

plan for engaging that office in the program's implementation or has outlined an innovative approach to technology transfer that has the potential to increase or accelerate technology transfer outcomes and can be adopted by other qualifying institutions;

“(ii) can assemble a project management board comprised of industry, start-up, venture capital, technical, financial, and business experts;

“(iii) has an intellectual property rights strategy or office; and

“(iv) demonstrates a plan for sustainability beyond the duration of the funding from the award, which may include access to venture capital.

“(B) Such other criteria as the Secretary determines necessary.

“(5) USE OF AWARD.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the funds from an award may be used to evaluate the commercial potential of existing discoveries, including activities that contribute to determining a project's commercialization path, including technical validations, market research, clarifying intellectual property rights, and investigating commercial and business opportunities.

“(B) LIMITATIONS.—

“(i) The amount of an award may not exceed \$1,000,000 a year.

“(ii) Funds from an award may not be used for basic research, or to fund the acquisition of research equipment or supplies unrelated to commercialization activities.

“(d) QUALIFYING INSTITUTION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘qualifying institution’ means a non-profit institution, as defined in section 4(3) of the Stevenson-Wylder Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3703(3)), or a Federal laboratory, as defined in section 4(4) of the Stevenson-Wylder Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3703(4)).

“(e) AUTHORITIES.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary may use the following authorities:

“(1) Section 1599g of title 10 of the United States Code, relating to public-private talent exchanges.

“(2) Section 2368 of such title, relating to Centers for Science, Technology, and Engineering Partnerships.

“(3) Section 2374a of such title, relating to prizes for advanced technology achievements.

“(4) Section 2474 of such title, relating to Centers of Industrial and Technical Excellence.

“(5) Section 2521 of such title, relating to the Manufacturing Technology Program.

“(6) Section 225 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (Public Law 115–91; 10 U.S.C. 2359 note).

“(7) Section 1711 of such Act (Public Law 115–91; 10 U.S.C. 2505 note), relating to a pilot program on strengthening manufacturing in the defense industrial base.

“(8) Section 12 of the Stevenson-Wylder Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3710a) and section 6305 of title 31, United States Code, relating to cooperative research and development agreements.

“(f) TERMINATION.—The pilot program conducted under this section shall terminate on September 30, 2024.”

#### DEFENSE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT RAPID INNOVATION PROGRAM

Pub. L. 111–383, div. A, title X, §1073, Jan. 7, 2011, 124 Stat. 4366, as amended by Pub. L. 114–92, div. A, title II, §216, Nov. 25, 2015, 129 Stat. 769; Pub. L. 114–328, div. A, title II, §213, Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2048, which related to the establishment of a competitive, merit-based program to accelerate the fielding of technologies developed pursuant to phase II Small Business Innovation Research Program projects, technologies developed by the defense laboratories, and other innovative technologies (including dual use technologies), was repealed by Pub. L. 115–232, div. A, title II, §224(b)(1), Aug. 13, 2018, 132 Stat. 1684. See section 2359a of this title.

#### § 2359a. Defense Research and Development Rapid Innovation Program

(a) PROGRAM ESTABLISHED.—(1) The Secretary of Defense shall establish a competitive, merit-based program to accelerate the fielding of technologies developed pursuant to phase II Small Business Innovation Research Program projects, phase II Small Business Technology Transfer Program projects, technologies developed by the defense laboratories, and other innovative technologies (including dual use technologies).

(2) The purpose of this program is to stimulate innovative technologies and reduce acquisition or lifecycle costs, address technical risks, improve the timeliness and thoroughness of test and evaluation outcomes, and rapidly insert such products directly in support of primarily major defense acquisition programs, but also other defense acquisition programs that meet critical national security needs.

(b) GUIDELINES.—The Secretary shall issue guidelines for the operation of the program. At a minimum such guidance shall provide for the following:

(1) The issuance of one or more broad agency announcements or the use of any other competitive or merit-based processes by the Department of Defense for candidate proposals in support of defense acquisition programs as described in subsection (a).

(2) The review of candidate proposals by the Department of Defense and by each military department and the merit-based selection of the most promising cost-effective proposals for funding through contracts, cooperative agreements, and other transactions for the purposes of carrying out the program.

(3) The total amount of funding provided to any project under the program from funding provided under subsection (d) shall not exceed \$6,000,000.

(4) No project shall receive more than a total of two years of funding under the program from funding provided under subsection (d), unless the Secretary, or the Secretary's designee, approves funding for any additional year.

(5) Mechanisms to facilitate transition of follow-on or current projects carried out under the program into defense acquisition programs, through the use of the authorities of section 2302e of this title or such other authorities as may be appropriate to conduct further testing, low rate production, or full rate production of technologies developed under the program.

(6) Projects are selected using merit-based selection procedures and the selection of projects is not subject to undue influence by Congress or other Federal agencies.

(7) A preference under the program for funding small business concerns.

(c) TREATMENT PURSUANT TO CERTAIN CONGRESSIONAL RULES.—Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to require or enable any official of the Department of Defense to provide funding under this section to any earmark as defined pursuant to House Rule XXI, clause 9, or any congressionally directed spending item as defined pursuant to Senate Rule XLIV, paragraph 5.

(d) FUNDING.—(1) Subject to the availability of appropriations for such purpose and to the limitation under paragraph (2), the amounts authorized to be appropriated for research, development, test, and evaluation for a fiscal year may be used for such fiscal year for the program established under subsection (a).

(2) During any fiscal year, the total amount of awards in an amount greater than \$3,000,000 made under the program established under subsection (a) may not exceed 25 percent of the amount made available to carry out such program during such fiscal year.

(e) TRANSFER AUTHORITY.—(1) The Secretary may transfer funds available for the program to the research, development, test, and evaluation accounts of a military department, defense agency, or the unified combatant command for special operations forces pursuant to a proposal, or any part of a proposal, that the Secretary determines would directly support the purposes of the program.

(2) The transfer authority provided in this subsection is in addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense.

(Added Pub. L. 115-232, div. A, title II, §224(a)(1), Aug. 13, 2018, 132 Stat. 1683; amended Pub. L. 116-92, div. A, title VIII, §878(a), Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 1530.)

#### TRANSFER OF SECTION

*Pub. L. 116-283, div. A, title XVIII, §§1801(d), 1842(b), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 4151, 4244, provided that, effective Jan. 1, 2022, with additional provisions for delayed implementation and applicability of existing law, this section is transferred to chapter 303 of this title, as added by section 1842(a) of Pub. L. 116-283, inserted after the table of sections, and redesignated as section 4061 of this title. See Effective Date of 2021 Amendment note below.*

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 2359a, added Pub. L. 107-314, div. A, title II, §242(a)(1), Dec. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 2494; amended Pub. L. 109-163, div. A, title II, §255(a), Jan. 6, 2006, 119 Stat. 3180; Pub. L. 109-364, div. A, title X, §1071(a)(2), Oct. 17, 2006, 120 Stat. 2398; Pub. L. 110-181, div. A, title II, §233, Jan. 28, 2008, 122 Stat. 46; Pub. L. 110-417, [div. A], title II, §253(b), Oct. 14, 2008, 122 Stat. 4402, related to Technology Transition Initiative, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 112-81, div. A, title II, §251(a)(1), Dec. 31, 2011, 125 Stat. 1347.

#### AMENDMENTS

2019—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 116-92, §878(a)(1), inserted “phase II Small Business Technology Transfer Program projects,” after “projects.”

Subsec. (b)(3). Pub. L. 116-92, §878(a)(2)(A), substituted “\$6,000,000.” for “\$3,000,000, unless the Secretary, or the Secretary’s designee, approves a larger amount of funding for the project.”

Subsec. (b)(7). Pub. L. 116-92, §878(a)(2)(B), added par. (7).

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 116-92, §878(a)(3), designated existing provisions as par. (1), inserted “and to the limitation under paragraph (2)” after “for such purpose”, and added par. (2).

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2021 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 116-283 effective Jan. 1, 2022, with additional provisions for delayed implementation and applicability of existing law, see section 1801(d) of Pub. L. 116-283, set out as a note preceding section 3001 of this title.

### § 2359b. Defense Acquisition Challenge Program

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—(1) The Secretary of Defense, acting through the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, shall carry out a program to provide opportunities for the increased introduction of innovative and cost-saving technology in acquisition programs of the Department of Defense.

(2) The program, to be known as the Defense Acquisition Challenge Program (hereinafter in this section referred to as the “Challenge Program”), shall provide any person or activity within or outside the Department of Defense with the opportunity to propose alternatives, to be known as challenge proposals, at the component, subsystem, system, or system-of-systems level of an existing Department of Defense acquisition program, or to address any broader functional challenge to Department of Defense missions that may not fall within an acquisition program, that would result in improvements in performance, affordability, manufacturability, or operational capability of that acquisition program or function.

(b) PANELS.—The Under Secretary shall establish one or more panels of highly qualified scientists and engineers (hereinafter in this section referred to as “Panels”) to provide preliminary evaluations of challenge proposals under subsection (c).

(c) PRELIMINARY EVALUATION BY PANELS.—(1) Under procedures prescribed by the Under Secretary, a person or activity within or outside the Department of Defense may submit challenge proposals to a Panel, through the unsolicited proposal process or in response to a broad agency announcement.

(2) The Under Secretary shall establish procedures pursuant to which appropriate officials of the Department of Defense may identify proposals submitted through the unsolicited proposal process as challenge proposals. The procedures shall provide for the expeditious referral of such proposals to a Panel for preliminary evaluation under this subsection.

(3) The Under Secretary shall issue on an annual basis not less than one such broad agency announcement inviting interested parties to submit challenge proposals. Such announcements may also identify particular technology areas and acquisition programs or functions that will be given priority in the evaluation of challenge proposals.

(4)(A) The Under Secretary shall establish procedures for the prompt issuance of a solicitation for challenge proposals addressing—

(i) any acquisition program for which, since the last such announcement, the Secretary concerned has determined under section 2433(d) of this title that the program’s acquisition unit cost or procurement unit cost has increased by a percentage equal to or greater than the critical cost growth threshold for the program (in this section referred to as a “critical cost growth threshold breach”);

(ii) any design, engineering, manufacturing, or technology integration issues, in accordance with the assessment required by section 2433(e)(2)(A) of this title, that have contributed significantly to the cost growth of such program; and