



Backgrounder

Innovation for Defence Excellence and Security (IDEaS) Program

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As outlined in Canada’s defence policy, [Strong. Secure. Engaged](#), adapting and innovating quickly are crucial to developing and maintaining capabilities that address the challenges presented by today’s evolving global defence and security environment. To this end, innovation, knowledge, and problem solving are essential for Canada and our allies to mitigate threats and meet evolving defence and security needs.

In that context, the Innovation for Defence Excellence and Security (IDEaS) program will foster creativity and ingenuity in Canada by bringing together networks of experts, providing support and opportunities to innovators, and by facilitating the integration and adoption of new capabilities for the Canadian Armed Forces and public safety and security communities. Innovators can put forward their best solutions to solve defence and security challenges through competitive processes, and advance their development and implementation by putting them directly into the hands of the CAF and public safety community for testing.

Some examples of where DND will be seeking innovative solutions include support to families; the health and wellbeing of CAF members; recruitment, training, and retention; air, land and maritime sensors; cyber security; and more.

Investing in innovation

To develop these new capabilities, the Government of Canada will invest, through the IDEaS program, a total of \$1.6 billion into Canada’s defence and security innovation community over a period of 20 years. This includes funding of \$313 million over the first five years, allocated as follows:

Fiscal Year	Funds allocated
2017/2018	\$ 3.5 million *
2018/2019	\$ 47.5 million
2019/2020	\$ 87 million
2020/2021	\$ 88 million
2021/2022	\$ 87 million
IDEaS planned spending over first five years	\$ 313 million

*2017/2018 figures are actual expenditures related to program development.

IDEaS program elements

More and more often, defence and security innovation is found outside of government laboratories, and within industrial, academic or even private settings. IDEaS is open to the broad innovation community and brings together individuals from small and large industry, academia, not-for-profit organizations, as well as individuals working from their very own home – the “basement innovator”.

The program offers eight important elements as collaborative tools to foster new solutions and help resolve defence and security challenges. IDEaS supports the development of solutions from conceptualization through to prototype testing and capability development.

All innovators will have equal opportunity to present their solutions through the following:

1. **Ideation:** brings together multi-disciplinary teams of innovators and operators to help refine various aspects of the defence and security challenges;
2. **Competitive Projects:** innovators present their solutions toward defence and security challenges. IDEaS helps mature their solutions into prototypes and potential capabilities;
3. **Innovation Networks:** connects innovators with better opportunities to support new and existing networks;
4. **Contests:** provides grant prizes for the successful demonstration of promising solutions;
5. **Sandboxes:** innovators demonstrate and test their prototypes with an opportunity to receive feedback on their applicability in a defence and security setting;
6. **Innovation Assessment and Implementation:** procures limited numbers of prototypes for evaluation in a realistic operational environment with direct feedback provided to innovators;
7. **Mobility:** allows for active exchange of personnel to share expertise build capability; and
8. **Integrator:** allows for DND experts to follow projects and seek where the innovations might best be directed towards solving defence and security challenges.

Through this new collaborative model, IDEaS will provide benefits to Canada, to the defence and security communities, and to the broad innovation community by:

- accelerating access to new defence and security solutions;
- positioning Canada's defence and security communities at the forefront of emerging science and technology trends;
- ensuring CAF operational relevance and interoperability with key partners and allies;
- enhancing Canada's ability to eliminate or mitigate emerging threats; and
- providing transparent and equal funding opportunities to innovators to help them mature and share their defence and security solutions

Developing the IDEaS Program through a consultative approach

The IDEaS program framework and business model were developed following a series of consultations with domestic and international partners including the United Kingdom, United States and Australia. Experts also met with commercial organizations and innovation hubs in Canada and the United States to better understand their tools and programs. The subsequent

analysis and best practices have been applied to the Canadian context and the development of the various IDEaS components and concepts.

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