A complex network diagram with numerous nodes and connecting lines, rendered in shades of gray, occupies the top half of the slide.

Army **Innovation** Competitions for **Transformative** Technology Solutions

Dr. Matt Willis

Director, Army Prize Competitions and Army Applied SBIR Program



BECOMING A BETTER PARTNER TO SMALL BUSINESSES

By understanding and addressing its pain points, the Army has developed itself into a more attractive business partner. Initiatives Include:

Understand how a startup's "funding runway" constrains its ability to navigate a long award process.

Advertise the program effectively to small businesses and **have a positive and attractive offer ready** to raise the odds that the best companies choose the Army to be among their business partners.

Deliver quickly on the Army xTech & SBIR Program's strengths so that partners are postured for transition, aligned with integrators, increasing the potential for Army program acquisition contracts.

Reduce operational complexity and barriers to entry to craft a good experience for commercial partners. →



Change processes and language and improve responsiveness to create a positive user experience.



Partner with companies who can succeed in commercial industry as well as with the government.



Improve access to Army people, problems and data, while reducing restrictive requirements.



Release topics on a rolling basis to better reflect how technology challenges manifest within the Army and create multiple entry points for companies.



Create a SBIR Contracting Center of Excellence dedicated to ever-improving and expediting the contracting experience for small businesses.



Ensure partnerships are a stepping-stone to transition to Army programs of record and/or further non-SBIR R&D funding.

ARMY xTECH PROGRAM

The xTech Program, led by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, manages the Army's prize competitions to award and accelerate transformative technology solutions that can help solve Army problems.

Provides:

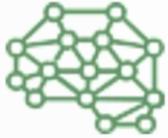
- Non-dilutive seed prizes.
- Comprehensive feedback from Army experts
- Direct exposure to Army and commercial stakeholders
- Networking, education and mentorship opportunities
- Alignment with Army priorities and customers

Aims:

- Connect with non-traditional businesses to spur innovation
- Break down barriers to working with the Army
- Accelerate technology development for the Army
- Propel American business toward enduring commercial viability and success

PRIORITY TECHNOLOGY ECOSYSTEMS

We work with **independent technology scouts** to focus on **five technology ecosystems** with rapid innovation and market growth in the private sector. Honing our expertise in these key areas will maximize the likelihood of successful transition and integration with Army programs.

 Artificial Intelligence / Machine Learning	 Autonomy	 Sensors	 Climate & Clean Tech	 Immersive & Wearables	 Contested Logistics/ Sustainment S&T
<i>Automatic Detection</i> <i>Biometrics</i> <i>Synthetic Data</i> <i>Training Algorithms</i>	<i>Robotic Platforms</i> <i>Unmanned & Optionally Manned Vehicles</i> <i>Resiliency & Survivability</i>	<i>Targeting</i> <i>Detection</i> <i>Real-Time Data Fusion</i> <i>Data Distillation</i>	<i>Climate Technology</i> <i>Energy Resilience</i>	<i>Augmented Reality</i> <i>Virtual Reality</i> <i>Mixed Reality</i> <i>Wearable Technologies</i>	<i>Additive Manufacturing</i> <i>Advanced Materials</i> <i>Communications</i> <i>Supply Chain Tech</i>

INCENTIVIZING **ARMY INTEGRATORS**

- In October 2022, HON. Camarillo, Under Secretary of the Army, announced pilot initiatives to incentivize major weapons systems integrators to collaborate and integrate technologies from small and nontraditional innovation firms.
- These initiatives will incentivize integrators and prime contractors to transition innovative technologies from pilot programs, prototype projects, R&D projects and/or SBIR|STTR projects to scale to capability, software or service acquisitions.

**xTechPrime
Competition**

**Army SBIR
Catalyst**

Project VISTA

Army IP Cadre

**Army Tech
Marketplace**

INCENTIVIZING ARMY INTEGRATORS – LAUNCHING 2023

xTechPrime

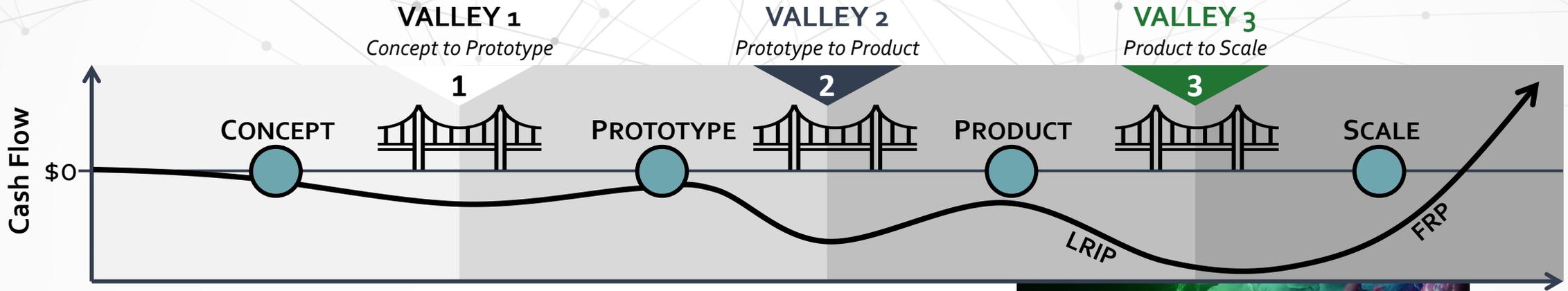
- Small businesses paired with prime contractors to develop technology prototypes
- Collaboration and integration into existing integrator-managed projects
- **Awards:** Cash prizes, Direct to Phase II SBIR awards up to \$2.0 million

Army SBIR Catalyst

- Matching SBIR funds with Army acquisitions funds and Prime Integrator funds
- Transition of SBIR prototypes in support of the Army of 2030
- **Awards:** Phase II SBIR awards up to \$15 million for prototype development, maturation/risk reduction, and demonstration

FOCUSED TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENTS FOR TRANSITION

Companies that develop critical technologies must cross three (!) Valleys of Death¹:



TECH | SEARCH



Time
TECH | SBIR
PACIFIC



U.S. ARMY
SBIR

**ARMY APPLICATIONS
LABORATORY SPARTN**

TECH | INTERNATIONAL
ADVANCED MANUFACTURING AND MATERIALS

TECH | PRIME



¹ Gwarda-Gruszczynska, 2019. "Valleys of Death" in *Creating, Commercializing, and Diffusion of Key Enabling Technologies* in Springer Proceedings in Business and Economics.

xTECHSBIR PACIFIC

The U.S. Army's xTechSBIR Pacific Competition invites small businesses in Alaska, Hawaii and Washington to develop solutions that support the military's long-distance strategy in the Pacific.

- Submissions are open March 9 – April 20, 2023.
- xTech will be awarding up to \$800k in cash prizes throughout the competition and the Army SBIR program will be awarding up to \$250k each in Phase I SBIR awards or up to \$1.9M each in Direct to Phase II SBIR awards.
- Finalists will be invited to participate in an xTech Accelerator, offering educational webinars, mentorship and community networking and engagement opportunities with Army experts to drive technology transition.

Challenge Areas of Interest

1. Supply Chain/Logistics
2. Sustainment and Climate
3. Communications
4. Internet of Things (IoT)/Sensing
5. Information Advantage

UNCLASSIFIED//PUBLIC RELEASE



WORK WITH US

Visit www.xtechsearch.army.mil to learn more about the Army xTech Program

- **Current Army xTech Competitions:**
 - **xTechSBIR Pacific:** Advanced Manufacturing and Materials
 - Submission Period: 9 MAR – 20 APR
- **Upcoming Competitions:**
 - **xTechPrime:** Opportunity for prime contractors to partner with small businesses
 - **xTech Autonomy:** Launching in 2023
 - **xTechSearch 8:** Open-topic competition, launching later in 2023

EMAIL US!

Army SBIR: usarmy.pentagon.hqda-asa-alt.mbx.army-applied-sbir-program@army.mil

Army xTech: usarmy.pentagon.hqda-asa-alt.mbx.xtechsearch@army.mil

Visit www.armysbir.army.mil to learn more about the Army SBIR|STTR Programs

- **Current Army SBIR|STTR Opportunities:**
- **Phase I: Army Tech Marketplace:**
 - Pre-release until 8 MAR
 - Open-submission period: 9 MAR- 11 APR
- **Upcoming Opportunities:**
 - New Topics in pre-release on 9 MAR

Visit SAM.gov to learn more about:

- **Current Army SBIR|STTR opportunities**