Small Business Vouchers Pilot

ENERGIZING THE CLEAN ECONOMY

Technical Power to Drive Clean Energy Forward

Each year, small businesses prove themselves the backbone of the US economy. 23 million small businesses represent more than 99% of all employers, account for more than half of all private sector workers, and generate three out of every four new jobs.

Small businesses account for three-quarters of all new jobs in this country and embody the spirit of innovation, entrepreneurship and individual initiative. Further, these small businesses are generating new products, technologies and ideas that are essential to future prosperity.

To overcome the technical challenges inherent in bringing innovations to market, a new initiative will help clean energy small businesses connect with national laboratories, America's science and technology powerhouses.

Launched by the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Office (EERE), the Small Business Voucher (SBV) Pilot will match selected clean energy small businesses with experts from the national labs—and give the businesses vouchers valued at $50K to $300K that they can exchange for national lab technical assistance.

Data Sources: US Chamber of Commerce and Council on Small Businesses.

This world-class laboratory assistance will focus on a specific technical challenge identified by the small business and deliver solutions intended to drive the clean energy business to greater commercial success.

Below is a quick overview of the SBV Pilot, how to apply, the selection process, and what the national labs can offer small businesses.

Available Funding	$20 million, provided as technical vouchers from the national labs
Voucher Amounts	• Ranges from $50K to $300K per business to fund either collaborative projects or technical assistance from the national lab • Small businesses must each provide 20% matching funds or in-kind services
Eligibility	• Must be a for-profit business with no more than 500 full-time-equivalent employees worldwide • Must be U.S.-based and U.S.-owned.
Technical Areas	Vouchers are limited to specific R&D areas: • Advanced Manufacturing • Bio-energy • Buildings • Fuel Cells • Geothermal • Solar • Water • Wind • Vehicles

Photo Credit: Paul Sakuma, Associated Press

How SBV Works

1. Confirm Your Small Business Meets Eligibility Requirements
2. Develop an Innovative Research Idea
3. Register Your Small Business by visiting the SBV website
4. Submit Your Request for Assistance Electronically
5. Labs Receive Requests
6. SBV Merit Review
7. DOE Evaluates Request and Approves/Rejects
8. Finalize Agreement
9. Begin Voucher Work

SBV Schedule/Award Cycles

Round 1: Sept 2015 – Jan 2016

(Opens 9/23/15, Closes 10/23/15)

Round 2: Feb–May 2016

Round 3: June–Sept 2016

What the National Labs Offer

A network of advanced science and technology centers, the national laboratories push the boundaries of research to help our country address current and anticipated challenges. In fulfilling their role, the labs have developed deep expertise, state-of-the-art facilities, and world-class, often unique, resources.

The SBV Pilot makes it possible to focus the power of the national labs directly on specific problems identified by small businesses. The solutions generated can help small businesses become even better equipped to do what they do best: advance innovation, create jobs, and build prosperity.

For More Information

Website: www.sbv.org (*available 9/23*)

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