SSTI Excellence in TBED Awards 2015

Overview

SSTI is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to improving initiatives that support prosperity through science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship, is pleased to announce the *2015 Excellence in TBED* Awards. The awards are designed to celebrate exceptional achievement in technology-based economic development (TBED). TBED fosters a climate where new and existing companies that develop technology and continuously innovate will thrive.

TBED programs tend to focus on several elements that have been found in successful technology-based economies, including: a research base that generates new knowledge, mechanisms for transferring knowledge into the marketplace, an entrepreneurial culture, sources of risk capital, and a technically skilled workforce. SSTI's *Excellence in TBED* Awards recognize exceptional achievement in addressing these elements, plus improving the competitiveness of existing industries and an integrated strategy toward TBED.

SSTI's *Excellence in TBED* Awards program is designed to celebrate exceptional achievement in TBED and offer practitioners and policymakers examples of successful approaches that are being employed by others. In celebrating exceptional achievement in TBED, the awards program: requires applicants to provide a clear explanation of the need for the initiative, a logical approach to addressing the need, and demonstrable results; is highly selective with applications reviewed by a committee of distinguished current and former practitioners; and, is rigorous but fair in its evaluation. Awards will be presented only for exceptional achievement; therefore, SSTI reserves the right not to issue an award in a particular category if no applications are deemed as meeting the standards of the award.

Most Promising!

While the *Excellence in TBED* Awards program was designed to celebrate long standing achievement with winners serving as models for other states and regions to replicate, SSTI also recognizes the value in showcasing innovative initiatives that show promise. The award for Most Promising TBED Iniative is presented to organizations that address a specific need in a community or region identified as an obstacle to growth with an innovative approach in design or implementation. Judges look for creative and out- of-the box thinking alongside a well-defined action plan. Scoring is heavily weighted on innovativeness and transferability.

Eligibility

Any TBED program or practitioner is eligible to apply. This includes, but is not limited to, nonprofit organizations, local and state governments, colleges and universities, federal agencies and labs, industry associations, economic development councils, and other organizations that promote innovation and technology-based economic development.

While SSTI encourages its members to apply, you do not need to be a member of SSTI to enter or receive an award, and your membership status will not affect the judges' evaluation of your application.
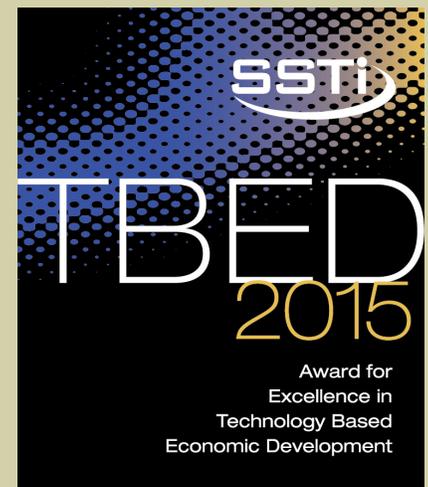
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2015 Awards Timeline

- June 1, 2015
  Call for applications

- July 15, 2015
  Deadline for applications

- October 27, 2015
  Winners recognized

Application Fee

- $75 SSTI members

- $95 Non-members

- Awards will be presented at SSTI's Annual Conference October 27 in Oklahoma City.

www.sstiawards.org

SSTi
TBED
2015
Award for
Excellence in
Technology Based
Economic Development

Contact

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Award Categories

The awards celebrate exceptional achievement in approaches used to help foster a climate where new and existing companies that develop technology and continuously innovate will thrive. Because these approaches can take many forms (e.g., programs, incentives designed to spur action, partnerships between organizations), we refer to them as initiatives rather than programs. Applicants are encouraged to think beyond traditional programs in approaches being used to address a specific element. Examples that are provided below should be viewed as illustrative rather than restrictive.

- **Expanding the Research Capacity**: Initiatives that strengthen the capacity to conduct research in universities, federal labs or the private sector. This may include centers of excellence, other university-industry partnership programs and initiatives to expand research facilities, recruit eminent scholars, or increase research funding through R&D tax credits.
- **Commercializing Research**: Initiatives that promote the conversion of research (from universities, federal labs or other research institutions) into technologies and products with high commercial potential.
- **Building Entrepreneurial Capacity**: Initiatives that encourage entrepreneurship and support entrepreneurs, including enriching the skills and ability of entrepreneurs, increasing the capacity of entrepreneurs to successfully start and grow companies, and improving the environment for entrepreneurial development.
- **Increasing Access to Capital**: Initiatives that enhance the ability of companies to access startup capital or fill other critical stages of capital formation in order to bring products to market and to grow.
- **Improving Competitiveness of Existing Industries**: Initiatives that expand the innovation capacity of existing companies or industries to develop new leading edge products or services or significantly enhance the competitiveness of their existing operations.
- **Most Promising TBED Initiative**: Initiatives that address a specific need in a community or region identified as an obstacle to economic growth with an emphasis on innovative or creative design or implementation.

Entry Guidelines

Each entry must include a completed registration form, cover page, narrative, and payment of entry fee. The narrative document must be typed on a maximum of five 8.5" by 11" pages using a minimum font size of 11 points.

Many TBED initiatives can cross into multiple categories. Nominations can be submitted for more than one category; however, each entry is considered a separate nomination and requires a separate registration form, narrative, and application fee. It is up to the applicant to determine under which category the initiative they are nominating is competing; entries with no award category or multiple categories marked will not be considered. Applicants can win in only one category.

How to Apply

Visit www.sstiawards.org for complete instructions. Entries must be uploaded as a PDF or Word document. The entry may also be mailed along with payment to: Awards Entry Fee, SSTI, 5015 Pine Creek Drive, Westerville, OH 43081.

Deadline for applications and payment is 5 P.M. ET July 15, 2015.

Celebrating exceptional achievement in technology-based economic development

Selection Committee & Process

Each application will be reviewed by a committee of distinguished current and former practitioners with knowledge and experience within a given award category. Selection committee members are chosen each year by SSTI based on their experience, knowledge of the field, and accomplishments.

If a member of a selection committee has a conflict of interest (including, but not limited to, being a past or present employee, contractor, consultant, board member, or investor) with an application, that member must immediately recuse himself/herself from any discussion or evaluation of the application.

SSTI receives applications in confidence. Each member of selection committees is obligated to maintain the confidentiality of the applications and the evaluation of applications, and is required to sign a nondisclosure statement.

The selection committee will evaluate applications based on a set of weighted criteria. Evaluation criteria may be modified from year to year; however, the criteria will not be altered after announcement of call for entries.

If no application in an award category achieves the level of excellence contemplated for the award, the committee may decide not to make an award in that category. The selection committee will determine winners, and decisions of that committee will be final. All applicants will be notified of their status when winners are announced.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated according to a scoring system with a set of weighted criteria based on the applicant's ability to clearly demonstrate: impact, transferability, partnerships, context, ability to achieve its vision, and innovativeness.

Judges will provide an overall score and a breakout score for the six criteria listed below. For all categories except the Most Promising TBED Initiative, impact and transferability account for the highest percentage.

Following is the criteria committee members will use to evaluate each application.

Criteria: Impact = 25%
• Does this effort have quantifiable metrics/measures? Are the measures and the methodology for determining the impact appropriate?
• Does the organization communicate its results in a meaningful and effective manner?

Criteria: Transferability of Lessons Learned = 20%
• What aspects of this effort qualify it for a "best practice"?
• Is this effort structured in such a way that others can learn lessons and apply them to their region?

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Recognizing efforts to improve our economy through science, technology & innovation

Criteria: Partnerships = 15%
• Has the project shown it has support of key leadership within its topic area?
• Does the initiative promote long-term or broad-reaching partnerships and collaboration?
• Does the initiative effectively leverage the resources and expertise of various organizations? (does it connect the dots) in such a way as to maximize its goals and outcomes?

Criteria: Context = 15%
• Has the application demonstrated how it fits into the overall TBED and economic development efforts of its region?
• Is the size and scope of the project meaningful to the geography in which it operates?

Criteria: Ability to Achieve its Vision = 15%
• Does the proposal articulate a long-term vision or strategy for the initiative?
• Does it identify key resources and/or issues that could impact successful implementation?
• Overall, does the program demonstrate that it has the elements in place to be able to accomplish its goals over the life of the program?

Criteria: Innovativeness = 10%
• Does the effort significantly improve the quality standard for this TBED area?
• Did the applicant demonstrate a fresh, creative or new approach in developing or implementing the initiative?
• What makes this effort stand out among others in its field?

Evaluation Criteria for Most Promising TBED Initiative
Applications submitted for consideration in this category will be evaluated according to the same criteria used for the other categories; however, percentages assigned will be weighted differently. Scoring is heavily weighted on innovativeness and transferability.

Innovativeness = 50%
Transferability of Lessons Learned = 20%
Ability to Achieve its Vision = 10%
Partnerships = 10%
Context = 10%

Applicants should address one specific TBED element (such as efforts to increase access to risk capital, build entrpreneurial capacity, commercialize research, etc.) rather than a comprehensive TBED effort.

The goal of the Most Promising category is to highlight programs that have demonstrated an innovative approach in design or implementation to serve as a model for other states and regions.

SSTI invites you to share your TBED story.

Application Narrative

The narrative template outlines specific information we are seeking for each entry. While other information may be included, please answer the following questions. Unless otherwise noted, the length of answers may vary, but the total submission should not exceed five pages. Please refer to the Application Guidelines on the next page for additional suggestions.

Cover Page:
• Provide a cover page with the following information: name of organization, name of nominated initiative, contact name and title, and website address.

Project Overview:
• Provide a brief abstract of the initiative including its purpose, description of what it does, and its impact. (Please limit to 250 words; for winning entries, this abstract may be used in press materials.)
• Provide background on the context in which the initiative operates and why it was created. This should include information about the region the initiative serves (rural, mid-size metro, etc.), the region's overall TBED activities, and other factors that provide a better understanding for the committee of the conditions under which the initiative operates. Describe how the initiative has been tailored to suit this context and how it has addressed market failures within the region.
• The specific activities of the initiative must be clearly defined.

Best Practice Implications:
In this section of the narrative, applicants should address how lessons learned from this initiative can be applied to others.
• What lessons have been learned in the implementation of this initiative?
• How has this initiative helped to advance or been integrated with other TBED or more traditional economic development efforts?

Impact:
In this section of the narrative, each applicant should provide details about the impact of the initiative.
• What metrics are used to measure the outcomes of or return on investment for the initiative?
• What has been the impact to date, and how is that impact determined?
• How are the results of the initiative communicated to key stakeholders, supporters and the public?

Innovation & Effectiveness:
In this section of the narrative, each applicant should address the following questions:
• What innovative approaches were used in developing and implementing the initiative?
• How does the initiative promote effective partnerships among relevant actors?
• How will the initiative successfully complete its objectives?
• What resources or key issues are needed for successful implementation?

Why You are the Best:
This is your final push! In no more than one paragraph, describe how your initiative is advancing the field of TBED and why your initiative should be selected.

*Sharing
best practices*

*Highlighting
Successes*

*Showcasing:
Impact
Innovation
Transferability
Effectiveness*

Application Guidelines

The following guidelines have been developed in accordance with suggestions submitted by committee members who have previously judged the applications. The judges strongly advise applicants to address these critical issues within their narratives.

1. **Tell us what you did.**
   - Provide your definition of the problem you set out to address and your theory of change.
   - Provide a comprehensive description of what your initiative is and what it has accomplished.
   - Provide any available evidence of potential clients' needs and priorities.

2. **Tell us how you do it.**
   - Provide specific goals and objectives of your program: what are your qualitative measures, what qualitative data do you use to help support the goals and metrics?
   - Provide specific and detailed information on the services and activities of your initiative.
   - Provide information on the context: first describe the "whole" and then outline the "portion" that you have been able to affect.
   - Are you adjusting your approach to respond to the context?
   - On what basis are you targeting your efforts?

3. **Tell us how it is funded.**
   - Provide information about initial funding and how you are planning for future sustainability.

4. **Tell us how it works.**
   - Provide information on who does what within the organization and describe how your organization partners with others (this will help the judges determine leveraging of resources).

5. **Tell us why you should be recognized.**
   - What distinguishes your program from others?
   - How well has your initiative succeeded? Provide information on how you have chosen to measure success and the results to date.
   - Make sure to carve out the results of the specific initiative from the overall results of the organization unless you are submitting the comprehensive work of the organization for an award.

FAQ

How are the award winners recognized?
Awards are presented at a special ceremony during SSTI's Annual Conference being held October 26-26 in Oklahoma City. Winners are invited to attend the conference as a guest of SSTI (a $675 value) and are provided a forum to showcase their accomplishments in a dedicated breakout session. Winners also will be showcased in the SSTI *Weekly Digest* and in a press release issued by SSTI. In addition, winners are invited to participate in podcast interviews or webinars made available to SSTI *Weekly Digest* subscribers and posted on SSTI's website. Finally, winners will receive exclusive use of the Excellence in TBED 2015 logo that can be added to their website, distinguishing their exceptional achievement in the TBED community.

Our TBED initiative crosses into several program areas — can we apply for more than one award?
Yes, a project or an organization can apply to more than one award category, but cannot win in more than one category. Remember that each application is reviewed separately, so program information as well as application fees must be completed for each category.

Our project is a partnership of multiple organizations — can each organization apply?
Technically, the answer is yes. However, we would encourage the partnership, rather than multiple members, to apply. Remember that one of the criteria for evaluation is related to the ability to build effective partnerships, and competing against yourself may not help your application in demonstrating this ability.

Can previous award winners apply again?
Previous award winners are asked not to apply for an award in the same category in which they won for at least two years. Previous awardees may apply in a different category with a different initiative, however.

Is the awards program limited to U.S. initiatives?
We are accepting applications from organizations that represent our membership, which at this time includes the U.S. and Canada.

How do I submit the application?
Entries should be submitted as a PDF or Word document using the registration form and upload feature found at www.sstiawards.org. Please fill in all the required fields on the registration form and upload your entry when finished. You may also mail your application to: SSTI, 5015 Pine Creek Drive, Westerville, OH 43081.

What happens after I submit my application?
You should receive confirmation of your entry immediately after submission. If your entry has not met the guidelines set forth within the application, SSTI will respond to you by email within three business days so that you may re-submit your application. After the deadline closes, the staff will forward all applications in a specific award category to the corresponding selection committee.

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Questions?
Contact
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Is there a time frame during which eligible initiatives must have been started or completed?
There is no specific time frame for a start or completion date. One of the major components for evaluation is the impact of the initiative, and therefore, well-established initiatives are expected to have a better chance of being selected. However, we strongly encourage older programs to emphasize work that is current so that they do not lose points for innovativeness.

Is there any way my application would be disqualified?
If you go over the five-page limit for the narrative your application may be disqualified. We will notify you within three business days so that you may resubmit the application by the deadline.

Can I include promotional materials along with the narrative?
Any additional materials such as promotional items, annual reports, past recognitions, etc. will not be considered by the selection panel.

What if I have suggestions for other categories or ideas about the process?
We would appreciate your feedback and encourage you to send us your ideas and comments via email to awards@ssti.org so we can have a written record and be able to assess suggestions at the end of the awards period. The 2015 awards program has changed as a result of suggestions we received over the past eight years.

Are credit card payments accepted for the application fee?
Yes. We have provided a secure link at www.sstiawards.org to process your credit card payment. You also may call us at 614.901.1690 if you prefer to give the credit card information over the phone.

Questions?
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Excellence in TBED Award Winners 2007-2014

2014 Award Winners

Expanding the Research Capacity

- USTAR - 2013
- The Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund - 2012
- Kentucky's Bucks for Brains Endowment Match Program - 2011
- Maine Technology Asset Fund - 2010
- James & Esther King Biomedical Research Program - 2009
- Georgia Research Alliance Eminent Scholars® - 2007

2013 Award Winners

Commercializing Research

- University of Florida Sid Martin Biotechnology Incubator - 2014
- Innovation Center of the Rockies - 2013
- ONAMI - 2012
- ACTiVATE® - 2011
- Washington Technology Center - 2009
- Maryland Technology Transfer Fund - 2008
- Georgia Research Alliance VentureLab - 2007

Building Entrepreneurial Capacity

- Innovation Works – AlphaLab Startup Accelerator Program - 2014
- BioGenerator and BioSTL - 2013
- Ben Franklin TechVentures® - 2012
- CONNECT - 2011
- JumpStart Inc. - 2010
- TechColumbus TechStart Program - 2009
- SC Launch - 2008
- Technology 2020 - 2007

2012 Award Winners

Excellence in TBED Award Winners
2007-2014

Increasing Access to Capital

- CincyTech - 2014
- UND Center for Innovation Foundation - 2013
- TechColumbus - 2012
- BioEnterprise - 2011
- i2E, Inc. - 2010
- JumpStart Inc. - 2009
- Innovation Works Seed Fund - 2008
- Connecticut Innovations Eli Whitney Fund - 2007

Improving Competitiveness of Existing Industries

- BioCrossroads - 2014
- Massachusetts Life Sciences Center - 2013
- Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research - 2012
- Center for Integrated Manufacturing Studies at RIT - 2011
- Florida High Tech Corridor Matching Grants Program - 2010
- Innovation Works Innovation Adoption Grant Fund - 2009
- Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology (CCAT) Supply Chain Integration - 2008
- The Maryland Industrial Partnerships Program - 2007

Most Promising TBED Initiative

- Illinois Science & Technology Coalition: Corporate-Startup Challenge - 2014
- ASU Entrepreneurship & Innovation Group - 2013
- BioAccel - 2012
- NorTech Regional Innovation Cluster Model - 2011

Enhancing the S&T Workforce

- CCAT Education Initiative - 2009
- Virginia Council on Advanced Technology Skills - 2007

2011 Award Winners

2010 Award Winners

2008 Award Winners

2007 Award Winners