Photonics Forum

April 10, 2019

11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

9th Floor

Room 901

Photonics Center

8 Saint Mary's Street

Lunch will be served!

Dr. C. Richard Schwerdtfeger, National Science Foundation

Updates to the NSF SBIR/STTR Program and Submission Process

The National Science Foundation offers SBIR and STTR grants to small businesses and start-up companies to develop revolutionary, high-risk, high-reward technologies that have commercial potential and societal impact. They can provide more than $1.5M in non-dilutive funding in about three years. NSF offers grants in 24 topic areas of deep technology and has very broad solicitations as they have no particular technology need or problem to solve. They strive for companies to bring their most revolutionary ideas to them, hopefully after having done some good customer discovery to show there is some market pull if the technology can be made to work. Dr. Schwerdtfeger will summarize the SBIR/STTR program, highlighting new requirements for the latest solicitation released on March 4, 2019.

Dr. Schwerdtfeger has 25+ years of experience as a scientist and entrepreneur. His focus has been on the development and commercialization of energy, semiconductor, smart grid and clean water technologies. He is currently the Photonics, IoT, Advanced Instrumentation, Sensors, and Space SBIR/STTR Program Director at NSF. Prior to that, he was the CTO and co-founder of ARC Energy, a semiconductor equipment company, the CEO of Boer PVConnector and COO of Pica Solar, both solar cell technology companies. He is also an angel investor and advisory board member of ClearCove Systems, a clean water technology company. Additionally, Dr. Schwerdtfeger is a technical advisor to three non-profits, the OuR&D Fund, the Emergent Technologies Institute, and the Whitaker Center for STEM Education. Before those entrepreneurial challenges, he was a Senior R&D Scientist at Saint Gobain, group manager at Alpha Spectra, and he started his career as a scientist at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

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