

Oklahoma Innovations - OCAST's Official Newsletter

September 2015

OKLAHOMA HEALTH CENTER CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

With humble beginnings in 1965 as the dream of five Oklahoma City business leaders, the Oklahoma Health Center was established on 325-acres just south of the Capital complex. Now 50 years later, the Oklahoma Health Center has become a Mecca for research, technology, medicine, patient care, social services and innovation. If you would like to keep up with the latest happenings, you can sign up on the website to receive the monthly e-magazine, Innovate, and the e-newsletter at www.oklahomahealthcenter.com or email info@oklahomahealthcenter.com.

OKLAHOMA SBIR FALL WORKSHOP

When: Tuesday, October 20, 2015

Where: PHF Conference Center, 655 Research Parkway, Oklahoma City

What: SBIR/STTR Workshop led by Mark & Catherine Henry, Grow Emerging Companies

Cost: \$25 (includes breakfast and lunch)

Registration: www.eventbrite.com/e/oklahoma-sbir-fall-workshop-tickets-18830161520

OCAST FUNDING PROCESS 101: HOW ARE OCAST RESEARCH CONTRACTS AWARDED?

OCAST's FY16 funding cycles will soon open for applications and the agency's process for selecting awardees is widely recognized as one of the best in the nation. So, how does funding get from OCAST appropriations to the researchers, businesspersons and entrepreneurs at the forefront of strengthening Oklahoma's economy?

Once a solicitation is released, applicants have four to eight weeks to prepare and submit their application. Applications are prepared offline and submitted electronically through the state's grants management system, OKGrants. Once an application is successfully submitted to OCAST, it is checked for adherence to the posted solicitation's guidelines. All complete and compliant applications are then passed to the program's advisory committee, which assigns reviewers.

At the heart of the OCAST funding process are the agency's reviewers. All applications submitted to OCAST for funding consideration are reviewed by out-of-state experts from both academia and industry. Two reviewers are assigned to each proposal based upon the project's abstract and the reviewers' expertise, grant history and participation on national funding panels. Reviewers are recruited and assigned to proposals by the program's advisory committee which is made up of professors and businesspersons from across the state. The committee groups reviewers and proposals by research area to form separate discussion panels.

Once reviewers have signed non-disclosure agreements and have received their assigned applications, they have five to eight weeks to prepare their evaluations. Although reviewers are only primarily assigned to a small

subset of proposals, they have access to each of the proposals on their panel and review them all prior to discussion.

Approximately six to nine weeks after the application deadline, reviewers arrive in Oklahoma City to convene with their panel and discuss all proposals. There is no triage system in the OCAST funding process; each proposal submitted gets a panel discussion and two written evaluations. Upon completion of the panel discussion, each panel ranks its proposals. After all panels have finished their discussions, all reviewers convene to discuss ranking all proposals from all panels, generating a single list of rankings for the entire pool of applications.

Two weeks to a month after the panel discussions, OCAST presents the reviewers' rankings to the Oklahoma Science and Technology Research and Development (OSTRaD) Board for funding approval. The board approves proposals – according to the reviewers' rankings – based on the amount of money available to the program.

After the OSTRaD Board votes to approve proposals for a funding cycle, awards may be announced to the public. Applicants are notified of their funding status via OKGrants, and OCAST issues a press release to local media. The OCAST contracts manager emails notices of award to both principle investigators and contract officials, informing them of the next steps in the award process. Generally, contracts begin 60 to 90 days after notice of award.

Thanks to the work of OCAST's advisory committees and external reviewers, the agency's proven, unbiased funding process results in the award of numerous innovative research projects every year, each of which has the potential to have a positive impact on Oklahoma, and hopefully the world.

STAFF ADDITION TO OCAST

Julia Southwick joined OCAST as finance and business manager. Julia comes to OCAST from the office of the Oklahoma Secretary of State (SOS) where she served as Business Manager II. Her responsibilities with the SOS included accounting operations, financial transactions, compliance (GAAP, statutes and rules), financial analyses, budget and performance reviews, budget work programs (BWP), account reconciliation, inventory management, P-card administration and E-Pro requisitions.

Ms. Southwick holds a medical degree (M.D. with specialty in children's orthopedic surgery) from Ural State Medical Institute, Ekaterinburg, Russia; an associate's in accounting from Oklahoma State University-OKC; and a master's in accounting from Oklahoma City University. She is a certified procurement officer (CPO). And she speaks fluent Russian.

We are pleased to have Ms. Southwick on our team, she is a welcome addition.

OKLAHOMA INVENTORS ASSISTANCE SERVICE

The Inventors Assistance Service at Oklahoma State University, a program of the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology, recently released its fiscal year 2015 annual report. The purpose of the annual report is to review the previous fiscal year program and assess impact of the program. The outcomes of the report are used toward developing improvements for the next year of the program.

The IAS program continues to serve the inventor community with business analysis and engineering design development. It has also expanded its scope of work to assisting small companies with Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) proposal development. The primary goal of services offered is to advance the

inventor or business further in the process, whether it is through education, engineering analysis and design, prototype development or grant assistance.

Findings of the FY15 report include:

- IAS generated a total of \$2,428,677 in economic impact, through new companies created, cost avoidance on patents or projects not pursued due to prior art or a saturated market, estimated private inventor dollars secured and grant proposal bids. This equates to an economic impact of 6:1, meaning for every \$1 invested, the IAS generated \$6 in impact through its services.
- Inventions proposed are often household, consumer and medical-related devices. Although most inventions do not fall into the realm of cutting-edge technology, they are typically novel and address a problem that does not yet have a solution.
- Business services, such as business plan development, are needed. A recent partnership with the Oklahoma Small Business Development Centers will assist in addressing this gap, and the IAS is excited to have the OKSBDC network as a strong resource for the inventor community.
- The program saw an increase in requests for 3-D models and patent drawings with less emphasis on prototype design.
- Commercialization and marketing assistance is a high need for the inventor community. The IAS is investigating viable options for this necessary service.
- Undergraduate student intern quality continues to improve. Students employed are national merit finalists, research scholars and leaders in their respective majors. The IAS has built a reputation at Oklahoma State University for employing high-achieving students who are critical to the success of the IAS program. In return, they develop real-world skills essential to their careers.

For more information about the Inventors Assistance Service, please visit <http://ias.okstate.edu> or call 405-744-2856.

OCAST CALENDAR

- [Oklahoma Manufacturing Conference](#): **October 7**
 - [SBIR Fall Workshop](#) at the PHF Conference Center: **October 20**
 - [SSTI Conference](#): **October 26-28**
 - Thunder Plains Developer Conference at the Cox Convention Center: **November 3**
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OKLAHOMA INNOVATIONS RADIO SHOW

The Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance [Applications Engineers](#) program provides on-site, one-on-one, focused engineering assistance and technology transfer services to small- and medium-sized Oklahoma manufacturers.

[Listen to the show.](#)

Families, caregivers, charities and research groups across the United States observe September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. In the U.S., 15,780 children under the age of 21 are diagnosed with cancer every year. A diagnosis turns the lives of the entire family upside down. The objective of Childhood Cancer Awareness Month is to put a spotlight on the types of cancer that largely affect children and survivorship issues.

[Listen to the show.](#)

To hear more interviews on *Oklahoma Innovations* visit the [OCAST website](#) or listen weekly on:

Altus - Saturday at 6 a.m. - KOCU 90.1 FM
Ardmore - Saturday at 6 a.m. - KLCU 90.3 FM
Chickasha - Saturday at 6 a.m. - KCCU 100.1 FM
Clinton - Saturday at 6 a.m. - KYCU 89.1 FM
Lawton/Fort Sill - Saturday at 6 a.m. - KCCU 89.3 & 102.9 FM
Oklahoma City - Sunday at 5 p.m. - KTOK AM 1000
Tulsa - Sunday at 8 a.m. - KRMG AM 740/FM 102.3
Wichita Falls, TX - Saturday at 6 a.m. - KMCU 88.7 FM