NASA SBIR 2016 Phase I Solicitation

S4.04 Extreme Environments Technology

Lead Center: JPL

Participating Center(s): ARC, GRC, GSFC, LaRC, MSFC

NASA is interested in expanding its ability to explore the deep atmosphere and surface of giant planets, asteroids, and comets through the use of long-lived (days or weeks) balloons and landers. Survivability in extreme high-temperatures and high-pressures is also required for deep atmospheric probes to planets. Proposals are sought for technologies that are suitable for remote sensing applications at cryogenic temperatures, and in-situ atmospheric and surface explorations in the high-temperature high-pressure environment at the Venusians surface (485 °C, 93 atmospheres), or in low-temperature environments such as Titan (-180 °C), Europa (-220 °C), Ganymede (-200 °C), Mars, the Moon, asteroids, comets and other small bodies. Also Europa-Jupiter missions may have a mission life of 10 years and the radiation environment is estimated at 2.9 Mega-rad total ionizing dose (TID) behind 0.1 inch thick aluminum. Proposals are sought for technologies that enable NASA's long duration missions to extreme wide-temperature and cosmic radiation environments. High reliability, ease of maintenance, low volume, low mass, and low out-gassing characteristics are highly desirable. Special interest lies in development of following technologies that are suitable for the environments discussed above:

- Wide temperature range precision mechanisms i.e., beam steering, scanner, linear and tilting multi-axis mechanisms.
- Radiation-tolerant/radiation hardened low-power low-noise mixed-signal mechanism control electronics for precision actuators and sensors.
- Wide temperature range feedback sensors with sub-arc-second/nanometer precision.
- Long life, long stroke, low power, and high torque/force actuators with sub-arc-second/nanometer precision.
- Long life Bearings/tribological surfaces/lubricants.
- High temperature energy storage systems.
- High-temperature actuators and gear boxes for robotic arms and other mechanisms.
- Low-power and wide-operating-temperature radiation-tolerant /radiation hardened RF electronics.
- Radiation-tolerant/radiation-hardened low-power/ultra-low-powerwide-operating-temperature low-noise mixed-signal electronics for space-borne system such as guidance and navigation avionics and instruments.
- Radiation-tolerant/radiation-hardened power electronics.
- Radiation-tolerant/ radiation-hardened electronic packaging (including, shielding, passives, connectors, wiring harness and materials used in advanced electronics assembly).

Research should be conducted to demonstrate technical feasibility during Phase I and show a path toward a Phase II hardware demonstration, and when possible, deliver a demonstration unit for functional and environmental testing at the completion of the Phase II contract.