

# NAVY SBIR TRANSITION PROGRAM

# SPOTLIGHT

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## **SimVentions: 25 years of innovation and Navy collaboration lead to latest Phase III award**

SimVentions, a small business supporting the DoD through multiple contracts with the Navy, Marine Corps, Army and other defense agencies, celebrates a quarter of a century in business this year. Founded in 2000 with just three employees and one government contract, the company has grown into a valued industry partner. SimVentions has built a strong reputation for its expertise in systems engineering, software engineering, modeling and simulation (M&S), and cybersecurity.

In late 2024, the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division (NSWCDD) awarded SimVentions a \$32 million Phase III contract. The cost-plus-fixed-fee indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contract will run from 2025 through 2032. This is the third such award SimVentions has received from NSWCDD since 2006 and will build on the development of software tools initially created through SBIR Phase I and Phase II funding. Each successive Phase III contract has continued the work of the previous contracts while incorporating more recent SBIR-funded technologies, explained Tram Chase, SimVentions' vice president of technology solutions.

The Phase I contracts for some of these technologies were awarded more than 20 years ago, in the early days of the company. "I actually worked on those 20 years ago when I started here," recalled Chase. While many of the SBIR solicitation topics originated with the Navy, several were initially funded during their early development by other defense agencies and later received Phase II or Phase III awards from the Navy.

The latest Phase III contract will focus on providing software development and engineering



Image provided by SimVentions

The SimVentions team.

support for NSWCDD and for NAVSEA Program Executive Office for Integrated Warfare Systems (PEO IWS). "There is a software development side to that," said Chase, "and then there's a services side, where we use the tools we've built to support Dahlgren and PEO IWS. Our tools help Navy personnel make sense of large amounts of data."

Navy customers currently use SimVentions' tools for a wide range of applications, including tracking and managing ship development efforts, electronic warfare (EW) capabilities and product developments, M&S resources, and Naval Innovative Science and Engineering (NISE) projects. "Our knowledge management software not only manages the process of the projects themselves, but also provides a way to store the artifacts related to those projects," Chase

explained.

According to the company, the solutions and capabilities SimVentions has developed for the Navy “have provided measurable improvements in planning, analysis, system engineering, modeling, development, and program management that have helped to reduce costs by providing clarity into complex issues and reducing inefficiencies.” Under the current Phase III contract, SimVentions will continue to tailor, extend, leverage, and enhance these SBIR-developed tools to meet evolving Navy needs.

SimVentions is also advancing new tools and capabilities through ongoing Phase I and Phase II efforts to address emerging Navy requirements. One current Phase II project managed by SimVentions director Lisa Bolin is the Workload Assessment Notification and Demand Alert (WANDA). This innovative tool is designed to help Navy EW teams monitor and manage the workload placed on their console operators.

“We’re working with PEO IWS 2 to help them better understand the workload placed on electronic warfare console operators,” Bolin explained. “These operators are constantly busy; they have a ton of data coming in and it leads to fatigue. WANDA will identify pain points in their current work and highlight areas where additional resources can lend some assistance to bring the workload back down to a manageable level.”

WANDA is part of the 2024-25 Navy STP cohort, and the program has been an invaluable resource. “It’s been incredibly informative,” Bolin said. “I’ve learned stuff I didn’t know I could do through SBIRs. Our business consultant, Charlie Westerfield, has been awesome. He’s always quick to answer any questions. I had no idea about some of the additional resources available to help pursue more opportunities, participate in a testing event, or connect with other companies doing the same thing where we can leverage each

other’s experiences. It’s also been a good networking opportunity.”

SimVentions fosters a collaborative working environment, according to Bolin. “We come together as a group and throw all kinds of ideas on the white board. We walk through what we think we could do, what we would design. When writing an SBIR proposal, I typically work with a couple of developers and sometimes a technical subject matter expert who has relevant military experience.” The company leverages its longstanding relationships with defense customers to better understand end-user needs. “I go and talk to the warfighters,” Bolin said. “I have a lot of contact with active-duty Marines, Sailors, and airmen. I’ve talked with several of them to understand their pain points and identify ways we can help address them.”

For Bolin, the process of choosing SBIR topics begins with personal inspiration. “It starts with the topic. If it’s something that appeals to my imagination and gets me thinking about possibilities, I advocate for it. I need to feel a passion for the project because that motivates me to deliver an end product that’s valuable to the military. I don’t want to give them a product that’s going to sit on the shelf. I want to help solve the problem. This company really backs its program managers in creating innovative software solutions and reimagining possibilities for our customers. It’s not something you get in just any company.”

Headquartered south of Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia, SimVentions focuses on customer and employee satisfaction as well as technical excellence. Through its Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP), the company has been 100% employee owned since 2020. For further information, visit [www.simventions.com](http://www.simventions.com).

