



SOLDIER POWER COHORT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

These FAQs will be updated weekly in response to questions we receive during the open period, 10.15.2021-11.16.2021. If you don't find an answer within this document, [schedule a call](#) with our team.

FAQ SECTIONS

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.01 ABOUT THE COHORT

WHAT IS THE SOLDIER POWER COHORT?

The Soldier Power Cohort is an 8-week program to identify, explore, and develop technologies that can generate, store, manage, and distribute power to Soldiers on the move. It is created and managed by an Army Applications Laboratory (AAL) contractor team from Huntington Ingalls Industries (Huntington Ingalls or HII) in partnership with a diverse group of Army modernization and transition stakeholders. The program takes a problem-focused approach to sourcing commercial capabilities that can be converted, scaled, and integrated to transform compact expeditionary power.



WHY IS THE ARMY LOOKING FOR COMPACT EXPEDITIONARY POWER SOLUTIONS?

The U.S. Army has increasingly applied advanced technologies to create enormous force multipliers on the modern battlefield. As a result, Soldiers “on the move” in expeditionary environments now contend with the challenges of additional weight, more electronic gear, and demand for ever-increasing amounts of power. The accumulating burden of ensuring sufficient power when and where it’s needed requires next-gen tech solutions to keep Soldiers safe and effective in the harshest environments.

The Army is working to address this problem in several ways, including the Soldier Power Cohort. Doing so will require advanced technology for independent power generation, energy storage, power distribution, and power management on a distributed and dispersed basis. It will also likely include new power conversion capabilities — potentially even integration with expeditionary Army vehicles or electric grids — to provide the power for dismounted Army Soldiers; small, dismounted Soldier units; and Soldier equipment.

Ultimately, we want to use or augment organic Army equipment and advance new technologies to meet the dispersed and dismounted power needs, while lightening dismounted Soldier equipment loads, reducing resupply needs, and enhancing mobility. The ability to provide robust power, energy storage, and power resupply solutions to forward-deployed dismounted Soldiers and equipment will deliver greater agility and maneuverability to ensure increased autonomy in Army tactical and expeditionary activities.

While the current commercial market for these technologies is relatively niche, both the Army and industry are facing similar challenges in how to maintain power for technology devices when away from the grid. Various industries are facing these issues (e.g., forestry, construction, oil & gas), so the Army wants to join forces to transform compact expeditionary energy and power solutions.

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF PARTICIPATING IN THE SOLDIER POWER COHORT?

As part of the Soldier Power Cohort, companies will earn \$100,000 in non-dilutive funding to help develop conceptual designs that translate existing solutions to address this specific problem. Cohort participants will learn about the Army Soldier Power problem set directly from the key stakeholders, including Program Managers and Army subject matter experts (SMEs). Gaining buy-in from those key stakeholders is essential to accessing follow-on funding and, optimally, transitioning to a Program of Record. The Soldier Power Cohort provides a unique opportunity to present your solution to those individuals responsible for follow-on contracts — with the potential to provide continued development through a proof of technology prototype and beyond.

During the Cohort, participating companies will also connect with end-users (Soldiers), other Army decision-makers, and key stakeholders to enable product development and inform concept design papers and presentations. This approach represents unparalleled engagement with the Army community and access to an enormous TAM (total addressable market) with one of the world’s largest customers — the DoD.



Finally, Soldier Power Cohort companies will have the opportunity to validate their technology and its interoperability in the harshest environments for customers with no margin of error. Both the learnings and the use cases from this opportunity can translate into commercialization of a military-grade technology product.

WHAT AM I EXPECTED TO DELIVER?

Companies that are invited to join the Soldier Power Cohort will be expected to deliver (1) an interim draft and (2) final concept design paper/presentation to relevant Army decision makers. During this final presentation, companies should include a plan to apply their existing technology to solve the Soldier Power problem moving forward.

The concept design paper and presentation developed during the Soldier Power Cohort should provide a clear vision for how a company's solution can help address the Army's problem and how that company would modify its existing solution to fit the Army's specific needs. We anticipate that this effort will require somewhere between 250 and 500 personnel hours throughout the course of the eight weeks, although the actual hours required will differ from company to company.

Along with basic information on the company, these deliverables will include a discussion of the company's technology or technologies, how this technology or these technologies could be converted to the Army's needs, any risks and/or limitations you anticipate for the technology or technologies, and details of how the company could build a demonstrable prototype to help address the problem.

WHY IS THE ARMY LOOKING AT "NONTRADITIONALS" AND OTHER COMMERCIAL COMPANIES?

Dramatic improvements in energy and power density for low-power commercial applications have increased the amount of output achievable while reducing size and weight. Intelligent power management and distribution solutions have also been instrumental in enhancing overall efficiency (as well as convenience) for consumers.

Inviting "nontraditional" companies to participate in the Soldier Power Cohort can cut several years off the traditional Army acquisitions process. How? In part, by leveraging your cutting-edge commercial technologies, applied to specific Army problems and use cases, and through concept designs informed by end-users and stakeholders. In short, the Cohort enables the Army to change the pace of innovation.

IS THE POWER TRANSFER COHORT SUBMISSION PROCESS THE SAME AS THE SBIR PROCESS?

No. The Soldier Power Cohort is not part of the Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) program; it is a separate program managed by Huntington Ingalls on behalf of the U.S. Army.



WHEN WILL COMPANIES NEED TO SIGN NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENTS (NDAS)?

Huntington Ingalls, the prime contractor responsible for managing the Soldier Power Cohort on behalf of the Army, will include non-disclosure language in the Cohort subcontract. There are no NDAs required during the submission process, so please consider that fact when choosing to provide any technical data as part of your submission.

WILL MY COMPANY'S INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY BE IMPACTED BY PARTICIPATING IN THE COHORT?

No, your company's existing intellectual property (IP) will not be impacted by participating in the Cohort. If you are invited to join the Soldier Power Cohort, you will be asked to disclose existing IP that will be used, advised of your existing IP rights, and asked to identify what limited-use rights you wish to provide the government. That said, the government will have a use right to any new IP that you develop as part of the Soldier Power Cohort.

DOES FOREIGN OWNERSHIP DISQUALIFY MY COMPANY FROM SUBMITTING OR BEING SELECTED?

Foreign ownership does not disqualify your company from submitting or from selection for the Cohort; however, foreign nationals will not be permitted to work on Cohort-funded project activities and should not be permitted access to materials from the program.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE SOLDIER POWER COHORT?

The Soldier Power Cohort is part of a larger AAL effort focused on Soldier-enabled technologies for expeditionary power. It is envisioned that some Cohort participants will be offered the opportunity to earn additional funding — up to \$250,000 — for follow-on proof-of-technology and demonstration activities immediately following the Cohort.

Once the concept design presentations for the Soldier Power Cohort are completed, the key Army stakeholders will select solutions they would like to continue into prototype development. If selected to continue to the proof-of-technology phase, which may include additional funding for research and development, then you will be expected to deliver a functional prototype after a development sprint.

WHEN DOES THE SOLDIER POWER COHORT TAKE PLACE?

The Soldier Power Cohort is scheduled to start on 01.24.2022 and is currently expected to conclude with concept design presentations on 03.18.2022.

WHERE DOES THE SOLDIER POWER COHORT TAKE PLACE?

AAL is dedicated to the safety of its Soldiers as well as the individuals who work with us on projects. Given the global pandemic, we have designed the Soldier Power Cohort programming to be delivered virtually. But there is nothing better than face-to-face collaboration with end users who deal with these problems directly. We will be monitoring the



situation closely and, if possible, will incorporate in-person engagements into the 8-week program. If a hybrid model of virtual and in-person interaction becomes viable, the primary physical locations will be Austin, TX, and Fort Bragg, NC.

WHAT IF MY TECHNOLOGY DOES NOT FIT THE SOLDIER POWER PROBLEM?

AAL offers a variety of ways for commercial businesses to take on Army problems. New thinking. More collaboration. Better results. That's the recipe for Army modernization, and AAL is helping lead the way through our Cohort Program. The Soldier Power Cohort is part of this program, but it's not alone. Learn more about the broader Cohort Program at aal.army/cohortprogram and find other opportunities to work with AAL at aal.army/get-involved.

.02 ABOUT THE SUBMISSION PROCESS

HOW DO I JOIN THE SOLDIER POWER COHORT?

To be considered for the Soldier Power Cohort, visit aal.army/cohort/submit and follow the instructions to submit your company's solution using the simple online process.

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE TO SUBMIT?

The deadline to submit for the Soldier Power Cohort is 11:59pm CT on 11.16.2021.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I SUBMIT?

After you upload the required information, you will receive an email confirming receipt of your submission. If you don't get that email within 24 hours of submitting, send us a note at soldierpower@aal.army so we can make sure your submission is received.

Once received, our team will review your submission. We may contact you and schedule a call if we have questions or need additional information. After a thorough review, we'll invite selected companies to join the Soldier Power Cohort and notify all who submitted of their selection status within 30 days of the application closing.

DO FOLLOW-ON FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES EXIST?

Yes. The Soldier Power Cohort is part of a larger AAL effort focused on Soldier-enabled technologies for expeditionary power. It is envisioned that some Cohort participants will be offered the opportunity to receive additional funding, up to \$250,000, for follow-on proof of technology and demonstration activities immediately following the Cohort.



I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS.

If you have more questions before submitting, [schedule a meeting](#) with a member of our team.

We will also be updating these FAQs on a weekly basis to include questions that arise for which the answers may be relevant to others, so check back here regularly for any new information.

.03 ABOUT COHORT ELIGIBILITY

CAN I JOIN THE COHORT EVEN IF I DON'T ALREADY WORK WITH THE DOD?

Absolutely! The Soldier Power Cohort is designed for companies (i) that don't typically work with the U.S. federal government but may have a capability useful to the DoD, or (ii) that have done some work for the U.S. federal government but have not yet reached a critical mass of sales for sustained engagement. Frequently, these companies might be considered "nontraditional" defense vendors.

DO I HAVE TO REGISTER FOR ANYTHING BEFORE SUBMITTING?

No, there are no registrations required to submit; however, to be selected for the Soldier Power Cohort and receive funding, a company will need to be registered with the System for Award Management (SAM) and have a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code.

WHAT DEFINES A "NONTRADITIONAL" COMPANY? DOES MY COMPANY NEED TO BE ONE TO SUBMIT?

While there is not a fixed definition of "nontraditional" companies for this program, AAL considers a nontraditional company to be one that has a business model which generates revenue primarily from non-DOD activities. When speaking of nontraditional companies, it means that AAL is seeking to include – within its search for solutions – technologies from throughout the commercial industry that can be applied and converted to solve Army problems.

That said, a company does not need to be nontraditional to submit to the Soldier Power Cohort. Companies that have worked or are working with the DoD will not be excluded from consideration.

CAN TWO OR MORE SMALL BUSINESSES TEAM FOR A COHORT SUBMISSION?

Yes, but only one company will receive a subcontract for \$100,000 for the Soldier Power Cohort Program, to allocate as appropriate.



PRIOR TO ENTERING THE PROGRAM, HOW DEVELOPED DOES THE SOLUTION NEED TO BE? CAN IT BE CONCEPTUAL, OR DO WE NEED A WORKING PROTOTYPE?

Ideal technologies will have an existing commercial solution, prototype, or simulation. We are not looking for solutions that meet military specifications at this stage. Rather, the focus of this program is conversion of commercial capabilities to military use cases.

We will be evaluating submissions based on:

- Technical Capability
- Problem Relevance
- Business Viability

DOES ACCEPTANCE TO THE SOLDIER POWER COHORT DISQUALIFY MY COMPANY FROM SBIR ACCEPTANCE? IS IT ONE OR THE OTHER?

No, submitting for one does not disqualify you from submitting to another program; however, the U.S. government does not permit two contracts with the same research deliverables.

CAN A COMPANY SUBMIT ALONGSIDE A UNIVERSITY?

No. All applicants to the Soldier Power Cohort must be registered businesses without any proposed subcontractors; however, applicant companies may have universities or other technical experts involved in their activities as advisors or through other indirect engagements.

CAN FOREIGN COMPANIES SUBMIT?

Yes. To receive funding, however, companies will need a U.S.-based subsidiary or affiliate that is registered with the System for Award Management (SAM) and that has a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code.

.04 ABOUT THE USE CASE

WHAT COMPANIES SHOULD SUBMIT TO BE PART OF THE SOLDIER POWER COHORT?

The Soldier Power Cohort is designed for businesses that are developing a range of power generation, energy storage, power distribution, and power management technologies – from integrated systems, to subsystems, to components. These technologies should exceed current military standards for power and energy output based on size, weight, and performance. Ultimately, the solutions should support power delivery, energy storage, and power resupply requirements of dismounted Soldiers; small, dismounted Soldier units; and dismounted Soldier equipment.



WHAT TYPES OF CONCEPTS IS THE ARMY SEEKING THROUGH THE SOLDIER POWER COHORT?

We are looking for advanced, lightweight power and energy solutions to support robust and increasing demands for dismounted operations. These include, but are not limited to:

- Advanced power generation capabilities
- High-density energy storage
- High-capacity recharging
- Rapid power and storage device swapping
- Other power distribution approaches
- Intelligent power management capabilities

These solutions will include multiple form factors and scales of power output and storage for Soldier personal equipment and small Soldier unit equipment, including wearables, network assets, and other operational assets.

The Army is focused on meeting the need through innovative technology applications — rather than constraining specifications based on the current state of military systems — and is open to an array of generation and storage options. This can range from fuel cells to novel batteries and include a host of power distribution, resupply, and management options. That said, the solutions should support signature reduction/mitigation needs. Alternative fuels used at the Platoon level may be considered, provided that all generation sources share the fuel.

.05 ABOUT AAL, HII, AND ACME

WHAT IS THE ARMY APPLICATIONS LABORATORY?

AAL is not a laboratory in the traditional sense of the word. We don't make things — we make things possible. AAL is the Army's innovation unit and a partner for both industry and government organizations. We create practices and processes to speed capability development and turn cutting-edge ideas into real, relevant solutions for Soldiers. Learn how we do it at aal.army.

IS THE SOLDIER POWER COHORT THE MAIN FOCUS OF AAL?

No. AAL is working on a variety of problem sets in addition to this one. You can discover more open opportunities to work with AAL at aal.army/get-involved.



IS AAL AFFILIATED WITH DIU?

No. AAL is a part of the Army Futures Command (AFC), and both are headquartered in Austin, Texas. They are separate and distinct from the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU). AAL and AFC exist to modernize the Army, while DIU works on Secretary of Defense problems applicable to the entire DoD.

HOW ARE HUNTINGTON INGALLS AND ACME GENERAL CORP. INVOLVED WITH AAL?

Huntington Ingalls is the prime contractor supporting the Soldier Power Cohort and other activities for AAL. ACME General Corp. (ACME) is a subcontractor supporting HII. Both companies — HII and ACME — have duties of non-disclosure regarding your submissions to the U.S. Army.

Companies selected to participate in the Soldier Power Cohort will each receive \$100,000 under a firm-fixed-price subcontract with Huntington Ingalls Industries. This subcontract requires completion of an 8-week program that culminates in a concept presentation to Army stakeholders. The \$100,000 will be paid in two installments based on the companies meeting deliverable milestones during the program.