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## DAILY NEWS

# New Army tech accelerator will help develop key cyber training system

December 21, 2017 | **Justin Doubleday**

The Army's new Training and Readiness Accelerator will take part in developing a training range for the Defense Department's cyber forces.

The Army selected the National Security Technology Accelerator (NSTXL), a nonprofit consortium designed to link commercial firms to the military, to manage the new accelerator, called TReX, last month. The service entered into an other transaction agreement with NSTXL to manage the accelerator, which will "identify and develop enabling technologies necessary to broaden the modeling, simulation, and training domain and to ensure the highest level of readiness for our nation's warfighters," according to a Nov. 13 Federal Business Opportunities notice.

The scope of the OTA is "intentionally broad to cover pretty much any training and readiness activity DOD-wide" according to Tim Greeff, chief executive of NSTXL. The sponsoring office is the Army's program executive office for simulation, training and instrumentation, located in Orlando, FL, which is "probably the leading hub for that technology space in the United States," according to Greeff.

He said the accelerator's OTA has an initial five-year term and no spending ceiling.

"These tend to be multiyear, fairly large projects, so my sense is that any ceiling would have proven to be a barrier to innovation at some point just because of the size and the nature of training and readiness," he added.

The agreement was made pursuant to new OTA prototyping authority granted by the Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act. The law allows DOD to transition successful prototype projects to production without further competition, Greeff noted.

One of the first programs TReX will help develop is the Persistent Cyber Training Environment, according to Greeff. The program will provide DOD forces with a standardized cyber training system, and the Army has been tapped to lead its development.

TReX will assist in the "developmental, risk-reduction work to refine and inform the enduring requirement throughout the program life cycle" for the cyber training system, Army spokesman Rick Gregory told *Inside Defense*. The Army is seeking \$56 million in FY-18 to continue developing the system.

The Army plans to host an industry day for the cyber training system in January, according to a Nov. 29 presentation shown at the annual Interservice/ Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference in Orlando. The service will release a request for proposals in FY-19, with an award to follow in early FY-20. The presentation shows the estimated value of the award could be as much as \$750 million, with a seven-year period of performance.

Besides the cyber training system, TReX has garnered interest from other programs in the Army and within the other services.

"While the Army will certainly be managing the predominance of their prototyping related to training via TReX, there has already been significant dialogue occurring between the other military services on how to better develop operational prototypes to support training and readiness," Gregory said.

The goal of TReX is to negotiate agreements for projects within 45 to 60 days, according to Greeff. Companies have to be part of the consortium to compete for agreements under TReX, he said, but the opportunities the accelerator takes on will be posted publicly for anyone to view, he added.

"We're really building this to be an open source platform for engagement by industry and academia broadly around all of the programs that are pushed out of the TReX," Greeff said.

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