High power levels needed for space exploration missions (including reactor powered electric propulsion, reactor powered surface systems, etc.) result in the need to reject large amounts of waste heat. Conventional radiator technologies, i.e., finned tube, heat pipe fed radiators, etc., are heavy, hard to package and deploy, and must be made quite redundant to assure long life operation. This solicitation seeks proposals for advanced heat rejection concepts that include belt and/or liquid droplet radiators, and other advanced radiator concepts that promise to lower mass by a factor of 3 to 10.

Subtopics

T8.01 Aerospace Manufacturing Technology

Lead Center: MSFC

NASA is interested in encouraging innovation in manufacturing through the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. Continued technological innovation is critical to a strong manufacturing sector in the United States economy. The Federal Government has an important role, in helping to advance innovation, including innovation in manufacturing, through small businesses. The President issued an executive order directing Agencies to the extent permitted by law and in a manner consistent with the mission of the Agency, to give high priority within such programs to manufacturing-related research and development. NASA is interested in innovative manufacturing technologies that enable sustained and affordable human and robotic exploration of the Moon, Mars, and solar system. Specific areas of interest in this solicitation include innovative manufacturing, materials, and processes relevant to propulsion systems and airframe structures for next-generation launch vehicles, crew exploration vehicles, lunar orbiters and landers, and supporting space systems. Improvements are sought for increasing safety and reliability, and reducing cost and weight of systems and components. Only processes that are environmentally friendly and worker-health oriented will be considered.

Proposals are sought in but are not limited to the following areas:

Polymer Matrix Composites (PMCs)

Large scale manufacturing; innovative automated processes (e.g., fiber placement); advanced non-autoclave curing (e.g., e-beam, ultrasonic); damage tolerant and repairable structures; advanced materials and manufacturing processes for both cryogenic and high-temperature applications; improved thermal protection systems (e.g.,
Ceramic Matrix Composite (CMCs)

Materials and processes that are projected to significantly increase safety and reduce costs simultaneously, while decreasing weight for space transportation propulsion. Innovative material and process technology advancements that are required to enable long-life, reliable, and environmentally durable materials.

Metals and Metal Matrix Composites (MMCs)

Advanced manufacturing processes such as pressure infiltration casting (for MMCs); laser engineered near-net shaping; electron-beam physical vapor deposition; *in situ* MMC formation; solid state and friction stir welding, which target aluminum alloys, especially those applicable to high-performance aluminum-lithium alloys and aluminum metal-matrix composites; advanced materials such as metallic matrix alloys compositions which optimize high ductility and good joinability; functionally graded materials for high or low temperature application; alloys and nanophase materials to achieve more than 120 ksi tensile strength at room temperature, and 60 ksi at elevated temperature above 500° F; new advanced superalloys that resist hydrogen embrittlement and are compatible with high-pressure oxygen; innovative thermal spray or cold spray coating processes that substantially improve material properties, combine dissimilar materials, application of dense deposits of refractory metals and metal carbides, and coating on nonmetallic composite materials.

Manufacturing Nanotechnology

Innovations that use nanotechnology processes to achieve highly reliable or low-cost manufacturing of high-quality materials for engineered structures.

T8.02 Advanced High Fidelity Design and Analysis Tools For Space Propulsion

Lead Center: MSFC

The pace at which the United States, through NASA, explores space will largely be driven by the cost of developing the systems required to make future explorations practical. The nation's ability to decrease the cost and schedule required to develop new space transportation systems that are required to support NASA's exploration missions is hampered by inadequacies in our design tools and databases. Space Transportation systems operate at the extremes of our materials capabilities, therefore, any shortcomings in our ability to predict the internal operating environments during the design process will almost always lead to redesigns during the development of the system. These redesigns are costly and always compromise the project's schedule. One way to address this issue is to increase the fidelity and accuracy of the tools used to predict the internal operating environments during design.

Universities are at the leading edge of development of new, "first principles" physical models, of development of new high fidelity numerical approaches for simulating operation of space transportation systems, and of development of the experimental approaches and data required to validate these tools. Transition of that technology, however, from the academic setting to a production, applications-centered environment where it can be
applied to the design of NASA's space transportations systems requires focused effort. Efficient and timely transfer of these capabilities from the university setting to the operational (production) setting is required to reduce the developmental risks associated with NASA's space transportation systems and to maximize the return on the NASA's investments at the Nation's colleges and universities.

This subtopic solicits partnerships between academic institutions and small business for the purpose of developing novel design and analysis approaches, and the methods by which to validate them, into useful production tools that can be used to develop NASA's space transportation systems. Examples of specific areas where innovations are sought follow:

- Efficient, three-dimensional (3-D), time accurate analysis tools for modern rocket engine combustion chamber and turbomachinery environments and performance;
- Efficient, three-dimensional (3-D), time accurate analysis tools for predicting the environment and loads internal to valves, lines, and ducts in modern rocket engines;
- Practical 3-D steady and time-accurate multidisciplinary analysis (MDA) tools for design of space transportations systems components and subsystems;
- Practical approaches for predicting the time varying 3D flow field in cases involving relative motion between objects;
- Practical Large Eddy Simulation (LES) tools for the analysis of high pressure reacting flows;
- Automated hybrid grid generation tools and grid adaptation tools;
- Efficient and accurate fluid properties routines for the range of conditions applicable to rocket engines;
- Automated approaches for extracting key engineering information and flow features from 3-D flow simulations;
- Automated approaches for validating and assuring quality of application software;
- Practical unsteady 3-D cavitation models for implementation into Reynolds-Averaged Navier-Stokes (RANS) analysis codes;
- Advanced instrumentation and diagnostic techniques necessary for acquisition of steady and unsteady code validation data; and
- Validation data for all of the tool types mentioned above.