Nuclear Radiation Detector Developed at UNH Recognized as One of 100 Top Innovative Technologies

Wednesday, November 14, 2018

DURHAM, N.H.—A Field-Deployable Imaging Neutron Detector (FIND) developed at the University of New Hampshire's Space Science Center has been selected as one of the 100 most innovative technologies of the past year. Finalists for the R&D 100 Awards are selected by an independent panel of more than 50 judges representing research and development leaders in a variety of fields.

Nuclear radiation detection has become a crucial technology in nuclear terrorism prevention and radioactive material monitoring. FIND detects radiation threats by pinpointing neutron emissions, allowing authorities to locate nuclear devices and material from a safe distance. The technology provides a substantial advantage over alternative methods, which use bulky and fragile neutron cameras. The development of a lighter, more portable solution expands potential applications to include military and other agencies in the field.

MEDIA RELATIONS

In collaboration with the Southwest Research Institute's Earth, Oceans, and Space Department at UNH (http://swri-eos.sr.unh.edu/), FIND was developed by a team of scientists and engineers led by research associate professor Peter Bloser and research project engineer Jason Legere.

UNH's work on FIND has been contracted by the federal Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), the U.S. Department of Defense's official combat support agency for countering weapons of mass destruction.

"The FIND project is based on decades of work at UNH developing instrumentation for neutron and gamma-ray measurement," said Bloser. "Thanks to DTRA's support, we've been able to take modern detector technology and make it more compact and portable, opening up new applications for defense and homeland security. Being selected as an R&D 100 finalist is a great honor and it shows that instrumentation being developed at UNH is innovative, impactful and broadly useful."

"FIND is an elegant solution to an important problem and being selected as an R&D 100 finalist is very exciting," said Legere. "We will continue to advance this path of development and look forward to designing the next generation of imagers."

The R&D 100 award winners will be announced Nov. 16, 2018, in Orlando, Florida.

The University of New Hampshire is a flagship research university that inspires innovation and transforms lives in our state, nation and world. More than 16,000 students from all 50 states and 71 countries engage with an award-winning faculty in top ranked programs in business, engineering, law, health and human services, liberal arts and the sciences across more than 200 programs of study. UNH's research portfolio includes partnerships with NASA, NOAA, NSF and NIH, receiving more than $100 million in competitive external funding every year to further explore and define the frontiers of land, sea and space.

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