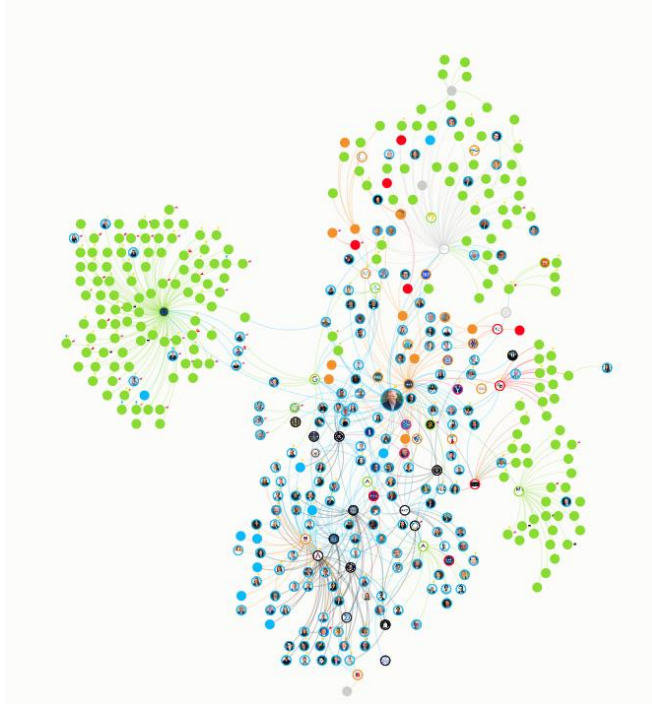




Eric Schmidt Inc.

This investigation of financial disclosures, tax records, business documents, and other publicly available information reveals the vast network constructed by billionaire Eric Schmidt through strategic investments and the cultivation of political relationships. By leveraging the connections made during his two-decade tenure at Google, Schmidt has built an oligarch-style empire designed to influence public policy in a way that allows him to further concentrate wealth and power.



A roadmap to tracking the influence of ex-Google CEO

A. Overview

During his two decades at the helm of Google, Eric Schmidt transformed the web search company from a Silicon Valley startup to a powerful global technology leader, building fame, wealth, and power in the process. According to the bio on his eponymous website, Schmidt oversaw “the company’s technical and business strategies Under his leadership, Google dramatically scaled its infrastructure and diversified its product offerings while maintaining a strong culture of innovation.”¹ After stepping down from his position at Google, Schmidt remained a technical advisor to Alphabet, the holding company of Google, from 2018-2020 advising its leaders on technology, business, and policy issues. Schmidt still owns about \$11.5 billion in Google shares.²

Less well known is the lasting legacy Schmidt left at Google by turning the company into a well-oiled lobbying machine. When he took the reins of Google in 2001, the company consisted of a handful of

¹ <https://eric Schmidt.com/bio/>

² <https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1242463/000119312523039299/d436076dsc13ga.htm> The includes what Schmidt personally owns. It also includes shares owned by his family trust and his foundations.

internet geeks and coders, disdainful of the DC lobbying hustle.³ Numerous reports between 2005-2016 describe the political education of the tech titans of Silicon Valley, often featuring Schmidt leading the way to take over the nation's capital.⁴

Under Schmidt's leadership, Google invested early and heavily in Washington. In 2003, the first year OpenSecrets.org started tracking Google lobbying data, the startup spent \$80,000. By the time he left the board of directors, Google had at least 26 outside lobby firms⁵ on the payroll and were spending close to \$19 million per year.⁶

Under Schmidt's leadership, Google quickly learned that spending millions on DC consultants, politicians, and think tanks was the way to win the battle of ideas – and secure the lucrative contracts that come with that victory.

It was 2005 when the company got serious about bringing outside lobbying firms into the mix “because they wanted help from people who have been in Washington battles before.”⁷

A 2010 quote from Schmidt shows his hand: “The average American doesn't realize how much of the laws are written by lobbyists,” Schmidt told Atlantic editor James Bennet at the Washington Ideas Forum. “It's shocking how the system actually works.”⁸

That year Google spent more than \$5 million to hire 57 lobbyists to roam the halls of Capitol Hill on its behalf.⁹ Two years earlier in 2008, Google had opened a 31,000 square foot office near the Capitol.¹⁰

Google came to master both the traditional and stealth methods of shaping policy at the highest levels of government. This included financing research at universities, investing in non-profit advocacy groups, and funding pro-business advocacy coalitions¹¹ by giving money to hundreds of Washington D.C.-based policy groups, think tanks and coalition efforts to build influence for the company.¹² The New America Foundation, a left-of-center, neo-liberal think tank that frequently weighs in on national security issues, has received \$21 million from Google to date.¹³

B. The Influence of Government Commissions

³ https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/how-google-is-transforming-power-and-politics/google-once-disdainful-of-lobbying-now-a-master-of-washington-influence/2014/04/12/51648b92-b4d3-11e3-8cb6-284052554d74_story.html

⁴ <https://www.techtransparencyproject.org/articles/googles-white-house-meetings>

⁵ <https://www.opensecrets.org/federal-lobbying/clients/hired-firms?cycle=2018&id=d000067823>

⁶ <https://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/alphabet-inc/summary?id=d000067823> (Data from 2018)

⁷ <https://www.newspapers.com/image/423155220/?terms=%22google%22%20lobbying&match=1>

⁸ <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2010/10/googles-ceo-the-laws-are-written-by-lobbyists/63908/>

⁹ <https://www.opensecrets.org/federal-lobbying/clients/lobbyists?cycle=2010&id=D000022008>

¹⁰ <https://www.washingtonian.com/2008/02/28/a-night-out-google-opens-a-dc-office/>

¹¹ https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/how-google-is-transforming-power-and-politics/google-once-disdainful-of-lobbying-now-a-master-of-washington-influence/2014/04/12/51648b92-b4d3-11e3-8cb6-284052554d74_story.html

¹²

<https://kstatic.googleusercontent.com/files/ddfc97f01d89290e37bc52abdd9704bc3314ec5598bebe9676c64cd7a5ba1a719acaf069c1f9c218986e507f58bf3b50c750119c778cb4e88e99f3fb4dd904b4>

¹³ <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/aug/30/new-america-foundation-google-funding-firings>

Eric Schmidt got an early taste of how he could influence government policy as an advisor role when he was named to President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST), which resides within the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) "According to a statement released by the White House, PCAST is an advisory group of the country's foremost scientists and engineers who will help the President and Vice President form policy related to science, technology, and innovation."¹⁴

During Schmidt's tenure on the committee, PCAST advised government science and technology policy that benefited Google including releasing a report on Spectrum policy "Realizing the Full Potential of Government-Held Spectrum to Spur Economic Growth." The report advocated for new spectrum sharing models, including dynamic spectrum sharing.¹⁵ Schmidt served on PCAST from 2009 to 2017.¹⁶

Then Schmidt transitioned to exercising his influence through congressionally mandated national government commissions starting in 2016. In the process, the tech billionaire reinvented himself as the prime influencer on national security, China, artificial intelligence, and internet policy.

Though Schmidt has never been registered as a lobbyist, he has become very effective at changing government policy to benefit his investments through the powerful connections he has carefully cultivated through his membership on several influential government commissions and boards.

He held the Chairmanship of the Department of Defense's Innovation Board from 2016 until 2020 before becoming Chairman of the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence (NSCAI). Both of these bodies have had a significant impact on DoD technology policies, especially in the controversial area of artificial intelligence.

Schmidt has heavily influenced AI-related legislation on Capitol Hill. That includes the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act, which would fund the activities of the new chief digital and artificial intelligence officer, Craig Martell, who was hand-picked by Schmidt to run the Department of Defense Joint Artificial Intelligence Center.¹⁷

Schmidt's involvement in national security policy continued in 2022 when outgoing Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi nominated him to the National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology (NSCEB), an 11-member-panel which was still being compiled at the time of writing.

A review of Schmidt's publicly available investment information indicates that the commissions' recommendations have, in turn, had significant impact on Schmidt's own portfolio, which is filled with defense, artificial intelligence, and quantum computing startups, among others.

Eric Schmidt and Innovation Endeavors, just one of the venture capital funds that he founded, have made at least 57 investments in AI companies while Schmidt was running the commission, according to an analysis of Crunchbase data.¹⁸ This new commission will almost certainly do the same.

Schmidt has quietly exercised his influence over defense spending in other ways that may benefit his investment portfolio as well. In 2021 for example, he launched America's Frontier Fund, a "public-private, deep-tech investment fund" staffed with Washington and former defense industry insiders. The

¹⁴ <https://techcrunch.com/2009/04/27/googles-schmidt-and-microsofts-mundie-appointed-as-obama-tech-advisors/>

¹⁵

https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/pcast_spectrum_report_final_july_20_2012.pdf

¹⁶ <https://ericschmidt.com/bio/>

¹⁷ <https://www.protocol.com/newsletters/sourcecode/eric-schmidt-ai-us-china>

¹⁸ Crunchbase data on file

non-profit investment fund has faced scrutiny over allegations that it is yet another vehicle Schmidt is using to steer taxpayer money to his own investments.¹⁹ AFF's current president is Jordan Blashek, who continues to moonlight as an "executive in residence" at Schmidt Futures.²⁰

In February 2023, an executive with AFF identified only as "Tom", told a tech finance symposium that a war between China and Taiwan would be extremely good for AFF and its investments. "If the China-Taiwan situation happens, some of our investments will 10x, like overnight," he told the attendees.²¹

While it's unclear what specific investments he was referring to, he told the attendees that it was a critical component with a \$200 million value to a \$50 billion market cap. "That's like a choke point, right," he said. And if it's only produced in China, for example, and there's a kinetic event in the Pacific, that would 10x overnight, like no question about it."

These financial conflicts of interest have never been disclosed. In fact, when the Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC) sought these disclosures in a lawsuit against the NSCAI, it was denied the disclosures but learned that the average commissioner financial disclosure was 5 pages. Schmidt's disclosure was 38 pages.²²

C. Tracking Schmidt's influence and investment network

This interactive map tool not only documents Schmidt's investments but also chronicles the organizations that he has built to redefine the Washington influence game. In addition to creating the Special Competitive Studies Project (SCSP), a nonprofit that advocates for the policies proposed by the NSCAI, he uses Schmidt Futures, created in 2017, to fund fellowships and salaries for strategically placed government staff.

The strategy has paid off. Schmidt Futures released a report on technology that profiled the "promising engineering biology discoveries to biobased production and assessing infrastructure needs to support the U.S. bioeconomy"²³ that immediately became a new White House initiative and was referenced numerous times in a President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology report in 2022.²⁴ The policies advocated by SCSP were incorporated into artificial intelligence related congressional legislation.

Despite the wealth of data presented, this interactive map is far from complete. However, it presents a unique opportunity to understand the vast network of organizations, companies, nonprofits, and investment funds that Schmidt influences or controls, offering a glimpse into how power and money function in DC by tracking the activities of the Silicon Valley billionaire.

Whether it's spectrum policy, semi-conductors, biotechnology, or AI, if Schmidt advocates for a change in government policy, he spends the resources to ensure he gets what he wants.

D. Schmidt Explains His Influence

¹⁹ <https://www.techtransparencyproject.org/articles/eric-schmidts-unseen-influence-over-us-defense-spending>

²⁰ <https://www.schmidtfutures.com/person/jordan-blashek/>

²¹ <https://theintercept.com/2023/02/03/china-americas-frontier-fund/>

²² <https://epic.org/documents/epic-v-ai-commission/>

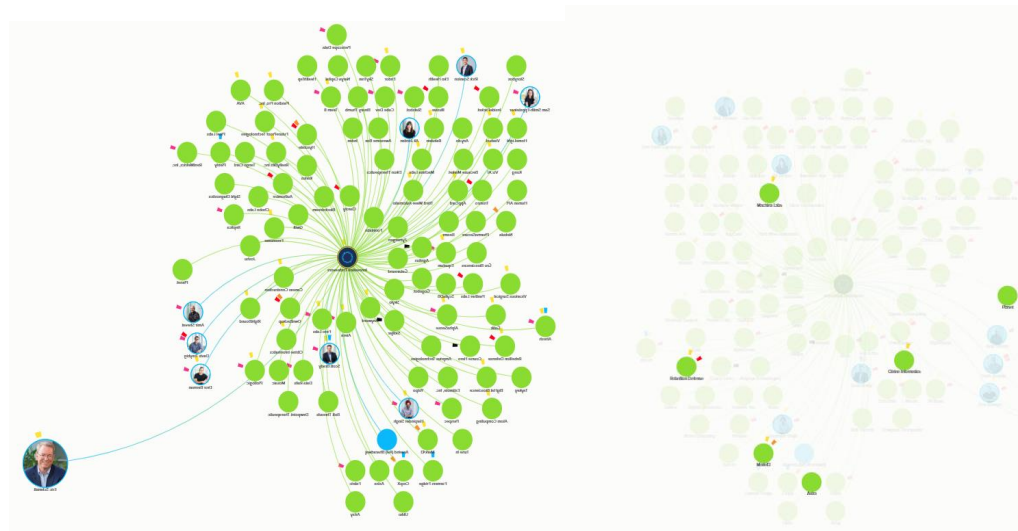
²³ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WiAjfHgQvODr_pUEFxyqwhvs7VTK2OeT/view

²⁴ https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/PCAST_Biomufacturing-Report_Dec2022.pdf

During an NSCAI event in 2021, Schmidt tacitly admitted his strategy, saying that he and his team “had this interesting idea that not only should we write down what we thought, ... we would have a hundred pages of legislation that they could just pass.” That idea, Schmidt said, “had never occurred to me before but is actually working.”²⁵

Schmidt also admitted to being deeply involved in the creation and funding of various classified programs: “We don’t talk much about our secret work,” Schmidt said at the event. “But there’s an analogous team that worked on the secret stuff that went through the secret process that has had similar impact.”²⁶

Schmidt said he learned early that White House lobbying was key to getting requests passed into law. At the 2021 event, he said, “If I’ve learned anything from my years of dealing with the government, it’s that the government is not run like a tech company. It’s run top down. So, whether you like it or not, you have to start at the top, you have to get the right words, either they say it, or you write it for them, and you make it happen. Right? And that’s how it really, really works.”²⁷



Some of the individual investments at Innovation Endeavors receiving federal government contracts.

E. Leveraging Venture Capital Funds

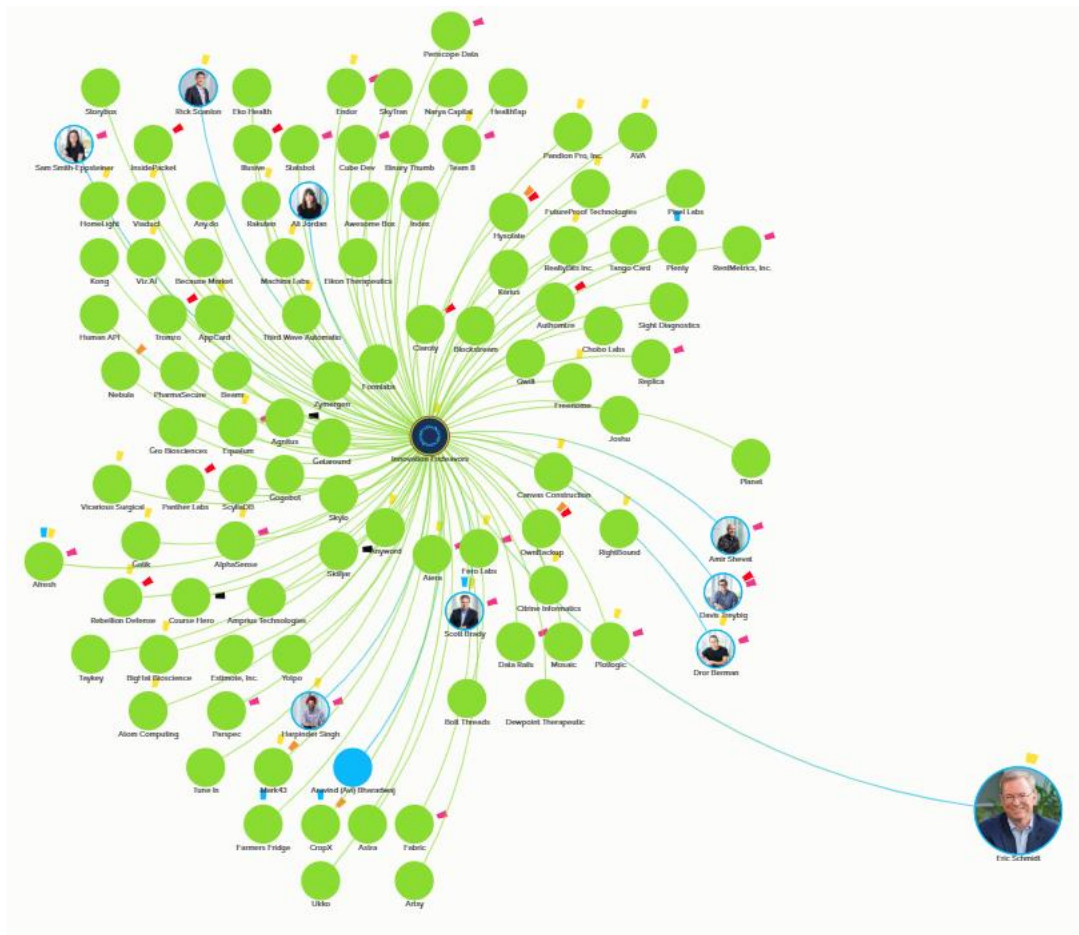
Outside of his primary investment vehicle, Hillspire LLC, Schmidt plays a significant role in five venture capital funds. The size of Schmidt’s investments in these funds is not publicly disclosed.

1. **Innovation Endeavors** – Eric Schmidt is a founding partner. The fund invests in multiple sectors including Cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence and Financial Services. Founded in 2010, the fund manages \$1.5 billion in assets.

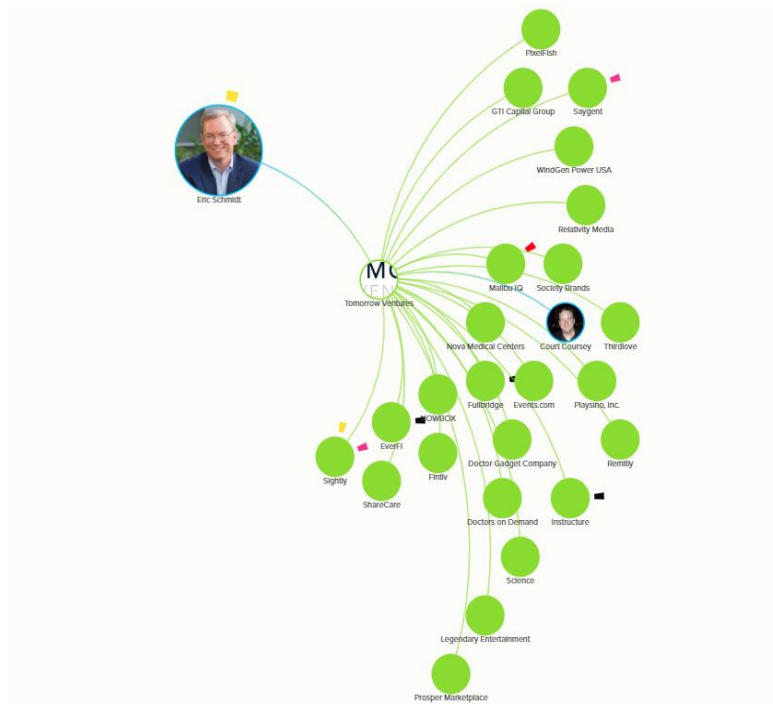
²⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NijXsm4-3aw>

²⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NijXsm4-3aw>

²⁷ <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/10/24/how-googles-former-ceo-eric-schmidt-helped-write-ai-laws-in-washington-without-publicly-disclosing-investments-in-ai-start-ups.html>



- Tomorrow Ventures** -- Tomorrow Ventures is an early stage venture capital firm focused on “lifestyle-focused companies.” Since its 2009 founding, the fund has invested in over 350 companies “that are helping shape the future” and currently lists over 70 companies in its portfolio.²⁸



- American Frontier Fund** – AFF, founded in 2021,²⁹ is a non-profit, “deep-tech” fund focused on “securing” the US’s “technology leadership and collective prosperity.” In an initial announcement, Schmidt was listed as being on the Board of Directors.³⁰ The executive director and a board Member have worked or continue to work for Schmidt and its current president Jordan Blashek, continues to serve as an “executive in residence” at Schmidt Futures.³¹

²⁸ <https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/tomorrow-ventures>

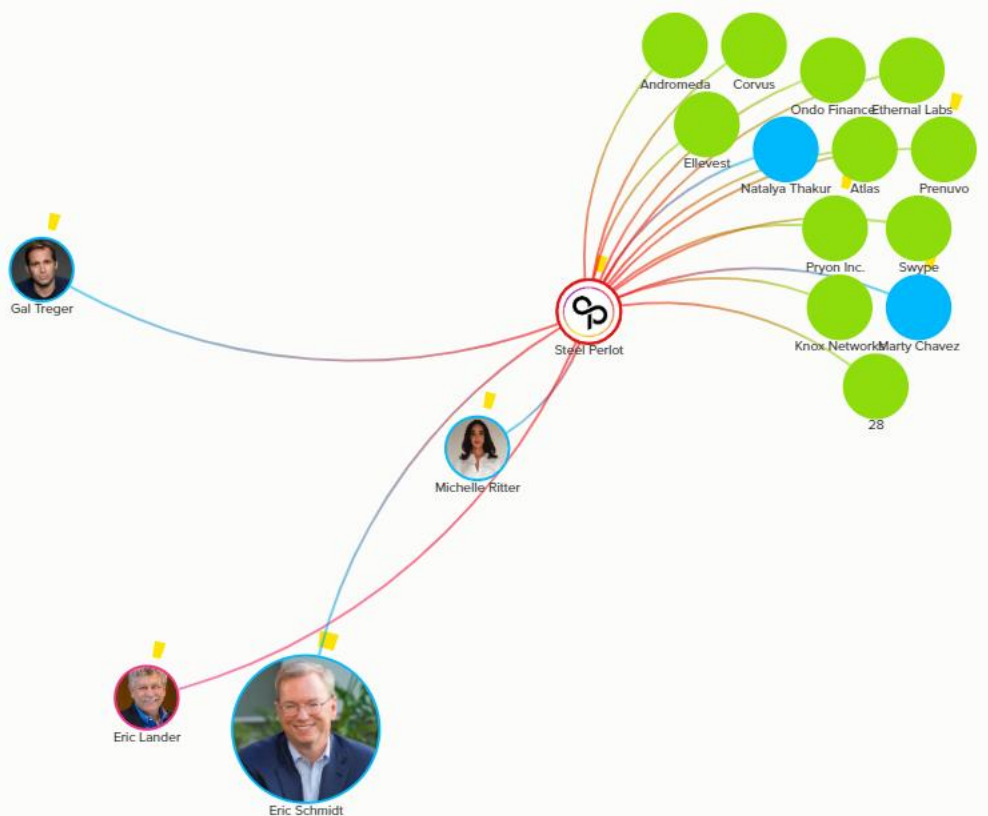
²⁹ <https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/america-s-frontier-fund>

³⁰ <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/22036129-america-s-frontier-fund-launches-to-secure-america-s-technology-leadership-america-s-frontier-fund>

³¹ <https://americasfrontier.org/team>,

<https://www.schmidtfutures.com/person/jordan-blashek/>

4. **Steel Perlot** -- In late 2021, Schmidt’s girlfriend Michelle Ritter founded a venture capital fund called Steel Perlot. Schmidt appears to be a substantial (if not the only) investor in Ritter’s VC fund and holds a senior position at the fund. Steel Perlot invests in AI, decentralized finance and “deep technology.”³² It is also a major investor in cryptocurrency and NFT projects, and has a large stake in Knox Networks, a startup that is working with the Federal Reserve to adopt a new Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC).³³ Recently, Schmidt ally and former director of the White House OSTP office Dr. Eric Lander, joined Steel Perlot as a member of the technical advisory board. Marty Chavez, Vice-Chair of Sixth Street Growth joined the board.³⁴



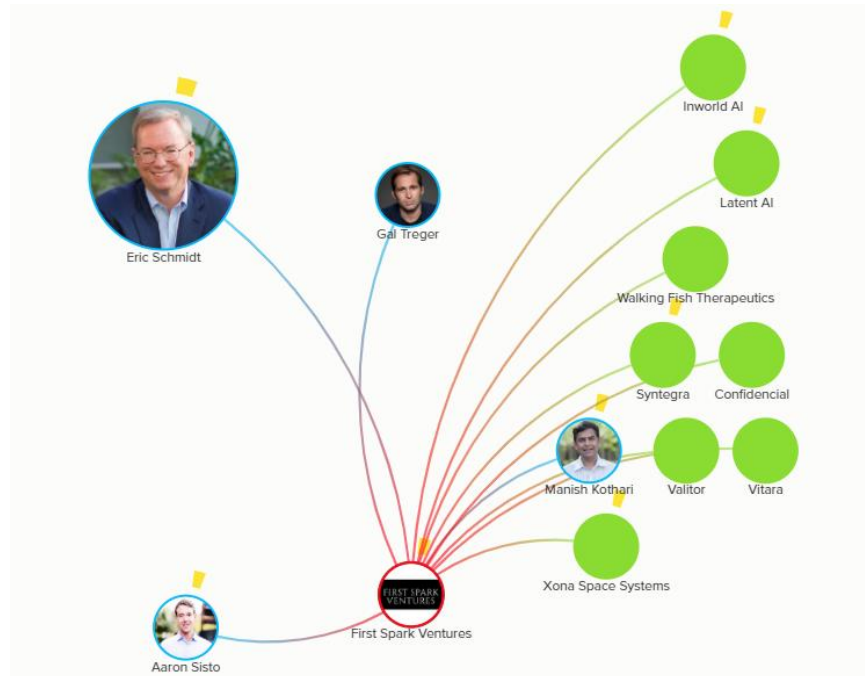
5. **First Spark Ventures** -- First Spark Ventures is a another “deep-tech” venture capital fund focused on “breakthrough technologies,” including new areas of healthcare research like synthetic biology. Schmidt is listed as a founding non-managing partner.³⁵

³² <https://www.steelperlot.com/>

³³ <https://www.financialexpress.com/blockchain/us-based-think-tank-unveils-project-around-cbdc-exploration/2653239/>

³⁴ <https://steelperlot.com/people>

³⁵ <https://www.firstsparkventures.com/#Team>



F. EricSchmidt.gov – Examples of profiting off government service.

Schmidt began investing in start-ups while he was still at Google, funding dozens of companies through two venture capital firms: Tomorrow Ventures, established in October 2009, and Innovation Endeavors, launched in 2010.³⁶

Schmidt and his teams eventually diversified his holdings, investing in a variety of funds, including Steve Case’s Revolution LLC, Zetta Venture Partners, Radical Ventures, and a 20 percent stake in DB Shaw. By building off his success with Tomorrow Ventures, Schmidt has become a key investor in at least five venture capital firms.

Many of Schmidt’s more recent investments benefit from the federal contracts, with at least 12 receiving federal support. Examples include:

Astra –Schmidt invested in this rocket launch startup that provides satellite delivery and launch services through Innovation Endeavors.³⁷ Astra went public in 2012, and in October 2020, the company was selected by the U.S. Air Force AFWERX program to pursue development of its Rocket 5.0 program.³⁸ Schmidt was a vocal proponent of AFWERX’s creation in 2018, and he has continued to promote the AFWERX program through public testimony to Congress and as Chair of the Defense Innovation Board.³⁹

³⁶ <https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business>

³⁷ https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/astra-b6dc/company_financials/investors

³⁸ <https://arstechnica.com/science/2020/10/astra-pitches-larger-rocket-suborbital-cargo-delivery-plan-to-air-force/>, <https://twitter.com/AFWERX/status/1311416966964547585>

³⁹ <https://www.airforcemag.com/read-watch-former-google-ceo-eric-schmidt-on-how-the-pentagon-can-accelerate-ai/>, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-115hhr30683/html/CHRG-115hhr30683.htm>

Lobbying disclosures show that the company's subsidiary, Astra Space Operations Inc. has lobbied on the FY 2023 Defense Appropriations Bill; the 2022 NASA Authorization Bill; the FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act; the 2022 NASA Authorization Act; and the FY 2023 Intelligence Authorization Bill.⁴⁰

Notably, Velocity Government Relations, one of the lobbying firms retained by Astra, also lobbies for Planet Labs, another company in which Innovation Endeavors holds substantial investments (see Planet Labs below).

Covariant – According to a 2021 blog post, Schmidt is an investor in Radical Ventures, a venture capital fund focused on investments in AI and quantum computing startups.⁴¹ Radical Ventures invested in the startup's Series B (2020) and Series C (2021) funding rounds of AI robotics company Covariant.⁴²

In turn, Covariant was favorably cited in the final report released by Schmidt-chaired National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence (NSCAI) as one of the robotics companies poised to “win the market for the software platforms that power the next wave of industrialization.”⁴³

Duality Technologies -- According to a *FastCompany* article at the time, Team8 Ventures was founded in part to tap into the record \$14 billion requested in President Obama's 2015 budget to protect against emerging cyber threats.⁴⁴ Schmidt, who was a member of Obama's President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST), helped draft the November 2013 Council report to the President that informed that budget request.⁴⁵

Team8 Ventures is a substantial investor in Duality Technologies.⁴⁶ In March 2021, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) announced that Duality Technologies had been selected to lead a team to develop Fully Homomorphic Encryption (FHE), an approach to data security that delivers mathematical proof of encryption through advanced cryptography.⁴⁷

Lilt – Zetta Venture Partners, which counts Eric Schmidt as a limited partner,⁴⁸ invested in three funding rounds for Lilt, a human and AI-assisted global language translation startup.⁴⁹

Lobbying disclosures from 2020 and 2021 show that Lilt lobbied for support funding in the 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).⁵⁰ Government contracting data shows that Lilt has received \$1.2 million in contracts from the Departments of Defense, Justice, and Commerce.⁵¹

⁴⁰ <https://projects.propublica.org/represent/lobbying/r/301036589>

⁴¹ <https://radical.vc/radical-reads-2020-top-ai-stories/>

⁴² https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/covariant/company_financials/investors

⁴³ <https://irp.fas.org/offdocs/ai-commission.pdf> (See footnote 22, Page 266)

⁴⁴ <https://team8.vc/news/how-eric-schmidt-cisco-and-an-israeli-spy-master-launched-a-new-cybersecurity-incubator/>

⁴⁵

https://web.archive.org/web/20151021061400/https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/PCAST/pcast_cybersecurity_nov-2013.pdf

⁴⁶ https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/team8/company_financials/investments

⁴⁷ <https://www.darpa.mil/news-events/2021-03-08>

⁴⁸ <https://tractable.ai/en/leadership> (See list of Tractable investment partners)

⁴⁹ https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/lilt/company_financials/investors

⁵⁰ <https://projects.propublica.org/represent/lobbying/search?search=lilt>

⁵¹ <https://www.usaspending.gov/search/?hash=120319b52a35c92652f09f1da9d09dd4>

Falkonry -- Zetta Venture Partners is also invested in Falkonry, an AI predictive analytics company.⁵² The AI company has received at least \$7.5 million in Department of Defense contracts according to government data.⁵³

Machina Labs -- Schmidt's VC fund Innovation Endeavors is a Series A investor in Machina Labs, a machine learning and AI industrial engineering and manufacturing startup.⁵⁴ The AI startup has received at least \$4.8 million in contracts from the Department of Defense and NASA according to government data.⁵⁵

Rebellion Defense -- Schmidt's VC fund Innovation Endeavors is an investor in Rebellion Defense, an AI intelligence and machine learning startup.⁵⁶ Lobby disclosure filings for 2022 show that the AI company has lobbied for funding inclusion in the 2023 NDAA.⁵⁷ The company has received at least \$1.8 million in Department of Defense contracts according to government data.⁵⁸

The founder of Rebellion Defense, Chris Lynch, is linked to Schmidt in other ways as well. Lynch was one of the early founders of the US Digital Service, created during the Obama Administration, and later served as the first director of the Defense Digital Service.⁵⁹ Google and Schmidt were early supporters of both initiatives and involved in their creation.⁶⁰

G. The revolving door

Eric Schmidt has made himself a prominent Washington insider and leveraged his relationships with current and former governmental officials more effectively than almost anyone in recent memory. Among other connections, Schmidt has written a book on artificial intelligence with the 99-year-old Henry Kissinger and is on first name basis with several current and former Secretaries of Defense.

His influence goes beyond just personal relationships, however, as demonstrated by this interactive map, which shows at least 50 former high-ranking government officials that now work for Schmidt.

⁵² https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/falkonry/company_financials/investors

⁵³ <https://www.usaspending.gov/search/?hash=1d4e1dc2a91fd628b82c774c92f45300>

⁵⁴ https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/machina-labs/company_financials

⁵⁵ <https://www.usaspending.gov/search/?hash=6df79a6dc43e245ea6a8e43ede891fac>

⁵⁶ https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/rebellion-defense/company_financials

⁵⁷ <https://projects.propublica.org/represent/lobbying/search?search=rebellion+defense>

⁵⁸ <https://www.usaspending.gov/search/?hash=bc329b306423ea4f757522c5acd017be>

⁵⁹ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lynchseattle/>,

⁶⁰ <https://www.wired.com/story/why-big-tech-and-the-government-need-to-work-together/>,

<https://theintercept.com/2016/04/22/googles-remarkably-close-relationship-with-the-obama-white-house-in-two-charts/>,



The Schmidt influence map compared to the number of former government employees in his network.

The revolving door between Schmidt’s various nonprofit entities (and connections to organizations he funds) and positions in government moves the other way as well. The record shows that he has been particularly influential in placing his former staff and close associates at top government agencies. And in at least one case, the timing suggests the revolving door moves were orchestrated to benefit Schmidt’s investment portfolio.

For instance, in March 2022, *Politico* reported that Schmidt’s “fingerprints” were all over President Biden’s science office, the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP).⁶¹

Schmidt has particularly close ties with President Biden’s former OSTP chief Eric Lander through the Broad Institute, a joint biomedicine initiative between MIT and Harvard. Lander served as the founding director and president of the Broad Institute before joining the Biden Administration.

After President Biden nominated Lander to head OSTP, Schmidt, who has served on the Broad Institute since 2012, contributed \$150 million to the bioscience initiative.⁶² As reported by *Politico*, soon after joining OSTP, Lander hired several OSTP officials whose salaries were paid by Schmidt Futures.

Tom Kalil, Schmidt Futures’ chief information officer, was one of the officials who served as an unpaid consultant to the science office. Emails show that Kalil and Lander were instrumental in securing Schmidt Futures funding for the salaries of OSTP personnel, despite the concerns of OSTP’s general counsel that the moves raised “significant ethical concerns.”

⁶¹ <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/03/28/google-billionaire-joe-biden-science-office-00020712>

⁶² <https://www.broadinstitute.org/news/broad-institute-launches-eric-and-wendy-schmidt-center-connect-biology-machine-learning>

In August 2021, Lander released an interagency memorandum laying out White House research and development priorities for the FY 2023 budget. One of the key priorities was a national security strategy focused on biomanufacturing, particularly related to biomedical technologies such as vaccine development, diagnostic technologies, antiviral therapeutics, and genomic sequencing.⁶³

Corporate filings show that the same month as the Lander memo, First Spark Ventures, a “deep tech venture capital fund” was incorporated in California.⁶⁴ Schmidt serves as a founder of the new fund, which counts at least four biotech/biomedicine investments as part of its investment portfolio that has been made public.⁶⁵

Despite the conflict-of-interest questions, Schmidt was tapped to serve on the National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology in January 2023, a move that Walter Schaub, the former director of the U.S. Office of Government Ethics described as a “potential horror show” given Schmidt’s ability to shape biotech policy in ways that would potentially benefit his own personal financial interests.⁶⁶

Other top Schmidt employees and associates who have joined key decision making slots in the Biden Administration include:

- **Dr. Mark Aidinoff:** Aidinoff who served as a Senior Advisor and OSTP’s Acting Chief of Staff until January 2023, formerly served as a senior strategist at the data analytics company Civis Analytics.⁶⁷ Schmidt is a substantial financial backer of the company and serves as Civis’ technical advisor.⁶⁸
- **Jonathan Lipman:** An archived web page from the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) shows that Lipman, a Schmidt Futures employee, was posted to the General Services Administration in 2022.⁶⁹ As the *TechTransparencyProject* reported in December 2022, Schmidt appears to be the primary financial backer of FAS’ Day One Project, an initiative to place outside experts in key government positions in the Biden Administration.⁷⁰
- **Justin Lynch:** A former AI policy advisor to Biden’s OSTP, Lynch has made a full trip through the revolving door, serving as director of research for the Schmidt-chaired National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence (NSCAI) before joining the White House OSTP in April 2021. In October 2021, Lynch left OSTP to join Schmidt’s nonprofit the Special Competitive Studies Project as the senior director of research and analysis.⁷¹
- **Tom Kalil:** As reported by *Politico*, Kalil served as an unpaid advisor to Biden’s OSTP in 2022 while remaining on the payroll of Schmidt Futures. Kalil left the OSTP post following ethics complaints that OSTP officials’ ties to Schmidt raised significant conflict of interest concerns.⁷²

⁶³ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/M-21-32-Multi-Agency-Research-and-Development-Priorities-for-FY-2023-Budget-.pdf>

⁶⁴ <https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business>

⁶⁵ <https://www.firstsparkventures.com/>

⁶⁶ <https://www.cnn.com/2023/01/31/googles-ex-ceo-eric-schmidt-tapped-for-federal-biotech-commission-that-allows-members-to-keep-investments.html>

⁶⁷ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/marc-aidinoff-0187a460/>

⁶⁸ <https://www.civisanalytics.com/team/>

⁶⁹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220323235145/https://fas.org/impact-fellowship/>

⁷⁰ <https://www.techtransparencyproject.org/articles/eric-schmidts-expanding-influence-apparatus>

⁷¹ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/justinrogerlynch/>

⁷² <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/03/28/google-billionaire-joe-biden-science-office-00020712>

That Schmidt Futures Bioeconomy working group report was cited 9 times in this December 14, 2022 PCAST report to the president titled "Biomufacturing to Advance the Bioeconomy"⁷³ Schmidt Futures Mary Maxon was an outside advisor to the report

H. Schmidt and Spectrum policy

Another key issue where Schmidt has effectively leveraged his influence is the government's spectrum policy – the management of the radio frequency spectrum that powers cellular and wireless services. Schmidt believes that the United States should nationalize its spectrum assets, particularly advanced 5G spectrum, to compete with China. That coincidentally greatly benefits Google and several of Schmidt's other personal investments.

In 2009, Schmidt was named to President Obama's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST), which resides within the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). PCAST is an advisory group of the country's foremost scientists and engineers who advise the President and Vice President on policy related to science, technology, and innovation.⁷⁴

Two years later in 2012, PCAST released a report "Realizing the Full Potential of Government-Held Spectrum to Spur Economic Growth," advocating for new spectrum sharing models, including dynamic spectrum sharing, a model that allows 4G, LTE, and 5G to be used in the same frequency band and dynamically allocated based on user demand.⁷⁵

The report disfavored the model of clearing government spectrum and auctioning it for licensed use; promoting instead a spectrum sharing model in which the government would allocate shared spectrum for military and commercial use. The report first suggested commercial spectrum sharing for military use, which would later be adopted by the FCC in 2015 in the 3.5GHz band, known as Citizens Broadband Radio Service (CBRS). Rules later established by the FCC would allow for commercial mobile operations without acquiring spectrum licenses.

The Wireless Innovation Forum, which includes Google as a key member, issued a statement in support of the PCAST report, stating that many of the report's recommendations were supported by the work of the Forum.⁷⁶ Google also oversees the Spectrum Access System (SAS) that manages the allocation of spectrum between military and commercial users.⁷⁷ As a PCAST member, Schmidt has often expressed his support for shared spectrum. In 2013 for instance, he tweeted, "the old model for spectrum does not work, the new model is to share spectrum; we will stop having all these problems!"⁷⁸

⁷³ https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/PCAST_Biomufacturing-Report_Dec2022.pdf

⁷⁴ <https://techcrunch.com/2009/04/27/googles-schmidt-and-microsofts-mundie-appointed-as-obama-tech-advisors/>

⁷⁵

https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/pcast_spectrum_report_final_july_20_2012.pdf

⁷⁶ https://www.wirelessinnovation.org/assets/work_products/Recommendations/winnf-12-r-0004-v1.0.0%20winnforum%20position%20on%20pcast%20report%20on%20spectrum%20sharing.pdf

⁷⁷ <https://cloud.google.com/spectrum-access-system/docs/overview#:~:text=Google%20SAS%20is%20a%20cloud,Register%20CBRS%20devices.>

⁷⁸ <https://twitter.com/ericsschmidt/status/351739071648899073>

Schmidt has also used his considerable influence to advocate for shared spectrum with the Department of Defense. In 2016 for instance, former DOD Secretary Ash Carter created the Defense Innovation Board (DIB), a new Pentagon advisory board to bring Silicon Valley expertise and best practices to the U.S. military. Then Google Executive-Chairman Eric Schmidt was named chairman of the new initiative.⁷⁹ Google's head of wireless services Milo Medin was also named as a board member, which gave Google two seats on DIB's board.⁸⁰

Two years later in 2018 news sources reported that Medin was leading a push for an open access wireless network utilizing Navy spectrum. The stories noted that Google's role as a Spectrum Access System provider could help determine when to give priority to Navy ships and then switch over consumers to other channels so as not to disrupt military uses. According to news accounts, Google had already installed sensors around the coasts of the United States to detect when Navy ships are near.⁸¹

In 2019, the DIB released a report proposing the creation of a nationalized 5G network that would share DoD mid-band spectrum with commercial providers.⁸² The report was authored by Google's Medin and Alsop Louie Partners founder Gilman Louie who cofounded the CIA's venture capital arm In-Q-Tel.⁸³

Louie has continued to work closely with Schmidt, serving on Schmidt's America's Frontier Fund and as a member of the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence (NSCAI) which Schmidt chaired. Schmidt endorsed the 5G report, tweeting the day the report was released, "Curious about 5G and when you will get it? Read the just approved report from the DIB on the challenges of getting 5G working for mobile users in the United States along with recommendations on how to fix an impending crisis. <https://media.defense.gov/2019/Apr/03/20>"⁸⁴

As Schmidt increasingly shifted his focus to the commercial and military threats from China, he continued to advocate for new spectrum sharing models. In February 2020, Schmidt published an op-ed in the *New York Times* highlighting China's fast growing emerging tech sector and warning that China could out-pace America. He specifically cited the expansion of 5G sites in China as an indicator of this trend and warned that the US could not win technology and 5G wars without the government's help.⁸⁵

In 2020, the Schmidt-chaired NSCAI released its first quarter recommendations memo. The recommendations are almost identical to the April 2019 DIB report: Key recommendations included improving 5G spectrum sharing, particularly in the sub-6 GHz mid-band and utilizing AI to dynamically manage spectrum access, another key Schmidt priority. The NSCAI report also echoed the DIB report's "China threat" regarding the country's 5G advances while parroting language from the report on the possibility of using the CBRS spectrum sharing model as a model to further develop spectrum sharing in the mid-band.⁸⁶

In May 2020, Schmidt, who still owned millions shares of Alphabet stock, left Google to focus almost exclusively on government projects such as military technology.⁸⁷ The *New York Times* reported at the

⁷⁹ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-military-innovation-idUSKCN0W421V>

⁸⁰ <https://innovation.defense.gov/Members/Article/1395855/milo-medin/>

⁸¹ <https://9to5google.com/2018/03/29/google-leading-open-wireless-spectrum/>

⁸² https://media.defense.gov/2019/Apr/04/2002109654/-1/-1/0/DIB_5G_STUDY_04.04.19.PDF

⁸³ <https://techcrunch.com/2015/08/12/niantic-labs-maker-of-ingress-spun-out-as-its-own-company/>

⁸⁴ <https://twitter.com/ericsschmidt/status/1113544734558105601>

⁸⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/27/opinion/eric-schmidt-ai-china.html>

⁸⁶ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wkPh8Gb5drBrKBg6OhGu5oNaTEERbKss/view> (P. 56)

⁸⁷ <https://markets.businessinsider.com/news/stocks/eric-schmidt-reportedly-leaves-google-2020-5-1029188115#>

time that he had become the prime liaison between Silicon Valley companies and the military and had invested millions of dollars into more than half a dozen defense-related startups.⁸⁸

By the fall, Schmidt was openly advocating not just for spectrum sharing, but also calling for nationalizing the country's 5G network. In September 2020 for instance, Schmidt endorsed calls for a nationalized 5G network and suggested that the Navy's mid-band spectrum was one of the best options.⁸⁹ In other forums, Schmidt called for dynamic spectrum sharing arrangements but arrangements in which the military would continue to own the spectrum."⁹⁰

I. Schmidt's Network Is Deeply Entrenched In A Startup Deploying A Former Google Moonshot Program

Some of Schmidt's closest allies in Washington, DC and Silicon Valley are also tied to the startup Aalyria, a company which is bringing to market two pieces of technology developed by Google's moonshot Project Loon.

Project Loon was Google's attempt to use "high-flying balloons to beam superfast internet to areas that could not be served by more traditional means."⁹¹ After Loon was shuttered, Google "transferred nearly a decade's worth of intellectual property, patents and physical assets, including office space," to the startup in return for "an undisclosed minority stake."

Aalyria is marketing two pieces of technology, Tightbeam which uses lasers to transmit data, and Spacetime which is software used to monitor and predict where flying objects are to ensure they can transmit data back to a ground station. Aalyria's CEO Chris Taylor said the two pieces of technology could be used by satellite operators, airlines and telecom companies who are looking to "create more sophisticated high-speed internet networks."

Shortly after its founding in September 2022, Aalyria received an \$8.7 million contract from the Defense Innovation Unit under its "Hybrid Space Architecture Program to "create a network architecture that uses both commercial and government space assets to provide secured data communications in and out of Earth."⁹²

Aalyria also signed a "teaming agreement" with defense contractor Anduril⁹³ and with startup satellite company Rivada Space to deploy the company's Spacetime product in its planned low-Earth orbit communications constellation.⁹⁴ Rivada said Aalyria's Spacetime offers its "unique architecture an advantage for finding the most robust and reliable means of communications between any two user terminals in the world through real-time analysis of millions of possible paths."⁹⁵

Rivada's latest attempt to deploy a wireless network has been mired in legal troubles, including a dispute with Chinese investors over spectrum rights and proposed satellite constellation based in Liechtenstein.⁹⁶

⁸⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/02/technology/eric-schmidt-pentagon-google.html>

⁸⁹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=1R70nlzt2eg&feature=emb_logo

⁹⁰ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/should-the-u-s-change-how-it-does-out-airwaves-for-5g-11605047990>

⁹¹ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-09-12/google-loon-technology-lives-on-at-aalyria-technologies>

⁹² <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/09/12/google-spins-out-secret-hi-speed-telecom-project-called-aalyria.html>

⁹³ <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20230509005464/en/>

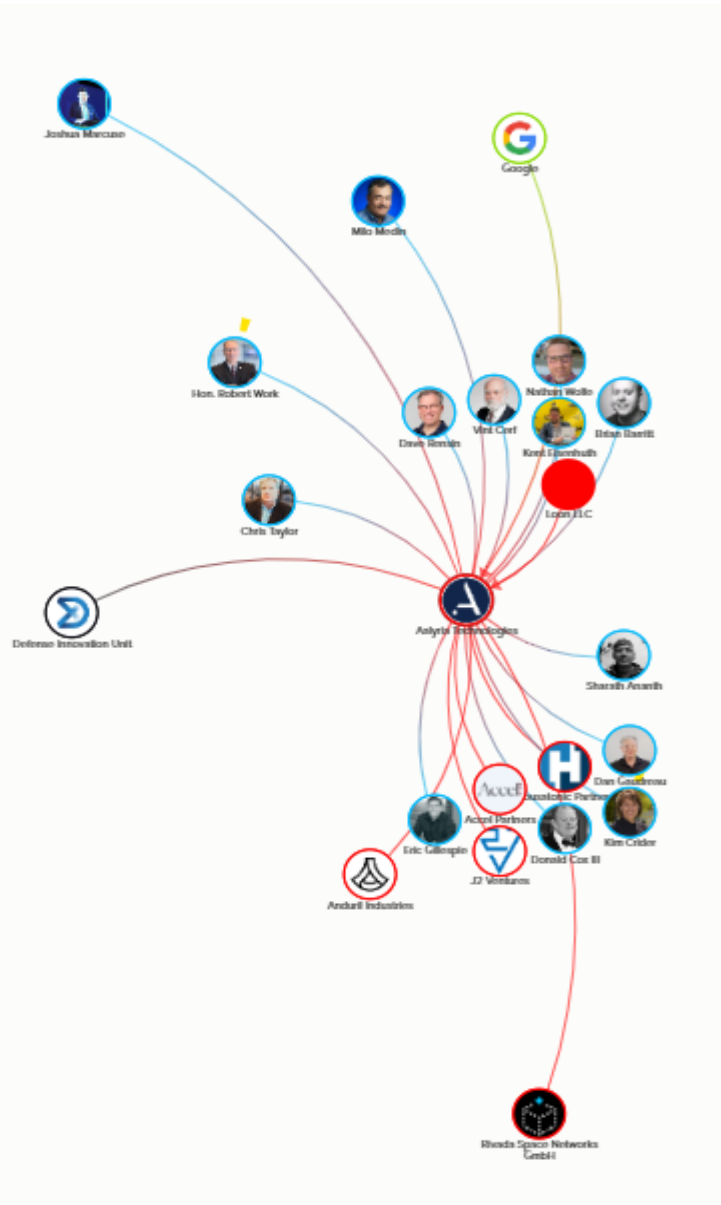
⁹⁴ <https://spacenews.com/rivada-space-networks-selects-aalyria-spacetime/>

⁹⁵ <https://www.rivada.com/aalyrias-rivada/>

⁹⁶ <https://www.ft.com/content/f1f342ab-d931-44ca-bf0d-f7762db76982>

Alyria’s advisors and executives include several notable Google employees, including Vint Cerf, Nathan Wolfe, Milo Medin and Dave Rensin. Schmidt’s longtime Washington, DC ally former Deputy Secretary of Defense and Vice Chair of the Schmidt-chaired National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence, Robert Work is advising the company.⁹⁷ Work is also connected to one Alyria’s main customers Anduril via his former Chief of Staff.⁹⁸

While Schmidt may not be overtly involved in Alyria, the programs he put into place, like DIU, and the network of DC players he has been cultivating over the years, are playing an active role.



A mapping of the DC influence network that benefitted and built Alyria.

⁹⁷ <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20220913005840/en/Alyria-Launches-to-Revolutionize-Communications-Networks-Across-Land-Sea-Air-and-Space>

⁹⁸ <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20230509005464/en/>