

## OptTek Receives NSF Award to Create Workforce Diversity Software

**Boulder, CO, December 11, 2006**

OptTek Systems, Inc. a Boulder optimization technology firm announced it was awarded a Phase I Small Business Innovative Research grant by the National Science Foundation to develop software to enhance workforce diversity. Under the award, OptTek Systems plans to develop and market a software system to support diversity planning and management. The software is anticipated to be used to improve an organization's ability to plan and manage workforce diversity. The benefits of the system include cost-effective achievement of diversity goals and objectives, improvements to workforce capabilities and performance, and enhanced business performance. The software will be developed by combining two innovative methods drawn from the field of operations research: agent-based simulation and metaheuristic optimization.

According to Dr. James Kelly, OptTek CEO, "Many companies are currently searching for cost effective ways to increase employee diversity. Additionally, these same companies are keenly interested in predicting the diversity of their future workforce. OptTek will develop a system that addresses both of these needs. This work extends innovations in optimizing and planning pioneered by OptTek Systems, Inc., yielding capabilities for workforce diversity planning and management that do not currently exist."

In a market where organizations invest billions of dollars to create and maintain diverse workforces, the technology is expected to support more effective and efficient decisions. The technology will examine the cause and effect relationships between diversity policies and programs and individual employees, allowing for accurate prediction of company diversity metrics in future years. The system will also allow human resource professionals to select the optimal set of policies and programs required to meet their diversity objectives while minimizing total program costs.

The broader impacts of this research include the potential to:

- increase workforce diversity, capabilities, and performance.
- support a significant social and economic initiative.
- design a more effective approach (simulation/optimization) to diversity planning and management.
- develop and market commercial-grade software that may be applied to other high-risk, highly complex environments.
- attract downstream funding from venture capital firms and business alliance partners as it significantly increases workforce diversity performance.
- add to the body of knowledge in workforce diversity and decision sciences that may be leveraged to permit additional research and development.

### **About OptTek Systems, Inc.**

OptTek Systems, Inc. is a Boulder, CO based optimization software and services firm. From its inception in 1992, OptTek has become the leading provider of optimization software to simulation companies and employs state-of-the-art techniques based on many years of research in the area of optimization, in which OptTek's founders are internationally recognized leaders. OptTek specializes in developing and customizing its software to enable solutions for business problems characterized by significant uncertainty and complexity. OptTek's software is used by hundreds of firms including Fortune 500 companies for diverse applications including portfolio optimization, business process management, data security, financial and strategic planning, logistics and transportation, and telecommunications. OptTek's website is [www.OptTek.com](http://www.OptTek.com).

### **About The NSF SBIR Program**

Since 1982, the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program has directed over 30,000 awards worth several billion dollars in R&D support to thousands of qualified small high-tech companies on a competitive basis. To obtain funding, a company applies for a Phase I SBIR grant. The proposed project must meet an agency's research need and have commercial potential. If approved, grants of up to \$100,000 are made to allow the scientific and technical merit and feasibility of an idea to be evaluated. If the concept shows potential, the company can receive a Phase II grant of up to \$750,000 to develop the idea further. In Phase III, the innovation must be brought to market with private sector investment and support.

### **CONTACT:**

Jay April  
Chief Development Officer  
OptTek Systems, Inc.  
1919 Seventh Street  
Boulder, CO 80302

303.447.3255 ext. 104 [april@OptTek.com](mailto:april@OptTek.com)