

The Army xTech Program – xTechSearch 7 Competition Announcement

I. Background and Purpose

The U.S. Army would like to invite interested entities to participate in the Expeditionary Technology Search competition, a forum for eligible sole proprietors and small businesses across the U.S. to engage with the Department of Defense, earn prize money, participate in the accelerator program and potentially submit for a Phase I Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) award. xTechSearch offers 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 Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology recognizes that the Army must enhance engagements with small businesses by (1) understanding the spectrum of ‘world-class’ technologies being developed commercially that may benefit the DOD in the manufacturing space and (2) integrating the sector of commercial innovators into the DOD Science and Technology (S&T) ecosystem.

The xTechSearch 7 competition will provide up to \$800,000 in cash prizes to select eligible entities. Ultimately, up to 20 finalists will receive a cash prize of \$20,000 each and invitation to demonstrate their innovative technology solutions to Army challenges. Up to 10 participants will be selected as the final winners of the competition to receive an additional cash prize of \$25,000 each and the opportunity to submit for a Phase I SBIR award of up to \$250,000 each. Details on the prize structure and SBIR structure are listed below in the 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 DOD stakeholders. Participants will have access to training, mentorship, and other support infrastructure as they progress throughout 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.

The efforts described in this notice are being pursued under the authorities of 10 U.S.C. § 4025 (formerly 2374a) and 15 U.S.C. § 638 and 10 U.S.C. § 4022 (Prototype Projects) to award cash prizes and SBIRs to only those eligible entities as described in this announcement. While the authority of this program is 10 U.S.C. § 4025, the xTechSearch 7 competition may generate interest by another DOD organization for a funding opportunity outside of this program (e.g., submission of a proposal under a Broad Agency Announcement). The interested DOD organization may contact the participant to provide additional information or ask for a request for proposal in a separate solicitation.

II. Eligibility Requirements

The entities allowed to participate in this competition must be sole proprietors (someone who owns an unincorporated business by himself or herself) or small business concerns in accordance with Small Business Administration guidance under 13 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 121.201, or any entity willing and able to be registered as a small business in the United States, meeting the requirements of 13 CFR §121.201, if selected to participate in this competition.

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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 in the case of a private entity, shall be incorporated in and maintain a primary place of business in the U.S., and in the case of an individual, whether participating singly or in a group, shall be a citizen or permanent resident of 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 finalists from the xTechSearch 6 competition are not eligible to participate in this competition unless they partner with another firm that did not reach the finals of xTechSearch 6 so long as the alternate firm is the primary lead and not the finalist company. All xTechSearch 6 finalists will be eligible again during the xTechSearch 8 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 that include military infectious diseases, combat casualty care, military operational medicine, chemical biological defense, and clinical and rehabilitative medicine will be excluded from xTechSearch.

III. 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 apply 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; Climate and Clean Technologies; 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.

IV. Program Submission

The xTechSearch 7 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 submission upload must be received by **11:59 PM ET on November 6, 2022.** Submissions received after the deadline will not be considered.

Register now by selecting the xTechSearch 7 competition tile at:

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

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All xTechSearch 7 competition 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 from the judges panel will be provided to the participants throughout each phase of the competition. The purpose of providing this feedback is to help accelerate transition of the technology to an Army end-user by providing insight on best applications for the technology, 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.

V. xTechSearch Competition Structure

Part 1: Concept White Paper

All eligible entities shall submit a short 3-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 a panel of DOD experts across the S&T ecosystem including Warfighter, acquisition, and research and development subject matter experts.

All concept white papers must adhere to the following requirements:

- All concept white papers must be submitted using the template found on the registration page, "*xTechSearch7_WhitePaper_Template.doc*". **Any proposals submitted in a format other than that provided by the template will not be reviewed.**
- Please list your company name, and proposal title **EXACTLY** how you would like them to appear on 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 Army.

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 7 competition registration page):

- Abstract – 5%
- Army Capability Gap(s) – 10%
- Potential for Impact – 30%
- Technology and Concept Viability – 30%
- Dual Use – 15%
- Proposal Quality – 10%
- Overall Impression – 0%

Upon conclusion of the concept white paper evaluation period, up to 50 applicants will be selected to receive a prize of \$5,000 each and an invitation to Part 2: Technology Pitches.

Part 2: Technology Pitches

Selected participants from Part 1 will be invited to conduct a virtual pitch on their technology concept and team ability to a panel of Army and DOD SMEs, tentatively scheduled from January 23 – February 3, 2023 (dates will be finalized with participants) and are subject to change. Each participant will have 15-minutes to pitch, followed by 10-minutes for questions and answers with judging panel.

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Detailed instructions and evaluation criteria will be provided to the participants selected for Part 2 of the competition. Up to 20 participants will be selected to receive a prize of \$15,000 each and an invitation to participate in the xTechSearch 7 finals.

xTechSearch 7 Accelerator

In addition to the prize money and invitation to the finals, selected participants from Part 2 will have the opportunity to participate in the xTechSearch 7 Accelerator, a 3-4-month cohort-based program designed to help develop the finalists through educational programming, diverse mentorship, venture building consulting, community building and strategic exposure. Additional details on the accelerator will be provided to the selected participants.

Part 3: Finals

Selected participants from Part 2 will be invited to conduct a final presentation, in-person or virtual, on their technology concept and transition plans to a panel of Army and DOD SMEs, tentatively scheduled to occur in April/May 2023 (date is subject to change). The exact location and dates of the finals event are still to be determined and will be provided to the finalists closer to the event.

Detailed instructions and scoring criteria will be provided to the finalists. Up to 10 winners will be selected as the final winners of the competition and will receive an additional prize of \$25,000 each and an invitation to submit for a Phase I SBIR award of up to \$250,000 each.

Part 4: Request for Phase I SBIR Proposal

A separate SBIR announcement will be issued with detailed instructions on how to submit the SBIR proposal materials. Winners selected from Part 3: Finals will be the **only firms eligible** to participate and submit a Phase I proposal under this announcement and will receive detailed instructions upon selection. All other submissions will be ineligible.

Participants that are selected and awarded a Phase I SBIR, will have an opportunity to submit a Phase II SBIR proposal at the conclusion of their Phase I contract. Only firms that were awarded a Phase I SBIR under this announcement will be eligible for a Phase II SBIR. Additional instructions and details will be provided to the eligible firms.

VI. Prizes and Incentives

Prizes will be offered under 10 U.S.C. §4025 (Prize competitions). The total prize pool is \$800,000. The SBIR contract awards will be offered under 15 U.S.C. 638; each Phase I SBIR award shall be up to \$250,000 and each SBIR Phase II proposal shall be up to \$1.8M. Other non-monetary incentives are provided through the xTechSearch 7 competition to help small businesses engage and stay engaged with the Army.

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Phase	Winners	Prize	Phase I SBIR Award
Part 1: Concept White Paper	Up to 50	\$5,000 each	N/A
Part 2: Technology Pitches	Up to 20	\$15,000 each	N/A
Part 3: Finals	Up to 10	\$25,000 each	N/A
Part 4: Request for Phase I SBIR Proposal	Up to 10	N/A	Up to \$250,000 each
	Total	\$800,000	Up to \$2.5M

VII. Proposed Schedule

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

Date	Activity
September 27 – November 6, 2022	Application Part 1: Concept white paper submission period
December 15, 2022	Semifinalists Announced
January 23 – February 3, 2023	Technology Pitches
February 7, 2023	Finalists Announced
February – April/May 2023	xEchSearch 7 Accelerator
April/May 2023	Finals
April/May 2023	Winners Announced
June 2023	SBIR Phase I proposal submission closed
June 2023	SBIR Phase I award notification

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 the 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 the DOD.

For the xTechSearch 7 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 7 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 7 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.

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X. Point of Contact

The xTech Program Office

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

Email: usarmy.pentagon.hqda-as-a-alt.mbx.xtechsearch@army.mil

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