

The Army FUZE xTech Program – xTech|Adaptive Strike Competition Announcement

I. Background and Purpose

The U.S. Army is seeking innovative technology solutions from eligible small and large businesses across the U.S. that address critical capability gaps through the xTech|Adaptive Strike competition. This platform offers participants the opportunity to engage with the U.S. Department of War (DoW), earn prize money, participate in Soldier exercise events and potentially receive a contract award or agreement.

The U.S. Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ASA(ALT)) is partnering with the Joint Innovation Outpost (JIOP), U.S. Army 3rd Infantry Division (3ID) and the MARNE Innovation Center to deliver the xTech|Adaptive Strike competition. This initiative supports the U.S. Army's broader effort to (1) identify commercially available or near-commercial technologies that address operational challenges and could be rapidly adapted for Army use; (2) engage and integrate non-traditional innovators and emerging technology providers to broaden the U.S. DoW's Science and Technology (S&T) and exercise ecosystem; (3) assess technologies and provide expertise and feedback to accelerate, mature, and transition technologies to support operational forces; and (4) deliver attritable, scalable capabilities that can be delivered within 180 days of challenge completion.

The xTech|Adaptive Strike competition will consist of three (3) phases:

- (1) Application, including the following:
 - a. Five (5)-page white paper;
 - b. Up to 10-minute required technology demonstration video; and
 - c. Self-certification of minimum requirements.
- (2) Semifinals Soldier exercise event; and
- (3) Finals Soldier exercise event.

The U.S. Army intends to award up to \$1.5 million in cash prizes throughout the competition to selected participants. The award structure is as follows:

- **Semifinalists (Part 1):** Up to **20 semifinalists** may be selected at the conclusion of the Part 1 submission evaluation period. Each selected semifinalist will be eligible to receive a cash prize of **\$25,000 each** and the opportunity to participate in the Part 2 semifinals live Soldier exercise event scheduled for June 2026.
- **Finalists (Part 2):** Up to **10 finalists** may be selected at the conclusion of the semifinals event. Each selected finalist will be eligible to receive an additional cash prize of **\$50,000 each** and the opportunity to participate in the Part 3 finals live Soldier exercise event scheduled for October/November 2026.
- **Winners (Part 3):** Following the finals event, up to **five (5) winners** may be selected. Each selected winner will be eligible to receive an additional cash prize of **\$100,000 each**.

Additional details on prize structure can be found in Section VII.

The xTech|Adaptive Strike competition is conducted in accordance with 10 U.S.C. § 4025, which authorizes the use of prize competitions to stimulate innovation and identify promising technologies for national security applications. Requirements for competition under 10 U.S.C. § 3201 are satisfied upon completion of the challenge and use of prize authority. As such, this competition serves as a competitive down select mechanism that enables government organizations to engage with finalists and winners through a variety of follow-on acquisition pathways, including but not limited to:

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- 10 U.S.C. § 4114 – Selection of contractors for prototype projects
- 10 U.S.C. § 4022 – Prototype projects
- 10 U.S.C. § 4023 – Procurement for experimental purposes
- 10 U.S.C. § 4001 – Research and development
- 10 U.S.C. § 4021 – Other Transaction Authority (OTA)
- 10 U.S.C. § 3458 – Authority to acquire innovative commercial products and commercial services using general solicitation competitive procedures
- 15 U.S.C. § 3703 – Technology innovation partnerships
- 15 U.S.C. § 638 – Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs

Government organizations are encouraged to consider leveraging these statutory authorities to pursue follow-on awards with companies identified through the xTech competition process. This approach supports rapid technology maturation, accelerates the transition of innovative capabilities to the field, and promotes collaboration with non-traditional and small business performers.

While the authority of this program is 10 U.S.C. § 4025, the xTech|Adaptive Strike competition may generate interest by other U.S. Army, DoW or USG organizations for a funding opportunity outside of this event. The interested organization may contact the participant to provide additional information or ask for a request for proposal in a separate solicitation. Finalists of the prize competition may have opportunities to submit a separate proposal for further development of their proposed technology solution based on the needs of the Army. The Army may use a contract mechanism of their choice and will notify the participants accordingly.

All xTech|Adaptive Strike competition submissions are treated as privileged information and contents are disclosed to government employees and designated support contractors strictly for the purpose of evaluation and program support.

The xTech Program intends to provide feedback from evaluators to participants during each part of the competition. The purpose of providing this feedback is to help accelerate the transition of the technology to a U.S. Army end-user by providing insight into the best applications for the technology, suggestions for product improvement for U.S. Army use and recommended next steps for development. However, the Government will not respond to inquiries regarding this feedback.

II. Eligibility Requirements

Eligible entities include U.S. based nonprofit organizations, for-profit organizations (i.e., large and small businesses) only.

Each eligible entity:

- Shall be incorporated in, and maintain, a primary place of business in the U.S.;
- Shall not be a U.S. Federal government entity or employ a U.S. Federal Employee acting within the scope of their employment;
- Shall not be currently under contract, agreement or other providing similar capabilities to the Government for work described in the problem statement;
- Must have or be able to obtain a CAGE code if selected to advance in the competition (instructions on how to obtain a CAGE code can be found on the xTech|Adaptive Strike registration page); and

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- Shall be at the sole discretion of the Government.

III. Topics and Problem Statement

The U.S. Army's front-line units are facing significant challenges from adversaries who are using large quantities of low-cost technologies like drones and jammers. The Army's current equipment is often too expensive, complex, and slow to deploy, which leaves smaller units vulnerable. This technology gap makes it difficult for them to conduct reconnaissance, communicate effectively, and defend against the growing threat of unmanned systems in fast-paced environments.

To counter this, the Army is actively seeking innovative, ready-to-deploy solutions that are both affordable and easy for small units to use. They need better longer-range reconnaissance tools, cost-effective drones, mobile power sources, and scalable anti-drone defenses. The main goal is to empower these units to maintain an advantage, improve their protection, and sustain operations against rapidly evolving threats, and the Army is encouraging collaboration with commercial companies to find these solutions.

The Army is seeking to evaluate capabilities that demonstrate performance in one (1) of four (4) capability areas:

- **Capability 1:** [Extended On-Station Time and Range for Medium/Long-Range Reconnaissance \(MRR/LRR\)](#)
- **Capability 2:** [Affordable Drones and Loitering Munitions for Scaled Operations](#)
- **Capability 3:** [Power Generation for Ground Units with sUAS](#)
- **Capability 4:** [Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems \(c-UAS\) for Soldier Operations](#)

For details on the full capability areas, see [Appendix A](#).

IV. Program Submission

The xTech|Adaptive Strike competition is voluntary and open to all entities that meet eligibility requirements listed in Section II (Eligibility Requirements). **Only one (1) submission per capability area per eligible entity is permitted. If submitting to more than one (1) capability area, the technology solutions must be different.**

The registration information and submission upload must be received by **5:00 PM ET on March 13, 2026**. Submissions received after the deadline will not be considered.

Register by selecting the xTech|Adaptive Strike competition image at:
<https://www.xtech.army.mil/>

V. xTech|Adaptive Strike Competition Structure

Part 1: Concept White Paper & Video

All eligible entities must submit a **five (5)-page concept white paper and pre-recorded video of up to 10 minutes** that demonstrates the technology and its suitability for participation in a live Soldier exercise event. The white paper and video should outline the solution's benefits to the U.S. Army, technical approach in its design and execution, scalability and price. Submissions will be evaluated by subject matter experts (SMEs) across the U.S. DoW. Any

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submissions provided above the five (5)-page limit and the 10-minute video limit, will not be evaluated.

All concept white papers and videos must adhere to the following requirements:

- Concept white papers **must be submitted using the template found on the [Valid Eval](#)** registration page, “Template_xTech_Adaptive_Strike_White_Paper.docx”. **Any proposals submitted in a format other than that provided by the template will not be reviewed.**
- For the required video, provide a URL on the contest registration linking to the video (preferably hosted on Vimeo). Videos should serve to clarify or illustrate concepts from the white paper and must not exceed 10 minutes in length.
- List your company name, country name and proposal title **EXACTLY** how you would like them to appear in any contest marketing materials. Use a clear and concise proposal title to give readers and potential stakeholders an understanding of how your technology would benefit the U.S. Army.
- Proposals by offerors should describe their approach to accomplishment of the expectations using concise narratives.
- White papers should include evidence of how they will deliver the specified units required for the June exercise as outlined in Appendix A.

Evaluators will review and score submissions using the following scoring criteria (further details on each scoring dimension can be found on the xTech|Adaptive Strike competition registration page):

Criterion	Weight
Introduction	7%
Army Benefits	30%
Technical Approach	20%
System Scalability / Economics	30%
Commercial Potential	10%
Submission Quality	3%

Upon conclusion of the submission evaluation period, the xTech Program will select **up to 20 semifinalists to receive a cash prize of \$25,000 each** and advance to Part 2: Semifinals Soldier Exercise.

Part 2: Semifinals Soldier Exercise

Selected semifinalists from Part 1 will participate in a live Soldier exercise event, and potentially a pitch event, with a panel of U.S. Army and DoW SMEs and end-users. The event is currently expected to be held **June 1-19, 2026, at the National Training Center (NTC) in Fort Irwin, California.**

The xTech Program will provide additional instructions, detailed evaluation criteria, and exact dates and location for the event at a later date.

Prior to the exercise event, semifinalists will have the opportunity to engage with U.S. Army and DoW personnel to prepare and discuss event expectations.

Dates and times are subject to change.

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Semifinalists will be required to submit additional documentation prior to the exercise event. These materials are necessary to meet specific safety protocols for Soldiers and to ensure the event is executed successfully. All documentation must be submitted by the stated deadlines. Failure to provide the required materials or meet the deadlines may result in disqualification from the xTech|Adaptive Strike competition.

Participating firms must commit to full participation for the entire duration of the exercise event to support Soldier training and meet operational objectives. Non-compliance with event requirements or failure to meet performance standards during the exercise may result in disqualification from the competition.

Upon conclusion of the exercise event, the xTech Program will select **up to 10 finalists to receive an additional cash prize of \$50,000 each** and advance to Part 3: Finals Soldier Exercise.

Part 3: Finals Soldier Exercise

Selected finalists from Part 2 will participate in a final live Soldier exercise event, and potentially a pitch event, with a panel of U.S. Army and DoW SMEs and end-users. The event is currently expected to be held **October 29 – November 28, 2026, at the NTC in Fort Irwin, California.**

The xTech Program will provide additional instructions, detailed evaluation criteria, and exact dates and location for the event at a later date.

Prior to the exercise event, finalists will have the opportunity to engage with U.S. Army and DoW personnel to prepare and discuss event expectations.

Dates and times are subject to change.

Finalists will be required to submit additional documentation prior to the final exercise event. These materials are necessary to meet specific safety protocols for Soldiers and to ensure the event is executed successfully. All documentation must be submitted by the stated deadlines. Failure to provide the required materials or meet the deadlines may result in disqualification from the xTech|Adaptive Strike competition.

Participating firms must commit to full participation for the entire duration of the exercise event to support Soldier training and meet operational objectives. Non-compliance with event requirements or failure to meet performance standards during the exercise may result in disqualification from the competition.

Upon conclusion of the final exercise event, the xTech Program will select **up to five (5) final winners to receive an additional cash prize of \$100,000 each. Winners may have an opportunity to submit for a follow-on contract or agreement, subject to availability of funds and technical needs.**

VI. Proposed Schedule

The proposed schedule is outlined below and subject to change without notice.

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Date	Activity
February 23 – March 13, 2026	Part 1: Concept white paper & video submission period
April 17, 2026	Semifinalists announced
June 1-19, 2026	Part 2: Semifinals Soldier Exercise
July 2026	Finalists announced
October 29 – November 28, 2026	Part 3: Finals Soldier Exercise
November 2026	Winners announced

VII. Prizes and Incentives

Prizes will be offered under 10 U.S.C. §4025 (Prize Competitions). The total prize pool is \$1.5 million. Other non-monetary incentives are provided through the xTech|Adaptive Strike competition to help industry engage with the U.S. Army.

Phase	Winners	Prize
Part 1: Concept White Paper	Up to 20	\$25,000 each
Part 2: Semifinals Soldier Exercise	Up to 10	\$50,000 each
Part 3: Finals Soldier Exercise	Up to five (5) final winners	\$100,000 each
	Total	\$1,500,000

VIII. 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 injury, death, damage, or loss arises through negligence or otherwise.

IX. Intellectual Property

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

For the xTech|Adaptive Strike 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 xTech|Adaptive Strike: Ground 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 xTech|AdaptiveStrike: Ground 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 by selecting the xTech|Adaptive Strike competition image at:

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X. Point of Contact

The U.S. Army FUZE xTech Program Office

Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army, Research and Technology

Email: usarmy.xtech@army.mil

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

APPENDIX A – Problem Statement Descriptions

Capability 1: Extended On-Station Time and Range for Medium/Long-Range Reconnaissance (MRR/LRR)

Problem Statement: Current reconnaissance systems often fail to meet their advertised range of 15-20 kilometers in real-world conditions like hills and woods. This creates a critical shortfall for combat brigades that need to engage targets at 30-40 kilometers. This reconnaissance gap prevents them from effectively using their long-range weapons, limiting their ability to strike from a safe distance. To fix this, the Army needs improved systems that provide the necessary range to match their long-range firepower. Additionally, units need to be able to affordably acquire these systems.

Desired Effects:

- Extend the effective range of fielded Company Level Directed Requirement/Medium Range Reconnaissance (MRR) systems to meet BCT sensing requirements of 30-40 kilometers, even in challenging terrain.
- Increase on-station time to enable persistent reconnaissance and target acquisition.
- Enhance the ability to employ long-range weapons systems, such as loitering munitions, at their full stand-off potential.
- Provide scalable solutions to adapt to diverse operational environments, including wooded and hilly terrain.
- Minimize the logistical burden of deploying and maintaining extended-range reconnaissance systems.
- Complete System cost should be less than \$350,000
- Participants must be able to provide 10 testable units for the June 2026 Semi-Finals if selected.

Capability 2: Affordable Drones and Loitering Munitions for Scaled Operations

Problem Statement: Adversaries are deploying drones and loitering munitions at scale, with thousands of systems available for operational use, while brigade combat teams (BCTs) struggle to procure even hundreds. The inability to scale these capabilities is largely driven by cost constraints, as current vendor-provided systems exceed affordability thresholds for mass procurement. While units can build first-person view (FPV) drones, they lack access to complete, vendor-provided systems at affordable costs. Affordable solutions are required to enable BCTs to scale drones and loitering munitions to match adversary capabilities, ensuring operational parity and overmatch. A unit can build FPVs for under \$1,000 but cannot purchase a complete system from a vendor for that amount.

Desired Effects:

- Develop cost-effective drones and loitering munitions that can be procured in large quantities to meet operational scaling requirements.
- Reduce the per-unit cost of complete systems to align with affordability thresholds for mass procurement.
- Enable BCTs to deploy drones and loitering munitions at scale, matching or exceeding adversary capabilities.
- Support rapid production and fielding to meet the demands of high-tempo operations.
- Ensure compatibility with existing operational frameworks and targeting systems to maximize utility.
- Participants must be able to provide 10 testable units for the June 2026 Semi-Finals if

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selected.

Capability 3: Power Generation for Ground Units with sUAS

Problem Statement: Field units lack adequate power solutions to recharge their small drones and are unable to run a command post silently on batteries through the night. This forces them to rely on loud, heavy generators, which compromise their position and slow down operations. A scalable, portable, and quiet power system is required to sustain continuous drone missions and allow command posts to function effectively overnight in remote environments.

Desired Effects:

- Extend mission duration for both sUAS and essential command post equipment by providing a consistent power source.
- Enable silent overnight command post operations by eliminating reliance on audible generators.
- Ensure the solution is scalable for various unit sizes and man-portable for deployment in austere environments.
- Minimize the logistical footprint by providing a lightweight, durable, and easy-to-operate system.
- Participants must be able to provide 10 testable units for the June 2026 Semi-Finals if selected.

Capability 4: Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems (c-UAS) for Soldier Operations

Problem Statement: While Adversaries are increasingly leveraging unmanned systems to disrupt operations, compromise survivability, and overwhelm traditional defenses. Units require soldier-portable, edge-deployable c-UAS solutions that are scalable, affordable, and simple to operate, enabling rapid response to diverse UAS threats in austere and contested environments. These systems must empower Soldiers at the lowest echelons to neutralize enemy UAS threats without reliance on centralized infrastructure or manpower-intensive processes.

Desired Effects:

- Deliver lightweight, compact c-UAS systems that can be easily carried and operated by individual Soldiers in the field, or are support a modern ABCT Command Post setup.
- Ensure systems are designed for rapid deployment and operation in austere environments, minimizing reliance on centralized infrastructure.
- Provide solutions that can be scaled to meet the needs of small units while maintaining affordability for widespread adoption.
- Enable effective neutralization of diverse UAS threats, including swarms, fixed-wing, and rotary-wing platforms.
- Minimize training requirements and logistical burdens by ensuring systems are intuitive and reliable for Soldiers to operate.
- Protect Soldiers and critical infrastructure by mitigating UAS threats effectively and efficiently.
- Participants must be able to provide 6 testable units for the June 2026 Semi-Finals if selected.