



## Air Force Research Lab has the contacts for contracts

By John Nolan  
B2B Staff Writer

Applied Optimization Inc. has been a contractor for the Air Force Research Laboratory for 10 of its 12 years of existence.

The small company, which provides engineering, research and technology development services, has seen its revenues increase to \$850,000 last year, up from \$100,000 in the first year.

There has been an increase in the learning curve, as well.

"I am an engineer. I understand mathematics, but not necessarily economics and how to do business," said Anil Chaudhary, founder and principal scientist of Applied Optimization, which has a work force of eight full- and part-time employees. It operates in a city-supported business incubator at 714 E. Monument Ave. in Dayton.

The doors are open for companies like Applied Optimization that want to provide research services for the Air Force Research Laboratory, headquartered at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. The agency had \$2 billion under contract in 2006 at its locations nationwide, of which \$968.1 million went to small businesses. Miami Valley contractors accounted for \$158.9 million of the contract obligations, including \$107.4 million to small businesses.

The AFRL in 2006 recorded 10,776 of what it calls contract actions, including new contracts or modifications to existing agreements. A total of 47 businesses held contracts valued at \$3 million or more, but there were also contracts worth \$50,000. A typical contract will run for three to five years.

Chaudhary said he has incorporated the advice and opinions of the AFRL's scientists and small-business advisers. His company's work for AFRL has led to additional contractor work serving Hanscom Air Force Base, Mass., and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research in Arlington, Va., which manages basic research for the Air Force.

Applied Optimization's work includes math-

**Applied Optimization Inc. does contract work for the Air Force Research Laboratory. Founder and principal scientist Anil Chaudhary builds specialized telescopes for tracking satellites.**

B2B Staff photo by Ty Greenlees

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## Pursuing a contract with the Air Force Research Laboratory

The AFRL buys research services and support. Much like competing in the civilian market, small businesses pursuing contract work



for the AFRL are urged to do their homework, register with the government and target the appropriate

agency and official for the services being offered.

Some things to do:

- Register with the government's central contractor registration database, to receive an identification number with the government.
- Go to the [www.SelltoAirForce.org](http://www.SelltoAirForce.org) Web site for information about approaching the Air Force to offer services.
- Consult with the AFRL's small business office at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Also available are small business development centers, funded by the state and the U.S. Small Business Administration, at Wright State University and the University of Dayton, and a procurement technical assistance center at Miami Valley Research Park in Kettering.

emational computations to analyze objects detected by telescopes searching the sky for the AFRL's sensors directorate at Wright-Patterson, and a partnership with a Columbus company to produce nanostructured aluminum that the Air Force could use to reduce the weight of bulkheads in aircraft. Through nanotechnology, materials can be enhanced with tiny nanoparticles to reduce a substance's weight or increase its durability.

A total of 1,220 small businesses serve the AFRL, among them 80 in Ohio. Some of those businesses have multiple contracts, as many as 25 or so covering different locations and missions.

Universal Technology Corp., of Beavercreek, has 200 employees, up from two 45 years ago. It does work for AFRL research directorates at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, along with

Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M., and Peterson Air Force Base, Colo. The company ranks as one of the AFRL's top small businesses, receiving \$45.5 million of work for the federal fiscal year ended Sept. 30, 2006, said Pat Deschaine, director of small business for the AFRL.

For research contracting, the government considers a small business to be one of up to 500 employees. Many small-business contractors, however, have 10 employees or fewer.

Their small size allows them to be nimble and fill specific Air Force needs that bigger companies do not, Deschaine said. Those that become successful are sometimes bought by larger contractors because of that niche expertise, she said.

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