

# Initiatives

## Alumni Outreach

The short tenure of DARPA technical staff (Program Managers, Deputy Program Managers, Office Directors, Deputy Office Directors, Directors and Deputy Directors), means that even though the technical staff numbers at around 120 any given year, the number of Scientists and Engineers who have done a 3-5 year turn at DARPA, is a generous and well-placed group. The majority of the DARPA alumni consider their tenure at DARPA a life-changing experience. More

## DARPA's S&T Privacy Principles

DARPA is the principal agency within the Department of Defense for high-risk, high-payoff research, development and demonstration of new technologies and systems that serve the warfighter and the Nation's defense. DARPA's core mission is to prevent and create technological strategic surprise for the United States. The Agency has a rich 50-year history of successes ranging from the Internet to GPS, stealth, and UAVs, but these advances, now ubiquitous, were once the source of discomfort and unease. Such is the nature of work performed at the Agency. Many of the now ubiquitous technologies pioneered at DARPA were once considered impossibilities. And this progression—first impossible, then improbable, eventually inevitable—characterizes many of the Agency's most important advances. We take on new, seemingly impossible challenges each year. In so doing, there is often a tension between novel concepts and an underdeveloped ethical, legal, and societal framework for addressing the full implications of such research. This is a problem not unique to DARPA. Other agencies have faced it, such as NIH, during the Human Genome Project. If we do our research well, we will necessarily bump up against these concerns. Our responsibility to the defense of the Nation is such that we must thoughtfully address these issues, while simultaneously pursuing our work. We expect it of ourselves. And sound leadership demands it.

More

# History

## History

DARPA's history of fundamental breakthroughs has altered defense and the world as we know it. Our nation's global technological leadership is a result of the enormous contribution Defense innovation has made.

DARPA was created in 1958 as the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA). The political and defense communities recognized the need for a high-level defense organization to formulate and execute R&D projects that would expand the frontiers of technology beyond the immediate and specific requirements of the Military Services and their laboratories.

In 2008, DARPA celebrated its 50th anniversary. Explore videos and read articles highlighting 50 years of DARPA's achievements .

## A Proud History



The Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik showed that a fundamental change was needed in America's defense science and technology programs. DARPA was formed to meet this need and rejuvenated our defense technological capabilities. [50 Years of Innovation and Discovery \(pdf\)](#)

## Internet



DARPA's (or ARPA's) involvement in the creation of the Internet began with an idea to link time-sharing computers into a national system.

[DARPA and the Internet Revolution \(pdf\)](#)

[More about the ARPANET](#)

[DARPA Network Challenge](http://archive.darpa.mil/networkchallenge/) (<http://archive.darpa.mil/networkchallenge/>)

## Stealth Fighter



Early efforts by DARPA led to the development of the Air Force F-117 tactical fighter (Stealth Fighter). In Operation Desert Storm, it penetrated air defenses and delivered 2,000 tons of ordnance to account for nearly 40% of all targets with an 80%-85% hit rate, without losing any fighters. [More about the Stealth Fighter](#)

## M16 Assault Rifle



Through project AGILE and a report to the U.S. military, DARPA was instrumental in adopting the M16 assault rifle as the military's individual weapon of choice, protecting U.S. troops across the globe. [More about the M16](#)