

2020 TIBBETTS AWARD WINNER

Rodney Couick, Ph.D.



Dr. Couick spearheaded SBIR contracting via GSA's Assisted Acquisition Service's (AAS) that provides increased access to cutting-edge technology for the federal Government while helping small businesses meet their commercialization goals.

LOCATION

IL
O'Fallon

ORGANIZATION

US General Services Administration (GSA)

SBIR/STTR AFFILIATION

US General Services Administration (GSA)



Impact & Achievement

Dr. Rodney Couick took something good and made it better! Dr. Couick is with U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)'s Office of Assisted Acquisition Services (AAS), which awards and administers contracts on behalf of federal agencies on a fee-for-service basis. He is also the GSA Subject Matter Expert for the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. Having served as an Air Force acquisition officer prior to joining GSA, Dr. Couick was keenly aware of the challenges that can be associated with SBIR contract award timelines and offered a GSA solution-SBIR contracting via GSA's Assisted Acquisition Services (AAS).

Dr. Couick conducted extensive research and wrote a convincing business case to gain GSA approval to conduct the AAS Phase III Pilot Program. Today, the AAS program helps manage SBIR Phase III contracts and in turn provides increased access to cutting-edge technology for the federal government while helping small businesses meet their commercialization goals. This program, spearheaded by Couick, encourages real-world applications for research and development, and addresses the President's Management Agenda (PMA) Cross Agency Priority (CAP) goal to improve the transfer of federally-funded technology from the laboratory to the marketplace.

This vision for Phase III does not stop there. Dr. Couick drafted language for the 2019 SBIR Policy Directive clarifying that SBIR Agencies may use assisted acquisition providers to meet SBIR contracting needs and worked with the Air Force to establish an Air Force-wide Interagency Agreement (IA) for Phase III contracting support. This allows organizations throughout the Air Force, as an alternative, to obtain Phase III assisted acquisition services support from GSA on a fee-for-service basis. Dr. Couick has also established and signed an agency-wide IA with the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) for AAS Phase III support and is currently working with the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering on a DoD-wide IA for AAS support.

As part of these efforts, Dr. Couick personally responded to hundreds of inquiries from SBIR awardees and potential customers and participated in scores of teleconferences to jump start progress. These efforts have fueled economic growth throughout the country—Air Force, Navy, and National Cancer Institute studies have shown \$12.50, \$14, and up to as much as \$50 or more return-on-investment for every \$1 invested—Phase III is where this happens in the federal marketplace.