

U.S. Navy Opens Tech Bridge Network in London



The logo of the London Tech Bridge.

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Navy’s acquisition chief announced on Oct. 20 the establishment of the London Tech Bridge – the Navy’s first such innovation center outside the United States, NavalX Public Affairs said in a release.

“London Tech Bridge makes 13 overall and our first overseas location,” said James Geurts, assistant secretary of the Navy for Research Development and Acquisition. “This location emphasizes and builds on our unique partnership with the U.K. and Royal Navy and will better enable us to accelerate solutions to support our defense strategies.”

The London Tech Bridge will connect U.K. technology solutions to the Department of the Navy (DoN) and will also partner U.S. companies with U.K. industry.

NavalX, with the London-based U.S. Office of Naval Research Global, in place since 1946, explored new connections with industry startups to large businesses, academia and U.K. defense partners. Together the team aims to connect technology solutions to the Department of the Navy and harness innovation.

In London, the Tech Bridge will be working with the U.K. Ministry of Defence and the Royal Navy, combining the innovation of the two nations’ defense experts.

“The London Tech Bridge will serve as the DoN gateway to connect with international leading-edge tech companies and innovation partners to accelerate solutions to the warfighter,” said Whitney Tallarico, NavalX Tech Bridge program director. “While national security is our goal, we are

keenly aware that it takes an international team to provide stability for our world.

“Part of that stability is based on offering global citizens meaningful jobs, opportunities to work on complex problems, and providing a platform to remind us that we have friends at home and abroad who want to see our people and our economies flourish,” Tallarico said.

Initial focus areas of the London Tech Bridge will be artificial intelligence, unmanned and autonomy, biotechnology, space, and lasers/directed energy. In addition to connecting technology solutions, the London Tech Bridge will provide guidance and connections to the U.S. Department of the Navy, as well as develop the U.S. naval workforce’s abilities to leverage the network and resources in the U.K.

London Tech Bridge’s foundational partners include ONR Global, Imperial College London’s Institute for Security Science and Technology, the U.S. Embassy London’s Office of Defense Cooperation and Department of Commerce section, and NATO’s Maritime Unmanned Systems Innovation and Collaboration Cell (MUSIC²) and Innovation Advisory Board.

Furthermore, London Tech Bridge plans to work with partners from the U.K. Department of International Trade, U.K. Ministry of Defence’s Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA), Royal Navy’s Office of the Chief Technology Officer, Maritime Capabilities (MARCAP), NEMESIS Program, NavyX, and many more.

“The launch of the London Tech Bridge further solidifies our strong and historic bond with our UK partners,” said Cmdr. Albert Arnold, London Tech Bridge director. “Working together with the Royal Navy and the entire MoD, we will improve interoperability and interchangeability by innovating together, as well as reduce overall costs by combining efforts.

“It will truly be a two-way bridge moving technology and innovation in both directions, with the goal of contributing dual-use solutions to both economies,” Arnold continued. “We are extremely excited to work with innovators and technology leaders here in the U.K. to enhance the already booming ecosystem.”

Since the establishment of Tech Bridges last year, the Department of the Navy’s Tech Bridge initiative has harnessed collaboration and creativity to address naval concerns and capabilities. Due to the success of the Tech Bridges the Naval Agility Office (NavalX) has doubled the number of Tech Bridge locations. Twelve current locations, positioned around U.S. technology centers, span both coasts and include the Midwest. The London Tech Bridge is the 13th.

Notable Tech Bridge successes in the past year include funding \$45 million in projects to solve naval problems; awarding more than \$2 million in prize challenges to non-traditional industry partners; sponsoring \$37.5 million in small business innovation research targeting maintenance and sustainment; and helping to distribute over \$800,000 to COVID-19 response efforts.

The Tech Bridge hubs connect and sustain “acceleration ecosystems” in off-base locations, fostering greater collaboration. This is done by partnering with colleges and universities, research institutions, start-ups, corporations, small businesses and nonprofits, among others.