



## **NASA SBIR 2016 Phase I Solicitation**

### **H13 Non-Destructive Evaluation (NDE)**

Future manned space missions will require technologies that enable detection and monitoring of the space flight vehicles during deep space missions. Development of these systems will also benefit the safety of current missions such as the International Space Station and Aerospace as a whole. Technologies sought under this SBIR Topic can be defined as advanced sensors, sensor systems, sensor techniques or software that enhance or expand NASA's Nondestructive Evaluation (NDE) and NDE modeling capabilities beyond the current State of the Art.

Sensors and Sensor systems sought under this topic can include but are not limited to techniques that include the development of quantum, meta- and nano sensor technologies for deployment. Technologies enabling the ability to perform inspections on large complex structures will be encouraged. Technologies should provide reliable assessments of the location and extent of damage. Advanced processing and displays are needed to reduce the complexity of operations for astronaut crews who need to make important assessments quickly. Examples of structural components that will require sensor and sensor systems are multi-wall pressure vessels, batteries, thermal tile, thermal blankets, micrometeoroid shielding, International Space Station (ISS) Radiators or aerospace structural components.

Technologies sought under the modeling SBIR include near real-time large scale nondestructive evaluation (NDE) and structural health monitoring (SHM) simulations and automated data reduction/analysis methods for large data sets. Simulation techniques will seek to expand NASA's use of physics based models to predict inspection coverage for complex aerospace components and structures. Analysis techniques should include optimized automated reduction of NDE/SHM data for enhanced interpretation appropriate for detection/characterization of critical flaws in space flight structures and components. Space flight structures will include light weight structural materials such as composites and thin metals. Future purposes will include application to long duration space vehicles, as well as validation of SHM systems. Techniques sought include advanced material-energy interaction simulation in high-strength lightweight material systems and include energy interaction with realistic damage types in complex 3D component geometries (such as bonded/built-up structures). Primary material systems can include metals but it is highly desirable to target composite structures. NDE/SHM techniques for simulation can include ultrasonic, laser, micro-wave, terahertz, eddy current, infra-red, backscatter X-Ray, X-ray computed tomography and fiber optic.

## **Subtopics**

### **H13.01 NDE Simulation and Analysis**

**Lead Center:** LaRC

**Participating Center(s):** ARC, JSC

Technologies sought under this SBIR include near real-time large scale nondestructive evaluation (NDE) and

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structural health monitoring (SHM) simulations and automated data reduction/analysis methods for large data sets. Simulation techniques will seek to expand NASA's use of physics based models to predict inspection coverage for complex aerospace components and structures. Analysis techniques should include optimized automated reduction of NDE/SHM data for enhanced interpretation appropriate for detection/characterization of critical flaws in space flight structures and components. Space flight structures will include light weight structural materials such as composites and thin metals. Future purposes will include application to long duration space vehicles, as well as validation of SHM systems.

Techniques sought include advanced material-energy interaction simulation in high-strength lightweight material systems and include energy interaction with realistic damage types in complex 3D component geometries (such as bonded/built-up structures). Primary material systems can include metals but it is highly desirable to target composite structures. NDE/SHM techniques for simulation can include ultrasonic, Laser, Micro-wave, Terahertz, Infra-red, X-ray, X-ray Computed Tomography, Fiber Optic, backscatter X-Ray and eddy current. It is assumed that all systems will have high resolution high volume data. Modeling efforts should be physics based and account for changes in energy interaction due to material aging and induced damage such as micrometeoroid impact. Examples of damage states of interest include delamination, microcracking, porosity, fiber breakage. Techniques sought for data reduction/interpretation will yield automated and accurate results to improve quantitative data interpretation to reduce large amounts of NDE/SHM data into a meaningful characterization of the structure. Realistic computational methods for validating SHM systems are also desirable. It is advantageous to use co-processor configurations for simulation and data reduction. Co-Processor configurations can include graphics processing units (GPU), system on a chip (SOC), field-programmable gate array (FPGA) and Intel's Many Integrated Core (MIC) Architecture. Combined simulation and data reduction/interpretation techniques should demonstrate ability to guide the development of optimized NDE/SHM techniques, lead to improved inspection coverage predictions, and yield quantitative data interpretation for damage characterization.

Phase I Deliverables - Feasibility study, including demonstration simulations and data interpretation algorithms, proving the proposed approach to develop a given product (TRL 2-4). Plan for Phase II including proposed verification methods.

Phase II Deliverables - Software of proposed product, along with full report of development and test results, including verification methods (TRL 5-6). Opportunities and plans should also be identified and summarized for potential commercialization.

## **H13.02 NDE Sensors**

**Lead Center:** LaRC

**Participating Center(s):** ARC, GRC, JSC, KSC

Technologies sought under this SBIR program can be defined as advanced sensors, sensor systems, sensor techniques or software that enhance or expand NASA's current sensor capability. It is desirable but not necessary to target structural components of space flight hardware. Examples of space flight hardware will include light weight structural materials including composites and thin metals.

Technologies sought include modular, smart, advanced Nondestructive Evaluation (NDE) sensor systems and associated capture and analysis software. It is advantageous for techniques to include the development on quantum, meta- and nano sensor technologies for deployment. Technologies enabling the ability to perform inspections on large complex structures will be encouraged. Technologies should provide reliable assessments of the location and extent of damage. Methods are desired to perform inspections in areas with difficult access in pressurized habitable compartments and external environments for flight hardware. Many applications require the ability to see through assembled conductive and/or thermal insulating materials without contacting the surface. Techniques that can dynamically and accurately determine position and orientation of the NDE sensor are needed to automatically register NDE results to precise locations on the structure. Advanced processing and displays are needed to reduce the complexity of operations for astronaut crews who need to make important assessments quickly. NDE inspection sensors are needed for potential use on free-flying inspection platforms. Integration of wireless systems with NDE may be of significant utility. It is strongly encouraged to provide explanation of how proposed techniques and sensors will be applied to a complex structure. Examples of structural components include but are not limited to multi-wall pressure vessels, batteries, tile, thermal blankets, micrometeoroid shielding,

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International Space Station (ISS) Radiators or aerospace structural components.

Phase I Deliverables - Lab prototype, feasibility study or software package including applicable data or observation of a measureable phenomenon on which the prototype will be built. Inclusion of a proposed approach to develop a given methodology to Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of 2-4. All Phase I's will include minimum of short description for Phase II prototype. It will be highly favorable to include description of how the Phase II prototype or methodology will be applied to structures.

Phase II Deliverables - Working prototype or software of proposed product, along with full report of development and test results. Prototype or software of proposed product should be of Technology Readiness Level (TRL 5-6). Proposal should include plan of how to apply prototype or software on applicable structure or material system. Opportunities and plans should also be identified and summarized for potential commercialization.