



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

October 4, 2023

The Honorable Ben Cardin
Chairman, Committee on Small Business
and Entrepreneurship
U.S. Senate
428A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roger Williams
Chair, Committee on Small Business
U.S. House of Representatives
2361 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Joni Ernst
Ranking Member, Committee on
Small Business and Entrepreneurship
U.S. Senate
428A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nydia M. Velázquez
Ranking Member, Committee on Small Business
U.S. House of Representatives
2069 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cardin, Chairman Williams, Ranking Member Ernst, and Ranking Member Velázquez:

As you know, the SBIR and STTR Extension Act of 2022 reauthorized the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs through fiscal year (FY) 2025. The Inspector General of a Federal agency that participates in the SBIR or STTR programs must submit an annual report to Congress describing its investigations involving those programs (15 U.S.C. Section 638b(c)). The U.S. Department of Education (ED) participates in the SBIR program; however, ED does not participate in the STTR program as it does not have an extramural research or a research and development budget in excess of \$1 billion.

Below you will find data required from the Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the SBIR program covering FY 2023. ED SBIR program staff reported that its total SBIR budget for FY 2023 was approximately \$13 million.

(1) The number of cases referred to the OIG that relate to fraud, waste, or abuse with respect to the SBIR program.

In FY 2023, the OIG did not receive any allegations of possible fraud, waste, or abuse involving the SBIR program.

(2) Report the actions taken in each case if fraud, waste, or abuse was determined to have occurred.

N/A

(3) If no action was taken, report the justification for action not being taken.

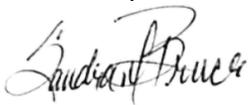
N/A

(4) Provide an accounting of the funds used to address fraud, waste, and abuse in the SBIR program, including a description of personnel and resources funded and funds that were recovered or saved.

For the last several years the OIG has conducted video training sessions and webinars aimed at assisting SBIR grant applicants and recipients in identifying and addressing fraud, waste, and abuse involving the SBIR programs. As they are conducted virtually, the training costs are nominal, averaging about \$500. The OIG held its FY 2023 session on October 26, 2022, and will hold its FY 2024 session on November 1, 2023.

We will track and follow up on any allegations or complaints we receive involving ED's SBIR program and will be certain to describe our efforts in future reports. If you have any questions or if you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at (202) 245-6900, or have a member of your staff contact our Congressional Liaison, Catherine Grant, at (202) 245-7023.

Sincerely,



Sandra D. Bruce
Inspector General

cc: The Honorable Miguel Cardona, Secretary, U.S. Department of Education