LSU and Integer Technologies Announce $9.8M ONR Contract, Partnership

Navy funding advances intelligent autonomy for maritime vessels, supporting LSU research priorities in Coast, Defense and Energy

COLUMBIA, S.C. – July 30, 2024 – LSU and Integer Technologies announce the Office of Naval Research has awarded their team a $9.8 million contract to research and develop new solutions for improving the intelligence, autonomy and decision-making ability of distributed networks of maritime intelligent autonomous systems for naval operators.

The program, titled Intelligent Data Management for Distributed Naval Platforms, will support the U.S. Navy's goal of transitioning to uncrewed and autonomous vessels to achieve Distributed Maritime Operations. The LSU-Integer team will research and develop digital engineering and artificial intelligence and machine learning approaches to enable naval autonomous vessels with three essential functions: 1) make sense of limited data to determine its importance to the mission, 2) communicate securely, effectively and efficiently with other assets, and 3) independently determine best actions through global models, particularly in scenarios with high uncertainty.

In support of the program, Integer Technologies has established a permanent research and development office in the Louisiana Digital Media Center on LSU's flagship campus in Baton Rouge. The Integer office will be home to scientists, engineers and staff to establish a dedicated Department of Defense capability in Louisiana, supported by a pipeline of qualified LSU graduates.

“With our proud military legacy and flagship mission, LSU continues to serve and protect Louisiana and the nation,” LSU President William F. Tate IV said. “We have world-class problem solvers in coastal science and engineering, in cybersecurity and energy, and are excited to partner with Integer Technologies to put our research faculty and outstanding students and graduates in a position to support the U.S. Navy in defense of our great nation, in a way that creates jobs right here in Louisiana.”

“Our work with Integer is an example of a true partnership,” said Greg Trahan, director of economic development at LSU, and university lead on the project. “Our research capabilities and outstanding students are the reasons Integer is opening their Baton Rouge office and, collectively, we’re building a competitive advantage in technology and talent development for the Navy, here in Louisiana.”

“We’re excited about this partnership as the breadth and depth of the research capacity and the entrepreneurial spirit we’ve found at LSU is outstanding,” said Duke Hartman, CEO of Integer Technologies. “This partnership has absolutely huge potential for the state, and has already led to additional high-impact, multi-million-dollar proposals between Integer and LSU. I couldn’t be more pleased to announce this partnership, hire LSU grads and establish a permanent office in Baton Rouge.”

The program positions LSU and Integer to build broader capabilities to meet Navy needs, including to secure maritime and cyber-physical critical infrastructure along the Gulf Coast. The research team will develop and test prototypes in waters off Louisiana’s ports and coast in real-world conditions, with an eye toward dual-use technologies with applications in domestic port security, offshore energy, and ocean and coastal remote sensing.

“My administration is committed to the continued economic

growth of our great state of Louisiana," Governor Jeff Landry said. "Supporting our military, increasing port security and supporting the offshore energy industry through projects like this will bring continued investment and high-earning jobs to the hardworking men and women of Louisiana."

"Keeping our country safe in the future is all about how well we can gather and make sense of data and intelligence," said Senator Bill Cassidy. "This partnership between LSU and Integer Technologies helps our Navy defend our nation better. Louisiana can be proud that LSU is who the Navy is working with."