



Advancing Innovation in the Mississippi River & Gulf Region

Gulf Blue Connect brings the proven innovation model of Gulf Blue and Gulf Blue Navigator to Vicksburg, anchored at the Mississippi Center for Innovation and Technology (MCITY). It links Mississippi's maritime strengths with inland research and technology hubs, bridging the Gulf Coast and the Mississippi River. By fostering collaboration across federal, academic, and industry partners, Gulf Blue Connect strengthens Mississippi's leadership in defense, environmental resilience, and economic growth.

Driving Innovation at Gulf Blue Connect

Mission

Accelerate the development and commercialization of dual-use maritime and river technologies that strengthen security, resilience, and economic growth.

Focus Areas

- River-Gulf Innovation: Linking inland waterways with coastal assets
- Defense & Security: Supporting ERDC and other Federal and DoW partners
- Resilience: Advancing monitoring, mapping, and sustainability
- Entrepreneurship & Workforce: Creating opportunities for startups and students

Value & Impact

- Builds on MCITY momentum
- Extends Gulf Blue Navigator inland
- Positions Mississippi as a leader in research translation

INNOVATION COLLABORATION IMPACT

Driving Innovation at Gulf Blue Connect

Gulf Blue Connect builds on Mississippi's coastal and river assets to create solutions with national relevance. By linking researchers, industry, and federal partners, it helps move technologies from discovery to deployment.

Led by USM with:

- ERDC
- Mississippi Research Consortium
- Federal agencies, industry, & startups



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\$16.1M+ FUELING
RESEARCH
& INDUSTRY
GROWTH

Driving innovation through research investment, commercialization programs, and industry collaboration.

84 INNOVATION
ENGAGEMENTS

Connecting researchers, industry, and community partners

28 PATENTS
FILED

Protecting Mississippi's Intellectual Property

16 COHORT
STARTUPS

Supporting Innovation Through Gulf Blue and ARTISAN Cohorts

4 RESEARCH
STARTUPS

Driving Mississippi's Startup & Innovation Ecosystem

Source: The University of Southern Mississippi, Office of Innovation Management – NSF Accelerating Research Translation (ART) Annual Report, 2025.

COLLABORATIVE ACOUSTIC DEMONSTRATION ON THE GULF COAST



Strengthening Coastal and Resilient Maritime Solutions

USM partnered with the University of Mississippi, Hyperion Technology Group, BLUEiQ, and SeaTrac to advance undersea sensing and autonomous vessel technologies. The demonstration, held at USM's Gulf & Ship Island Building and Marine Research Center, showcased innovations with applications for national defense, commercial shipping, and coastal resilience.

By integrating acoustic and autonomous systems, **partners are advancing solutions for domain awareness, mapping, and coastal resilience.**



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Living Shorelines: Natural and Engineered Resilience

Integrating ecological processes with **engineered design to strengthen coasts.**

Gulf Blue Navigator Cohort 4 will explore innovations that align natural systems with engineered solutions to strengthen **coastal resilience and sustainability.**

This theme supports the **U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center's Engineering With Nature®** program, with opportunities spanning data and modeling, sensing technologies, drones, advanced materials, aquaculture systems, and marine bio-based products.

gulfbblue.org
gulfbbluenavigator.org



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FROM RESEARCH TO MARKET:

USM research is delivering real-world solutions with global impact.

Through **applied innovation and collaboration with ERDC**, USM researchers are protecting technologies that **advance materials, coastal, and defense-related innovation.** These developments **strengthen Mississippi's position as a leader in research translation and technology development.**

USM PROTECTED TECHNOLOGIES Developed with ERDC



FROM COAST TO RIVER, GULF BLUE CONNECT SUPPORTS RESEARCH WITH PURPOSE AND IMPACT.