Revolutionary Artificial Intelligence warship contracts announced

The funding aims to revolutionise the way warships make decisions and process thousands of strands of intelligence and data by using Artificial Intelligence (A.I.).

Nine projects will share an initial £1 million to develop technology and innovative solutions to overcome increasing 'information overload' faced by crews as part of DASA's Intelligent Ship – The Next Generation competition.

Defence Minister James Heappey said:

> The astonishing pace at which global threats are evolving requires new approaches and fresh-thinking to the way we develop our ideas and technology. The funding will research pioneering projects into how A.I and automation can support our armed forces in their essential day-to-day work.

Intelligent Ship is focused on inventive approaches for Human-AI and AI-AI teaming for defence platforms – such as warships, aircraft, and land vehicles – in 2040 and beyond.

DASA, on behalf of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl), is looking at how future defence platforms can be designed and optimised to exploit current and future advances in:

- Automation
- Autonomy
- Machine learning
- Artificial Intelligence

These key areas of research will look to address the complex and constantly evolving threats to national security.

This work will inform requirements then develop applications essential to the future force in an increasingly complex and A.I. driven environment. Although titled Intelligent Ship, a warship is just the prototype demonstrator for this competition – the project will inform development relevant to all defence equipment and military services.

Julia Tagg, Dstl A.I. Lab, said:

> This DASA competition has the potential to lead the transformation of our defence platforms, leading to a sea change in the relationships between AI and human teams. This will ensure UK defence remains an effective, capable force for good in a rapidly

> changing technological landscape.
>
> Crews are already facing information overload with thousands of sources of data, intelligence, and information. By harnessing automation, autonomy, machine learning and artificial intelligence with the real-life skill and experience of our men and women, we can revolutionise the way future fleets are put together and operate to keep the UK safe.

The competition, currently backed by a total of £4 million over two phases, has the potential to transform the way the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force equipment platforms are designed, work together, operated and manned by the 2040s.

Innovations developed in phase 1 of the competition could later help determine the different platform types, size and role of future platforms as well potentially being adapted and integrated into the existing fleet.

DASA Delivery Manager Adam Moore said:

> DASA brings together the brightest minds in science, industry and academia to turbocharge innovations to keep the UK, as well as those who protect us, safe from emerging and evolving threats to our way of life.
>
> This project will ensure the Royal Navy and all our Armed Forces stays one step ahead of our adversaries.