

Local tech companies on FAST track

Jeff Tucker

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Five companies with connections to northern Arizona and Flagstaff got a little help from the Arizona Department of Commerce last month.

The companies were awarded "FAST" grants ranging from \$4,000 to \$5,000 apiece, and some of the money will go toward applying for larger grants called the Small Business Innovative Research Grants awarded by 10 federal agencies.

The SBIR grants can range from \$100,000 to \$750,000.

The five northern Arizona companies selected for the awards are: Corneal Science: A member of the Northern Arizona Technology and Business Incubator, Corneal Science is working with Northern Arizona University to develop new polymers for contact lenses that helps people who suffer from dry eyes, a common problem in the high western desert.

SenesTech: The company, which has been in business in Flagstaff since October, specializes in the chemical sterilization of research animals. The process can have implications on gender-based research, and one such application is in menopause research.

Flagstaff Renewable Fuels: Flagstaff Renewable Fuels is a grassroots company focusing on developing alternative sources of energy. Its current project is developing a wind farm that would tie into Arizona Public Service and provide energy to the local grid. It also would provide capital to the company for its ongoing research on hydrogen fuel cells.
InXsol: A Phoenix-based company with ties to Flagstaff and taking part in the incubator. InXsol specializes in technical training and simulation development for aerospace applications.
NovaKinetics: Provides engineering/composites manufacturing services to the aerospace industry.

Not only will the money from the FAST grants help these small, start-up companies apply for larger federal grants, but it also can help with other things.

SenesTech's Loretta Mayer said she will use the grant not only to apply for an SBIR grant but also to apply for two new patents for her company
