NASA Small Spacecraft Technology
Accomplishments, Opportunities and Plans

Cubesat Developers Workshop
April 21, 2016

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Washington DC
SPACE TECHNOLOGY MISSION DIRECTORATE

NINE PROGRAMS

- NASA Innovative Advanced Concepts (NIAC)
- Space Technology Research Grants
- NASA Center Innovation Fund
- Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR & STTR)
- Game Changing Development
- Small Spacecraft Technology
- Centennial Challenges * Cube Quest Challenge
- Flight Opportunities
- Technology Demonstration Missions
- Early Stage Development Demonstration Infusion
Objectives:
- Develop and demonstrate new capabilities employing the unique features of small spacecraft for NASA's missions in science, exploration and space operations
- Promote the small spacecraft approach as a paradigm shift for NASA and the larger space community.

Implementing through:
- Contracts with industry
- Directed NASA projects
- Collaborations with universities
- Partnerships with other NASA organizations and other agencies

Six demo missions planned for 2015-16 with 16 satellites

www.nasa.gov/smallsats
Edison Demonstration of Smallsat Networks
EDSN and Nodes

NASA Ames, Montana State U and Santa Clara U

Demonstration of autonomous network communications with multiple low-cost satellites based on smartphone processors (Phonesat heritage)
EDSN: 8 cubesats, Nodes: 2 cubesats
Each includes a high-energy particle detector

EDSN Launch – Nov 2015 – lost due to launch vehicle failure
Nodes Launch – Dec 2015 to ISS  Deployment – May 2016
Optical Communications and Sensor Demonstration (OCSD)

Aerospace Corporation

Dramatic improvement in space to ground laser communications with 1.5U cubesats - plus proximity operations, laser ranging and tracking, and propulsion.

Launches – Oct 2015 and June 2016

Mission 1

Demo: Pointing & Laser Downlink Engineering Development Unit

Mission 2

Demo: Proximity Operations & Propulsion

Demo: Downlink 5Mbits/s to 200Mbits/s +

First flight unit

Laser ranging & tracking between satellites
Integrated Solar Array and Reflectarray Antenna
ISARA

JPL, Aerospace Corporation, Pumpkin Inc.
Increased Ka-band communication and potential radar remote sensing for low-cost but effective science missions
Launch – June 2016

Technology being used for MARCO cubesat deep space radio relay demonstration
Cubesat Proximity Operations Demonstration
CPOD

Tyvak LLC

Formation flight, proximity operations and autonomous rendezvous and docking with two 3U cubesats.

Launch – Mid-to-late 2016

Engineering Development Unit
Iodine Hall Thruster Demonstration

Isat

NASA Marshall with NASA Glenn and Busek Co.

Isat will mature the technology for using iodine propellant with a small Hall Effect thruster and demonstrate its operation in space. This technology will enable high $\Delta V$ primary propulsion for small spacecraft.

12U cubesat

Target launch in late 2017
Pathfinder Technology Demonstrator

NASA Ames and NASA Glenn with industry partners for cubesat bus and technology payloads

The Pathfinder Technology Demonstrator series will demonstrate spacecraft technologies in Earth orbit including new systems for *propulsion, precise pointing, and high-data-rate communications*.

Current RFP for up to five 6U cubesat buses

*Proposals in review*

Technology payloads are being developed through SBIR and Tipping Point contracts and other sources are possible.

Target date for first launch is 2017
Technology Development

Early Career Projects – NASA + External Partners

• *On-orbit Autonomous Assembly from Nanosatellites*
  – NASA Langley and Cornell University
• Lightweight Integrated Solar Array and Transceiver
  – NASA Marshall and Nexolve Inc.

STMD Tipping Point Projects – selected

• *Hyper-XACT Attitude Determination & Control System*
  – Blue Canyon Technologies LLC, Boulder, Colorado
• *Reaction Sphere*
  – Northrop Grumman Support Services Corporation, Millersville, Maryland
• *Hydros Thruster*
  – Tethers Unlimited, Bothell, Washington
• *High-Thrust High-ΔV Green Propulsion for Cubesats*
  – Aerojet Rocketdyne, Inc., Redmond, Washington
Smallsat Technology Partnerships

Cooperative agreements with US universities to develop and/or demonstrate new technologies and capabilities for small spacecraft in collaboration with NASA.

Two year projects
- Up to $100,000 per year, per university
- Up to 1.0 FTE in NASA labor per year

13 Projects selected in 2013

8 Projects selected in 2015

Annual solicitations planned starting in 2015

3U Cubesat prototype with embedded copper wire and solar array (U of New Mexico, UT-El Paso & NASA Glenn)
Smallsat Technology Partnerships

Issued 2016 NRA Appendix on April 8

Topics:
1: Enhanced Power Generation and Storage
2: Cross-linking Communications Systems
3: Relative Navigation for Multiple Small Spacecraft
4: Instruments and Sensors for Small Spacecraft Science Missions

Proposals due May 25, 2016

Montana State/GSFC
Radiation-tolerant Processor

California State-Northridge/JPL
Low-Temperature Capacitor Flight Demo

CSUNSat1
Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)

Small Spacecraft Technology Topic - created for 2014

- 5 Phase II projects now underway
- 1 SBIR Commercialization Readiness Project underway
- Isat flight project employing an Air Force SBIR for propulsion system development

Anticipate significant growth in SBIR opportunities for Small Spacecraft Technology beginning in the next solicitation - end of 2016
Small Spacecraft Technology
State of the Art Report

• Compiled for the SST Program by Ames Engineering with inputs from the larger community
• Originally published in October 2013
• New update completed in December 2015
• Annual update intended, broad participation desired
• Link to report on STMD/SSTP website: www.nasa.gov/smallsats
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Small Spacecraft Technology

Nationwide Participants and Partners

www.nasa.gov/smallsats
Astronomy Night at the White House
October 19, 2015