ARMY APPLICATIONS LABORATORY

MODULAR PAYLOADS FOR UAS

THE PROBLEM

Current unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and payloads are often proprietary and designed to be mission-specific. Some systems offer swappable payloads; however, these payloads aren't interchangeable across UAS manufacturers, and additional capabilities depend on the same manufacturer developing new payloads. To maximize battlefield usability, the Army wants the ability to swap payloads on the fly via common connections.

THE OPPORTUNITY

For this Phase I SBIR effort, the selected companies can receive up to $150,000 each for a 3-month period of performance. Awardees will collaborate with government stakeholders and UAS vendors to plan for the integration of their payloads using Picatinny Common Lethality Interface Kit (CLIK), along with developing plans for technology improvements to their payloads. The intent of this project is to explore, test, refine, and advance modular payload technologies as an industry-government team, experimenting iteratively through Soldier touchpoints.

We are interested in the following types of modular payloads:

- Electro-optical (EO) and infrared (IR) laser rangefinder and designator
- Communications relay (voice and data)
- Electronic warfare (EW)
- Signals intelligence
- Cargo resupply up to 20lb
- Other novel payloads that can provide Soldiers an offensive or defensive advantage

IMPORTANT DATES

Applications Open: May 6 2026
Applications Close: June 3 2026

DEVELOP & INTEGRATE UAS PAYLOADS FOR THE PICATINNY COMMON LETHALITY INTERFACE KIT (CLIK) SPECIFICATION