

# Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA)

March 2024

## What is DIANA?

DIANA is instructed to accelerate civil-military emerging and disruptive technological solutions – particularly dual-use ones – to critical transatlantic defense and security challenges, leveraging existing elements from NATO nations and NATO bodies and guided by relevant NATO Strategies and Frameworks. It is a business accelerator, rather than a technology accelerator.

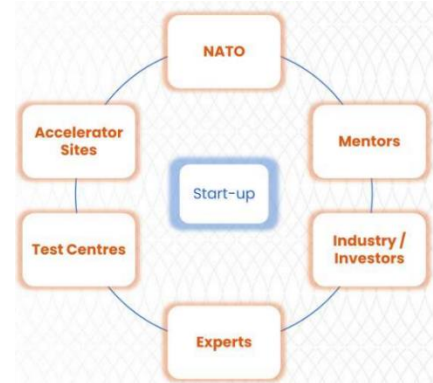
The Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA) is an initiative aimed at fostering innovation in defence and security SMEs and start-ups. Winners are provided €100,000 for the first 6 months, and following a competitive down-selection successful participants may receive up to a further €300,000 for an additional 6 months. It announces its challenges on various platforms including LinkedIn, government ministries, test centres, accelerators, and its network of national and affiliated courses ([DeepTechLab](#), Startup [Incubator](#)). This document provides a brief guide on how companies can apply for DIANA 2024 challenges.

## NATO Innovation Fund.

The NATO Innovation Fund (NIF) was introduced to further develop innovation within the alliance, specifically within the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) sectors as while they are world leading, they're often underfunded. The goal of NIF is to bring commercialization and development to companies developing emerging and disruptive technologies (EDT's). This is vital to maintain a capability advantage within both Industry, Military and commercial technologies.

## Eligibility.

Any SME or start-up headquartered in a NATO member nation is eligible to participate in DIANA challenges. While proposals from all eligible companies are accepted, the aim of the programme is to advance the development of start-ups and SMEs as they will benefit the most. The reward for winning a challenge will provide considerable funding that SME's and start-ups may struggle to secure from investors, as well as bootcamp accelerators which will help further an SME's business capabilities and development. Collaborative proposals are encouraged, although all member companies must meet the basic eligibility requirements with one of the participating companies being listed as the lead for communication, contracting, and reporting purposes should a grant be awarded. Universities and non-profit groups are currently not eligible; however, this is anticipated to change in the future.



## Application Process.

To apply for any of the 2024 DIANA challenges, companies can go to the DIANA [website](#) and click the blue 'Apply' button, they must then provide the relevant information to prove eligibility. Once a challenge problem is selected by the company, they must then submit a 1-page quad chart and a maximum 4-page proposal. Financial information is not required during the application stage.

While DIANA does not provide proposal development support, online instructions on the submission process for a specific challenge is available through the DIANA website. A good proposal was described on the website as a solution of a transformational nature or potential for high impact, the

uniqueness or novelty compared to similar solutions, the technological feasibility and the dual-use relevance. However, applicants were advised that due to the selection board containing a range of experts, operational end users and investors, the use of technical jargon and uncommon acronyms should be avoided.

As part of the application process a business will be asked to provide a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number, a unique 9-digit number for identifying businesses, or a US Unique Entity ID number. While this is technically not required for the application process, it will be required to be entitled to funding should the participating company be awarded a grant. DUNS numbers are free to obtain and are used in all NATO countries.



Register on the DIANA portal for future challenge notifications  
[www.nato-diana.org](http://www.nato-diana.org)



Learn more and APPLY here for the Challenges  
[www.diana.nato.int](http://www.diana.nato.int)



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### Selection Process.

The selection and proposal evaluations are conducted by DIANA staff, experts from the NATO scientific and technical community, operational end users and investors. DIANA ensures the utmost privacy and security of shared information through a secure portal. Once a company has been selected, they will be automatically contacted by DIANA staff with instructions on how to create a unique login account to access the secure portal.

See below for an example of the list of emerging and disruptive technologies featured in the 2023 DIANA challenges.



Sensing & Surveillance:  
Sensing the Coastal Undersea Environment



Energy Resilience:  
Harnessing Microgrid Technologies for Disaster and Conflict Recovery



Secure Information Sharing:  
Truly Reliable and Unquestionably Secure Technology