



Request for Qualifications

SBIR/STTR Resource Center Entrepreneur In Residence (EiR)



Central Maine Growth Council

Dirigo Labs

10 Water Street, Waterville, Maine 04901

Email: launchwell@dirigolabs.org

Phone: (207) 680-7300

centralmaine.org | dirigolabs.org

Executive Summary

The Central Maine Growth Council (CMGC) seeks a seasoned SBIR Entrepreneur in Residence (EiR) to join the Dirigo Labs' team. Dirigo Labs suite of programs equips promising ventures with mentorship, dedicated workspace, and comprehensive resources to propel them toward rapid commercial success.

The EiR will play a critical role in supporting DL's programming, including assisting startups and businesses navigate the complexities of Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) applications and associated commercialization strategies.

Qualifications: Extensive startup experience, strong business acumen, mentorship expertise, and networking skills, paired with excellent communication and dedication to facilitating support for R&D-focused startups. Proven ability to offer tailored guidance, helping businesses navigate the complexities of SBIR applications and commercialization processes.

Deadline: Submit application materials by **12/19/24** midnight to launchwell@dirigolabs.org.

Contact: launchwell@dirigolabs.org

The EiR will be a cornerstone of Dirigo Labs, playing a pivotal role in:

- **Mentoring:** Providing strategic guidance and expert advice on critical areas like business development, marketing, fundraising, and SBIR application strategies.
- **Networking:** Facilitating connections with investors, partners, and industry experts, fostering impactful relationships that support the growth of R&D-focused startups.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Designing and/or delivering workshops and training sessions that impart valuable industry knowledge, entrepreneurial best practices, and commercialization insights.
- **Program Development:** Collaborating with CMGC to enhance the Dirigo Labs experience and provide tailored support, helping businesses navigate the complexities of SBIR applications and commercialization processes.
- **Pipeline Cultivation and Tracking:** Support CMGC and Dirigo Labs in building and maintaining a structured pipeline of Maine-based entrepreneurs and startups interested in SBIR/STTR opportunities, actively tracking their progress and readiness to apply. Work closely with candidates to assess eligibility, address challenges, and provide continuous support, ensuring a flow of well-prepared applicants for SBIR/STTR funding.

Introduction

CMGC is seeking a highly motivated and experienced SBIR/STTR-focused Entrepreneur in Residence (EiR) to join our team and play a vital role in the success of the startups we serve.

(1) About Dirigo Labs

Dirigo Labs operates three programs to support startups in rural Maine:

1. **Dirigo Labs Accelerator:** The flagship accelerator program is a 12-week program for growth stage startups focused on investor readiness training, fundraising, and increasing sales. Each cohort member will be assigned a temporary board of advisors from the DL mentor pool and will have a chance to compete for a \$25k cash prize at the end of the program.
2. **Dirigo Launch Incubator:** The incubator program is an 8-week program designed for ideation stage startups focused on customer discovery and go-to-market strategy. The curriculum is designed around the NSF's SBIR commercialization plan and is targeted at SBIR interested startups. Each cohort member will be assigned a mentor.
3. **Dirigo Model:** A 9-part series designed to guide entrepreneurs through the creation of a comprehensive financial model, a cornerstone for startup success. This program will center on the Dirigo Labs proprietary financial modeling template.

Dirigo Labs operates a SBIR Resource Center to support DL cohort companies and all other SBIR-interested startups in Maine. This resource center provides hands-on SBIR eligibility review, SBIR project planning support, and commercialization training through our programs. Through our partnership with the Maine Technology Institute, SBIR-interested startups will receive expert guidance through preparing their grant applications.

I. Role of the SBIR Resource Center EiR

The SBIR Resource Center EiR will play a crucial role in supporting SBIR-interested startups. Responsibilities for the hybrid role will include:

- **Providing mentorship and guidance to the startups served by the Resource Center:** Coaching founders on business development, marketing, fundraising, and navigating the complexities of SBIR/STTR applications and commercialization processes.
- **Connecting the startups with relevant resources and networks:** Identifying potential investors, partners, and customers to advance R&D-focused ventures.
- **Designing and/or delivering workshops and training sessions:** Sharing expertise on SBIR/STTR, R&D-focused entrepreneurship, and commercialization strategies.
- **Participating in DL events and activities:** Building relationships with the startups and contributing to the overall program experience.
- **Promoting R&D in the region:** Contributing to CMGC's efforts to build a thriving ecosystem for R&D and technology-driven startups in mid-Maine.

(1) Qualifications and Experience

We are seeking a candidate with the following qualifications and experience:

- **Extensive experience in the SBIR/STTR and R&D space:** Proven success in starting, scaling, or advising R&D-focused companies and supporting SBIR/STTR grant applicants or applications.

- **Strong business acumen:** Deep understanding of business development, marketing, finance, and other key business functions.
- **Knowledge of SBIR/STTR processes:** Familiarity with the SBIR/STTR landscape and the ability to guide startups through the intricacies of federal funding, compliance, and commercialization.
- **Mentorship experience:** Demonstrated ability to guide and support entrepreneurs through their challenges and successes.
- **Networking skills:** Strong relationships with key players in the R&D, startup, and funding ecosystems.
- **Excellent communication and interpersonal skills:** The ability to build rapport with entrepreneurs, mentors, and other stakeholders.
- **Dedication and commitment:** Willingness to invest time and energy into supporting the Dirigo Labs and R&D-focused startup community.

(2) Compensation and Terms

The SBIR Resource Center EiR position is structured as an independent contractor engagement with an anticipated term of approximately nine (9) months, commencing in the first quarter of 2025 and concluding no later than September 29, 2025. Compensation for services shall range from \$8,000 to \$10,000 over the course of the engagement, with work performed and invoiced on an hourly basis at a rate mutually agreed upon in advance.

III. Application Process

To apply for this position, please submit the following materials by **December 19th at midnight** to launchwell@dirigolabs.org:

- **Resume or CV**
- **EIN or Social Security Number/TIN**
- **UEI if available**
- **Cover letter outlining your interest in the position and how you believe you can contribute to Dirigo Labs and the SBIR/STTR community**
- **Three (3) references from individuals familiar with your work and experience**

(1) Selection Process

Please submit questions and/or associated requests for information to CMGC at launchwell@dirigolabs.org subject line: *SBIR Resource Center EiR RFQ* by no later than **11:59 pm ET December 12, 2024**.

To be considered for evaluation, all completed applications must be received in full by no later than **11:59 pm ET on December 19, 2024**. Applications submitted after this deadline will not be accepted or reviewed, and applicants are solely responsible for ensuring timely submission.

Interviews are expected to be conducted in **December (2024) and January (2025)** and the final selection will be made shortly thereafter.

SBIR/STTR Resource Center Entrepreneur-in-Residence - Request for Qualifications

We are excited to hear from passionate and experienced entrepreneurs who are committed to supporting the next generation of SBIR/STTR and R&D-focused startups. Please do not hesitate to contact us at launchwell@dirigolabs.org if you have any questions.