

FACT SHEET

INDIA-U.S. DEFENSE ACCELERATION ECOSYSTEM (INDUS-X)

JUNE 21, 2023

Today, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and the Indian Ministry of Defense (MoD) launched the India-U.S. Defense Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X) to expand the strategic technology partnership and defense industrial cooperation between our governments, businesses, and academic institutions. This initiative builds on a commitment by the U.S. and Indian National Security Advisors in January 2023 to launch an “Innovation Bridge” to connect U.S. and Indian defense start-ups as part of the U.S.-India initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET). India’s Innovations for Defense Excellence (iDEX) and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) are leading INDUS-X activities for MoD and DoD, respectively.

With support from our governments, closer cooperation between our private sectors and research institutions will catalyze innovation within our defense industrial bases. Through INDUS-X, we will strengthen ties between our defense industrial ecosystems to make them more innovative, accessible, and resilient.

At the two-day catalyst event, hosted by the U.S.-India Business Council at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, defense innovation stakeholders from across our governments, academic and research organizations, investors, defense firms, technology incubators, industry associations, and other start-up enablers came together to develop ambitious initiatives to drive INDUS-X forward.

The below collaboration agenda outlines prospective actions for INDUS-X stakeholders to advance defense innovation between the United States and India. The agenda provides timelines and metrics to measure progress in implementing collaboration initiatives envisioned under INDUS-X. INDUS-X stakeholders intend to advance this collaboration agenda through the following efforts:

BILATERAL COOPERATION MECHANISM

- ▶ **Advisory Oversight:** A Senior Advisor Group (SAG) will assess the progress of the collaboration agenda and make recommendations to the defense establishments and other INDUS-X stakeholders for future work. The United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Carnegie India, USIBC, the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF), and the Society of Indian Defense Manufacturers (SIDM) will convene follow-on programming to drive implementation of the collaboration agenda and identify barriers to implementation for the SAG’s consideration.

INDUSTRY AND ACADEMIA-LED INITIATIVES

- ▶ **Mentor-Protégé Partnerships for Start-ups:** Indian and U.S. defense firms intend to identify opportunities to establish formal and informal mentoring with start-ups to assist with market access, business strategy, and technology know-how.

- ▶ **Accelerator Program for Defense Start-ups:** Hacking for Allies (H4x), the Information Technology Industry Council (ITIC), and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Hyderabad, in collaboration with additional INDUS-X stakeholders, have expressed their intent to explore opportunities to provide start-ups with jointly defined problem sets, mentoring, and exposure in defense commercialization, business development, product refinement, technology advancement, funding opportunities, and more.
- ▶ **Academic & Start-up Programming Partnerships with Universities and Accelerators:** Pennsylvania State University, IIT Madras, and IIT Kanpur have expressed their intent to lead best practice workshops with Indian and American universities and accelerator partners, such as labs, Technology Hub (T-HUB), IITs, and Hacking for India, to exchange best practices in defense innovation, fielding, and commercialization.
- ▶ **Collaboration of Start-ups with Defense Majors' Supply Chains:** Indian and U.S. defense firms may explore options for supply chain collaborations with start-ups.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- ▶ **Joint (Prize) Challenges:** DoD and MoD, in collaboration with external stakeholders, will explore joint challenges for U.S. and Indian start-ups that leverage common dual-use cases for both countries.
- ▶ **Innovation, Testing, and Certification Labs & Centers for Defense Start-ups:** DoD and MoD intend to explore pathways for start-ups to access each other's respective research and development (R&D) centers and innovation labs to support start-up collaboration. INDUS-X stakeholders also intend to identify opportunities for enhanced testing and certification capacity in India and the United States.
- ▶ **Indo-U.S. Joint Innovation Fund:** IndiaSpora, IndUS Tech Council, Forge/Coimbatore, and T-Hub/Hyderabad will engage private investors to garner support for investment in defense and dual-use start-ups. DoD and MoD also intend to explore options (e.g., public-private partnership) for a fund to support deep-tech defense start-ups.
- ▶ **Easing regulations for cross-border development & trade:** The Senior Advisor Group will recommend adjustments to respective regulatory schemes (e.g., DFARS, ITAR, EAR, Make in India) to streamline start-up innovation between the two countries and increase procurement opportunities. The MoD and DoD may refer these recommendations to existing trade dialogues, including the India-U.S. Strategic Trade Dialogue, as appropriate.
- ▶ **Standardization of Indo-U.S. certifications for technology start-ups:** MoD and DoD intend to explore standardizing certification for technologies developed by the defense innovation ecosystems of both countries, accelerating their absorption. Areas of focus include Quality Assurance (QA) parameters, certification standards, and program success memoranda.