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First Beam from Navy's Superconducting Injector at Niowave

LANSING, Mich—The Navy's free electron laser program made a significant advance on June 9 when the superconducting injector being developed at Niowave, a Michigan-based defense contractor, generated a beam of photoelectrons. This superconducting injector is the only one of its kind in the world and is the first superconducting injector built and tested by the Department of Defense and its defense contractors. This achievement was a result of a collaboration between the Office of Naval Research, the Naval Postgraduate School, Niowave and The Boeing Company.

Superconducting accelerator technology has historically been limited to large research facilities. Recently, due to companies like Niowave, the technology has been developed for a broad range of applications such as high power lasers, cancer therapy, medical radioisotope production and detection of nuclear materials, as well as other national defense applications.

Development of the superconducting injector will continue at Niowave with plans to move the accelerator to the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA where it will be used in a free electron laser program that includes education of defense personnel in this advanced technology.

Background information:

The Office of Naval Research is an executive branch agency within the Department of Defense that supports the President's budget. In addition, ONR provides technical advice to the Chief of Naval Operations and the Secretary of the Navy. The Naval Postgraduate School is located in Monterey, California. Founded in 1909, its mission is to provide high-quality, relevant and unique advanced education and research programs that increase the combat effectiveness of the Naval Services, and the other Armed Forces of the United States and our international partners.

Niowave is a high-tech research, development and manufacturing firm specializing in superconducting particle accelerators. Founded in 2005, Niowave's state of the art facilities in Lansing, Michigan, produce accelerators for the military, research labs, universities, and hospitals. The Boeing Directed Energy Systems group, headquartered in Albuquerque NM, both develops and supports technologies for the Navy's Free Electron Laser Program and many other DOD high power laser programs.

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