

Six area firms vying for NASA contracts

By Michael Davidson

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BOULDER - Six companies based in Boulder County have a chance to earn NASA contracts through a program intended to help small businesses and researchers commercialize NASA technology.

NASA selected proposals from five companies based in Boulder - Tech-X Corp., SPEC Inc., ColdQuanta Inc., Eltron Research and Development Inc. and GeoVisual Technologies Inc. - along with Lafayette-based Composite Technology Development Inc. for Phase 1 of the agency's Small Business Innovation Research program.

NASA received 1,878 qualified Phase 1 proposals, and 300 proposals were selected as candidates for possible partnerships.

Phase 1 is the first of three phases. Awards are for feasibility studies to evaluate the scientific and technical merit of proposals, according to a release from NASA. Phases 2 and 3 expand on and commercialize the research.

Phase 1 awards are typically for six months for the SBIR contracts and 12 months for the STTR contracts, in amounts up to \$125,000, according to NASA.

The competitive awards-based programs are intended to encourage small businesses and research institutions to engage in federal research, development and commercialization, according to NASA. The agency benefits because the research addresses its technological needs, while businesses can profit from new products developed during the program, NASA said.