

ASU to provide energy services to Army, Air Force

Intergovernmental agreements enable military branches to tap university expertise and resources

By Raymie Humbert, ASU News
July 15, 2026

Military installations pose a variety of challenges for energy efficiency and resilience. Many facilities contain older buildings that make managing use — and costs — difficult. They have demanding use cases and require reliable energy to run mission-critical systems.

Now, the Army and Air Force are turning to a university partner to help them.

On July 7, Arizona State University officially signed 10-year Intergovernmental Support Agreements (IGSA) with the United States Army and Air Force, aiming to aid the departments in energy planning and preparedness support, resilience and monitoring.

“The Army and Air Force have a strong history of collaboration with our state and local communities to support our nation's defense through innovative agreements like the ones we celebrate today,” said Dave Leinberger, chief of the Army Community Partnerships Office, at an event commemorating the IGSA signings at ASU’s Barrett & O’Connor Center in Washington, D.C. “The effort supports readiness, infrastructure modernization and long-term resilience across military installations.”

A typical IGSA allows governmental institutions to access resources and services through certain state and local government entities, such as a town providing emergency medical services to a nearby Army base instead of the base having to provide those services themselves. Through the agreements with ASU, the Air Force and Army will be able to utilize the university as a resource in the same way — with a specific focus on energy and water services.

Earlier this year, ASU began working on IGSA project with the Army at [Fort Huachuca](#) in Cochise County, Arizona. The July 7 event formalized the partnership, and expands the agreement to include the Air Force.

“It’s so important that we, as American universities — new American universities, national service universities — step up and do our part to make the world safe for democracy,” said Chris Howard, executive vice president and chief operating officer at ASU. “Partnerships like this are built through

sustained collaboration, and I am deeply grateful to our team for their commitment to this important effort.”

Through the agreements, the Army and Air Force will have access to services through ASU's facilities and resources rather than relying solely on internal capabilities. Services included in the IGSA include:

- Energy services, including utility metering and billing analysis

- Energy and water assessments

- Building automation and controls

- Distribution network modernization

- On-site generation

- Microgrid development

- Independent project review

- Energy readiness exercises

“The outstanding support the Department of War receives from Arizona State University cannot be overstated,” said Leinberger. “These strategic agreements will support resilient energy systems for both the Army and Air Force. Through these agreements, ASU will be able to offer utilities monitoring, auditing and preparedness services while strengthening the local workforce.”

The event fell on the 50th anniversary of allowing women in the U.S. Air Force, Army, Navy and military academies, a symbol of how progress and forward thinking continue to be a priority for all parties involved.

“Today's signing is much more than symbolic to us; it's a commitment to innovation, to resilience and to shared national security,” said Nancy Balkus, deputy assistant secretary of the U.S. Air Force, at the event. “By working together — the Air Force, the Army and Arizona State University — we ensure our installations remain ready and resilient and capable of projecting power under any circumstance.”

The agreements also represent the Department of Defense¹'s goals to help improve energy resilience.

“Being able to do intergovernmental support agreements with the Department of War and academic institutions is really foundational to the success that we're both pursuing,” Balkus said. “It underscores a really simple but profound truth: National security requires energy and water surety.”

Throughout the discussion, speakers emphasized the importance of a collaborative effort that not only advances important missions today but also helps prepare future generations to thrive.

“At the end of the day, this partnership is about improving readiness, increasing resilience, reducing costs and ensuring our installations have the reliable infrastructure needed to support the mission,” said David Dentino, deputy assistant secretary of Army for installations, housing and partnerships, at the celebration. “It’s a true win-win for the Army, for ASU and for the communities we serve.”

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

¹ Also known as the Department of War.

Main image



Attendees of the ASU Intergovernmental Support Agreements signing ceremony gather for a photo at the ASU Barrett & O'Connor Washington Center in Washington, D.C. Photo courtesy of Hager Sharp

Gallery



David Dentino, deputy assistant secretary of Army for installations, housing and partnerships, and Chris Howard, ASU executive vice president and chief operating officer, present the new Intergovernmental Support Agreement at the ASU Barrett & O'Connor Washington Center in Washington, D.C.



Nancy Balkus, deputy assistant secretary of the U.S. Air Force, and Chris Howard, ASU executive vice president and chief operating officer, hold up a proclamation of the new Intergovernmental Support Agreement at the ASU Barrett & O'Connor Washington Center in Washington, D.C.



Nancy Balkus, deputy assistant secretary of the U.S. Air Force, and Chris Howard, ASU executive vice president and chief operating officer, sign an Intergovernmental Support Agreement at the ASU Barrett & O'Connor Washington Center in Washington, D.C.



Dave Leinberger, chief of the Army Community Partnerships Office, kicks off the ASU Intergovernmental Support Agreements signing ceremony and introduces (from left) David Dentino, Chris Howard and Nancy Balkus.