



NSIN Propel Background:

Propel is a program within NSIN's Venture Portfolio that partners with commercial startup accelerators to provide solutions to the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) by rapidly maturing dual-use companies. This approach de-risks the search for emerging technology and uses a proven strategy to accelerate novel solutions relevant to the DoD. By working with commercial accelerators, Propel helps units, commands, and program offices discover and shape emerging technologies in response to the real-world needs of the DoD.

Applicants for NSIN Propel undergo a rigorous selection process to form a cohort focused on DoD challenges. Through a multi-month process, with the guidance of mentors from the commercial sector, academia, private capital, and the DoD iteration sponsors, cohort members improve their technology, strengthen understanding of customer needs, and build a team into a viable dual-use business. The result is a small business that is much more prepared to work with the DoD and

succeed in the commercial market. Accelerator programs culminate in a demo day when the startups show their progress to prospective customers and private sector investors.

About NSIN Propel Hawaii 2024: Building upon the momentum of last year's iteration with PACFLT, NSIN launched NSIN propel Hawaii 2024 with PACAF. The accelerator page can be found here: <https://nsin.mil/events/2024-06-21-propel-hawaii/>

NSIN Propel Hawaii 2024 Propel Objectives:

- Recruit top emerging startups nationally to enhance PACAF's capabilities.
- Foster collaborative iteration between founders, PACAF, and other DoD stakeholders for product refinement and demonstrations.
- Prepare the cohort to successfully pursue government R&D contracts and experimental opportunities.
- Connect the cohort with investors to secure trusted private capital for scaling.
- Educate the cohort on navigating DoD complexities and establishing pathways for technology transition.
- Coordinate gatherings of end-users, program offices, industry representatives, and investors to collectively achieve objectives.

Key Dates:

May 29: Launch Open Call

June 4, 6: Government Stakeholder Info Session

Register here: <https://airtable.com/appCPHLsfMDDQBOq6/shrAOsB1zWhOXI5II>

June 6: Public Info Session

Register here: <https://airtable.com/appCPHLsfMDDQBOq6/shrC3JVvEL3tc8zIQ>

June 21: Applications Due

Jul 1 - 19: Downselect

Jul 16 - 17: Selection Committee

July 24: Program Start / Virtual Kickoff

Week of Aug 12: In-person Kickoff in Hawaii *aligning with PACAF schedule*

July- October: In Session

Oct 27 - 29: *HTDC Pacific Tech Conference at the Hawaii Convention Center*

October 30: Demo Day in Hawaii (*Location TBD*)

Previous Demo Day Videos:

[NSIN Propel Sizzle Reel](#)

[2021 New York Demo Day](#)

[2022 New York Demo Day](#)

[2023 Hawaii Demo Day](#)

[2023 USSOCOM Demo Day at Gillette Stadium](#)

Mission Partner Role and Integration Points:

NSIN Propel's primary objective is to **Accelerate to Mission and Market** through four scalable pillars that align with PACAF's priorities and tech focus areas:

1. A Trusted Network
2. Customer Discovery
3. Experimentation
4. Access to Capital

Several integration points exist that directly impact the outcomes of the program and collaboration opportunities for the cohort. Together, NSIN and Decisive Point will provide PACAF S&T and the 613th AOC with all of the information needed to maximize participation.

Historically, Mission Partner involvement has included the following:

- Discussion and Review of requirements and transition pathways
- Iteration and Curation of the Tech Focus Areas (*in-progress*)
- Selection Committee Downselect Participation
- Providing gov to gov back up for introductions to relevant program offices or codes. The accelerator team brings a robust network but seeks input from the mission partner on additional stakeholder to bring into the down select process, for tech interchange and attend events
- Providing a mission overview to the cohort
- Supporting tech interchange for the cohort

- Recommending the top performers in the cohort to participate in experimentation or follow-on collaborations

Both NSIN and Decisive Point will act as a force multiplier, bringing their network and aligning stakeholders to support the program. This will include recruiting interested SMEs to sit on the Selection Committee. This Committee serves as the first entry point for interested end-users to work alongside NSIN and PACAF S&T and the 613th AOC . Often selection committee members will stay involved throughout the duration of the accelerator - meeting with teams, designing use cases, and attending events. The selection committee is a 4-6 hour time commitment during the course of the week in which the top percentile of applicants virtually pitch and are formally evaluated.

Program Summary:

NSIN and Decisive Point (delivery partner) will maximize Propel's three-month timeframe by packing in robust programming. This approach ensures that cohort companies benefit from comprehensive support and engagement with PACAF S&T and the 613th AOC and a wide spectrum of dual-use stakeholders.

Virtual Kick-off: In the first week the cohort will be brought together for a program overview and motivational guest speaker from PACAF S&T and the 613th AOC . The goal of this first meeting is to (1) give the cohort a full understanding of the calendar, events, and expectations, (2) meet their fellow cohort companies and the accelerator team, (3) hear from the mission partners, and (4) build a sense of mission and understanding of what it means to be a company in the national security innovation base.

In-Person Launch Event: Gathering the cohort in-person at the program's outset will foster camaraderie among teams, increase the likelihood of partnerships, and enhance mission partners' investment in program success. The kickoff event will serve as more than a gathering for immediate business opportunities; it will also facilitate small group discussions, meaningful iterations on product development, and allow the cohort to solidify plans for integrating and implementing technologies. Whenever possible, Decisive Point will leverage other innovation events related to PACAF S&T and the 613th AOC or specific geographic regions as force multipliers.

Group Workshops: Cohort companies will attend a 2-hour workshop each week. The group workshops are themed around a curriculum topic and include relevant speakers or panels, virtual small group breakouts, and collaborative review of pitch decks, proposals, and business development materials. The group sessions are dynamic and fast-moving, providing a platform for interactive discussion, and an opportunity to build camaraderie. Speakers are DoD end-users, investors, alumni, business leaders, and dual-use subject matter experts. We continuously update themes and online resource toolkits around the workshops to incorporate recent news and updates impacting the dual-use space.

Collider Events: Throughout the program, there will be a minimum of three collider events, each dedicated to customer discovery. These events, encompassing (1) investors, (2) industry primes, and (3) end-users, are conducted either in-person or virtually. The primary objective is to allow the cohort to receive feedback from investors, explore collaborations with commercial partners, and iterate with warfighters on use cases. For virtual colliders, Decisive Point leverages breakout rooms on platforms like Zoom to facilitate seamless customer discovery interactions. In the case of in-person events, Decisive Point employs small group sessions or conference rooms, allowing companies to circulate and engage effectively.

Experimentation Events: Experimentation events play a pivotal role in helping startup founders validate their technology by offering a structured and interactive environment for testing, learning, and refining their innovations. This setting facilitates immediate user feedback, supports iterative development, validates proof of concepts, and provides opportunities for determining the next steps. Decisive Point maintains a calendar of early-stage experimentation events and assists cohort companies in preparing applications for attendance. Whether experimentation occurs during the program or afterward, Decisive Point consistently brings alumni back for experimentation cycles. Past experimentation events include: NPS Joint Interagency Field Experiment (JIFX), AFRL Future Flag 2022, AFRL Future Flag 2023, POST Field Experimentation, SOF AT&L Technical Experimentation (TE), DHS NUSTL events, Air Force Combat Controller Field Events, and PACFLT testing events.

Demo Day: The attendance for Demo Day has grown remarkably since 2021, consistently averaging over 100 attendees. Positioned as the culminating event of the NSIN Propel accelerator, Demo Day will serve as the platform for cohort companies to showcase their technologies through operational pilots, demonstrating their preparedness for field-based demonstrations. Extensive preparation and logistical efforts lead up to Demo Day, with a primary focus on refining and practicing pitches with cohort companies. The event will commence with a motivational guest speaker, often a distinguished figure such as a flag officer or astronaut. Subsequently, cohort pitches are tailored for the dual-use investment community, DoD customers, and industry stakeholders present. Each cohort member will seize the opportunity to demonstrate their technology and engage in networking within the event space. Demo Day stands as the definitive moment in the program, marking the culmination of collective efforts and advancements made by the cohort. When venue space allows, NSIN Propel alumni are invited to take part in Demo Days.

Supporting Partners:

Below is a list of relevant organizations that the accelerator team will engage for involvement throughout the program. The accelerator team welcomes warm introductions and recommendations for additional stakeholders the mission partner feels would bring value to the program.

AFRL Information Directorate
All AFLCMC PEOs

ACC - ACE
AMC & AFSOC - Logistics
AFCEC - Air Force Civil Engineering Center
AFCS - Air Force Agile Combat Support
UH- Applied Research Lab UARC
Naval X Tech Bridge
DIU On-Ramp Hub
Hawaii Technology Development Corporation (HTDC)

Tentative Experimentation Opportunities:

Bamboo Eagle
Future Flag at AFRL
JIFX at NPS
Neptune Falcon/Neptune Hawk
Gray Flag 2024 Conference at Port Hueneme and Point Mugu (13-27 Sept 2024) POC: MR. Kevin Ruddell SOCPAC S&T
Shadow Operations Center- focal point for experimentation, rapid development, and test support to JADC2 technical solution and TTPs for Multi-Domain Operations Center for the Future

About NSIN: NSIN is a program office in the U.S. Department of Defense, nested within the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU). We are set up to collaborate with a wide variety of innovators to include universities, researchers, students, entrepreneurs and start-ups. We create opportunities for collaboration across communities and connect those that might not traditionally work in national security. Together, we help drive national security innovation and develop technologies that directly support the individuals responsible for protecting our country.

Lead Execution POCs:

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About Decisive Point (Delivery Partner): Decisive Point is a venture capital firm investing in deep-tech innovations for security, health, energy, and infrastructure. Decisive Point has operated five iterations of NSIN Propel since 2021 for USSOCOM SOF AT&L S&T, PACFLT N6, and AFRL Information Directorate. Decisive Point on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBDiIMBY20A>. Decisive Point team: <https://www.decisivepoint.com/team>

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Pacific Air Forces Science & Technology and the 613th Air Operations Center (Mission Partners): PACAF, in coordination with other components, allies, and partners, provides USINDOPACOM with continuous unrivaled air, space, and cyberspace capabilities to ensure regional stability and security.

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