

Spotlight Event
37th Surface Navy Association National Symposium
January 14, 2025

Overview:

The Surface Navy Association (SNA) is a nonprofit that represents the Surface Warfare Community. The SNA's mission is to recognize the contributions of the Navy and Coast Guard's Surface Forces to national security, and to address challenges faced by the Surface Forces. Each year, the SNA holds the National Symposium to bring together experts and decision-makers from the military, industry, and Congress in dialogue about the role and needs of the Surface Forces. The theme of the 37th SNA National Symposium was "sharpening the sword," and it emphasized readiness, operational excellence, and continual improvement to ensure our surface forces maintain superiority on the seas.

Event Highlights:

The symposium coincided with the Navy 2025.1/A SBIR/STTR topic open period, offering a timely opportunity to promote active solicitations. Two-thirds of the small businesses engaged were already familiar with the SBIR/STTR program, and several confirmed they were actively drafting or had already submitted proposals.

Insights from PEO USC:

Team members also attended briefings from the Program Executive Office Unmanned and Small Combatants (PEO USC) at the NAVSEA booth. Notable presentations included:

- CAPT Andy Gold (PMS 515) – An update on the construction of the USS Constellation (FFG 62)
- Gary Jones (PMS 495) – A strategic overview of the Mine Warfare program

Both sessions emphasized the growing demand for innovation and highlighted PEO USC's interest in industry-submitted ideas for future SBIR/STTR topics.

NAVSEA SBIR/STTR Outreach Impact:

The NAVSEA SBIR/STTR Outreach Team connected with 52 organizations and was able to reconnect with six Navy SBIR/STTR awardees: Hepburn and Sons, AMSC, IDT, Areté, PEI, and Tech Wizards. Five of these companies expressed interest in participating in future SBIR/STTR success story panels, like the one hosted at the Potomac Tech Bridge NAVSEA STTR Symposium last October.

For companies exceeding the SBIR/STTR size threshold, the Outreach Team provided guidance on participating via subcontracts and introduced tools such as navysbirsearch.com to identify eligible small business partners.

Conclusion:

The 37th SNA National Symposium proved to be a dynamic platform for promoting current SBIR/STTR topics, strengthening relationships with industry partners, and gaining valuable insight into naval initiatives. The NAVSEA SBIR/STTR Outreach Team continues to play a vital role in bridging small business innovation with mission-critical Navy needs.