

Navy 25.4 Release 1 – Catapult Challenge

Ask Me Anything

Non-technical questions, responses provided by Navy SBIR/STTR Program

Non-technical questions posted and responded to during AMA:	
Question:	Answer:
My company received a Selected/Not Funded status from a proposal submission to a different DoD component. Are we able to participate in this Catapult Challenge?	A proposal is not an award, and we want to leverage prior awards. So if you have a Phase I award that you could leverage, and your Selected/Not Funded was received when you proposed to Phase II, we're going to be leveraging your Phase I award and not that Selected/Not Funded Phase II proposal. But, I know that Air Force, or AFWERX also does Selected/Not Funded for initial proposals to Direct to Phase II topics. We will not consider that because it is not an award and we can't leverage it. So as long as you have prior SBIR awards that you can leverage, that is what you need to leverage to apply for this (Catapult Challenge). You also need to have the availability of at least a second Phase II available that we can bring to the Navy.
Does an ongoing/existing Phase II qualify?	In principle, I know that we have done awards in parallel because if you have an existing Phase II that you're working on or an existing Phase I that you're working on there's an award there that Navy can leverage. The potential there is that we could leverage that award, but you have to recognize that if you have an existing Phase II that you have just started for the Navy to be able to leverage that we have to ask permission from your current customer to allow Navy to award a second Phase II award at Navy. And if they're not far enough along into their Phase II to understand they may want to do a second Phase II with you they may not want to give that ability for the second Phase II award up to Navy. So, I'm not saying it is impossible, and I don't think we put any limiting criteria in the BAA, yes, you can submit and Navy can leverage. The point is Navy will need an award to leverage.
Does the previous SBIR or STTR award have to be a Navy award?	The previous SBIR or STTR award leveraged can come from any participating agency.

Can I leverage a non-SBIR or STTR award?	<p>No, the previous award must be an SBIR or STTR award.</p> <p>To add, the work you do for us in this Catapult Challenge has to derive from, extend, or complete work from your previous SBIR or STTR. There has to be a logical connection to complete the work because that is what the law states. It is a legal requirement.</p>
Are proposers required to have a facilities clearance to perform the work, if awarded.	It depends on the topic. Any of the topics that have potential to become classified in Phase II will be marked that way. There will be a paragraph within the topic write-up that will indicate that the topic may become classified in Phase II. It will be clear in the topic Description. Just make sure you are reading through that information as you propose.
What type of contract award will this Phase II be?	Typically, Navy awards a Cost Plus Fixed Fee for Phase II.
Is there a time limit on the original award?	No, there is no time limit for the leveraged award. If your technology is relevant to what we are asking for then we will consider it. It does not matter how old your previous SBIR work is.
What Phase in the program will these Catapult Challenge awards be?	The awards made to these Catapult Challenge topics will be Phase II awards. These awards will be made against your previous SBIR topic number. We will be asking those Program Offices to which the topic originated for permission to make a Phase II award at Navy. Navy will take care of this Cross Agency Award process.
Non-technical questions submitted at registration:	
Question:	Answer:
Where does the Catapult funding come from?	It is Navy SBIR funding, and it will be issued by the awarding SYSCOM.
Is it two-year funding?	Yes, it is.
What is the range of funding for individual projects?	That is going to be dependent on the negotiations after you're selected. Every proposal that comes in needs to not exceed \$2,000,000 and 36 months worth of performance. Once you've been selected (to submit a Full Phase II Proposal) the System Command who has selected you, whether it's NAVSEA or SSP, will negotiate the Full Phase II Proposal with you thereafter.
Will there be other FY25 Catapult topics issued after this 25.4 round?	None planned right now, but I can't say that there won't be. If this goes well, we might do it again in FY25. We might plan for another round for FY26.

Are Phase IIs from AFWERX eligible to receive Catapult funding?	Yes, they are, as long as they meet the other requirements, meaning you have at least a Phase I and/or an initial Phase II award.
How do we access funding for equipment to produce critical safety item (CSI) parts?	Everything you need to do the work in your Phase II needs to be proposed in your Phase II proposal
If we have not won a Phase 1 yet, can we partner with someone who has to address these solicitations?	Absolutely. Any firm qualifies to participate in this may add a partner to their proposal and that partner does not necessarily have to be an SBIR awardee, they don't even have to be a small business.
Can we submit proposals to a topic area that is not currently advertised?	No, you may not. We want your proposals to be in line with the requirements of each of these topics. So when you're submitting, you're going to be submitting to an individual topic. So you need to pick the topic that you're going to submit to and write a proposal that is going to be evaluated for technical merit, personnel, and commercialization potential, the same evaluation criteria that we always use in SBIR.
Does the age of the original SBIR matter?	No, it does not matter. It does not matter how old your previous SBIR work is. There's no limit on that.
Can we submit more than one proposal to a topic?	Yes, you may, but I would like you to put your best foot forward in your proposal.
Is there Govt. matching funds required?	There is no Government matching requirement on your part. We will work that out. If the program offices to which you are aligning based on what you're proposing have government matching funding they want to add to your award, that will take place after you've been selected.
How many awards are planned?	We're planning for as many awards as we get good ideas and we can qualify to meet the needs of these topics. We don't have a set number set aside that we're planning to do. This is the first time that we've done a solicitation based process for our Catapult Program. So we're really interested to see how many great ideas we have. My office has committed and the SYSCOMs have committed to leverage it to the greatest extent possible and we haven't really defined how many awards that is going to be.
Would the Navy be interested in proposals that support enabling technologies but do not directly support the entire mission scenario described?	Yes, we are interested in that as well.

General questions submitted at registration for all topics:	
Question:	Answer:
What challenges do SYSCOMs foresee in scaling these technologies to the operational level?	New technologies may not be compatible with existing systems and infrastructure, requiring investment in integration and customization.
How will the long-term sustainability of these innovative solutions be addressed?	Long-term sustainability will be addressed in Phase III and follow-on efforts. Innovative solutions should be designed with sustainability and end-users in mind.