

Understanding U.S. Defense R&D Spending

Overview of U.S. Defense R&D Spending in 2025

In 2025, the U.S. defense R&D spending is characterized by a strategic focus on maintaining and enhancing existing military capabilities while adhering to budgetary constraints set by recent legislative acts. The Continuing Appropriations and Other Matters Act, 2025, plays a significant role in shaping the allocation of funds, emphasizing the continuation of projects funded in previous fiscal years and restricting new initiatives unless specifically appropriated. This approach ensures that the Department of Defense prioritizes ongoing projects and activities, thereby maintaining operational readiness and technological advancement. [\[1\]](#)

A key area of focus in the 2025 defense R&D budget is the enhancement of military capabilities across various domains. This includes investments in radars, manned and unmanned aerial capabilities, and defensive cyber capabilities. The budget also allocates funds for long-range precision fires, integrated air and missile defense systems, and anti-ship missiles. These investments reflect a commitment to modernizing the U.S. military's technological edge and ensuring its ability to respond to emerging threats effectively. [\[2\]](#)

Category	Funding (in millions)
Defense Research Sciences	311


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The U.S. defense R&D budget for 2025 also emphasizes the importance of supply chain resiliency, particularly for small unmanned aerial systems. This focus is crucial in ensuring that the military can maintain its operational capabilities in the face of potential disruptions. Additionally, the budget supports training in critical operations, which is essential for preparing military personnel to effectively utilize new technologies and systems. These measures highlight the Department of Defense's commitment to maintaining a robust and adaptable military force. [\[2\]](#)

constraints imposed by recent legislative acts ensure that the Department of Defense prioritizes ongoing projects and activities, thereby maintaining operational readiness and technological advancement. This strategic allocation of resources is essential for addressing both current and emerging security challenges.  [\[1\]](#)

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2. To authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes., H.R. 5009, 118th Congress, 2024, https://legislation.politicopro.com/bill/US_118_HR_5009?activeTabs=bill-text

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