

**AIR UNIVERSITY
INNOVATION
ACCELERATOR (AU*i*X)
CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**



AU*i*X

16 February 2024

SECURITY INSTRUCTIONS

1. This document is UNCLASSIFIED and does not come within the scope of directions governing the protection of information affecting national security. Although it is UNCLASSIFIED, it is FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY and should be considered proprietary information.
2. Addressees may reproduce this document in whole or in part as necessary for CONOPS distribution or to prepare written or electronic comments.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION	5
1.1. Executive Summary	5
1.2. AUiX/The Eagle Institute Model	7
SECTION II. AUiX	9
2.1. Vision	9
2.2. Mission	9
2.3. Strategy	9
2.4. Objectives	9
2.5. Description	9
SECTION III. DOCTRINE, OPERATIONS, & MATERIALS LAB	10
3.1. Vision	10
3.2. Mission	10
3.3. Strategy	10
3.4. Objectives	10
3.5. Description	10
SECTION IV. EVENTS LAB	11
4.1. Vision	11
4.2. Mission	11
4.3. Strategy	11
4.4. Objectives	11
4.5. Description	11
SECTION V. EDUCATION LAB	12
5.1. Vision	12
5.2. Mission	12
5.3. Strategy	12
5.4. Objectives	12
5.5. Description	12
5.6. Facilities	12
SECTION VI. SPECIAL PROJECTS LAB	13
6.1. Vision	13
6.2. Mission	13
6.3. Strategy	13

6.4. Objectives	13
6.5. Description	13
SECTION VII. THE EAGLE INSTITUTE	14
7.1. Vision	14
7.2. Mission	14
7.3. Strategy	14
7.4. Objectives	14
7.5. Description	14
7.6. Facilities	14
SECTION VIII. ADMINISTRATION	17
8.1. Onboarding	17
8.2. Calendar	17
8.3. Suspense Management	17
8.4. Document Management	18
8.5. Leave	18
8.6. Position Descriptions	18
SECTION IX. CALENDAR MANAGEMENT	19
9.1. AUix Calendar	19
9.2. Personal Calendar	19
9.3. The Eagle Institute Manning Calendar	19
SECTION X. CONTRACTING	20
10.1. Background.	20
10.2. Current Execution Approach.	20
10.3. Approval for Project Requirements.	20
10.4. Finance to Contract Obligation Process.	20
10.5. Execution.	21
APPENDIX A. PROJECT INTAKE FORM	22
APPENDIX B. THE EAGLE INSTITUTE OPENING CHECKLIST	23
APPENDIX C. THE EAGLE INSTITUTE CLOSING CHECKLIST	24
APPENDIX D. WHITE PAPER	25
APPENDIX E. AUix PROJECT PHASING	27

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Executive Summary

AUiX enhances the contributions of Air University (AU) and its 11 centers to national security by transcending traditional methods and taking ideas "One Step Beyond."

The initiative seeks to uncover, initiate, and refine transformative ideas through a broad spectrum of educational programs, pioneering research, and strategic collaborations. Its core mission is to embrace a comprehensive 'whole of nation' approach in tackling both security and developmental challenges effectively.

The fundamental goal of AUiX is to act as a bridge for innovation, linking AU with key entities such as the Department of Defense (DoD), industry frontrunners, academic circles, and community groups. These collaborations are designed to be in harmony with the National Security Strategy (NSS), with the objective of creating a fertile ground for research and joint initiatives.

1.1.1 AUiX Objectives

- **Innovation Outreach:** Develop comprehensive outreach strategies to promote innovation that is symbiotic with NSS objectives.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Establish meaningful alliances with stakeholders across DoD, industry, academia, and communities.
- **Collaborative Frameworks:** Build platforms for innovation, acting in harmony with NSS objectives.
- **Cutting-Edge Competence:** Maintain expertise in the latest innovations, technologies, and strategic trends.
- **Facilitation:** Create and manage innovation-friendly workspaces designed for research, collaboration, and ideation.
- **Resource Management:** Effective management of budget, contracts, and logistics to enable AU's mission.

1.1.2. Description

AUiX functions as the catalyst for innovation at AU, supporting the 11 center commanders and commandants as a component of the AU/Headquarters team, under the direction of the Chief Operations Officer (AU/A3) in the role of AU/A39. In collaboration with stakeholders from the Department of Defense, industry, academia, and the broader community, AUiX fosters an environment that capitalizes on the extensive network of AU's students, faculty, and staff to identify and nurture promising ideas. It facilitates the engagement of leading researchers, emerging small businesses, and forward-thinking visionaries to bring these ideas to fruition. Moreover, AUiX plays a crucial role in the innovation ecosystem by disseminating knowledge, especially through educational initiatives that introduce the upcoming cadre of Airmen to state-of-the-art technologies and their applications, thereby equipping them to thrive in the increasingly knowledge-driven conflict arenas of the future.

1.1.3. AUiX Core Values

C2/A2

Creativity:

Definition: Fostering an environment where novel ideas are generated, explored, and developed.

Significance: creativity is the lifeblood. It's what drives the development of groundbreaking innovations, services, or solutions. AUiX values creativity and we will attract forward-thinking individuals and companies, ensuring a continuous flow of innovative ideas and projects.

(Virtues: Risk and Humility)

Community:

Definition: Community refers to building a network of innovators, entrepreneurs, and stakeholders who collaborate, support, and uplift each other.

Significance: A strong sense of community ensures that members are connected, supported, and understood. It promotes collaboration between different entities within AUiX, leading to synergies, partnerships, and shared success stories.

(Virtues: Engagement and Trust)

Adaptability:

Definition: Staying agile and responsive to the ever-evolving landscape of technology, demands, and global trends.

Significance: The world of innovation is fast-paced. AUiX can quickly pivot strategies, resources, and focus based on emerging technologies or shifts . This ensures we remain relevant and at the forefront of our respective fields.

(Virtues: Agile and Proactive)

Accountability:

Definition: Involves ensuring that projects are executed responsibly, resources are used efficiently, and commitments to stakeholders are met.

Significance: Accountability builds trust with partners, investors, and members of AU at large. It ensures that AUiX operates with integrity and reliability. By being accountable, we can attract investments, partnerships, and talented innovators, knowing AUiX stands by its commitments and delivers on its promises.

(Virtues Transparency and Courageous)

1.1.5. AUiX Director's Intent

AUiX is to spearhead a dynamic, comprehensive approach to advance national security objectives through interdisciplinary collaboration and technological advancement. The primary goal is to expedite problem-solving across a spectrum of critical areas, including warfare studies and operations research, by fostering an environment conducive to the rapid ideation, development, and prototyping of forward-thinking strategies and technologies.

In alignment with this, AUix is committed to integrating these innovations within the joint force, thereby enhancing our collective capacity to address complex security challenges. This involves not only the cultivation of novel solutions but also ensuring their seamless transition from concept to application within and beyond the confines of Air University. To this end, technology transfer initiatives are a cornerstone of our efforts, enabling the dissemination of advancements to wider defense and civilian sectors.

Leadership development is at the heart of the mission. AUix aims to nurture a cadre of leaders who are not only adept in their tactical and strategic roles but are also equipped with the critical and creative thinking skills necessary to navigate and shape the evolving technological landscape. This involves a deliberate focus on cultivating an ethos of innovation, resilience, and adaptability among our students and faculty.

In pursuit of these objectives, AUix will leverage the vast expertise and resources within the Air University community, as well as the extensive network of partners in academia, industry, and government. Through collaborative endeavors, educational outreach, and a steadfast commitment to excellence, AUix will strive to empower our Airmen and the broader defense community with the knowledge, skills, and technologies essential for success in the knowledge-based battlespace of the future.

Our path forward is clear. Together, we will harness the power of innovation to secure a strategic advantage for our nation, ensuring that Air University remains at the forefront of educational and operational excellence in the service of national security.

1.1.6. AUix Sub-Units and Labs

DOM Lab: Focuses on comprehensive military innovation across Doctrine, Operations, Training, Materiel, Leadership, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy.

Events Lab: Engages with communities and stakeholders through innovative methods and activities.

Education Lab: Sets the standard for modern classroom environments and reimagines educational experiences through technology.

Special Projects Lab: Builds and sustains critical partnerships for amplifying AUix's reach and effectiveness.

The Eagle Institute: Provides the physical infrastructure that is integral to AUix's mission, acting as a hub for innovation and collaboration.

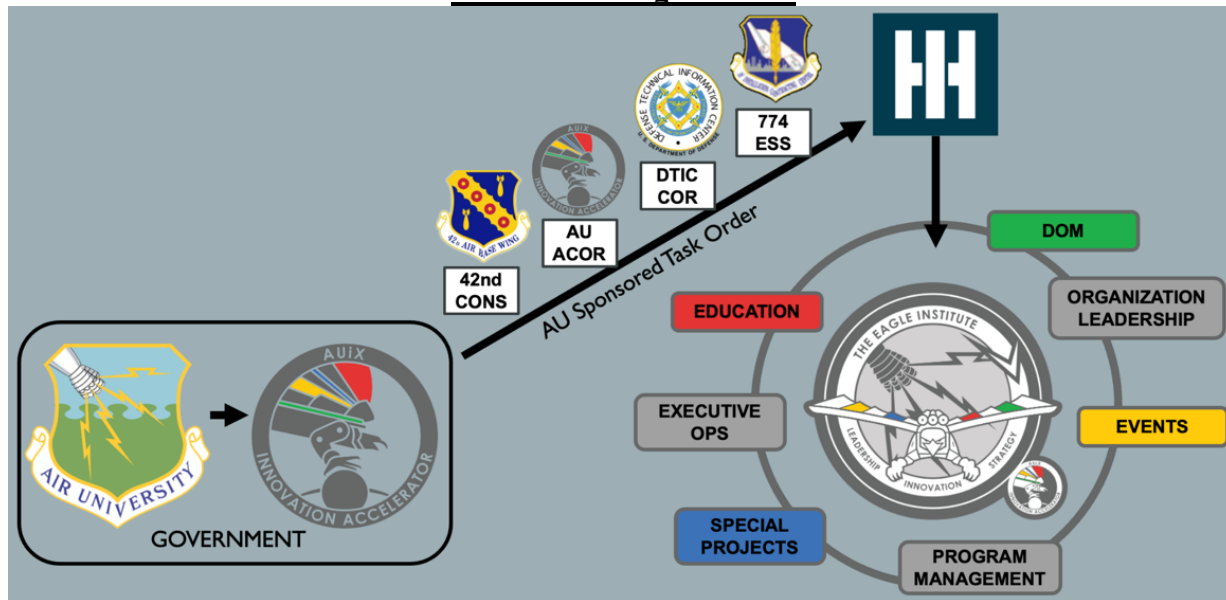
This CONOPS serves as a blueprint for AUix's commitment to fostering a culture of innovation, strategic engagement, and educational excellence, in alignment with national security objectives.

1.2. AUix/The Eagle Institute Model

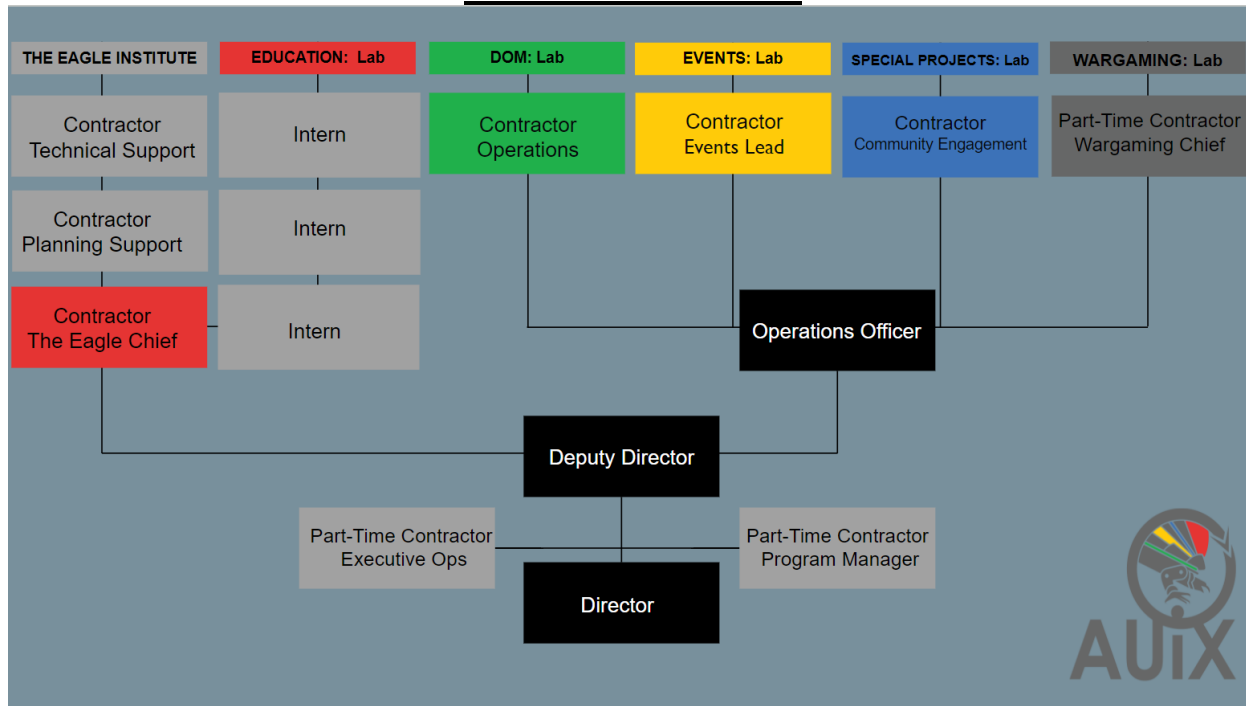
AUix conducts business inside The Eagle Institute for Leadership, Innovation, and Strategy, yet the distinction allows AUix the agility to conduct business from government-only to contractor-only operations, or anywhere in between. This is a unique model within the AU enterprise (though common for USAF materiel offices with large support contractor staffs), best described as a government led, contractor operated entity. AUix is led by government personnel,

conducting the range of official operations, and The Eagle Institute is operated by Huntington Ingalls Industries (HII), which includes subcontractors as necessary under contract through AUiX's sponsored DTIC administered AU R&D Task Order (TO). In this way, AUiX can ensure efficient and effective operations to achieve AU lines of effort under one roof, The Eagle Institute.

Contracted Organization



Lines of Communication



SECTION II. AUix

2.1. Vision

A catalyst for realizing ideas through conceptual experimentation.

2.2. Mission

Accelerating problem solving through education, communication, and engagement; taking ideas one step beyond.

2.3. Strategy

Drive innovation and connect AU with strategic partners in the Department of Defense (DoD), industry, academia, and community in accordance with National Security Strategy (NSS) objectives. Promote research and collaboration in the innovation ecosystem.

2.4. Objectives

Build outreach strategies to drive innovation in support of NSS objectives.

Develop strategic partnerships with DoD, industry, academia, and the community.

Collaborate with partners enabling innovation in accordance with NSS objectives.

Conversant in cutting-edge innovation, technology, methods and strategic engagement.

Design and maintain workspaces to promote innovation, research, and collaboration.

Manage budget, resources, contracts, and travel enabling innovation and outreach for AU and its eleven center commanders and commandants.

2.5. Description

AUix serves as the innovation accelerator for AU and its eleven center commanders and commandants under the Chief Operations Officer (AU/A3) working with partners in the DoD, industry, academia, and community. AUix creates a space to leverage AU's massive student, faculty, and staff population to source ideas of merit, activating those ideas by hosting the best researchers, small businesses, and visionaries. AUix shares insights within the innovation ecosystem, particularly through educational outreach exposing the next generation of Airmen to emerging technologies and applications enabling them to compete in the knowledge-based battlespace of the future.

SECTION III. DOCTRINE, OPERATIONS, & MATERIALS LAB

3.1. Vision

AU's agent for Doctrine, Operations, and Materials (DOM) innovation initiatives.

3.2. Mission

Deliver innovative solutions to the warfighter through DOM initiatives.

3.3. Strategy

Analyze NSS objectives and DOM initiatives with the warfighter, connect ideas of merit with the DoD, industry, academia, and community, and prototype solutions.

3.4. Objectives

- Doctrine: Capture best practices to enable innovation.
- Operations: Focus on warfighters to innovate tools and processes to improve mission accomplishment.
- Materiel: Research, investigate, acquire new technologies and equipment to support innovation.

3.5. Description

The DOM Lab is directly linked to the warfighter, examining the needs of the warfighter to develop innovative methods to accelerate innovation and enhance the mission. The DOM Lab investigates, studies, and researches concepts from multiple sources, capturing ideas of merit to enable the warfighter to complete the mission faster, smarter, and more effectively. DOM takes properly vetted ideas, partners with various entities in academia and/or industry with the goal of improving the mission and strengthening national security objectives. The lab stays in tune with operational needs through warfighter engagement, real time feedback on materiel needs, and awareness of policy changes affecting current methods and systems.

SECTION IV. EVENTS LAB

4.1. Vision

AU's agent to connect with innovation partners.

4.2. Mission

Develop and implement innovative methods to engage audiences and communities through events and outreach activities.

4.3. Strategy

Plan and execute high value forums, connecting AU with leaders and key stakeholders in the DoD, industry, community, and academia.

4.4. Objectives

- Promote AU innovation.
- Connect AU with innovation partners.
- Plan and execute events with cutting-edge content.

4.5. Description

The Events Lab is responsible for developing, promoting, supporting, and marketing AUiX events, projects, and experiences. The lab develops marketing strategies and campaigns across multiple platforms including social media, press releases, and the AUiX website to promote AU programs, events, and initiatives. The lab ensures event coordination between AU Public Affairs and public media to ensure alignment with the AU Commander's intent. The Events Lab also analyzes and reports on the effectiveness of marketing campaigns, providing insights and recommendations for future improvements. The lab also remains involved in AUiX projects, developing marketing programs, and evaluating new tools and technologies to improve the effectiveness of the organization's work. Finally, the Events Lab provides guidance and mentorship to AUiX Interns, developing skills and expertise.

SECTION V. EDUCATION LAB

5.1. Vision

AU's agent to revolutionize education and curriculum development through technical innovation.

5.2. Mission

Develop, deliver, and maintain a state-of-the-art classroom environment, fully equipped to transform the learning experience.

5.3. Strategy

Develop innovative educational technologies, strategies, and practices in a cutting-edge classroom environment.

5.4. Objectives

- Field and maintain a cutting-edge classroom environment.
- Prototype and test new educational approaches or technologies.
- Collaborate with teachers, students, administrators, and other stakeholders.
- Provide innovative professional development for educators.

5.5. Description

The Education Lab conducts research on various aspects of learning theories, educational strategies, student engagement, education technologies, and curriculum development. Collaboration efforts aim to understand educators' needs, evaluate the impact of innovations with various research methods, and share the latest research findings with strategic partners, incorporating feedback into the lab's work. The Education Lab also advocates for changes to educational policy, improving teaching and learning at the enterprise level. By fostering innovative methods of teaching and learning, the lab will inspire critical thinkers to take ideas of merit "one step beyond."

5.6. Facilities

The Eagle Institute, embodies AUiX's strategy: building partnerships in the local community and diversifying the learning experience across the educational spectrum. The Education Lab will conduct business virtually and within the philosophical ecosystem of the Praxeum classroom. Praxeum works closely with Echo Lab and Chimaera to provide a well-equipped, flexible workspace to include:

- Multiple interactive TV panels with integrated presentation/mirroring and video conferencing
- Virtual Reality headsets for simulations and exploration.
- 3D printers, coding, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) kits, drones, Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities, and much more.

SECTION VI. SPECIAL PROJECTS LAB

6.1. Vision

AU's agent to connect with innovation partners and to develop new ideas.

6.2. Mission

Build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders in the DoD, industry, community, and academia to diversify, propagate, and enhance the reach of AUiX innovation programs.

6.3. Strategy

Develop outreach projects, programs, and activities to reach target audiences with key messages.

6.4. Objectives

- Develop and implement education and outreach programs.
- Build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders.
- Evolve AUiX outreach projects, programs, and activities.
- Identify opportunities for expanding the AUiX mission.

6.5. Description

The Special Projects Lab is responsible for leading, vision setting, overseeing, and managing the development and implementation of projects and programs to engage key audiences for AUiX. The lab implements a multitude of diverse outreach initiatives to achieve AU's strategic goals.

SECTION VII. THE EAGLE INSTITUTE

7.1. Vision

AU's innovation and collaboration space.

7.2. Mission

The physical space connecting AU with the DoD, industry, academia, and community.

7.3. Strategy

Create an environment which inspires innovation and collaboration.

7.4. Objectives

- Connect strategic partners.
- Foster innovation.
- Provide cutting-edge workspaces.

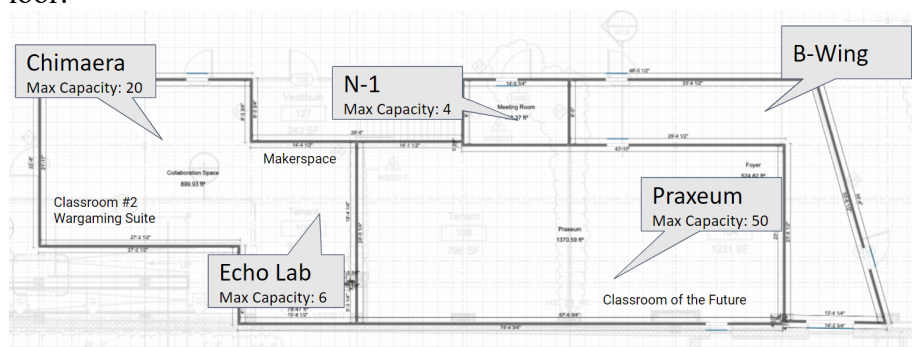
7.5. Description

The Eagle Institute is the innovation hub where the AUix team executes its mission, conducts business with the DoD, industry, academia, and the community, and fosters creative solutions in accordance with the NSS. It is an open-architecture forum designed to inspire a free flow of ideas with academic freedom. AUix holds events in The Eagle Institute such as Leadership Education Development Experience (LEDx), featuring keynote speakers and workshops to cultivate ideas within the innovation ecosystem. The Eagle Institute also incorporates multiple spaces equipped with state-of-the-art technology which can be reserved using a web-based scheduling system, "Skedda." The Eagle Institute includes a community or common space, freely accessible to the public, which allows for spontaneous collaboration opportunities.

7.6. Facilities

The Eagle Institute is in downtown Montgomery.

7.6.1. First Floor:



7.6.1.1. Chimaera

Multi-purpose classroom available to host small-scale unclassified wargames and strategy sessions.

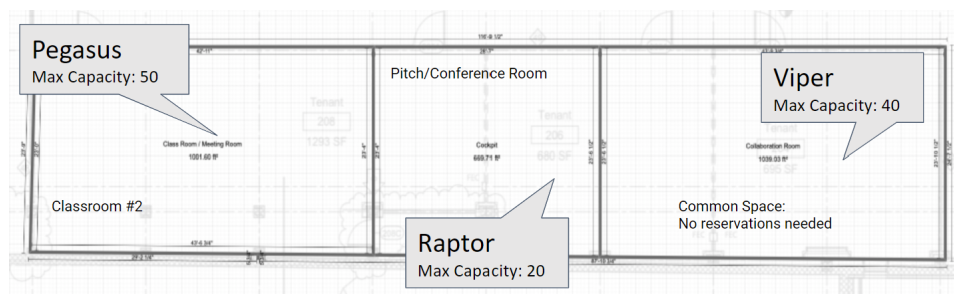
7.6.1.2. Echo Lab

Fully functional makers space providing facilities for 3D printing, laser engraving, and other fabrication equipment for ideation and prototyping. Echo Lab is available to host STEM workshops.

7.6.1.3. Praxeum

“Classroom of the Future” designed to host classes and employ innovative instructional techniques and technologies for the academic community.

7.6.2. Second Floor:



7.6.2.1. Pegasus

Multi-purpose room available for academic or innovation collaboration forums.

7.6.2.2. Raptor

Smaller classroom that is well suited for video conferencing.

7.6.2.3. Viper

Open collaboration space for walk-in discussions, could be reserved for Air University personnel with prior coordination by exception.

7.7. Operations

The Eagle Institute was designed to allow users to define and meet their own needs with the aid of state-of-the-art technology and automation. With up to five workspaces, AUiX envisions The Eagle Institute to be in use continuously to maximize connections and a free flow of ideas.

7.7.1. Events Scheduling

Events in the Eagle Institute should be planned and scheduled as early as practicable, and each event will be assigned a primary Eagle Institute point of contact (POC) to ensure continuity. The Eagle Institute POCs are responsible for contacting patrons for specific event requirements, parking, and coordination with external agencies. Events are scheduled and managed on Skedda.com which can be accessed from the Eagle website ([Link](#)).

7.7.2. Parking

The Eagle Institute recommends using local parking garages or street parking for its participants.

SECTION X. CONTRACTING

10.1. Background.

AUiX can utilize multiple contracting approaches, predicated on bona fide need of AETC/AU funding and scope of the applicable contracts. This includes both internal contracts via 42CONS (local contracting), other Air Force contracts, and inter-agency acquisition support (such as through OUSD(R&E) DTIC)). For interagency acquisition support, the applicable policy is defined via Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology, Meeting Department of Defense Requirements Through Interagency Acquisition memorandum, dated 31 Oct 2008. For example, this memorandum establishes the requirement for a 7600A Interagency Agreement to be established between the Requiring Agency (AETC) and Servicing Agency (e.g., DTIC) as well as local contracting office approval for requirements greater than \$500k.

10.2. Current Execution Approach.

For EOFY23, for the next five (5) years of period of performance, AETC has established a 7600A with DTIC for utilization of a DTIC Information Analysis Center Multiple Award Contract (IAC MAC) Task Order (TO) titled “Research and Development (R&D) for Air University Innovation Accelerator (AUix).” This TO can obligate O&M, RDT&E, and PROC funding, predicated on bona fide need of those funds (e.g., that they are being executed in accordance with the appropriation). This TO can also take funding from external sources including other USAF offices as well as any DoD or Whole of Government (WOG) source, as along as AUix concurs (including the Contracting Officer Representative (COR)) with utilization. Though DTIC is the RA, this TO (and all DTIC TOs) are serviced by the Air Force Interagency Contracting Activity (AFICA), under 55CONS at Offutt AFB, NE.

Though this DTIC TO is the first course of action for execution of selected projects, it should be noted that other contracts may still be utilized. For example, this could include utilization of a USAF Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) Phase II or III, other IDIQs, or other definitized contracts with applicable scope and available ceiling.

10.3. Approval for Project Requirements.

The TO requirement is set in the Performance Work Statement (PWS). As such, there is no other PWS that is modified or added to the TO by AFICA. Specific project Statements of Objectives (SOO) or Statements of Work (SOW) can be developed by AUix and/or its USG partners, and they should be tied to the applicable TO PWS tasks. These specific project SOOs should be sent to the TO prime contractor, as they will formulate the subcontract SOW (if applicable). Via market research, the prime contractor will follow their approved purchasing and hiring systems for identification and execution of subcontracts

10.4. Finance to Contract Obligation Process.

As the RA, DTIC accepted funds (via MIPR) on a rolling basis throughout the FY. The usual end date (EOFY) for the latest receipt of MIPRs is 31 August. However, it is well advised for MIPRs to be received well in advance of that date, given the large number of EOFY MIPRs that DTIC receives.

For the specific process, the following steps are needed:

1. AUiX (and/or partner) establishes project need and may develop project SOO
2. If greater than \$250k, AETC requires a Requirements Approval Document (RAD), which includes a Memorandum for Record (signed by the AU Director of Operations) and RAD worksheet. For both documents, AETC finance will provide a MIPR # that needs to be included. Ideally, this entire process is no more than one (1) week. If less than \$250k, no RAD or MFR is required.
3. AETC Finance then forwards the package for 42CONS for approval. Ideally, 42 CoNS approval process is no more than two (2) weeks.
4. AETC Finance transmits the MIPR and MIPR supplemental page (which breaks out Contract Line Items Numbers between labor, materials, travel, equipment, and DTIC fee) to the Alternate Contracting Officer Representative (ACOR) for the DTIC TO. Ideally, this process is no more than two (2) days.
5. The ACOR transmits the MIPR and MIPR supplemental page to DTIC for processing. Ideally, this process is no more than one (1) day.
6. DTIC accepts the MIPR and returns a 448-2 and prepares a Purchase Request (PR) for AFICA. Ideally, this process is no more than two (2) weeks.
7. AFICA obligates the funding and returns a contract modification to the ACOR. Ideally, this process is no more than thirty (30) days.
8. The ACOR returns the contract modification to AETC Finance, which allows AETC Finance to obligate the funds in the AETC system. Ideally, this process is no more than three (3) days.

10.5. Execution.

There are two major considerations for funds obligated to contract. These are (1) the bona fide need of the funds, which ties back to the Congressional direction set in the appropriation and (2) the Contract Line Item Number (CLIN) to which the funds are obligated.

For bona fide need of funds, funds must be obligated in support of projects that tie back to the appropriation. Also, upon obligation, the expenditure clock ties to the type of appropriation. For O&M, this clock is twelve (12) months; RDT&E is twenty-four (24) months; and Procurement is thirty-six (36) months. This specific DTIC TO has a single five (5) year Period of Performance (PoP) so that simplifies the process given that funds do not need to be rolled forward between annual PoPs. Especially for O&M, it is key to track the date of funds obligation and ensure the funds are expended within twelve (12) months. Note that actual invoicing can occur after that period, but the prime contractor needs the purchase approvals and labor executed within it.

For CLINs for the DTIC TO, funds are obligated to CLIN 1 for labor and materials (incidental materials and ODCs) and CLIN 2 for travel and equipment. Even after funds are expired for obligation, they can be realigned between CLINs as long as it is prior to their expenditure clock.

APPENDIX A. PROJECT INTAKE FORM

1. Determine objectives/capabilities desired.
2. Assist project/idea owner with authoring Statement of Objectives incorporating description, scope, and desired impact/result to force (5Ws).
3. Generate desired End State for AUiX to include follow on program owner, desired customer, and final disposition of prototype.
4. Establish timeline, budget, funding line and contracting vehicle.
5. Determine partners in the project.
6. Set recurring intervals for partners to provide updates to AUiX.
7. Find a sponsor for the project.
8. Add to commanders' prioritization/funding list.
9. If selected for execution, project plan built on Monday.com with necessary details added, milestones programmed to include expected end date.

APPENDIX B. AUiX PROJECT PHASING

AUiX's structured progression through the project life cycle uses stages broken down into pre-alpha, alpha, beta, and transition phases. This phasing aligns to the stages in the OV-1 depiction below. These phases, each with its distinct focus and/or testing conditions, facilitate a systematic approach to identifying, iterating, and resolving issues while aligning the project with user needs and project objectives.

1. Pre-Alpha

Pre-alpha is AUiX's ideation and conceptualization phase, where core functionalities and features are being brainstormed, drafted, and initially designed. This stage is crucial for setting a solid foundation for the project as it allows for the exploration of ideas, identification of potential challenges, and the drafting of initial solutions. This early engagement in conceptual deliberation and validation serves to mitigate risks, align the internal team, and set a clear, informed path forward as the project transitions into the alpha stage where more concrete development and internal testing commence.

2. Alpha

Alpha is a critical phase in AUiX's innovation project where partnerships with stakeholders are developed, funding is sourced, and initial model development begins. At the end of this phase, the concept or prototype lacks features, may have placeholder elements, or may demonstrate issues that could significantly impact functionality. The feedback loop is vital here as it enables the innovation team to make necessary corrections and improvements based on the findings from this testing phase.

3. Beta

Beta plays a crucial role in the product innovation process as it signifies a shift from internal development and testing to external testing and feedback collection. By expanding testing to include an external audience, a more diverse range of users can uncover issues that may not have been discovered earlier. This phase may also involve performance tuning to assess the system's capability to operate under various conditions. Ultimately, feedback gathered during testing is used to make iterations necessary for meeting the original project objectives.

4. Transition

During transition AUiX searches for internal or external stakeholders who are interested in taking the project forward into an operational or production stage. The new stakeholder assumes operational and sustainment responsibilities of the project.

