



The US Defense Department and Israel Ministry of Defense Seek Startups with Groundbreaking Technologies to Fight Terrorism

Launching CTTSC3 - the "2018 Combating Terrorism Technology Startup Challenge"

Tel Aviv. January 21, 2018 – The US Department of Defense, Combating Terrorism Technical Support Office, together with the Israel Ministry of Defense, Defense Research and Development Directorate, and the MIT Enterprise Forum of Israel, today announced the launch of CTTSC3, a unique contest for startups with technologies that can help defeat terrorism. Over \$200K in prizes will be awarded to the most promising startups.

The US Defense Department is holding this contest in Israel for the third time because of the reputation of the Israeli startup ecosystem, as well as the unique combating-terror and security expertise that Israeli entrepreneurs bring to the table. The contest reflects the realization that startups can play a game-changing role in combating the constantly evolving threat of global terrorism. As terrorists become ever more sophisticated, technological innovations become an increasingly critical component of detecting and defeating them.

This year the challenge is divided into two tracks: The first track is the General Technologies Track. This track is open to startups in any technology domain. Prior finalists in the General Track have included innovations in surveillance, social media analytics, image and video understanding, cybersecurity, drones, robotics, personal protection, biometrics, reconnaissance, and detection of explosives, water contamination, and hidden threats.

The second track is the Urban Navigation Technologies Track. This track focuses on innovative technologies for navigating without GPS - an increasingly important issue for special forces, law enforcement, and other combating terrorism professionals who need to operate in indoor or other environments where GPS is not available. Entries in this track might include location services based on beacons, technologies incorporating pre-loaded maps, technologies that estimate a user's position via dead-reckoning or step-counting, or any other technology for navigating or positioning with no GPS.

Both tracks are open to all startups, entrepreneurs, and research groups worldwide.



"Previous competitions proposed some great ideas and we funded several innovative startups, which look for collaboration and funding opportunities to realize the full potential of their initiatives" says **Brigadier General (Ret.) Dr. Daniel Gold, Head of Directorate of Defense Research and Development, Israel Ministry of Defense.**

"We chose Israel as the location for this contest because of the breadth, depth, and creativity of the local ecosystem" says **Adam Tarsi, International Program Manager, US Department of Defense, CTTSC.** "The best part of my relationship with Israel is the ability to find solutions that I wouldn't have found in my own backyard." Tarsi further explains the Defense Department's approach in developing win-win partnerships with innovative startups: "The scourge of terrorism impacts us all and we can use the brainpower that they are developing. They can still make market, win resources, and be successful in their primary customer market while supporting U.S. and Israeli government needs."

Gideon Miller, Chairman of the CTTSC stated: "This contest reflects how governments are increasingly turning to the startup ecosystem which is able to develop and deploy innovations far faster and more cost-effectively than traditional large defense-contractors can. It also reflects the trend of governments moving to adapt technologies from the commercial world, rather than developing solutions from scratch." Miller adds: "The contest is a unique opportunity for early stage startups. Besides the prize money, it provides extraordinary exposure to the resources and requirements of potential sponsors across the US Government, as well as other customers, investors, and partners worldwide."

The program has been extraordinarily successful, both for the Defense Department sponsors and for the startups involved says **Ayla Matalon, Executive Director of the MIT Enterprise Forum of Israel.** "The increasing need for innovative technologies in the struggle against terrorism is creating major opportunities for Israeli startups, and we see a rapidly growing response by Israeli entrepreneurs to meet this challenge. Three times the number of startups entered CTTSC2 as entered CTTSC1, thanks to the tremendous exposure to US and other funding bodies that participants received, and we expect this trend to continue. This year we expect several hundred entries", she adds.

When presenting the prizes at CTTSC2, **United States Ambassador to Israel, Daniel B. Shapiro** remarked: "It is no accident that the challenge is again being held here in Israel – known as the "start-up nation" for your embrace of technology and prowess in its development, and, unfortunately, also a place where the consequences of terrorist attacks are well-known." "What



makes today's event unique is its focus on leveraging the power of entrepreneurship to advance security efforts. In this field, not only are companies pursuing what makes sense for their business, but also what makes the world a safer place where democratic principles can thrive.”

The winner of CTTSC2, held in 2016, was the Israeli startup Duke Robotics, developer of 'The Future Soldier' robotic weaponry system on a drone platform. In 2015 the first prize was awarded to InSoundz, a startup whose technology zeroes in on and isolates specific voices of interest no matter how noisy the environment. Other prize-winners have included InnerEye, a brain-computer interface technology for helping analysts quickly review massive amounts of data, Imagry, a breakthrough in the artificial intelligence processing of images and video feeds, and Lirhot, a technology for detecting hidden objects based on previously unexploited portions of the electromagnetic spectrum.

The deadline for entries to both tracks is March 9, 2018. Entries will be reviewed by a distinguished international panel of judges from the US Defense Department, Israel Ministry of Defense and other relevant organizations. The most promising startups will be selected to present live, at the Combating Terrorism Technology Conference, Tel Aviv University on June 17, 2018. In addition, Navigation Challenge Finalists will demonstrate their technologies in a dedicated urban navigation test facility in Israel. In each track, the winning startup will receive a \$100,000 cash prize, and the runners-up will each receive \$10,000. All participants will gain significant exposure to relevant customers and sponsors across the US and Israeli governments, as well as other international investors, customers, and partners.

For more information about the contest and how to register visit www.cttsc-x.com