

How IWTSD and Wazoku Are Shaping the Future of Defence Innovation

In today's rapidly changing defence landscape, innovation is no longer limited to internal research labs or traditional contractors. The Irregular Warfare Technical Support **Directorate (IWTSD)**, in partnership with Wazoku, are using **open innovation** to crowdsource solutions for some of the sector's most complex challenges. By engaging a global network of innovators and problem-solvers, IWTSD is speeding up development and expanding beyond traditional, closed-off methods to access a wider and increasingly diverse pool of expertise. [Their Over-the-Air Siphon and Measurement Challenge](#) offered a total award amount of \$50,000, and garnered significant interest with impactful outcomes, ultimately receiving 60 solutions submitted for evaluation.

Explore how Wazoku is helping defence organisations solve critical challenges with innovative solutions. Click here to see open defence challenges and get involved: [Defense Challenges](#).



Breaking Down Barriers: How Open Innovation Is Driving Defence Forward

Defence innovation has traditionally been slow, siloed, and risk-averse. IWTSD's partnership with Wazoku is changing this by opening up the innovation process, inviting contributors from the Wazoku Crowd to provide solutions from fresh perspectives. This allows the IWTSD to get effective results to the teams that need them—faster than ever before.





Open Innovation

Open innovation focuses on innovating with external partners.

Inflow and outflow of knowledge to accelerate innovation.

Open to licensing partnerships and other forms of collaboration.

Innovation takes place internally and with external partners.

1

2

3

4



Closed Innovation

Closed innovation focuses on a company's internal innovation process.

Knowledge sharing only takes place within the company.

Relies on intellectual property rights, patents, and other protections.

Innovation takes place exclusively within the company.

This approach helps IWTSD address critical defence needs across various Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs), from early-stage ideas to proof-of-concept and beyond. By rapidly prototyping and testing new ideas, they foster collaboration, reduce duplication, close capability gaps, and make the most of available resources.

wazoku
CROWD



Ideation
1 - 3



Proof of Concept
4 - 6



Production Ready
7 - 9



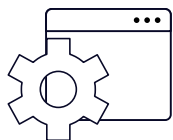
Brainstorm what we
can do

How to solve more specific
requirements

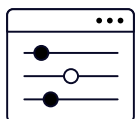
Who to collaborate with

IWTSD and Wazoku: A Look at the Challenges

Over the past decade, IWTSD and Wazoku have launched numerous defence-focused challenges, allowing Solvers to submit innovative solutions that tackle pressing defence needs. Some examples include:



Remotely Draining and Measuring Power: Aimed at finding methods to remotely de-energise IED power sources and measure remaining power without physical contact to improve threat neutralisation.



Data Ingestion and Curation for Intelligence Analysis: Sought to automate data curation to streamline intelligence analysis across various data types.



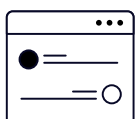
Detection of Underground Voids: Focused on exploring technologies to detect sinkholes across different soil conditions, with the goal of enhancing infrastructure resilience.



Improved CBR Protective Closure Systems: Looked to develop innovative PPE closure systems that meet strict safety standards, enhance protection, and allow for rapid prototyping.



Safer Crowd Control and Area Denial: Designed to create less-lethal solutions for crowd control that are effective in both open and confined spaces, reducing harm.



Material Mixture Identification Using Raman Spectra: A search for algorithms to improve the accuracy of chemical detection using Raman spectroscopy.



Pre-Event Insider Threat Recognition: Directed at identifying methods to predict violent behaviour using non-invasive indicators, with the aim of improving personnel safety.

How Defence Organisations Can Learn From This Model

Defence organisations worldwide face similar challenges: **how to anticipate disruptions, build resilience, and accelerate technology development**, while dealing with long timelines and evolving threats. Traditional defence research and development (R&D), which can span years or decades, struggles to keep pace with rapid global changes. The IWTSD-Wazoku partnership shows how open innovation can speed up development while lowering barriers to entry for new technologies.

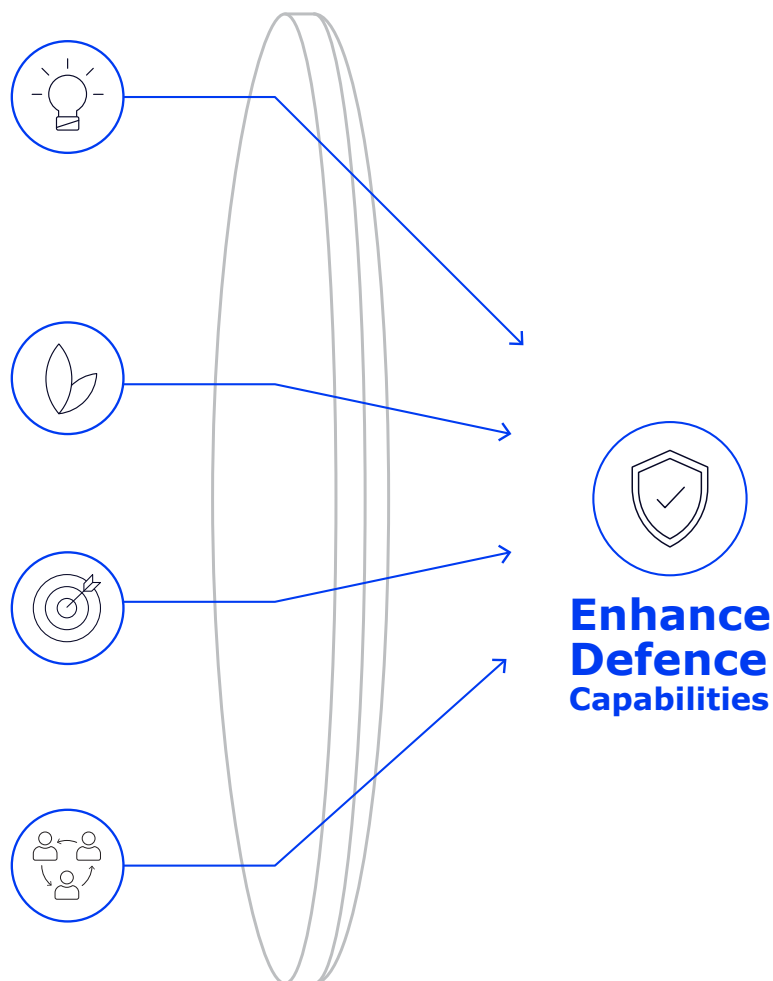
Through open innovation and tech scouting, defence organisations can:

Identify dual-use technologies that apply to both defence and commercial markets, scaling more efficiently and securely while attracting non-traditional suppliers.

Align with sustainability goals by incorporating adaptive design principles into new technologies.

Increase development visibility to build resilient-by-design capabilities that can withstand evolving threats.

Engage stakeholders early by collaborating with innovators across all TRLs, staying on the cutting edge of technology and reducing risks tied to long lead times.



As the global defence sector faces big questions about scaling innovation, improving resilience, and staying on target with sustainability, the IWTSD-Wazoku partnership offers a clear solution. Open innovation challenges have proven that global expertise can solve critical security problems in a fraction of the time traditional R&D requires. By embracing this model, defence organisations can better anticipate disruptions, accelerate new technology development, and keep pace with global transformation.

In a world where **production readiness, supply chain security, and dual-use applications** are critical, the work of IWTSD and Wazoku offers a roadmap for addressing these needs. The takeaway for the defence sector? Open innovation is not just an option—it's the future. By leveraging it, defence organisations can stay ahead of evolving threats and build adaptive, resilient solutions that will shape a more secure and prosperous future for all.

Ready to Accelerate Defence Innovation?
➔ **Contact us** to explore how Wazoku can help your organisation stay ahead of evolving threats



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