

EXPEDITIONARY TECHNOLOGY SEARCH (XTECHSEARCH) 6

Background Information:

The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ASA(ALT)) is announcing the sixth iteration of its open topic prize competition – Expeditionary Technology Search (xTechSearch). xTechSearch 6 will highlight opportunities for small businesses to collaborate with the Army to tackle the most critical Army modernization challenges.

The ASA(ALT) recognizes that the Army must enhance engagements with the small businesses, by: (1) understanding the spectrum of technologies being developed commercially that may benefit the Army; (2) integrating the sector of small business innovators into the Army's Science and Technology (S&T) ecosystem; and (3) providing mentorship and expertise to accelerate, mature, and transition technologies of interest to the Army.

The xTechSearch 6 competition will provide increasing non-dilutive seed prizes to select small businesses. Ultimately 20 Finalists will receive awards of \$25K each and be invited to demonstrate a proof-of-concept of their dual-use technologies pertaining to Army challenges and have the opportunity to submit for a Phase I Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) award of up to \$250K each. Proof-of-concept demonstrations will take place at or around the 2022 Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Global Force Symposium and Exhibition in March 2022 in Huntsville, Alabama. Details on the prize and SBIR structure are listed below in this announcement.

The xTechSearch competition strives to integrate small businesses into the Army's S&T ecosystem by providing research opportunities with Army labs, including authorized access to the Army's organic intellectual and technical capital. Participants will receive detailed feedback from Army and Department of Defense (DoD) stakeholders. Participants will have access to training, mentorship and other support infrastructure as they progress through the contest to determine how best to align their technology solutions with real users and buyers within the Army. Finalists will be entered into the xTech Accelerator to receive intensive mentorship and access to networking events to help grow their companies for Army and commercial users. xTechSearch is an opportunity for eligible participants to pitch novel technology solutions – a new application for an existing technology or an entirely new technology concept – to the Army.

The efforts described in this Notice are being pursued under the authorities of 10 U.S.C. § 2374a and 15 U.S.C. § 638.

Eligibility Requirements:

The entities allowed to participate in this competition must be sole proprietors or small business concerns in accordance with Small Business Administration guidance under 13 Code of Federal Regulations § 121.201, or any entity willing and able to be registered as a small business in the United States (U.S.) if selected to participate in this competition.

Each eligible entity:

- Shall be incorporated in, and maintain, a primary place of business in the U.S.;
- May not be a Federal entity or employ a Federal employee acting within the scope of their employment

Sole proprietors may participate in xTechSearch if the individual is a citizen or national of the U.S. or a lawful permanent resident of the U.S. and the business is registered in the U.S. Foreign companies may participate in xTechSearch by establishing a U.S. domestic business relationship (e.g., wholly owned U.S. subsidiary) or partner with an U.S. based company. Companies that have previously participated in the xTechSearch competitions are eligible to participate for new technology concepts or improvements to prior submitted proposals.

The 10 Finalists from both the xTechSearch 4 and xTechSearch 5 competitions are not eligible to participate in this competition unless they partner with another firm that did not reach the Finals of xTechSearch 4 and xTechSearch 5 so long as the alternate firm is the primary lead and not the finalists. All xTechSearch 4 and 5 Finalists will be eligible again during the xTechSearch 7 competition to submit a proposal on their own.

Technologies that fall exclusively within the portfolio of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command (MRDC) that include military infectious diseases, combat casualty care, military operational medicine, chemical biological defense, and clinical and rehabilitative medicine will be excluded from this iteration of xTechSearch. To learn more about what technologies that fall within the portfolio of MRDC please visit their website at https://mrdc.amedd.army.mil/index.cfm/program_areas/medical_research_and_development. Technologies with medical applications that have applications in other domains may apply. The xTech Program is developing a specific competition targeting medical technologies planned to launch later this year.

Program Submission:

The xTechSearch competition is voluntary and open to all entities that meet the eligibility requirements. **There may be only one submission per eligible entity.** The registration information and upload submission must be received by **5:00 PM ET on September 2, 2021**. Submissions received after the deadline will not be considered.

Register now:

<https://www.xtechsearch.army.mil/>

All xTechSearch submissions are treated as privileged information and contents are disclosed to Government employees or designated support contractors only for the purpose of evaluation and program support.

Detailed feedback will be provided to all participants at the end of each phase. The purpose of providing this feedback is to help accelerate transition of the technology to an Army user

by providing insight on best applications for the technology within the Army, suggestions for product improvement for Army use, and recommended next steps for development. However, the Government will not respond to questions or inquiries regarding this feedback. While the authority of this program is 10 U.S.C. § 2374a, a concept white paper submitted to the xTech Program may generate interest by another Army organization for a funding opportunity outside of this program (e.g., submission of a proposal under a Broad Agency Announcement). The interested Army organization may contact the participant to provide additional information.

Army Focus Areas

xTechSearch is seeking novel, disruptive concepts and technology solutions with dual-use capabilities that can assist in tackling the Army's current needs and be applied to current Army concepts. The intent is to provide the Army with transformative technology solutions while enabling cost savings throughout the Army systems' life cycle. Critical technology focus areas include Artificial Intelligence / Machine Learning (AI/ML); Advanced Materials; Advanced Manufacturing; Autonomy; Cyber; Electronics; Human Performance; Immersive; Network Technologies; Position, Navigation and Timing (PNT); Power; Software Modernization; and Sensors. See attached document on the Valid Eval registration page for a list of the top Army Modernization Priorities and other critical Army Focus Areas.

xTechSearch Application Process

Part 1: Concept White Paper

All eligible entities are invited to submit a 2-page concept white paper outlining their technology, the potential impact on the Army, technology and concept viability, and descriptions of the dual-use technology applications for both the commercial and defense space. Each concept white paper will be reviewed by an Army panel from the Army S&T ecosystem including Warfighter, acquisition, and research and development subject matter experts. Up to 50 applicants with the highest-ranking white papers will receive a prize of \$5K and advance to *Part 2: Technology Pitches*.

Concept white papers will be evaluated and ranked using the following Scoring Criteria (further details on each scoring dimension can be found on the xTechSearch registration page):

- Abstract – 5%
- Army Capability Gap(s) – 10%
- Potential for Impact/Revolutionizing the Army – 30%
- Technology and Concept Viability – 30%
- Dual Use – 15%
- Proposal Quality – 10%

Concept White Paper Submission Format

The xTechSearch Part 1 submission is a 2-page concept white paper. Please adhere to the following requirements:

- All concept white papers must be submitted using the template found on the Valid Eval registration page, "*xTechSearch_6_WhitePaper_Template.doc*". **Any proposals**

submitted in a format other than that provided by the template will not be reviewed, please read all instructions on the first page of the template document carefully. To submit your concept white paper visit the xTech website @ www.xtechsearch.army.mil and select the xTechSearch 6 tile to apply now.

- Please list your company name, and proposal title **EXACTLY** how you would like them to appear on any contest marketing materials, recommend clear and concise proposal titles to give readers and potential stakeholders understanding of how your technology would benefit the Army.

Part 2: Technology Pitches

Selected participants from Part 1 will be invited to conduct an in-person or virtual pitch to a panel of Army and DoD subject matter experts at locations across the United States. Participants will pitch their technology concept and team ability to a representative Army panel from the Army S&T ecosystem. Each participant will have 15 minutes to pitch, followed by 10 minutes for questions and answers with the Army and DoD panel. Up to 20 participants with the highest-ranking pitch will receive a prize of \$15K and a written invitation to attend the *xTechSearch 6 Finals*.

Technology Pitches will be evaluated and ranked using the following Scoring Criteria (further details on each scoring dimension and dimension weighting will be provided to all selected Part 2 participants):

- Elevator Intro
- Army Capability Gap(s)
- Potential for Impact/Revolutionizing the Army
- Technology and Concept Viability
- Dual-Use
- Army Transition Plan
- Presentation Quality

Part 3: Finals

Up to 20 Finalists will be invited to conduct Proof-of-Concept Demonstrations and present their transition plans to a panel of Army and DoD subject matter experts tentatively planned to be held at the 2022 AUSA Global Force Symposium and Exhibition in March 2022 in Huntsville, AL. In addition, these Finalists will be provided Army-sponsored exhibit space at the AUSA Innovators' Corner to engage with DoD customers, Army leadership, industry partners, and academia in attendance.

Detailed instructions and evaluation criteria will be provided to the Finalists. Up to ten (10) small businesses based on their scores and feedback from the judging panel will receive a prize of \$25K and a written invitation to submit a Phase I SBIR award of up to \$250K.

Part 4: Request for SBIR Phase I

A separate SBIR announcement will be issued with detailed instructions on how to submit the SBIR proposal materials. The ten (10) Finalists from Part 3 will be the **only firms eligible** to participate in Part 4 to submit a Phase I proposal under this announcement. Finalists invited to submit SBIR proposals will be notified and will receive detailed instructions upon selection. The

SBIR proposal instructions and full Broad Agency Announcement can be found here:

<https://beta.sam.gov/opp/23a3541bee074eea8deef2abcdf1bbef/view>

xTechSearch 6 Accelerator

The xTech Accelerator operated by FedTech is a 5-month, cohort-based program that the 20 xTechSearch Finalists can opt into. Each cohort is tailored to the group of Finalists around five (5) core pillars which include educational programming, diverse mentorship, venture building consulting, community building and strategic exposure. Additional details on the accelerator will be provided to the Finalists.

Prizes & Incentives

Prizes will be offered under 10 U.S.C. § 2374a (Prize competitions). The total prize pool is \$800K. The SBIR contract awards will be offered under 15 USC 638; each Phase I SBIR proposal shall be up to \$250K. Other non-monetary incentives are provided through the xTechSearch 6 Competition to help small business engage and stay engaged with the Army.

| <i>Phase</i> | <i>Number of Winners</i> | <i>Prize [10 USC 2374a]</i> | <i>Phase I SBIR Award [15 USC 638]</i> |
|---|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Application Part 1: Concept White Paper | Up to 50 | \$5K/each | N/A |
| Application Part 2: Technology Pitches | Up to 20 | \$15K/each | N/A |
| Part 3: Finals | Up to 10 | \$25k/each | N/A |
| Part 4: SBIR Phase I | Up to 10 | N/A | Up to \$250K/each |
| | Total | \$800K | Up to 2.5M |

Proposed Schedule (Subject to Adjustments):

| Date | Activity |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| July 30 – September 2, 2021 | Application Part 1: Concept White Paper Submission Period |
| September 29, 2021 | Application Part 2 invitations sent |
| October 25 – November 5, 2021 | Application Part 2: Technology Pitch Days |
| November 5, 2021 | Part 3 Finalists Announced |
| November 5 – March 2022 | xTechSearch 6 Accelerator – All 20 Finalists will have an opportunity to participate |
| March 2022 | Finals held at or around the AUSA 2022 Global Force Symposium |

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|-------------------|--|
| | in Huntsville, Alabama |
| March 2022 | Winners Announced |
| April 2022 | SBIR Phase I Proposal Submission Closed |
| May 2022 | SBIR Phase I award notification |

Disclaimers

Registered participants shall be required to assume any and all risks and waive claims against the Federal Government and its related entities, except in the case of willful misconduct, for any injury, death, damage, or loss of property, revenue, or profits, whether direct, indirect, or consequential, arising from their participation in this prize competition, whether the injury, death, damage, or loss arises through negligence or otherwise.

Participants shall be required to obtain liability insurance or demonstrate financial responsibility, in amounts determined by the Army, for claims by—

- Third parties for death, bodily injury, or property damage, or loss resulting from an activity carried out in connection with participation in this prize competition, with the Federal Government named as an additional insured under the registered participant's insurance policy and registered participants agreeing to indemnify the Federal Government against third party claims for damages arising from or related to prize competition activities; and
- Federal Government for damage or loss to Government property resulting from such an activity.

Intellectual property

The Army is a strong proponent of deliberate intellectual property (IP) rights and management by the private sector and the DoD.

For the xTechSearch competition:

- The Federal Government may not gain an interest in IP developed by a participant without the written consent of the participant;
- Nothing in this xTechSearch prize competition shall diminish the Government's rights in patents, technical data, technical information, computer software, computer databases, and computer software documentation that the Government had prior to this xTechSearch prize competition, or is entitled to, under any other Government Agreement or contract, or is otherwise entitled to under law; and
- The Federal Government may negotiate a license for the use of IP developed by a registered participant in the prize competition.

Register now:

<https://www.xtechsearch.army.mil/>

Point of Contact

The xTechSearch Team

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Website: <https://www.xtechsearch.army.mil>