

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 2025

## **Mojave Aerospace Accelerator Fund Invests \$400,000 in High-Impact Defense and Aerospace Startups**

### **Funding accelerates dual-use tech commercialization in East Kern and the Antelope Valley**

**Mojave, CA** – Aerospace and defense innovation took center stage at the end of May during the inaugural Mojave Aerospace Accelerator (MAACC) Fund Awards Ceremony, hosted in the National Test Pilot School Hangar at the Mojave Air & Space Port. The event celebrated five pioneering startup teams that are advancing dual-use technologies that have the potential to advance national defense and commercial aerospace. Startups received investments totaling \$400,000, which will be used to accelerate commercialization, deepen partnerships across government and industry, and drive innovation in East Kern County and the Antelope Valley.}

The MAACC Fund, a collaborative initiative powered by [B3K Prosperity](#), [Griffiss Institute](#), and [Starburt](#), invests in early-stage aerospace and defense startups that are developing technology for defense and aerospace applications. The fund is designed to accelerate the commercialization of technologies that align with defense and national security priorities while fostering regional economic growth.

“Our goal is to accelerate the commercialization of new technology that preserve U.S. competitiveness and outpace our adversaries, while driving regional economic growth,” said **Matthew Mroz, Executive Vice President at Griffiss Institute**. We are focused on deploying resources where it matters – supporting emerging technologies that strengthen our industrial base, serve the warfighter, and secure our nation’s critical infrastructure.”

The five companies selected to become part of the Mojave Aerospace Accelerator Fund’s inaugural Class of 2025 include:

- [ENDOX](#) – **\$50,000** – A startup developing an AI-enabled inspection and maintenance platform to enhance operational readiness of legacy vehicle and aircraft fleets.
- [Aerhart](#) – **\$50,000** – An aerospace tech company developing technologies to elevate the performance of urban air mobility aircraft.

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- **BQP – \$100,000** – A dual-use quantum software platform startup accelerating complex modeling & simulations with cutting-edge quantum algorithms on today's CPU-GPUs and forthcoming QCs for mission-critical industries including Aviation, Space, and Defense.
- **Nefeli Air – \$100,000** – A startup developing intelligent systems for real-time aircraft detection and predictive collision avoidance, enabling safer skies for uncrewed flight.
- **VTOLogic, Inc. – \$100,000** – An innovative aerospace company designing high-performance Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL) uncrewed aircraft, optimized for agile, multi-domain operations across civilian and defense applications.

Each company was chosen through a competitive selection process for its potential to deliver mission-relevant solutions with strong potential for commercialization in domains such as autonomous system, space technologies, secure communications, uncrewed systems, propulsion systems and energy efficient technologies.

“Dual-use innovation is vital to the future of aerospace, and these awardees prove what is possible when regional collaboration meets entrepreneurial ambition,” said **Lukas Oberhofer, Managing Director US, Starburst.**

The event featured remarks from regional leaders and defense ecosystem experts, including:

- **Dr. David “Jester” Smith**, CEO & General Manager, [Mojave Air & Space Port](#)
- **John-Paul “J.P.” Lake**, B3K Board Member and [Kern Venture Group](#) Managing Partner
- **Maria Onorato**, Associate Director, Industry Engagement & Development, [GO-Biz](#)
- **Chris Parlier**, Kern County Supervisor, District 2, [Kern County](#)
- **Dr. Zachary C. Krevor**, CEO & President, [Stratolaunch](#)

“The MAACC Fund is a bold new model for accelerating ideas with the potential to change both our region and the world,” said **Georgia Petropoulos, President & CEO of B3K Prosperity.** “Kern County is the ‘Silicon Valley’ of Aerospace and Weapons System Innovation in the United States and we are excited our program will continue to attract the talent necessary to advance technologies that align with our national defense priorities.”

“Being selected for the MAACC’s inaugural cohort is both a tremendous honor and a timely opportunity. This partnership arrives at a pivotal moment in BQP’s journey—after early traction across aerospace and defense and at a time when quantum computing is evolving from theory to field-deployable technology. The industry is undergoing a generational shift, and BQP is building the software stack that will help mission-critical sectors transition with confidence.

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We're especially grateful to our longtime collaborators at Starburst and the Griffiss Institute. Their continued trust validates our vision, our technology, and our growth. With their support, and that of the regional and federal ecosystem, we're accelerating the future of quantum-classical computing—moving it from labs to real-world missions.” said **Abhishek Chopra, Founder, CEO, and Chief Scientific Officer, BQP.**

The Mojave Aerospace Accelerator Fund exemplifies the power of partnerships in advancing national priorities. By reducing barriers to collaboration with the federal government and aligning resources, the MAACC Fund helps ensure technologies move swiftly from prototype to deployment – where they can make a difference.

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### **ABOUT GRIFFISS INSTITUTE**

*The Griffiss Institute (GI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit talent and technology accelerator for the United States Department of Defense and an international network of academic, government and industry partners. Since 2002, the GI has served the Air Force Research Laboratory Information Directorate, the Mohawk Valley region, and the United States, empowering diverse teams with talent and technology development programs that lead the nation in technical and economic impact. Learn more at [www.griffissinstitute.org](http://www.griffissinstitute.org).*

### **ABOUT B3K PROSPERITY**

*B3K Prosperity (B3K) is a region-wide inclusive economic development organization serving Kern*

**Fueling Growth in East Kern & the Antelope Valley**

*County and the City of Bakersfield in California. A public-private collaborative effort among business, government, industry, and civic leaders, our mission is to bring our region together to imagine, engineer, and build the next era of success, where all people prosper and businesses thrive. We're committed to growing the number of Quality Jobs in our region by investing in traded sectors and improving our regional competitiveness. Learn more at [www.b3kprosperity.org](http://www.b3kprosperity.org).*

## **ABOUT STARBURST**

*Founded in 2012, Starburst is an innovation catalyst in the global Aerospace and Defense (A&D) industry. Combining three complementary activities—startup accelerators, strategy consulting, and venture investments—they help A&D stakeholders innovate, navigate, and invest in the dynamic ecosystem. With offices in Los Angeles, Paris, Munich, Singapore, Seoul, Tel Aviv, Madrid, and Washington D.C., the team has built a robust community with 60+ partners and a portfolio of 140+ startups. Starburst's leading Flagship Accelerator program helps startups scale their business in aviation, space, and defense, as well as enabling technologies, with access to one of the largest groups of corporate representatives, government stakeholders, and private investors in the world to help startups win their first contracts. More information about Starburst can be found at [www.starburst.aero](http://www.starburst.aero).*