Where Innovation Meets Mission Impact: NVBDC 3.0 Bridges New Pathways to Federal Opportunities

AUSA 2026 highlights emerging defense contracting opportunities and new ways veteran-owned businesses can compete in the federal marketplace.


Elaine Taylor, NVBDC Executive Director

TROY, MI, UNITED STATES, October 26, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The 2026 Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Annual Meeting and Exposition highlighted an important shift in federal procurement: the growing emphasis on commercial innovation, private-sector partnerships, and faster solutions to national defense challenges.

Representing the National Veteran Business Development Council (NVBDC), Executive Director Elaine Taylor attended the 2026 AUSA Annual Conference to strengthen relationships with military leadership, defense contractors, and industry partners. She was joined by a number of NVBDC-Certified businesses, reinforcing the interest of veteran owned businesses of all in both the commercial as well as the Federal sectors

AUSA Highlights

The 2026 AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition emphasized the growing integration of commercial solutions into Army modernization, acquisition, and supply chain strategy. Key themes included leveraging commercially developed technologies to accelerate innovation, adopting flexible acquisition approaches to reduce barriers for nontraditional suppliers, and expanding public-private partnerships to strengthen manufacturing capacity and supply chain resilience. The Army's increasing focus on rapid delivery, scalable capabilities, and operational readiness reinforces the importance of businesses that can translate proven commercial

solutions into military applications.

For veteran-owned businesses, this shift creates opportunities to compete in the federal market by demonstrating technical capability, commercial performance, and mission-focused execution. The Army's Strategic Capital Initiative, xTech competitions, industry partnerships, and small-business matchmaking programs provide potential pathways for companies to enter the defense market.

NVBDC 3.0: From Certification to Opportunity

The developments outline during this year's AUSA Annual Conference align with NVBDC 3.0, the organization's expanded strategic direction focused on moving beyond certification to strengthen business development, supplier readiness, innovation, and access to new markets.
Through corporate matchmaking, strategic partnerships, AI education, digital readiness initiatives, and expanding federal engagement, NVBDC is working to help veteran-owned businesses become more competitive and better connected to procurement opportunities.



Jim Cowper, Chair of the NVBDC Board of Directors.



2026 AUSA Annual Meeting & Exposition

For veteran-owned businesses pursuing federal contracts, key first steps include registering in SAM.gov, developing a strong capability statement, monitoring federal solicitations and relevant Commercial Solutions Openings (CSOs), and obtaining SBA VetCert certification when eligible.

SBA VetCert covers both Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSBs) and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSBs), with certification required to access applicable set-aside and sole-source opportunities under the VA's Veterans First Contracting Program and relevant federal SDVOSB contracting programs. NVBDC certification complements these efforts by validating veteran ownership for corporate supplier recognition and commercial procurement

opportunities, providing a pathway to market access and business growth beyond federal contracting alone.

By helping businesses understand these pathways and connect with government buyers and prime contractors, NVBDC can play an important role in translating business capabilities into contracting opportunities.

Building the Next Generation of Veteran Business Opportunities

Elaine Taylor's participation at AUSA reflects NVBDC's commitment to ensuring veteran-owned businesses have a voice in conversations shaping the future of defense procurement and commercial innovation.

As federal agencies seek new solutions and stronger domestic supply chains, veteran entrepreneurs bring valuable leadership, technical expertise, and operational experience to the marketplace.

The mission of NVBDC 3.0 is clear: move from certification to opportunity, from connections to contracts, and from veteran business recognition to measurable economic growth.

Through strategic engagement and expanded market access initiatives, NVBDC is helping position veteran-owned businesses to compete, innovate, and contribute to America's economic and national security.

The key takeaway is that veteran-owned businesses should position themselves as capable, competitive solutions providers within the DoD and Army’s evolving defense ecosystem. By aligning their capabilities with military needs and actively pursuing government and industry partnerships, they can capitalize on emerging opportunities without assuming that veteran ownership alone provides a contracting advantage.

About NVBDC
The National Veteran Business Development Council (NVBDC) is a nationally recognized third-party certification organization dedicated to creating corporate contracting opportunities for veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses. Through rigorous certification standards, corporate partnerships, education, and business development initiatives, NVBDC helps veteran entrepreneurs compete and grow.

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