

NSIN PROPEL-Economic Development Initiative (EDI)

OVERVIEW: The National Security Innovation Network (NSIN) Propel-EDI is an iteration within the NSIN Propel program designed to source talented companies from economically challenged areas across the country to meet the objectives of NSIN's DoD Partners. The Propel-EDI program seeks to match problem-holders within the DoD with non-traditional commercial solution providers and align potential government funding opportunities. Specifically, NSIN is looking to partner with small non-traditional companies – located in Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Zones and Opportunity Zones.

THE CHALLENGE: For the upcoming cohort, NSIN has partnered with multiple United States Air Force Spark Cells – recognized as innovation thought leaders within the DoD. These Spark Cells have identified two challenges that provide key foundational elements for next-generation DoD operations, including those that support flight operations in austere environments and autonomous operations on military bases. The specific problems the Air Force Spark Cells seek to solve in this cohort include:

- **Mobile instrument landing system** to support establishing airfields and landing zones anywhere in the world, day or night, for use in inclement weather conditions - enabled by secure aircraft communications, microelectronics, advanced positioning and navigation capabilities, remote control and system automation, and small-scale, advanced power and energy storage systems – that can be transported, rapidly configured, and managed by a small team and with energy independence for short-duration operations in austere tactical and expeditionary environments; and
- **Robotics and automation solutions** to support machine-driven operations of existing military base security solutions, military facility operations and maintenance functions, and other functions with an emphasis on enabling autonomous and human-in-the-loop semi-autonomous solutions for threat and weather event-based control and management leveraging modern Internet of Things (IoT) applications, advanced robotic arm technologies, networked sensors and actuators, ultra-small-scale power sources, secure communications systems, and other platforms.

THE SOLUTION: NSIN is looking to partner with small non-traditional companies – located in Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Zones and Opportunity Zones – to help solve part or all the Spark Cell problems. The DoD and NSIN believe that there is untapped potential in non-traditional companies found across the country and that by working together to explore and understand our technical challenges we can build the best technology and tools needed to support our warfighters.

THE ASK: Apply to be a part of the Propel-EDI Cohort. As part of the FY22 cohort, we ask representatives from your company to commit to attend virtual programming for an 8-week period. This virtual time would include interactions with government stakeholders, including problem-holders and end-users, as well as time spent with the Propel-EDI team to develop and refine your concept. Your company will be expected to develop a brief to inform the government of your proposed concept. Finally, your company will work with the Propel-EDI team to help answer questions as you prepare relevant documents for SBIR submissions.

TIMING & COMMITMENT: The Propel-EDI Cohort is currently scheduled for April 11, 2022, to June 3, 2022. During this time, your company will participate in approximately 5-10 hours of programming a week. After the Cohort, the Propel-EDI team will work with your company to help you submit your SBIR application by the June 15, 2022, deadline.

All NSIN Propel-EDI submissions are due no later than March 23, 2022, at midnight EST.

For more information, contact Nina Archie, NSIN Acceleration Portfolio Program Manager at narchie@nsin.us.

About the National Security Innovation Network

The National Security Innovation Network (NSIN) is a program of the U.S. Department of Defense that collaborates with major universities and the venture community to develop solutions that drive national security innovation. We operate three portfolios of programs and services: National Service, Collaboration, and Acceleration. Together, these portfolios form a pipeline of activities and solutions that accelerate the pace of defense innovation. Learn more at nsin.mil.