Question	Answer
The solicitation page indicates there is an active API to get additional data for test/validation. The link takes us to the static data set. Can you point us to the correct API information?	We recently removed that bullet point and there will not be an API provided. There is, however, the static data that's provided within the link on the website.
The solicitation indicates there is a $150,000 prize. However, the page also indicates that there is an OTA award associated with this effort. Is there additional funding under the OTA to further develop and deploy the solution after the prize challenge? I.e., Is there subsequent funding under the OTA program?	The $150,000 prize award is standalone and does not require any follow-on work from the awardee. Regarding follow-on Other Transactions, while we hope this challenge could lead to such opportunities, there is no specific follow-on funding or mechanism currently in place.
Is collaboration / sub-contracting with University partners permitted?	Yes, it is. Subcontracting decisions are entirely up to your company and how you choose to manage them. However, please note that the company registering for the challenge and receiving the award must be officially registered in SAM. While subcontracting is allowed, the primary awardee must meet the eligibility requirement of either U.S.-owned and operated or India-owned and operated.
Is the challenge limited to using the input sources provided (static and API) for this challenge, or are other open source input sources permitted?	You are not required to use the test data set we provided. If you can address the problem without it or prefer to combine it with other data sources, that's perfectly fine. The test data set is simply available as a starting point if you find it helpful.
If additional sources are freely available to use as input, does the government have a listing of approved data sources that participants may interact with?	We are not providing a list at this time. However, if sourcing publicly available data becomes a common challenge for many participants, we may consider sharing examples of potential data sources. This is something we'll need to discuss internally, and if we decide to move forward, we will share the information with everyone.

As mentioned earlier, all questions from this AMA will be posted on our page, along with a link to the video, the solicitation, and corresponding answers. For any questions we can't answer today, including this one, we will follow up and ensure they are addressed there. Currently, we are not providing additional resources for sourcing that specific information. |
Problem 7 on the SDA Tap Lab page identifies track reacquisition as a high priority through usage of EO, IR, RF, or Radar sensors. Will any sample data from such systems be included with this challenge?	All of the data that is going to be provided is already posted.
When will the near-real time API be provided, and can sample usage be included when available?	We are not providing an API.
What sensors will be used for detection?	Sensors need to address the specifics of how satellites are identified and tracked. The key question is whether, given a TLE or another type of orbital specification for objects passing through low Earth orbit over the Pacific Ocean, you can use that data to generate recommendations that help achieve the challenge objectives.
will the sensors for satellite detection be on another satellite or located on ground	Tracking satellites is not the focus of this. However, information about satellites and their orbits is tracked by both ground-based and satellite systems and is publicly available.
Are the selection criteria or down select scoring available?	The judging criteria used for scoring are displayed here on the slides. These criteria apply to both the initial submission and the pitch event. While we do not provide the detailed scoring rubric, the judging criteria are available and can also be found on our website
Beyond the prize pool, what long-term collaboration or commercialization opportunities will be available for successful participants?	Once you participate in one of our DIU programs, you will remain in our system, gaining continued access to updates and potential opportunities that may align with your interests. You'll become part of our network, which includes options like accelerator programs if that suits your goals.

While there is no predefined pathway to a specific opportunity after participation, long-term collaboration is a key benefit. Finalists will have the chance to engage with our DoD mission partners, opening the door for potential follow-on engagements. These are some of the advantages of participating in the challenge and connecting with our DoD stakeholders |

Question	Answer
If API is removed, how is the data provided for every 5 to 10 minutes	The provided data set is not real-time, it consists of 24 hours of continuous data collected from a real-time feed, updated every 10 minutes. This allows you to simulate real-time conditions by feeding the data into a simulation model to test how your algorithm responds over a 24-hour period.
How will the DIU and iDEX support participants in accessing necessary tools and data for real-time tracking innovation? Can you share a resources link?	The data set is provided, but we are not offering additional resources at this time. If we decide to add more information or supporting materials to assist with solution development, we will notify everyone through our website and our email distribution list
Is subcontracting/partnering with a foreign company from an allied (NATO) country allowed?	Subcontracting or partnering with other companies is allowed and described under the eligibility section, provided the lead company is U.S.-owned and operated or India-owned and operated. If the lead company receives an award, it will be responsible for managing payments to its subcontractors and partners
Quantify the "Short Duration" for the predictions to be considered by the algorithm	The short duration refers to a time period of less than one orbit, typically lasting 30 minutes to an hour. This involves tracking an orbital location, propagating it forward in time, and potentially repeating the process. The primary time frame of interest would be when a satellite passes over the Indo-Pacific region in the Western Pacific
The press release notes "Winners will be awarded part of the $150,000 USD prize pool. ". Can you share how many awards are anticipated?	We intentionally left the criteria flexible because there are instances where one solution clearly outperforms the rest, prompting the team to award that solution a larger portion—or even the entirety—of the prize pool. Additionally, we did not specify a set number of awardees, instead referring to the 'top-performing company or companies' to allow for this flexibility.
The dataset that has been provided seems to only contain atmospheric density data from the WAM model. But the context says: "The challenge is to rapidly reacquire maneuvering satellites that may be attempting to evade detection within contested space environment." What is the ephemeris data source?	For clarification: The challenge focuses on tracking non-cooperative maneuvering objects in low Earth orbit. Many factors influence this, including the spacecraft's capabilities and characteristics. The provided data primarily covers atmospheric density, though factors like drag, space weather, and other environmental conditions also play a significant role. The goal is to determine how to correlate detected objects, identifying that an object measured at one point may be the same as another observed elsewhere, even if it's attempting to evade detection
It seems this is open ended, no specific problem or data specified beyond the general tracking problem. Is up to us to pick a problem and recommend a solution for it in the pitch? Or do we have to prototype the solution and show real results? if the latter, where do we get the data for the problem?	Our goal is not to provide a solution to the problem but to highlight one of the key factors influencing variations in TLE-defined orbits. We expect experts in the field to gather relevant information to enhance our ability to detect potentially nefarious orbital variations.

Additionally, it's important to note that orbital density fluctuations can result from factors unrelated to vehicle maneuvering. We're particularly interested in distinguishing between maneuvers driven by command and control activities versus those caused by natural atmospheric density variations |
| Could you run back to the slide that specifies the requirements for the White Paper? | The white paper requirements are available on our website at nsin.mil. White Paper Submission Requirements: Teams will submit a written notional concept of operations (CONOPS) of their solution, including methods and system information and an annotated graphic/schematic illustrating the CONOPS. Example outputs from the algorithm should also be provided, along with any additional information demonstrating the capability of your solution. White papers should adhere to the following format requirements: 1-inch margins Single spaced 12-point Times New Roman font PDF file Maximum 4 pages (including graphic/schematic, excluding citations) |
| Who are the other partners aside from DIU? | U.S. Space Forces - Indo-Pacific (USSPACEFOR-INDOPAC) and the Space Domain Awareness (SDA) Tools, Applications, & Processing (TAP) Lab and support from India's Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) |

Question	Answer
More info on my previous question: Prime/Lead company would be US-owned/operated/based company, partner/subcontractor would be a company from Spain.	That shouldn't be an issue as long as the prime company is U.S.-owned and operated or India-owned and operated. However, I want to reiterate that only the prime or lead company registering and submitting the solution will receive payment. While you can list partners or collaborators in your submission form, it will be the lead company's responsibility to distribute funds among team members
The challenge description on NSIN page contained the ionospheric density line	It looks like someone may have confused the terms 'ionospheric' and 'neutral atmospheric density. It appears to be a simple typo and a wording issue that we will update on the website.
You will be making three awards, correct? just confirming what I heard I think.	The solicitation specifies that awards will be given to the top-performing company or companies. This wording was intentional to allow flexibility based on the quality of submissions. If one solution significantly outperforms the others, we may award only that company. Conversely, there have been instances where we've awarded up to five companies. The final decision will depend on the quality of the solutions and the scoring process
Is the white paper and pitch deck supposed to be a proposed solution or a solution that we're supposed to implement and show results from between now and those dates?	The intent of this is not to develop an operational solution at this stage. Rather, it is to demonstrate a strong approach, present a concept of operations (CONOPS) that could be deployed in the future, and show some level of performance through a test algorithm. We are not expecting immediate or near-term deployment. Instead, we are focused on exploring innovative approaches to a problem that has yet to be solved.
I understand that the prize pool was left ambiguous intentionally but should teams provide solutions in the $10,000 range or the $100,000 range? This seems to be an important metric to understand for any proposing team. Can this please be clarified for us proposers?	That is up to the discretion of the team submitting.
https://nsin.mil/events/2025-01-09-us-india-satellite-tracking-challenge/ In this link under the heading Problem Statement, under the Subheading Context - 4th bullet point, the ionospheric dataset information is written. Can you clarify if ionospheric density is relevant to the challenge?	This will be corrected on the website.
How many finalists will be selected to participate in the pitch?	We've specified that up to 10 companies will be selected as finalists. While our goal is to include 10, if fewer viable solutions are identified, the number of finalists may be reduced accordingly.
Can you explain briefly about the interfacing standards that should be delivered with the algorithm	Variations in orbits resulting from your algorithm could be provided in a format compatible with existing publicly available orbital data standards. That said, this is intended to be an open-ended process. If your solution is selected and shows promise, further refinement would be expected. We're not looking for a fully operational interface at this stage,keeping the approach simple and neutral initially is recommended.
Given that iDEX is a part of this, what about prime participants registered in India?	We're definitely hoping to receive participation from both sides, along with the other eligible groups mentioned earlier. To make attendance more convenient, we're hosting a second AMA, likely next week, tailored to better accommodate their time zone. We'll share the details on our website and send an email notification to our distribution list.
You mentioned that Density factors are affecting acquisition and propagation of RSOs - to layer on to pete's question from earlier; what is the ephemeris source? And what is the baseline we're being compared to?	Our primary contribution is recognizing orbital density as one of many factors that can influence orbital variations. It is included it as a potential consideration in the investigation but acknowledge that several external factors may affect accuracy to varying degrees. It's up to the participants to determine their starting point and decide which external variables to account for during propagation. Ultimately, we are seeking a model capable of factoring in maneuvers and intentional evasion actions
Are you interested in a standalone application or a micro service or is that up to our discretion?	This is at the discretion of the proposers.

Question	Answer
Can developing HW solutions (e.g., sensors) be part of the pitch? Or does it have to be SW algorithms?	Ideally, the challenge is seeking a software-based solution that leverages readily available data or builds on an existing model.
Are these slides available for us to download as well?	A recording of the AMA will be posted on the NSIN and DIU event page for this challenge, with a link provided on the website. Additionally, a document containing the questions and answers will be uploaded. Any unanswered questions from today's session will be addressed and included there as well. Everyone will have access to both the video and the Q&A document.
Are US-owned and operated companies and India-owned and operated companies the only ones eligible? Any other countries?	According to the eligibility criteria outlined in the solicitation, companies from NATO, the Five Eyes Alliance, USMCA, and TPP countries are eligible to participate as part of a team. However, to clarify, the lead company applying to the challenge must be U.S.-owned and operated or India-owned and operated.
If we have additional questions in relation to the challenge after this session, what is the best way to get those answered?	Please email, challenges@nsin.mil for any other additional questions or inquires.
What is the point of awarding to more than one company if all participant solutions are observed?	In some cases, multiple companies present strong, viable solutions, and we aim to recognize and reward their performance accordingly
Does the solution need to predict evasive action and maneuvers (i.e., essentially be a prediction solutio, or can it be solution that detects maneuvers and evasive action after these events and tries to resolve those (i.e., match post-event tracks to prior known tracks)? Or is either of these ok?	Either option seems like it would be a strong proposal.
The technical specifications as stated in the website mentions an algorithm that can produce high quality state vectors or TLEs propagated for a short duration into the future. What is the expected forecast window for the target object state vectors?	I believe what was stated earlier referred to one revolution or one pass around the Earth, with the duration depending on the object's altitude. The longer the time between passes, the less likely we are to reacquire the object. Therefore, we are seeking a solution capable of redirecting the search during the next orbital revolution.
Can you elaborate the term "uncertainty information" of high-quality state vectors mentioned in the technical specifications	The intent is generally to identify variations in orbital paths and assess the quality of the associated data. In a short time frame, we may detect changes in the orbit without knowing the cause. It will be up to individual proposers to define what this means in terms of orbital precision and how they intend to address it.
If we are a US based company does a subcontractor from India strengthen our chances?	No, it doesn't impact scoring because it's not part of our evaluation criteria. All scoring is based solely on the specified criteria. While having representation from both countries would be a great success story, it doesn't provide any additional advantage in the scoring process.
Problem 10 on the SDA Tap Lab page outlines a classification of maneuvers of interest to the government. Does the government have any specific metrics associated with these maneuvers, such as Probability of Detection, False Alarm Rate, Track Coverage, or other relevant Technical Performance Measures (TPMs) that would apply to this challenge?	These metrics are intentionally left open-ended to give solution providers the flexibility to define them according to their approach. The ultimate assessment will be based on the solution's practical usefulness and potential for application, whether immediate or long-term. While no specific metrics are required, incorporating a well-justified range of metrics,especially when used in combination, could strengthen a proposal's overall viability.