



ACQUISITION INNOVATION
RESEARCH CENTER

Curricula for Startup Business Operations, Financing, and Intellectual Property

Recommendations and Strategies for the Defense
Acquisition Workforce and Undergraduate Programs

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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*In response to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023,
Section 834(a)(1)*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report is a response to the congressional mandate in Section (Sec.) 834(a)(1) of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for fiscal year (FY) 2023 to “make recommendations on one or more curricula for members of the acquisition workforce on financing and operations of [startup] businesses.”¹ The mandate across elements of Sec. 834 emphasizes the need for innovative approaches to negotiating intellectual property (IP) and data rights in agreements with startup businesses. This research employed a variety of web-based resources to collect information, identifying a diverse portfolio of over 210 existing online courses and other educational materials.

The proposed curriculum, *Financing and Operations of Startup and Negotiating and Establishing Intellectual Property and Data Rights*, is intended to serve as a comprehensive guide for the Acquisition Innovation Research Center (AIRC) Director to formulate recommendations and enhance the existing educational offerings for the Defense Acquisition Workforce, contributing to the overarching goal of fostering innovation within the government procurement landscape.

Curricula on Financing and Operations of Startups. The exploration for a comprehensive curriculum on financing and operations involved a meticulous review of academic resources, leading to a compilation of diverse materials. Sample resources include foundational textbooks, online courses from universities, and traditional university programs. Additionally, the report analysis includes global perspectives and industry-specific training resources. The proposed curriculum in Table 1 and Table 2 of the report encompasses key elements across these resources on startup financing and operations, addressing fundamental aspects crucial for the acquisition workforce and undergraduate students.

Curricula on Negotiating and Establishing IP and Data Rights. In response to the directive for innovative approaches to negotiating IP and data rights, additional relevant courses were identified, although limited and directly related to software and software-embedded systems. Courses cover foundational aspects of IP and its applications across industries, providing a comprehensive foundation for navigating IP rights in startup agreements. Table 3 of the report lists key elements across these resources on negotiating and establishing IP and data rights. Sample resources include academic textbooks, online courses, and learning materials from diverse universities.

Finally, existing Defense Acquisition University (DAU) curricula, such as ACQ315 and CON7210, complement the proposed curricula, addressing business acumen and leadership competencies. The collaborative effort aims to enhance the acquisition workforce’s capabilities, fostering innovation in government procurement.

Additional research, analysis, and coordination is needed to compare DAU and other Department of Defense (DoD) courses with extramural opportunities; assess the relative depth, approaches, and accessibility of these options; assess the minimum level of literacy in startup business financing, operations, and IP that any or all members of the defense acquisition workforce should have; assess who needs deeper or more advanced levels of training; and consult with domain experts in the DoD, academia, or industry on these topics.

¹ See Public Law 117-263.

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