



Photo: WM Symposium

The Robotics Pavilion at WM2018 featured NASA's Valkyrie humanoid robot.

need to do in the nuclear sector is grab it, use it, and get on with it.”

A U.S. government perspective was offered by Robert Ambrose, division chief of software, robotics, and simulation at NASA. He provided an overview of developments within the National Robotics Initiative (NRI), the National Science Foundation program to accelerate the development and use of robots in the United States. The initiative, Ambrose said, has two phases, beginning with NRI 1.0, which lasted from 2012 to 2017 and focused on collaborative robots that work beside or cooperatively with people. The second phase, NRI 2.0, which will run from 2018 to 2023, will focus on the ubiquity of robotics and the seamless integration of collaborative robots into the workplace.

Ambrose said that to date, nearly \$200 million in NRI grants has been awarded to universities by the government agencies involved in the program. “In the world of university robotics research, that’s considered a big deal,” he said.

Ambrose finished by noting a couple of case studies of robotics development that NASA has been working on, including the development of a robotic glove that allows the user to do physically demanding work for an extended period. He said that NASA is currently licensing the glove to various companies for industrial applica-



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