

NATO DIANA Announces Largest-Ever Cohort: 150 Innovators Selected Across Ten Challenge Areas for 2026 Challenge Programme

LONDON (10 December 2025) – NATO’s Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA) today announced the selection of **150 pioneering companies from 24 NATO countries** to participate in the 2026 Challenge Programme.

NATO DIANA connects companies with **military end-users, mentors, and investors**, accelerating the development, validation, and adoption of their innovations to help NATO tackle urgent operational challenges and maintain a decisive edge in defence technology.

The selected innovators will participate in NATO DIANA’s Accelerator Programme to develop their dual-use technologies to address ten **critical defence and security** challenges, including advanced communications and contested electromagnetic environments, autonomy and unmanned systems, energy and power, biotech and human resilience, and critical infrastructure and logistics. Starting in **January 2026**, the selected companies will receive **contractual funding** and gain access to DIANA’s expanding network of **16 accelerator sites and more than 200 test centres** across the 32 NATO nations.


"DIANA’s mission is to find the most innovative companies, help them advance their solutions and grow their business, and get the technologies we need into the hands of NATO operators. Over the next year, these innovators will accelerate breakthrough technologies that can help to transform how the Alliance defends against current and emerging threats," said James Appathurai, Interim Managing Director of NATO DIANA.

NATO DIANA offers innovators a unique combination of testing opportunities, expert mentorship and operational insight through a network of accelerator sites and test centres across the Alliance. DIANA provides real-world validation and opens rapid adoption and commercial pathways across all NATO nations, in support of the Alliance’s mission to safeguard the freedom and security of its one billion citizens.

The full list of innovator companies selected for the cohort can be found [here](#).

Quick facts about the NATO DIANA 2026 Innovators Cohort

- DIANA is announcing the next round of companies that will join its 2026 Challenge Programme.
- DIANA received a record of **3,680 submissions** from companies across NATO member states for this year’s challenge call.
- Each company will receive contractual funding and will join one of 16 DIANA-affiliated accelerators based throughout the Alliance.
- They will be working on solutions across 10 challenges areas drawn from key priorities identified by Allies. They are:
 - Energy and Power

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- Advanced Communication Technologies
 - Contested Electromagnetic Environments
 - Human Resilience and Biotechnologies
 - Critical Infrastructure and Logistics
 - Operations in Extreme Environments
 - Maritime Operations
 - Resilient Space Operations
 - Autonomy and Unmanned Systems
 - Data Assisted Decision Making

More information about the challenges can be found at [DIANA | Challenges](#). For any questions on DIANA's announcement, media or guidelines, please contact press@diana.nato.int.

MORE ABOUT NATO DIANA

NATO DIANA finds and accelerates cutting-edge technologies to deliver battle-winning defence and security solutions for the Alliance, while fostering deep-tech innovation. As a cornerstone of NATO's innovation and technology strategy, DIANA brings together world-class talent and the latest advancements to maintain the Alliance's technological edge. Leveraging a network of leading accelerator sites, test centres, expert mentors, and Allied expertise across 32 nations, DIANA empowers innovators working at the intersection of defence readiness, commercial potential, and technological breakthroughs.