A university-community research team has been awarded $399,000 from the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to establish a consortium to research and address the safety and liability issues associated with the development and implementation of hypersonic-related research. As one of eight institutions to be awarded, this funding is a part of the Department of Commerce's Office of Science and Technology Policy Hypersonic Technology Innovation Research Institutes (Hypersonic-TRI) program. In addition to funding, the consortium goal is to provide a university-community research model to increase the line of sight to commercialization and deployment of hypersonic technology, and to serve as a model for other regional and national consortia. The consortium is expected to be in place by fall 2021.

"This consortium is an important opportunity to bring together experts in academia, government, and industry to advance the safety and liability aspects of hypersonics research," said Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Environmental Quality and Deputy Director of the NIST, Dr. John C. Holdren. "Understanding the safety and liability issues that will exist for technologies such as hypersonics is critical to their advancement, and the establishment of this consortium is a critical step in ensuring that the potential benefits of these technologies will be realized."

The University of Tennessee at Knoxville (UTK) is the lead institution on the consortium and is working with five additional universities and three government and industry organizations to establish the consortium. The consortium will include the following partners:

- University of Tennessee at Knoxville (UTK), Knoxville, TN
- University of Dayton Research Institute, Dayton, OH
- Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO
- University of Akron, Akron, OH
- National Center for Hypersonics, Austin, TX
- The Aerospace Corporation, El Segundo, CA
- Air Force Research Laboratory, Dayton, OH

The consortium’s goal is to provide a university-community research model to increase the line of sight to commercialization and deployment of hypersonic technology, and to serve as a model for other regional and national consortia. The consortium will focus on the safety and liability issues associated with hypersonics research and development, with the ultimate goal of making hypersonic technology more accessible and affordable for various industries. The consortium is expected to be in place by fall 2021. The consortium will bring together experts in academia, government, and industry to advance the safety and liability aspects of hypersonics research, with the ultimate goal of making hypersonic technology more accessible and affordable for various industries.

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