National Aeronautics and Space Administration

THE INNOVATION CATALYST

APRIL/MAY 2021

THREE FACTS ABOUT COPYRIGHT LICENSES FOR SOFTWARE

NASA frequently uses patents to protect its intellectual property (IP), but in some circumstances, other types of IP protection might be more appropriate, including copyrights. According to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, a copyright is "a form of protection provided by U.S. law to the authors of 'original works of authorship' fixed in any tangible medium or expression." Since the subject matter of copyright casts a wide net, it applies to various forms of IP.

There are special cases where NASA might use a copyright instead of a patent to protect IP and distribute it outside the agency. Read on to learn more!

1. MOST SOFTWARE PACKAGES AT NASA DON'T NEED A COPYRIGHT LICENSE.

In many cases, your software can be released to an external party without being copyrighted or patented. If an interested party wants to use NASA software, simply completing the software release process and generating a Software Usage Agreement will suffice. Most users of NASA software do not seek to use NASA software for a commercial application, and as a result, they don't need to complete a license agreement.

2. IN ORDER FOR A COMPANY TO USE NASA SOFTWARE FOR A COMMERCIAL APPLICATION, THERE MUST BE A LICENSE IN PLACE.

If you're working with a company that would like to take NASA software and use it for a commercial application, then reach out to SPO. The typical software release process will also need to include some form of licensing agreement when commercialization is involved.

3. TO OBTAIN A COPYRIGHT LICENSE FOR NASA SOFTWARE, A CONTRACTOR MUST HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE INVENTION OF THE SOFTWARE.

Government employees do not receive copyright protection for their work if that work is developed as part of their official duties. For that reason, at least one contractor must be involved with the development of the software in order to obtain a copyright and, subsequently, a copyright license.

If you have any questions about software licenses or the software release process, please don't hesitate to reach out to SPO. Technology Manager Viva Miller (viva.l.miller@nasa.gov) or Assistant to Software Release Authority Staci Steward (staci.l.steward@nasa.gov) can offer guidance and help troubleshoot any problems you encounter.

NASA COMMERCIALIZATION TRAINING CAMP GOES VIRTUAL

The third NASA Commercialization Training Camp took place for the first time in a virtual setting in March, welcoming 10 professional athletes from the National Football League Players Association, the Women's National Basketball Players Association, and the National Basketball Players Association.

The NASA Commercialization Training Camp is an agency-level initiative that introduces current and retired professional athletes to the realms of technology transfer and commercialization of NASA technologies. The first few training camps spread the word about NASA's portfolio of licensable technologies to an audience of entrepreneurial, business-minded athletes with the drive and ambition to jumpstart new companies. Space Act Agreements with professional athletic organizations helped facilitate coordination between NASA and the players.

"NASA's Commercialization Training Camp is one of the highlights of our career development programs for active player members," says Connor Ford with the NFL Players Association. "These workshops provide an important first step in educating athletes about the possibilities that exist in the worlds of technology and business, while also surrounding them with important resources for those who continue down the path of licensing technologies and creating startups."

The virtual training camp in March featured two days of presentations and interactive content, kicking off with welcoming remarks from Christyl Johnson, Goddard's Deputy Director for Technology and Research Investments. Other speakers included Goddard Technology Manager Eric McGill, NASA's Johnson Space Center Commercialization Services Lead Kris Romig, Super Bowl Champion and NASA technology licensee Femi Ayanbadejo, and former training camp attendees Joe Wesley, Gary Baxter, and Aaron Wallace.

"This year's cohort didn't have much familiarity with technology transfer or commercialization, and they were amazed by how much NASA tech is already out there," says Erin Majerowicz, SPO's marketing lead and training camp organizer.

This year's training camp featured presentations from NASA inventors, including Goddard's Nithin Abraham and Johnson's Holly Newton, who told attendees about their technology development process. Majerowicz says that Goddard's innovator community plays a crucial role in tech transfer by speaking at events and sharing their work with prospective licensees.

"It's so important to hear from inventors themselves when telling the full story of technology transfer," she adds.

Goddard will help facilitate a second training camp this August, which will also take place virtually. The camp will include current and former NBA players. If you're interested in participating in this training camp, please contact Erin Majerowicz by emailing erin.m.majerowicz@nasa.gov.

MAKE SPACE FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH: TAKING BREAKS

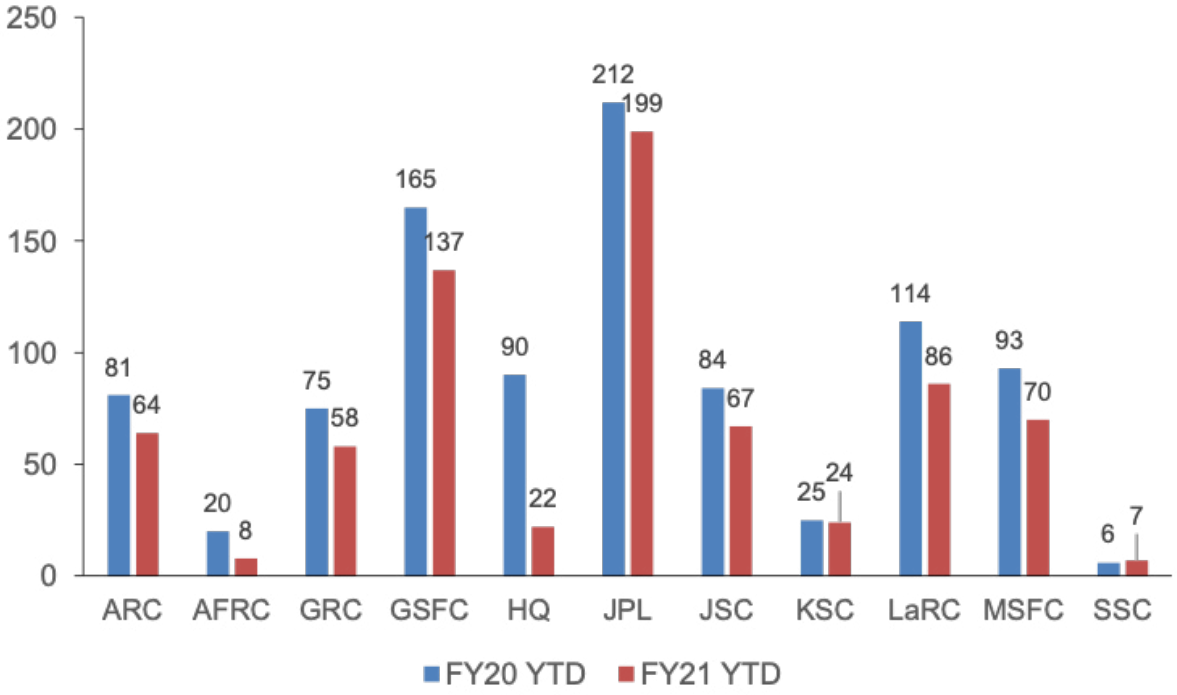
Feeling overwhelmed? Try taking a step away from your computer to clear your mind. Even a few minutes of walking outside can make a big difference.

Getting up and moving every hour or so also can benefit for your eyes, muscles, circulation, and spine.

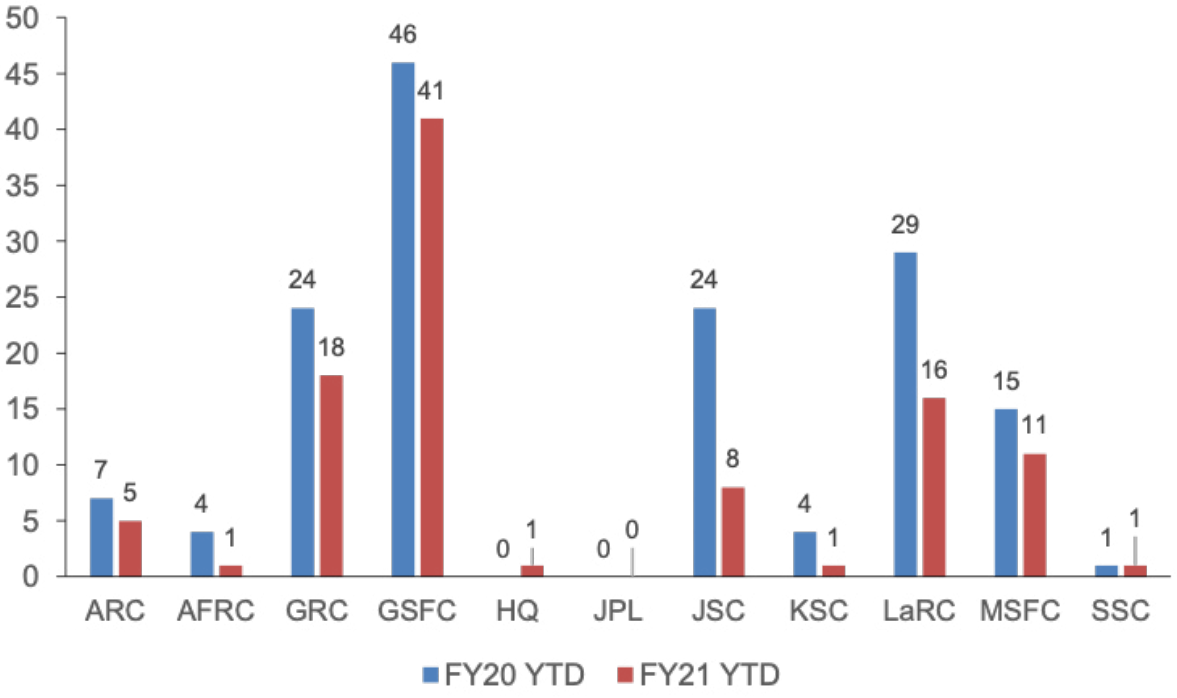
GODDARD *NTR* METRICS

Goddard's New Technology Report (NTR) numbers grew throughout the second quarter! As of April 1, 2021, Goddard is maintaining our lead in NTRs reported with a civil servant innovator and is in second place for overall NTRs reported. Thank you to Goddard's innovator community for reporting your innovations. Let's stay strong as we roll into the third quarter!

Total NTRs Reported



NTRs with at Least One NASA Civil Servant Inventor



GET TO KNOW SPO STACI STEWARD

NAME: Staci Steward

TITLE: Project Support Specialist

ROLE AT SPO: Code 102 Admin and Assistant to Software Release Authority

TIME AT NASA: 2.5 years

FAVORITE PART OF WORK DAY: When the work day ends (LOL)

STAR WARS OR STAR TREK: Neither

VIDEO GAMES OR BOARD GAMES: Both

BIGGEST PET PEEVE: People who don't take responsbility for their actions

FAVORITE QUOTE OR JOKE: Mean what you say. Say what you mean.

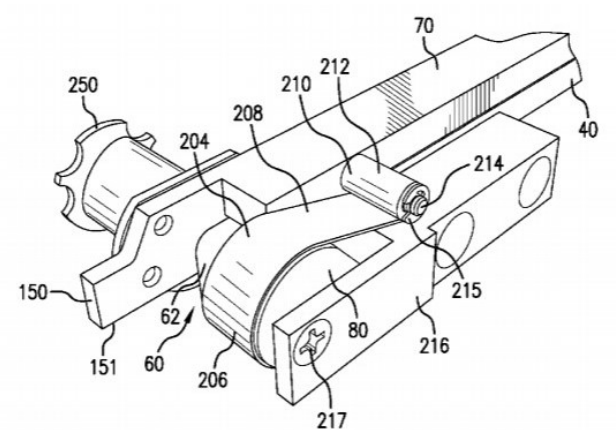
MOST OBSCURE TALENT: Axe throwing

Illustration by Danielle Battle

TECH TRANSFER TRIVIA

How much do you know about NASA technology transfer? Find out with our monthly quiz!

GUESS THE PATENT DRAWING



CLUE ONE: The technology is inexpensive, lightweight, and can deploy instruments and sensors that collect scientific data.

CLUE TWO: This technology was invented by Luis Santos Soto.

CLUE THREE: The patent for this technology was granted in 2020.

+ WANT TO KNOW THE ANSWERS?

Click here for Tech Transfer Trivia and here for the Guess The Patent Drawing.

Q *Who is responsible for reviewing your NTR?*

- **A.** Strategic Partnerships Office
- **B.** Office of the Chief Technologist
- **C.** Office of General Counsel
- **D.** Software developers

Q ***True or False**: You only need to submit an NTR if you plan to release your software publicly.*

- **A. True**
- **B. False**

Q *Which one of these entities does NOT need to review your software release package?*

- **A.** 508 Compliance
- **B.** Office of General Counsel
- **C.** Office of Small Business Programs
- **D.** IT Security

EVENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

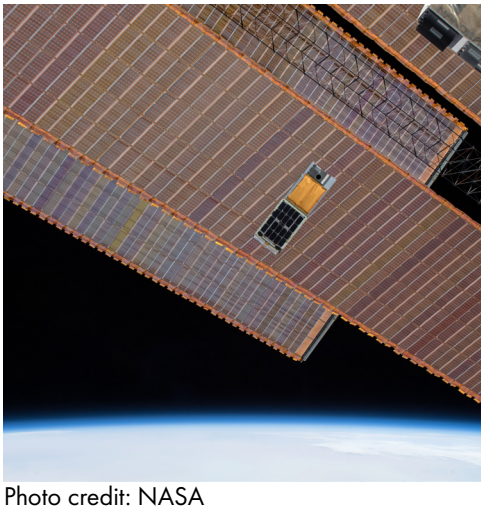


Photo credit: NASA

SMALLSAT WEBINAR SERIES

The Small Satellite Office is hosting a series of webinars on SmallSat-related technologies and software packages available for commercial use. The next session is a technology highlight that will feature Goddard innovators Sean Semper and others, with SPO Tech Manager Eric McGill acting as a moderator. You can tune into the event on ***June 24*** -- watch Dateline for a link to participate.

Image courtesy Fairfax County, Virginia

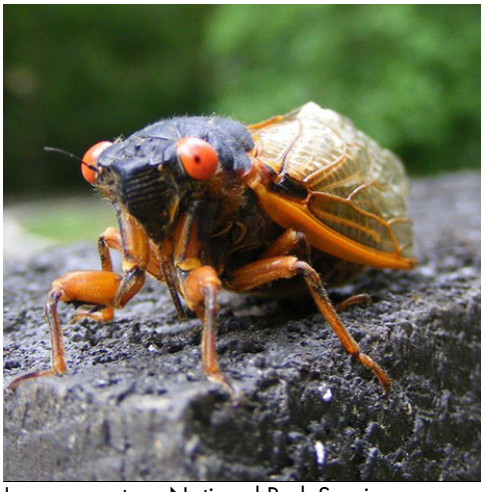


Image courtesy National Park Service

GODDARD CICADA DATA FEATURED IN FORBES

For anyone living in Maryland, the sudden appearance of foreboding holes in the ground signal the impending arrival of cicada cohort Brood X. But how do scientists know when the insects will officially emerge from the ground to swarm and complete their 17-year cycle?

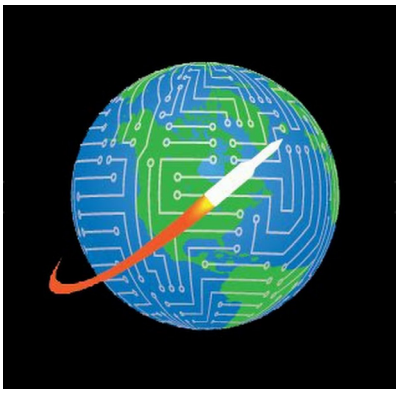
Two Goddard scientists – Eric Kemp and David Mocko – recently wrote a blog post seeking to answer that question, which attracted the attention of Forbes. In their blog, Kemp and Mocko look at soil temperature data from the North American Land Data Assimilation System Phase 2, which provides numbers of land variables in near-real-time. Historically, Brood X has emerged when soil 8 inches below the ground reaches 64.5 degrees Fahrenheit.

While the researchers emphasize that these figures aren't official cicada forecasts, it's interesting to look at the numbers. As of early May, soil temperatures in Maryland hadn't yet reached the threshold required to trigger cicada emergence.

The soil temperature numbers are updated daily, with a four-day latency in the data. Check out the post for more information.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Don't miss these future virtual events from the Strategic Partnerships Office!



VIRTUAL NASA COMMERCIALIZATION BOOT CAMP JUNE 8-10

Now is the time to register for the NASA Technology Transfer program's virtual Commercialization Boot Camp! Co-sponsored by the NASA Entrepreneurial Workforce Initiative, the boot camp introduces participants to entrepreneurial and commercialization methods via lean startup, including value proposition development, customer discovery and segmentation, making go/no-go decisions for product development, understanding why businesses/products fail, and more. This training will take place on Microsoft Teams, combining in-person virtual education, virtual group activities, and at-home study. Expert instructors with experience in I-Corps and Lean Startup will teach the course.

This event will take place **June 8-10**, from 11 am to 5 pm. You can register on SATERN: look for Course ID HQ-CBC; Class ID 130016. The deadline to register is June 1. Please contact Christie Funk (christie.j.funk@nasa.gov) or Mikaela McShane (mikaela.w.mcshane@nasa.gov) with any questions.

ADVANCING INNOVATION COMING SOON!

Calling all inventors! The Strategic Partnerships Office works with engineers, scientists, and other innovators who develop new technologies at Goddard that have commercial potential outside of NASA. In our "Advancing Innovation" training, SPO Deputy Chief Kerry Leonard will describe how you can work with SPO to advance your technology's reach by participating in technology transfer, partnerships, and Goddard's SBIR/STTR program.

There's no need to register in SATERN for these sessions; simply email Staci Steward (staci.l.steward@nasa.gov) to RSVP. The session times and dates will be announced on Dateline and in future editions of The Innovation Catalyst.

COMING SOON: SOFTWARE RELEASE COFFEE BREAK

SPO's next "Coffee Break" session will focus on the software release process in response to high interest in the topic. Software comprises more than 30 percent of all reported NASA innovations, and through the software release process, your software can help support projects across the United States. This is a complex process requiring multiple levels of review that unfold in parallel. SPO is here to help you navigate the process and clear hurdles to releasing your software package. During the Coffee Break session, SPO representatives will walk attendees through the various steps of software release, opening the floor for audience questions at the end.

The session will take place on Microsoft Teams -- please keep an eye on Dateline for date and time information.

GET TO KNOW SPO JOE FAMIGLIETTI

POSITION:
SBIR/STTR Center Lead

YEARS WITH NASA: 31 years

ROLE AT SPO: Lead Goddard's SBIR/STTR Program in support of NASA's annual solicitation development/review/ranking process by working with scientists and engineers across the center to have technologies developed by small businesses to support our projects/programs/missions.

FAVORITE PART OF THE WORKDAY:
When I've helped a fellow scientist and/or engineer at Goddard navigate the SBIR/STTR process in having a technology developed by a small business and getting it infused into a NASA project, program, or mission.

STAR WARS OR STAR TREK? Star Trek, because the future ain't what it used to be! Actually, because the belief that we could achieve the societal accord and technological capability one day is appealing.

FAVORITE QUOTE OR JOKE:
"Don't hate the player... hate the game!" Or, "Sometimes people ask me why I'm so mean. I just say it's an easier New Year's resolution to keep!"

MOST OBSCURE TALENT:
I don't have to work on being witty and charming. It just comes naturally!