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**Colorado SBDC TechSource – Innovate and Integrate**

**Talking Points**

**What’s the background/evolution of Technology programs at Colorado SBDC Network?**

* Throughout the state, companies are seeking technology application assistance to enhance business growth. As shift occurred approximately 10 years ago; scientists, engineers, and technology entrepreneurs sought out specified assistance regarding technology business practices and market placement prior to meeting with potential investors. Interest was concentrated along the Front Range near research labs and universities.
* Individual centers responded to request with referrals to both online and outside resources in Colorado and nationwide. Businesses returned continuing to seek ask assistance, indicating that they were not getting the support they were seeking elsewhere. Thus supporting the hypothesis that the SBDC network may have a role in Technology assistance.
* Center Directors and stakeholders used formal and informal processes to identify market needs; gather data from businesses, partners, and stakeholders; and analyze factors before moving forward. As network understanding of the demand developed, pilot initiatives were launched in response to client requests. This is the bases of the **Continuous Learning Process (CLP).** Additionally, directors receive professional development training (ASBDC conferences, technology commercialization certification, and specialized training) to provide better assessment and consulting.
* At both the Center-level and at the Lead Center, relationships were built with strategic partners: industry organizations, specialists at colleges and universities, for-profit business specialist, etc. High-caliber specialized expertise was tapped from professionals in our communities and developed within some centers. As funding and other resources permitted, pilot initiatives were tested (see list below.) Businesses highly rated both the training and consulting assistance received. The program demand and positive response encouraged the Colorado SBDC TechSource next phase.

**How is Colorado SBDC TechSource deployed on a statewide basis/ How does my Center fit in the statewide program?**

* Statewide marketing efforts seek to identify, communicate, and attract companies to utilize the TechSource program. All Centers can enter potential TechSource companies into the Center IC database from: generated lists (i.e. SBIR grant awardees), local market knowledge, referrals from strategic partners (i.e. Colorado Bioscience Association), public relations and digital marketing initiatives, etc. Potential TechSource businesses may apply online through [www.coloradosbdc.org](http://www.coloradosbdc.org) and will also be entered into the CIC.
* When you get an e-RFA, email or phone request for assistance, follow the same process you normally do with any request: ask what type of business they are/plan to be; ask what type of assistance they are requesting.

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| **Innovate** | **Integrate** |
| Assisting Technology Business | Assisting business with technology |
| * Deployed in Centers/ Statewide. | * Deployed in Centers/ Statewide |
| * Refined SBDC service with particular emphasis on the business landscape, the technology service/ product, and its path to market. * Determine needs/ standard SBDC process – assist at center level if possible | * Typically standard SBDC services and programing assistance. * Determine needs/ standard SBDC process – assist at center level if possible |
| * For additional expertise: contact and refer to SmartZone/ nearest Center | * For additional expertise: contact and refer to nearest Center/ SmartZone |
| * *The Center nearest to the client continues to follow up with the company to retain the customer relationship and to assist with other needs, as appropriate.* | * *The Center nearest to the client continues to follow up with the company to retain the customer relationship and to assist with other needs, as appropriate.* |

**Why are we going through this Tech Accreditation process?**

As a state network, we are already providing:

1. Help to Technology companies – at specialized SmartZone
2. Technology help to all types of companies – at all Centers.

Being awarded the Technology designation as a state network will:

* Provide added credibility with stakeholders
* Allow us to raise more funding to provide more services throughout Colorado
* Increase the SBDC’s value to Colorado technology sectors (a key focus of our stakeholders)
* And ultimately, will elevate the stature of the SBDC network within the entire Colorado community.

**What is the Statewide Technology Inventory Survey?**

From November 2015 - January 2016, a statewide center survey was conducted to capture information about all of the programs and services provided at each SBDC in Colorado.

Discoveries:

* Every Center is already providing programs and services that match the Integrate track.
* Many Centers are already providing programs and services that match the Innovate track – or they are referring these requests to other Centers in the network.

Action:

* The Tech Committee drafted and the entire network approved the Technology Strategic Plan to continue the evolution of the statewide TechSource program.

**What statewide Colorado SBDC TechSource – Innovate programs are planned for this year?**

* **Four 2-Day Programs - Pueblo, Durango, Grand Junction, N. Colorado (Greeley)**

The Technology Committee and Centers throughout Colorado are planning four programs around the state to share information and specialized consulting with businesses that may otherwise not be aware of these opportunities. For technology businesses, topics will include Federal and State Innovation Grants (SBIR/STTR; Advanced Industries) and other funding, plus technology commercialization. For technology and other businesses, topics will include contracting opportunities, certifications and building for growth.

* **Webinar Series – short/intensives, streamed online/on demand**

Topics would be focused on SBIR/Commercialization as well as Contracting and Certification (may include How to Analyze Proposal to make a Go/No Go Decision, Preparing for a DCAA Audit, the Technology Commercialization process. Market Research – How to Size Market Opportunities)

**What statewide Colorado SBDC-TechSource programs are proposed for next year?**

* **Statewide SBIR/STTR/Innovation Event -- November 2017 – Denver Metro area**

Full day event will include presentations by reps from the SBIR granting agencies (in person or streamed in,) one-on-one matchmaking sessions, keynote speakers.

* **Webinar Series – streamed online/on demand**

Program Managers from SBIR/STTR agencies explaining the programs, requirements, etc.

Topics arranged through the Small Business Technology Coalition.

**What is the** **Small Business Technology Coalition that all Centers will collaborate on?**

* Early in 2016, the Small Business Administration launched the Small Business Technology Coalition. A first of its kind public private partnership, it is designed to provide small businesses with one stop access to the latest digital educational and training resources from technology and industry leaders. The resources available are organized by stage of business including resources and trainings specific to start ups, growth companies, and mature companies.
* Companies involved are committed to delivering digital education and training to small business owners teaching them to use new cutting edge tools and resources. Technology Coalition partners include Amazon, Box, Facebook, LegalZoom, Microsoft, Salesforce, Zenefits, Bench, Canvas, Dash Data, Google, Intuit, LinkedIn, Paychex, Square, Thumbtack, and Yelp.
* The Small Business Administration Colorado District Office has taken a lead role in the support and implementation of the Small Business Technology Coalition. They have reached out to additional technology companies and have pushed for additional trainings as well as additional resources being added to the The Colorado SBDC Network is working very closely with the Small Business Administration District Office and is utilizing the Technology Coalition to its full extent. The Colorado SBDC continues to build on this model of leveraging the technology giants and continues to grow and develop the resources into an important asset in the small business owner’s tool box.