

## **Labrador Systems Awarded Competitive Grant from the National Science Foundation**

*Small Business Innovation Research Program Provides Seed Funding for R&D*

**Los Angeles, California, February 16, 2021** – Labrador Systems, an early-stage robotics company pioneering a new generation of assistive robots, has been awarded a [National Science Foundation](#) (NSF) Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase I grant in response to its proposal titled “Assistive Robots for Personal Care and COVID-19 Protection.” The purpose of the grant is to conduct research and development (R&D) to establish a new class of autonomous navigation technologies that can enable new categories of low-cost/high-performance personal assistive robots.

Labrador’s innovation fuses robotics with emerging visual positioning technologies from augmented reality (AR) to enable robust navigation for mobile robots using low-cost, consumer-grade electronics. Labrador’s research under this NSF grant addresses a key limitation of visual positioning systems, namely that visual changes in an environment dramatically impact performance and reliability over time.

Powered by this technology, Labrador’s new assistive robots will enable individuals with a variety of needs to have more agency over their environment and greater personal independence. The platform also provides a means to directly reduce exposure to viruses such as COVID-19 and other infectious diseases by physically assisting individuals and caregivers in homes and group care facilities.

“NSF is proud to support the technology of the future by thinking beyond incremental developments and funding the most creative, impactful ideas across all markets and areas of science and engineering,” said Andrea Belz, Division Director of the Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships at NSF. “With the support of our research funds, any deep technology startup or small business can guide basic science into meaningful solutions that address tremendous needs.”

“This Small Business Innovation Research Phase I award furthers Labrador’s core mission to develop a new generation of assistive service robots that are comparable to commercial robots in performance, but significantly more affordable, opening up a range of new applications for individual use and personal care,” said Mike Dooley, CEO and Co-Founder of Labrador Systems.

Once a small business is awarded a Phase I SBIR/STTR grant (up to \$256,000), it becomes eligible to apply for a Phase II grant (up to \$1,000,000). Small businesses with Phase II grants are eligible to receive up to \$500,000 in additional matching funds with qualifying third-party investment or sales.

Startups or entrepreneurs who submit a [three-page Project Pitch](#) will know within three weeks if they meet the program's objectives to support innovative technologies that show promise of commercial and/or societal impact and involve a level of technical risk. Small businesses with innovative science and technology solutions, and commercial potential are encouraged to apply. All proposals submitted to the NSF SBIR/STTR program, also known as America's Seed Fund, powered by NSF, undergo a rigorous merit-based review process.

#### **About Labrador Systems, Inc.**

Labrador Systems is an early-stage robotics company developing a new generation of assistive robots to help people live more independently. The company's core focus is creating affordable solutions that address practical and physical needs at a fraction of the cost of commercial robots. Labrador's personal robot, the company's first offering, will enter pilot studies in 2021. For more information, visit [www.labradorsystems.com](http://www.labradorsystems.com).

**About the National Science Foundation's Small Business Programs:** America's Seed Fund powered by NSF awards \$200 million annually to startups and small businesses, transforming scientific discovery into products and services with commercial and societal impact. Startups working across almost all areas of science and technology can receive up to \$1.75 million to support research and development (R&D), helping de-risk technology for commercial success. America's Seed Fund is congressionally mandated through the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. The NSF is an independent federal agency with a budget of about \$8.1 billion that supports fundamental research and education across all fields of science and engineering.

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