

LYNX is the Department of War's door into the defense marketplace

On January 29, 2026, the Department of War Office of Small Business Programs opened LYNX at lynxconnect.io. A company builds a profile, takes a readiness assessment, and gets an AI/ML roadmap plus partner and opportunity matching. A September 2026 SBA one-pager calls that access free and names APEX Accelerators and a Civil Reserve Marketplace Network pathway. On October 6, SBA pointed defense-industry small businesses at the same profile.

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On January 29, 2026, the Department of War Office of Small Business Programs announced LYNX. The announcement is the department release on war.gov and the same text in the Office of Industrial Base Growth newsfeed on business.defense.gov. Registration, the release says, is open at lynxconnect.io.

LYNX is a digital platform for supplier readiness, a clearer look at what a company can do, and a wider set of companies in the defense industrial base. A business starts by creating a company profile and completing an initial assessment. That assessment is the readiness baseline. It is also the list of next steps.

This paper follows those two pages, the September 2026 one-pager the Small Business Administration hosts at certifications.sba.gov, the October 6, 2026 post from @SBAGov, and the caption on the photograph. Where a sentence lives on only one of those pages, the sentence says so. Notice Nearby does not run LYNX, does not speak for the department, and does not speak for SBA.

The short version

Opened: January 29, 2026. Office of Small Business Programs announcement.

Address: <https://www.lynxconnect.io>. The release says registration is open.

First two steps: Create a company profile. Complete an initial assessment. That sets a readiness baseline and next steps.

Who it names: New entrants, small businesses, non-traditional suppliers, and growing defense contractors.

Matching: The release says AI/ML-informed roadmaps and AI-driven matching. The one-pager adds competency tagging and taxonomy mapping.

Price: The September 2026 one-pager says free access to the tools, connections, and insights. The January release does not use the word free.

Advice: The one-pager says connect with APEX Accelerators. The January release says expert support and does not name APEX.

Another pathway: The one-pager names the Civil Reserve Marketplace Network (CRMN) as a LYNX pathway. It does not publish membership rules.

A demo: The one-pager says attend a LYNX demo at business.defense.gov/training.

A mailbox: The OSBP newsfeed lists osd.business.defense@mail.mil.

SBA: SBA hosts the one-pager and, on October 6, 2026, pointed small defense suppliers at a LYNX profile. The pages do not describe a joint legal entity.

What the department said it built

The release calls LYNX a platform for companies that have technical capability and still

get lost in defense requirements, readiness expectations, and the search for a partner. The barrier it names is not a shortage of invention. It is the distance between a capability and credible participation in a mission-aligned opportunity.

That is a narrower claim than a new contracting system. The release does not say LYNX replaces SAM.gov, does not say it writes solicitations, and does not say a profile is an award. It says the department has had too little visibility into supplier readiness, and too many fragmented paths in. LYNX is the shared room it describes: a company shows readiness, and the department has a better chance of finding suppliers tied to priority missions and technology needs.

The defense marketplace has never been short of doors. It has been short of a door that tells you which shoes you still need. The January pages put that job on a profile and an assessment.

The release also places LYNX inside a broader Department of War effort to see supplier capabilities and to grow the industrial base in priority technology areas. It does not, in these pages, name the technology list.

Who it is for

The January release names four kinds of company. New entrants. Small businesses. Non-traditional suppliers. Growing defense contractors that already have a technical product and still cannot see the path from that product to a defense opportunity.

The September one-pager is wider. It says LYNX connects businesses of all sizes, whether they are experienced government contractors or new to the Department of War, with tools, insights, and opportunities. The same page says the point is to navigate the defense marketplace, build partnerships, and deliver capabilities to the mission.

Read together, the January text is about companies that are not yet comfortable in the system, and the September text refuses to make that the only audience. An experienced contractor is not turned away by the one-pager. A shop that has never had a contract is not turned away by the release. Both pages are about participation in the defense industrial base, not about a single set-aside.

The release is explicit about the failure mode it is trying to fix. A company can be good at the work and still be invisible, because nobody has a common picture of its readiness. LYNX is that picture, as the department describes it, plus a way for the company to see the same picture.

The profile

The first action on both the release and the one-pager is a company profile. The release's own list says the profile should be credible, and easy to build, update, export, and share. Those four verbs are the whole product description of the profile. Build it. Change it when the shop changes. Export it. Hand it to someone else.

A profile that can be exported is a profile that is not a hostage of the website. The release does not say which file format the export uses. It says the company should be able to take the profile with it. That matters for a teaming conversation that happens in email, or in a room, or on a prime contractor's own form.

The one-pager's version of the same idea is competency tagging and taxonomy mapping, done with AI, so the profile's capabilities line up with contracts and opportunities. That sentence is on the September page, not in the January release. The January release says the

profile increases visibility. The one-pager says the tagging is how the matching gets specific.

None of this is a promise that a buying office will open the profile. Visibility, in the release's wording, is the chance to be seen with a credible description. It is not a scheduled meeting.

The assessment, and the word free

After the profile, the release says a company completes an initial assessment. The assessment establishes a readiness baseline and identifies next steps. Later in the same release, the assessments are described as in-depth, and as the thing that identifies needs and puts actions in order.

The one-pager is the page that says the access is free. Its line is: LYNX provides free access to powerful tools, connections, and insights to help you compete, grow, and pursue new opportunities. The January release, which is the launch announcement, does not use the word free. A reader who wants the price should cite the September one-pager, not invent it from the January verb "open."

Free, on that page, means the department is not charging for the tools it describes. It does not mean a contract is free, a proposal writes itself, or a facility investment is on the house. The release talks about focusing investment on the actions most likely to advance defense participation. Investment is still the company's.

A readiness score is not a contract award. It is the department telling you which hallway you are still standing in. The pages call the output a baseline and a set of next steps. They do not publish the scoring rubric here.

What the AI is claimed to do

The January release uses a specific phrase: AI/ML-informed roadmaps that help a company focus investment on actions most likely to advance defense participation. A second phrase, in the same release, is AI-driven matching for teaming partners and opportunities. A third is evaluating opportunity fit against capabilities and readiness, so the pursuit is more strategic.

The September one-pager tightens the matching sentence. It says AI-powered competency tagging and enhanced taxonomy mapping match capabilities to contracts and opportunities, helping a company focus on winnable contracts. "Winnable" is the one-pager's word. The January release says "opportunity fit" and "mission-aligned." Those are related claims. They are not the same sentence, and this paper will not collapse them into a guarantee. Nothing on these pages says the model picks the winner, submits the offer, or knows a source-selection decision before the buying office does. The honest reading is a sorter. It is supposed to point a company at work that resembles what the company says it can do, and at partners who might need that work.

A roadmap is a map. It is not the contract. The release says the roadmap is aligned to the company's own business objectives. A company that lies on the profile will get a confident map of the lie. The pages assume the profile is the company's description of itself.

Partners, opportunities, and the CRMN line

The release says LYNX should speed the discovery of teaming partners and opportunities through advanced search and the AI matching above. It also says the platform improves

discovery and connection, with more precise partner matching and opportunity alignment tied to mission and technology priorities.

That is the marketplace half of the name people are using. The department's own headline is about entering and competing in defense markets. The one-pager's banner line is "Connecting industry to the warfighter" and "Turn readiness into action and capabilities into mission impact." The tool is described as a connection layer, not as the contract vehicle itself.

The Civil Reserve Marketplace Network appears on the one-pager and not in the January release. The one-pager's sentence is short. Use LYNX capabilities and pathways, including the Civil Reserve Marketplace Network (CRMN), to navigate the defense marketplace journey and identify actionable next steps. This paper will not invent what a CRMN application requires, who runs the network, or what a company is obligated to do after it joins. The one-pager names it as a pathway inside the LYNX journey. That is the whole of the sentence. Targeted connections, on the same one-pager, means building strategic relationships across the defense industrial base. Data-driven insights means staying informed about relevant regulations, requirements, reports, and industry developments. Those are library and introduction functions. They are useful. They are not a law firm and they are not a capture team.

Training, demos, and APEX Accelerators

The January release says companies can build capability and confidence through training resources and access to expert support. It does not, in that paragraph, name the classroom. The September one-pager does. It says attend a LYNX demo at business.defense.gov/training. It says the learning offer includes training, certifications, and resources to strengthen a team's capabilities and competitiveness. It says advisory services connect a company with APEX Accelerators and other resources to help navigate the defense marketplace and pursue opportunities.

APEX Accelerators are the one-pager's named advisors, not a sentence this paper found in the January launch text. A company that wants the January wording should say "expert support." A company that wants the September wording can say APEX Accelerators. Both can be true. They are not the same citation.

This paper did not retrieve a class calendar from business.defense.gov/training or from business.defense.gov/trainingseries/. Both addresses are the department's training pages.

The one-pager is the page that prints the demo instruction, and it prints [/training](https://business.defense.gov/training). A schedule that is not on these sources is not in this paper.

Certifications, in the one-pager's learning line, are not itemized. The page does not say LYNX itself issues a small-business certification, an 8(a) designation, or a facility clearance. It says a company can reach training, certifications, and resources. The certification, if there is one, belongs to whatever program issues it.

The two sentences the officials actually said

That is Michael Cadenazzi, Assistant Secretary of War for Industrial Base Policy, in the January 29 release. The Office of Small Business Programs newsfeed styles him as Mr. Michael Cadenazzi. The September one-pager shortens the quotation to the first sentence and styles him Hon. Michael Cadenazzi. The war.gov release uses the title without the honorific. The words of the long quotation are the same idea on each page that carries them: present the capability, order the steps, move faster toward work that matches a

mission.

James Mismash is quoted in the same release as Director of Small Business Programs. The first sentence: LYNX reflects OSBP's commitment to reducing barriers to entry and expanding participation across the defense industrial base. The second: by providing a common framework for readiness and capability, LYNX supports faster engagement, smarter collaboration, and more resilient supplier growth.

"Common framework" is the useful phrase. The department is not claiming a new statute. It is claiming a shared way to describe readiness, so a conversation between a company and a program office starts from the same checklist. Barriers to entry, in Mismash's sentence, are what OSBP says it is trying to lower. The release does not quantify the old barrier or the new one.

The one-pager also prints a line it attributes to "Contracting Command": if you are serious about government contracting, LYNX is a tool you need in your arsenal. This paper treats that as a slogan on the one-pager, not as a biography and not as a regulation. The page does not identify a person by name under that attribution.

"LYNX turns readiness into action. It's designed to help companies present their capabilities clearly, prioritize the right steps, and move toward mission-aligned opportunities with greater speed and confidence."

A photograph that is not the launch

The picture at the top of this paper was made on August 25, 2026, in Philadelphia, almost seven months after the LYNX announcement. It is a courtesy photo from the Office of the Under Secretary of War for Acquisition and Sustainment, posted on DVIDS as photo 9890610, VIRIN 260825-D-D0980-6993. The caption says U.S. Small Business Administration Administrator Kelly Loeffler spoke with James Mismash in a fireside chat titled "The Next-Gen Arsenal, Fueled by Small Business."

The same caption identifies Mismash as Deputy Assistant Secretary of War for Industrial Base Growth. The January 29 release identified him as Director of Small Business Programs. This paper does not merge those titles into one invented office. Each title is printed where its source printed it. Titles move. The sources are dated.

The caption says the conversation was about synchronizing efforts to cut bureaucratic red tape, streamline transition pipelines, and empower small manufacturers to expand production. It says the chat set up an announcement later that day: the reestablishment of the Smaller War Plants Commission, described there as a way to surge capital and expertise to entrepreneurs, manufacturers, and workers in the defense industrial base. That announcement is what the photo caption says. It is not a LYNX feature, and this paper does not have a separate commission document in front of it.

The photograph is here because it is a real Department of War frame of the small-business conversation this platform sits inside, with a credit and a date. It is not a picture of someone pressing a launch button on January 29. The DVIDS public-use notice asks news users to say that the appearance of Department of War visual information does not imply or constitute DoW endorsement. That sentence is the credit, and it is the rule.

Where SBA fits, and where it does not

SBA is in this story as an amplifier and as the host of a FAQ document. The one-pager lives at certifications.sba.gov/faq/DoW_LYNX_1-pager_Sept_2026.pdf. The file name and the page

say Department of War. They do not say SBA built the platform, owns the database, or signs the contracts a company later wins.

On October 6, 2026, the SBA account @SBAGov posted: "If you are a small business in the defense Industrial base looking for your next opportunity to supply our Arsenal of Freedom, @DeptofWar has made a direct path for you! Just follow the 3 steps below to get started with your LYNX profile today: 1) Build a company profile on" a short link. The short link on that post opens the post's photo, not a separate application page. The graphic in the photo is the September one-pager's design. It tells a company to register at lynxconnect.io, and it lists three steps: build a company profile on LYNXConnect.io, complete the readiness assessment, and use the results to reach training, find teaming partners, and connect to opportunities.

That is SBA telling a small business to use a Department of War path. It matches the framing on the department pages. It does not create a joint venture, a shared appropriation, or a new certification with two seals. A company that needs the operator should follow the release: Office of Small Business Programs, Department of War, mailbox osd.business.defense@mail.mil.

The war.gov release adds a short description of that office. OSBP, it says, expands small business participation in defense acquisition by reducing barriers, accelerating pathways, and connecting companies with mission needs. That is the office's own job description on the release. LYNX is one pathway the office announced.

What a company should do next

The pages support a plain sequence. None of the later steps replace the first two.

1. Open <https://www.lynxconnect.io> and start the company profile. The release says the profile should be something you can update, export, and share. Write the capabilities the way a buying office can read them, not the way a trade-show banner reads.
2. Complete the initial readiness assessment. The release says that assessment is the baseline and the next-step list. Keep the result. It is the document the roadmap is supposed to start from.
3. Use the AI/ML roadmap as a priority list, not as an award notice. The release says it should focus investment on actions that move defense participation. If the roadmap names a gap, the gap is the work. The roadmap is not the customer.
4. Use the search and matching tools for teaming partners and opportunities. The one-pager's version of this is competency tagging and taxonomy mapping aimed at winnable work. Compare what the tool returns with the solicitation itself. A match is a lead.
5. Go to a demo if you want a person to walk the screens. The one-pager's address for a LYNX demo is <https://business.defense.gov/training>. The department also publishes a training series at <https://business.defense.gov/trainingseries/>. This paper does not have the week's agenda.
6. If you want an advisor, the one-pager points to APEX Accelerators and other resources inside the platform. Ask them about the defense marketplace. Do not ask them to pretend a profile is a contract.
7. If the screen and the one-pager disagree, write osd.business.defense@mail.mil. That is the contact the OSBP newsfeed prints. Ask the office that runs the tool. Do not ask a social-media repost to settle a registration rule.

A company that already sells to the department can still use the profile. The one-pager

says the platform is for experienced contractors and for companies that are new. Updating an exportable profile is a smaller job than learning the vocabulary from zero. It is still the job the release describes.

What this is not

LYNX, on these sources, is not a set-aside, not a multiple-award contract, and not a promise that a program office will call. It is not a substitute for reading the solicitation, registering where a solicitation tells you to register, or meeting a security requirement the solicitation names. Those duties live in the opportunity. LYNX is the department's tool for getting a company ready to look at opportunities and for letting the department see the company.

It is also not an SBA certification program that happens to wear a Department of War name. SBA is pointing at it and hosting a one-pager. The operator named in the launch text is the Department of War Office of Small Business Programs.

The one-pager's CRMN mention is not, by itself, a description of a reserve fleet, a surge contract, or a mobilization order. It is a named pathway. A company that needs the rules should get them from the page that states the rules, which is not the one-pager's single sentence.

Notice Nearby is not the department, not SBA, and not LYNX. Nothing on this page submits a profile, holds a login, or stores a company's capabilities. The buttons worth using are on lynxconnect.io.

A county listing is a different shelf

A defense profile answers a defense question: what can this company do for a mission, and how ready is it. A county classified answers a local question: who is hiring near here, who does this work in this county, what machine is for sale. Those are different readers.

ZOST, at [\[zost.app\]\(https://zost.app\)](https://zost.app), is the county classifieds shelf. A supplier that needs a welder, a local service listing, or a buyer for a piece of equipment can put that in front of people in a state and a county while the LYNX profile is the defense record. The categories that fit that sentence are [\[services\]\(https://zost.app/category/services\)](https://zost.app/category/services), [\[help wanted\]\(https://zost.app/category/help_wanted\)](https://zost.app/category/help_wanted), and [\[for sale\]\(https://zost.app/category/for_sale\)](https://zost.app/category/for_sale).

ZOST is not part of LYNX. A listing there is not a readiness assessment, and a LYNX roadmap is not a help-wanted ad. Use each one for the reader it was built for. The defense door is lynxconnect.io. The county door is zost.app.

Notes and sources

Department of War release, January 29, 2026, "Department of War Launches LYNX to Help Businesses Enter and Compete in Defense Markets." [war.gov](https://www.war.gov)

<https://www.war.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/4394333/department-of-war-launches-lynx-to-help-businesses-enter-and-compete-in-d>
Office of Small Business Programs / Office of Industrial Base Growth newsfeed, January 29, 2026, the same announcement, including the contact osd.business.defense@mail.mil. business.defense.gov

<https://business.defense.gov/Engage/News/Newsfeed-Repository/Article/4392554/dow-launches-lynx-to-help-businesses-enter-and-compete-in-d>
Small Business Administration FAQ one-pager, September 2026, "DoW LYNX." Free access, APEX Accelerators, CRMN, and the demo line are on this page. certifications.sba.gov

https://certifications.sba.gov/faq/DoW_LYNX_1-pager_Sept_2026.pdf

LYNX registration, as named by the release and the one-pager. [lynxconnect.io](https://www.lynxconnect.io) (<https://www.lynxconnect.io>)

LYNX demo page named by the one-pager. business.defense.gov/training (<https://business.defense.gov/training>)

Department training series page. This paper did not retrieve a class schedule from it.

business.defense.gov/trainingseries (<https://business.defense.gov/trainingseries/>)

SBA post, October 6, 2026, pointing small businesses in the defense industrial base at a LYNX profile.

[x.com/SBAgov](https://x.com/SBAgov/status/2107587049477808485) (<https://x.com/SBAgov/status/2107587049477808485>)

Photograph: DVIDS photo 9890610, VIRIN 260825-D-D0980-6993, courtesy photo, Office of the Under Secretary of War (Acquisition and Sustainment), Philadelphia, August 25, 2026. DVIDS

(<https://www.dvidshub.net/image/9890610/day-1-fireside-chat-next-gen-arsenal-fueled-small-business>). Public-use limits: copyright (<https://www.dvidshub.net/about/copyright>). Not the January 29 launch. The appearance of U.S.

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