

# TUTORIAL #30

## How Should I Prepare the Project Summary/ Abstract?

The project summary or abstract that you prepare as part of your Department of Energy (DOE) Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) application is important. Please note that the abstract WILL become a public document, so keep this in mind while writing it. Many uses are made of this document. The abstract may be posted on DOE and/or the Small Business Administration's (SBA) website. If you are awarded a grant in response to your application, the abstract will also be sent to members of Congress or state governors. Keep these uses in mind while writing the abstract.

### WHAT TO PUT IN AN ABSTRACT

Prepare the abstract as a stand-alone document, no more than one page in length that will be uploaded into grants.gov as a separate PDF file. The abstract should contain a description of the project (both Phase I and Phase II), as well as a statement of objectives and the methods to be employed. However, it should NOT contain any proprietary information – given that it will become a public document.

### PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

Researchers are often confused about what information should be kept proprietary. In essence,

what's proprietary is the “secret sauce,” that is the data that explains how you solved the problem, the intellectual property (IP) that you want to ultimately protect through a patent, a copyright or a trade secret. To state the problem you are addressing, the objectives that you have, and to provide a broad statement about the field of inquiry that this will impact, will not raise proprietary concerns. Also, if you are working with others and talk about their contribution in the abstract, make sure that none of the information that you wish to include is “confidential.” Principal investigators (PI) should also check with the business official in their firm to assure that the abstract does not contain any “business sensitive” information.

### GUIDELINES FOR WRITING AN ABSTRACT

In writing the project summary or abstract, assume that the reader that you are addressing is a technically literate reader and follow the specific guidelines that DOE provides in its Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for the structure of the abstract. The header should contain the company name, the project title, the PI's name, and the topic number/subtopic letter. A template which follows the structure recommended by DOE can be downloaded from the Tools section of this tutorial.

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abstract  
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document

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