

AFWERX · SPACEWERX

Post-Reauthorization Update & Path Forward



APRIL 2026

STATE OF THE ECOSYSTEM

A RENEWED COMMITMENT TO INNOVATION

The Big Picture: SBIR/STTR programs have been reauthorized through September 30, 2031.

- **Mission Continuity:** While program authority was paused, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Space Force needs for rapid, commercial-led innovation have continued to grow.
- **The “Thaw”:** Moving from a legislative pause to a deliberate **Implementation Phase**.
- **Goal of Today:** Share what we know now, how we’re preparing for upcoming changes, and how you can prepare.

IMPLEMENTATION

HOW IT FLOWS FROM GUIDANCE TO ACTION

Legislative Mandate: The *Small Business Innovation and Economic Security Act* sets the high-level rules.

Transition Period:

- **Federal Policy:** The **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)** issues the Policy Directive to all agencies.
- **Departmental Alignment:** The **DOW Overall SBIR/STTR Program Office** translates that into Department-wide instructions.
- The **Department of the Air Force (DAF)** receives that guidance.
- **AFWERX & SpaceWERX Execution:** We create the implementation plans for the USAF AND USSF.

**Note: Implementation discussions are happening now.
We are coordinating across the DAF, DOW, and SBA to ensure a smooth transition.**

TRANSPARENCY & TIMING

COMMUNICATION: WHAT TO EXPECT AND WHEN

We will socialize any updates that affect our external partners once we have validated guidance and have determined how that guidance will affect our program and timelines.

Phased Rollout: Updates will likely include changes to solicitation timelines, new proposal caps, and enhanced vetting procedures.

The “Socialization” Window: We will host another webinar to walk through implementation guidance as it becomes available.

Where to Watch: AFWERX & SpaceWERX Social Media channels for updates.

Effective Now: Programs are reauthorized, agencies can issue solicitations and issue awards. By July, agencies must publish limits on how many proposals can be submitted per fiscal year. Other changes will take effect in October with the new fiscal year.

HIGH-LEVEL CHANGES IN THE 2026 ACT

WHAT'S NEW IN THE REAUTHORIZATION?

Five-Year Certainty: Authorization is secured through FY2031, providing long-term stability.

Direct to Phase II (D2P2) Expanded to STTR: Extends D2P2 eligibility to STTR awards, giving agencies the option to skip Phase I for qualifying STTR applicants.

Enhanced Research Security: Stricter due diligence regarding “Foreign Countries of Concern” (FCOC). Applicants must disclose all foreign affiliations including venture backing and IP licenses.

Proposal Caps: Agencies are now required to set annual limits on the number of Phase I proposals a single firm can submit to ensure a broader, more competitive industrial base.

Commercialization Benchmarks: Increased emphasis on commercialization outcomes and Phase III transition - agencies will define how they evaluate and measure commercial impact.

HIGH-LEVEL CHANGES IN THE 2026 ACT *CONT'D*

WHAT'S NEW IN THE REAUTHORIZATION?

FY2026 Carryover Funding: Agencies may carry over unused FY2026 SBIR/STTR funds to support new awards once programs resume, meaning pent-up funding from the lapse period remains available.

Technical & Business Assistance (TABAs): Increased funding for cybersecurity assistance and I-Corps training, extended to Direct to Phase II and Strategic Breakthrough Award recipients.

Acquisition Workforce Training: Contracting officers and acquisition workforce across federal agencies will have training on SBIR/STTR missions, goals, and authorities, use of Phase III agreements, data rights, and sole source award contracts.

Strategic Breakthrough Awards: A new initiative providing up to \$30M in sequential Phase II awards to bridge the gap between innovation and scale.

STRATEGIC BREAKTHROUGH FUNDING

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TO COME

Strategic Breakthrough Funding is *not* intended to replace the STRATFI/TACFI Program.

Goal: To accelerate critical technology transition through sequential Phase II awards.

DAF SBIR/STTR will be following the guidance put forth by OUSW and the reauthorization.

- Builds on a previous Phase II
- Funding up to \$30M and have no more than a 48 month Period of Performance
- Will require 1:1 matching funds.
 - Matching funds must be 20% or more from DoW, non-SBIR/STTR Program funds
- Market research requirement that shows viable and effective solution
- Written commitment requirement that follow-on funding is secured

Implementation plan and a full list of requirements to come.

CURRENT & UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

UPCOMING AIR OPPORTUNITIES

WHAT IS AIR FUNDING IN FY 26?

Immediate Outlook: Our FY 2026 focus areas are as follows:



Autonomous Mass

- Collaborative Combat Aircraft (CCA)
- Small Unmanned Aerial Systems (sUAS)
- Weapons Technology



Command, Control, & Battle Management

- Communications, & Battle Management (C3BM)
- Advanced Mission Systems Architecture & Engineering



Counter Incursion

- Counter Unmanned Aerial Systems (cUAS)
- Kinetic/Non-Kinetic Defeat



Agile Combat & Readiness

- Contested Logistics
- Manufacturing & Readiness



Emerging Priorities

Alignment With The DOW's Critical Technology Areas (CTAs)



Applied Artificial Intelligence



Biomanufacturing



Contested Logistics Technologies



Quantum and Battlefield Information Dominance



Scaled Hypersonics



Scaled Directed Energy

UPCOMING AIR OPPORTUNITIES

WHAT IS AIR PARTICIPATING IN FY 26?

FY 2026 Dates: Air anticipates participating in all monthly releases for the remainder of FY26. We follow OUSW's release schedule.

AIR'S PARTICIPATION IN FY 2026 DOW SBIR/STTR SOLICITATION SCHEDULE			
SOLICITATION CYCLE	ANNOUNCEMENT PERIOD		
	PRE-RELEASE	OPEN	CLOSE
Release 1	April 13, 2026	May 6, 2026	June 3, 2026
Release 2	May 6, 2026	May 27, 2026	June 24, 2026
Release 3	June 3, 2026	June 24, 2026	July 22, 2026
Release 4	July 1, 2026	July 22, 2026	August 19, 2026
Release 5	August 5, 2026	August 26, 2026	September 23, 2026
Release 6	September 2, 2026	September 23, 2026	October 21, 2026

CURRENT AIR OPPORTUNITIES

Pre-Release April 13 | Open May 6 | Close June 3

DAF26BZ01-DV001 | Homeland Convoy Counter Drone Operations

DAF26BZ01-DV002 | Autonomous Leader-Follower UAS Formation for Enhanced Mission Resilience and Reduced Operator Workload

DAF26BZ01-NV003 | Low-Cost Modular Payload Vehicle for Agile Electronic Warfare Swarms with Ground Launch Capability

DAF26TZ01-NV004 | Low-Cost, Phased Array Antennas for Collaborative Jamming in sUAS Swarms

DAF26BZ01-DV005 | AI Framework for Multimodal Scene Construction and Data Generation

DAF26BZ01-NV006 | Intelligent Threat Aware Autonomy

DAF26BZ01-DV007 | CHORD - Collaborative Human Autonomy Operational Review

DAF26BZ01-NV008 | Runtime Assured Autonomy

UPCOMING AIR EVENTS

COME SEE US AT SOME OF OUR LARGER, UPCOMING EVENTS!

MAY
18-22

SOFWEEK

TAMPA, FL

JULY
27-31

AFLCMC LCID & AFRL WDI

DAYTON, OH

AUG
18-20

FED SUPERNOVA

AUSTIN, TX

AUG
24-26

DAF IT & CYBERPOWER (DAFITC)

MONTGOMERY, AL

SEPT
12-16

AFA 2026 NATIONAL CONVENTION & AIR,
SPACE & CYBER CONFERENCE

NATIONAL HARBOR, MD

SEPT
22-24

2026 DEFENSE TECHCONNECT
INNOVATION SUMMIT & EXPO

NATIONAL HARBOR, MD



OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES

RESUMING MOMENTUM

➤ OPEN OPPORTUNITIES THAT CLOSE MAY 13TH

- **SF25D-T1201** Adaptive & Intelligent Space (AIS) Challenge
- **SF254-D1201** Integrated S&T Insight and Co-Investment Decision Support Platform
- **SF254-D1205** Technology Maturation to Support Commercial De-Orbit as a Service for pLEO Constellations
- **SF254-D1206** Knowledge-Guided Test and Evaluation Frameworks for Proliferated Low Earth Orbit Constellations
- **SF254-D1207** Affordable IR Sensors for Proliferated LEO Missile Tracking Constellation
- **SF254-D1204** Secure Multi-Source Data Fusion Environment for pLEO Constellations

➤ OPEN OPPORTUNITIES THAT CLOSE MAY 29TH

- **Space PY26.21 STRATFI** Notice of Opportunity

UPCOMING SPACE OPPORTUNITIES

RESUMING MOMENTUM

➤ PRE-RELEASE

- **DAF26BZ01-NV500** Autonomous Space Cargo Network (ASCN): AI-Driven Logistics Automation and Digital Twin Integration for Space Mobility (**Open May 6th-June 3rd**)
- **DAF26BZ01-NV501** Commercial-Derives Insights for Novel Tactical Surveillance, Reconnaissance, and Tracking (TacSRT) Capabilities (**Open May 6th-June 3rd**)

➤ UPCOMING FOCUS AREAS

- On Orbit Space Logistics
- Defensive Cyber Operations
- Cis-lunar Space Domain Awareness
- Novel Sensing for Ground and Space



UPCOMING SPACE EVENTS

COME JOIN US!

**APR
21-23**

SSC Cyber Expo

LA SFB

**APR
28**

The North American Lithuanian
Defense and Space Forum

THE BR-DGE
EL SEGUNDO, CA

**APR
30**

Unique Launchpad Session

THE BR-DGE
EL SEGUNDO, CA

**APR
30**

SBIR Reauthorization Party

THE BR-DGE
EL SEGUNDO, CA

**MAY
7**

Phase III for Government Personnel
Webinar

VIRTUAL

**MAY
7**

Launchpad Session

THE BR-DGE
EL SEGUNDO, CA



UPCOMING SPACE EVENTS **CONT'D**

COME JOIN US!

**MAY
13**

SSC Subcontracting Forum: Pathways to Primes

**THE BR-DGE
EL SEGUNDO, CA**

**MAY
18**

SOF WEEK 2026

TAMPA, FL

**MAY
21**

Phase III for Industry Webinar

VIRTUAL

**MAY
21**

Space Tech Economic Forum

**THE BR-DGE
EL SEGUNDO, CA**

**JUN
30**

SSIO Industry Dialogue Day

VIRTUAL

**JUL
21-23**

INNOVATE 2026

HUNTSVILLE, AL



SMALL BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS

ACTION ITEMS FOR COMPANIES & PARTNERS

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREPARE

Audit Your Foreign Ties: The new law expands and reinforces due diligence. Review your cap table, intellectual property licenses, and key personnel affiliations for any "Foreign Country of Concern" (FCOC) connections.

Update Your Registrations: Ensure your SAM.gov, DSIP, and SBIR.gov profiles are active and that your Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) is up to date.

Refresh Your Value Prop: Align your R&D with current mission priorities. Gather market-based evidence that your tech solves a specific customer problem. The new commercialization benchmarks will be stricter.

Matching Fund Readiness: If you are eyeing Strategic Breakthrough award opportunities, start identifying potential 1-for-1 matching fund partners (private venture or non-SBIR government funds) to be ready for the new \$30M Phase II opportunities.

AFWERX & SpaceWERX are your partners in navigating this transition. We will communicate updates regarding implementation timelines and process changes as they are available.

Resources

STAYING CONNECTED

LinkedIn: Follow @AFWERX and @SpaceWERX for updates.

AFWERX.com: Air Force-specific opportunities, announcements, and resources.

SpaceWERX.us: Space Force-specific opportunities, announcements, and resources.

DSIP Portal: Use the DSIP portal (<https://www.dodsbirsttr.mil/>) to review open topics and submit proposals.

SBIR.gov: The authoritative source for solicitations and program information across all federal agencies.

SBA Policy Directive: The U.S. Small Business Administration will publish updated implementation guidance at [sbir.gov/about/policies](https://www.sbir.gov/about/policies) once issued.

Q & A