



I-Corps prepares small businesses for commercialization through an intensive 12-week “Boot Camp” Program (for SBIR companies) or the more comprehensive 6-week “Cohort” Program (for STTR Companies). These competitive programs are available during Phase I of the NASA SBIR/STTR Program, helping prepare Phase I awardees transition their ideas for a successful future.

Interested? Each program consists of a small group of companies who are serious about success. To be considered, you must first submit an application form during the NASA SBIR/STTR Phase I proposal submission. If your proposal is selected for Phase I, you must write a short, 5-page proposal for potential inclusion into the upcoming I-Corps program.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ABOUT I-CORPS

Who leads the program?

The training is led by I-Corps certified instructors who have each created one or more companies and who have also served as industry mentors. The instructors lead the classroom training material presentations, feedback and lessons learned discussions, office hours, and webinar presentations.

What is expected of me?

Besides classroom participation both at the Kickoff Workshop and Closing Workshop, the teams attend weekly webinars led by the instructors and perform weekly homework assignments (books/articles and videos).

What's the NASA I-Corps curriculum?

The I-Corps training program introduces the concept of a Business Model Canvas, a framework that helps small companies understand how to describe, explain, price, develop, and market their product or service. This is a critical part to a successful commercialization effort.

As part of the Canvas, each company creates a formal hypothesis-validation approach to identify and mitigate gaps in knowledge in the following seven areas:

1. Product/Service Value Proposition
2. Customer/User-Case and Pain Point
3. Demand Creation
4. Channel Development
5. Revenue Model
6. Partnership Strategy
7. Resource Requirement

Are there deliverables needed to complete the NASA I-Corps Training?

Yes, the following deliverables are required:

- Lessons Learned Presentation
- 2-Minute Lessons Learned Video (I-Corps Cohort Program only)
- 1-Minute Technical Video (I-Corps Cohort Program only)
- Business Model Canvas Initial
- Business Model Canvas Final
- Two-page Account of Award Outcomes and Impact to Society that includes:
 - A brief statement (one page) of what value the firm obtained and learned by participating in the I-Corps Program
 - A brief statement (one page) of what commercialization planning and/or activities the firm plans to undertake in the next year

APPLYING TO I-CORPS

Is the I-Corps Opt-In form included in the Phase I Proposal 23-page count?

No, the I-Corps Opt-In form does not count towards the page count of the Phase I proposals.

If a company has multiple applicable SBIR/STTRs, can they apply to I-Corps more than once and receive more than one training grant?

NASA SBIR/STTR PMO will issue only one I-Corps Training Grant per company even if the company has two or more very different technologies.

LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Who are the NASA I-Corps Program points of contact?

- Technical and Programmatic: Zach Burkland, Technical Officer - Zachary.burkland@nasa.gov
- Contractual: Benjamin Benvenuti, Grant Administrator Officer - Benjamin.s.Benvenuti@nasa.gov

FURTHER READING?

Yes, there are reference text books and videos recommended for those about to begin I-Corps.

- The Startup Owner's Manual by Steve Blank and Bob Dorf
- Business Model Generation by Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur
- Steve Blank articles and videos at: <https://steveblank.com>