

BAA Call N0001426SBC11
Special Program Announcement for Office of Naval Research
Research Opportunity:
FY27 Communications and Networking Applied Research

I. INTRODUCTION

This announcement describes a technology area, entitled “Communications and Networking”, under the N0001425SB001, Long Range Broad Agency Announcement for Navy and Marine Corps Science and Technology which can be found at <https://www.onr.navy.mil/work-with-us/funding-opportunities/announcements>. The submission of proposals, their evaluation and the placement of research grants and contracts will be carried out as described in the above Long Range Broad Agency Announcement.

The purpose of this announcement is to focus attention of the scientific community on (1) the area to be studied, and (2) the planned timetable for the submission of white papers and full proposals.

II. TOPIC DESCRIPTION

The proposed topic will develop and mature Communications and Networking technologies for Naval operations.

Background:

A Design for Maritime Superiority (2018) describes an operational architecture for distributed maritime operations (DMO) that "... will provide accurate, timely, and analyzed information to units, warfighting groups, and fleets." A critical component of this architecture is the Naval Tactical Grid (NTG) to connect distributed units into groups and distributed groups into fleets. Communications and networking technologies that can provide seamless, robust, connectivity are key enablers for the NTG. These technologies will be deployed on a variety of platforms, both manned and unmanned, operating under challenging environmental and operational warfare conditions (lack of infrastructure, mobility, spectrum limitations, interference, multipath, atmospheric, jamming, electronic intercept, size/weight/power constraint, etc.) in different domains (land, maritime [includes both surface and undersea], cyber, and space). Successful Command and Control (C2) and decision making, at all levels of command, for DMO is critically dependent on these communications and networking technologies.

Objective:

The goal of the Communications and Networking Program within the Office of Naval Research (ONR 311) is to support the Navy's Information Warfare vision by developing measurable advances in technology that can directly enable and enhance end-to-end connectivity and

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quality-of-service for mission-critical information exchange among widely dispersed naval, joint, and coalition forces. The vision is to provide high throughput robust communications and networking to ensure all warfighters – from the operational command to the tactical edge – have access to information, knowledge, and decision-making necessary to perform their assigned tasks. The ONR program is interested in white papers for potential FY27 Applied Research (Budget category 6.2) projects under the following focus areas:

1. Development of long-range VHF-band data link, using compact 4x4 Multiple-Input, Multiple-Output (MIMO) based on 5G/Commercial-Off-The Shelf (COTS) and sub-MHz frequency channelization (spectral efficiency in excess of 1 bit/Hz);
2. Novel design and prototyping of compact electronically-steered apertures for higher frequencies (i.e., above Ka-band);
3. Innovative approaches and technologies for low probability-of-detection communications against advanced electronic threats;
4. Advanced techniques for distributed network control, synchronization, and/or scheduling; and
5. New algorithms for predicting network behavior/performance or emerging operational requirements that are translated into traffic engineering policies.

The ONR is receptive to innovative ideas, which are not within the above focus areas, but nonetheless are important to the Navy/Marine Corps communications and networking, as otherwise described in this Topic Description

III. WHITE PAPER SUBMISSION

Although not required, white papers are strongly encouraged for all offerors seeking funding. Each white paper will be evaluated by the Government to determine whether the technology advancement proposed appears to be of particular value to the Department of the Navy. Initial Government evaluations and feedback will be issued via e-mail notification from the Technical Point of Contact. The initial white paper appraisal is intended to give entities a sense of whether their concepts are likely to be funded.

Detailed Full Proposal (Technical and Cost volumes) will be subsequently encouraged from those Offerors whose proposed technologies have been identified through the above referenced e-mail as being of “particular value” to the Government. However, any such encouragement does not assure a subsequent award. Full Proposals may also be submitted by any offeror whose white paper was not identified as being of particular value to the Government or any offeror who did not submit a white paper.

For white papers that propose efforts that are considered of particular value to the Navy but either exceed available budgets or contain certain tasks or applications that are not desired by the Navy, ONR may suggest a full proposal with reduced effort to fit within expected available budgets or an effort that refocuses the tasks or application of the technology to maximize the benefit to the Navy.

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White papers should not exceed 5 single-sided pages, exclusive of cover page, references and resume of principal investigator, and should be in 12-point Times New Roman font with margins not less than one inch. White papers shall be in Adobe PDF format (preferred) or in Microsoft Word format compatible with at least Microsoft Word 2016.

The 5-page body of the white paper should include the following information:

- Technical Concept: A description of the technology innovation and technical risk areas.
- Future Naval Relevance (where applicable) – A description of potential Naval relevance and contributions of the effort to the agency's specific mission.
- Operational Naval Concept (where applicable) – A description of the project objectives, the concept of operation for the new capabilities to be delivered, and the expected operational performance improvements.
- Operational Utility Assessment Plan (where applicable) – A plan for demonstrating and evaluating the operational effectiveness of the Offeror's proposed products or processes in field experiments and/or tests in a simulated environment.
- Goals and Benchmarks - Describe the goals of the research and the benchmarks that will be used to measure the progress and success of those goals.
- Gold Standard Science: Describe your success in implementing Gold Standard Science in accordance with EO 14303 – Restoring Gold Standard Science (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/05/29/2025-09802/restoring-gold-standard-science>).
- Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) cost estimate

A resume of the principal investigator, not to exceed 1 page, should also be included after the 5-page body of the white paper.

White papers must be submitted through ONR Submission Portal at <https://submissions.nre.navy.mil/> in accordance with Section F, Submission Requirements and Deadline, Section 4. White Paper Submissions in N0001425SB001.

To ensure full, timely consideration for funding, white papers should be submitted **no later than July 31, 2026**. White papers received after that date will be considered as time and availability of funding permit.

The planned date for completing the review of white papers is **August 14, 2026**.

An expanded oral presentation will be requested from those Offerors whose proposed technologies have been identified as being of "particular value" to the Government. However, a positive email response to the oral presentation does not assure a subsequent award. The purpose of the oral presentation is to better acquaint the Government with the Offeror's proposal,

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especially in its understanding of the technical approach and impact. The oral presentations are tentatively scheduled for **September 10, 2026**.

IV. FULL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND AWARD INFORMATION

Full proposals should be submitted under N0001425SB001 or its successor N0001427SB001 by **November 16, 2026**. Full proposals submitted after that due date should be submitted under its successor N0001427SB001 and will be considered as time and availability of funding permit.

ONR anticipates that both grants and contracts will be issued for this effort.

Full proposals for contracts should be submitted in accordance with the Appendix 2 of the N0001425SB001. Full proposals for grants should be submitted via Grants.gov in accordance with Appendix 1 of N0001425SB001.

Gold Science Standard (Supplement to SF424 (R&R), block 17, Financial Assistance Certifications and Representations)

By Checking “I Agree” on the SF 424 (R&R) block 17, you agree to comply with the administration policies, procedures and guidance respecting the Gold Standard Science in accordance with EO 14303

(<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/05/29/2025-09802/restoring-gold-standard-science>).

The period of performance for projects may be from one, two or three years.

ONR plans to fund five (5) to six (6) individual awards with a value of \$250,000 to \$500,000 per year, using research funds. However, lower and higher cost proposals will be considered

Although ONR expects the above described program plan to be executed, ONR reserve the right to make changes.

Funding decisions should be made by **October 5, 2026**. Selected projects will have an estimated award date of **April 15, 2027**.

V. SIGNIFICANT DATES AND TIMES

Event	Date	Time
Recommended White Paper Submission Date*	7/31/2026	4 pm Eastern Time
Notification of White Paper Valuation*	8/14/2026	
Oral Presentations	9/10/2026	
Notification of Selection: Full Proposals *	10/05/2026	
Recommended Full Proposal Submission	11/16/2026	4 pm Eastern Time
Awards *	4/15/2027	

Note: * These are approximate dates.

VI. Small Business Subcontracting

Other-than small businesses (i.e. large businesses, non-profit organizations and educational institutions) must submit a subcontracting plan along with their research proposal. While other-than small businesses are responsible for making these subcontracting arrangements, ONR can help facilitate prime contractor/small business contracting connections by posting to the ONR external website contact information of small businesses that have indicated their subcontracting interests and technological niche for prime contractor consideration for this program. This is not an endorsement, but an effort by ONR to help bring these parties together to provide superior solutions.

If you are a small business and your company is interested in subcontracting activities with other-than small businesses, please provide the following information by email to the ONR Small Business Director at nrl_smallbusinessoffice@us.navy.mil with the subject line “N0001426SBC11 – Small Business Subcontracting Interest”:

- 1) Company Name and Website
- 2) Individual (POC) name and POC email address
- 3) Business Size and socio-economic category
- 4) Brief Technology Description (no more than 3 sentences)
- 5) Technology Key Words (no more than 10 words)

Note: Do not include ANY proprietary information. This information will be posted on the ONR website under this BAA call and will be available to the public.

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VII. POINTS OF CONTACT

In addition to the points of contact listed in N0001425SB001 the specific points of contact for this announcement are listed below:

Technical Points of Contact:

Name: Dr. Sunoy Banerjee

Title: Program Officer, ONR Code 311

Address: One Liberty Center, 875 North Randolph St., Suite 1114, Arlington, VA 22203-1995

Email: sunoy.n.banerjee.civ@us.navy.mil

Business Point of Contact/Contracting Officer:

Name: Stephen Hughes

Title: Contracting Officer

Address: One Liberty Center, 875 North Randolph St., Suite 1169, Arlington, VA 22203-1995

Email: stephen.t.hughes.civ@us.navy.mil

VIII. SUBMISSION OF QUESTIONS

Any questions regarding this announcement must be provided to the Technical Points of Contact and/or the Business Point of Contact listed above. All questions shall be submitted in writing by electronic mail.

Answers to questions submitted in response to this BAA Call will be addressed in the form of an Amendment and will be posted to the following web pages:

- Sam.gov Webpage –Contract Opportunities – <https://sam.gov/>
- Grants.gov Webpage – <http://www.grants.gov/>
- ONR BAAs, FOAs and Special Program Announcements Webpage - <https://www.onr.navy.mil/work-with-us/funding-opportunities/announcements>

Questions regarding **White Papers or Full Proposals** should be submitted NLT two weeks before the dates recommended for receipt of White Papers and/or Full Proposals. Questions after this date may not be answered.

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