US military pays Nvidia $25 million to develop supercomputer chip

Paying to push the boundaries for GPUs

An Nvidia team has received $25 million from the US military as part of a push to develop a supercomputer chip infinitely better than anything currently available.

The Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) is keen to give the US the edge in the supercomputer race by handing out money left, right, and centre in efforts to fund research and development of a superchip for the US military's supercomputers.

DARPA awarded four different teams a research contract for the computer chip designed to increase GPU processing speeds by several thousand percent, choosing Nvidia as one of its partners due its extensive background developing graphics chips.

“...This recognizes Nvidia’s substantial investments in the field of parallel processing and highlights GPU computing's position as one of the most promising paths to exascale computing,” said Bill Dally, chief research scientist at Nvidia.

“We look forward to collaborating to develop programmable, scalable systems that operate in tight power budgets and deliver increases in performances that are many orders of magnitude above today’s systems,” he added.

The Nvidia team consists of Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee, supercomputer firm Cray in Seattle and a number of universities throughout the US.

While the large sum of money will be aimed at developing a supercomputer chip, the benefits of advances made may filter down to everyday users with new additions to Nvidia's chip range.

### External links

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### Other chips stories

- DRAM at risk of shortfall in second half of 2010
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### Latest stock market

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### Related topics

nVidia, USA, Cray

### Comments

- So who are the other three teams? Nothing like an incomplete story. Makes me wonder if this was written by someone with a 20 minute attention span. - rich wargo - 10 Aug 20:49

- Okay, this is the ExtremeScale challenge to pack a petaflop supercomputer into a single rack. Each team was given $25M US to develop prototype. Teams are led by Intel, MIT Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Lab, Sandia National Lab, and oh, yes, Google CEO warns of data explosion and future without privacy - rich wargo - 10 Aug 20:57
nVidia.

Good thing ORNL is involved with nVidia, as I'm sure their entry will need petawatts of power. ORNL has all those lovely hydroelectric plants nearby.

I wonder if AMD is on one of the teams?

Great Reporting, Rich Wargo - 10 Aug 22:23

I can't believe they're not putting our money... A petaflop + dog, US Gov. computer named Roadrunner. If only there was such a computer as a Wiley Coyote!

Ok it's been a long day...

Do you spell relief beep beep or bleep bleep? ACME if iCare.

Peter Chan - 11 Aug 09:10

There should be a corresponding program to find an economic solution with off the shelf hardware, not only in terms of capital outlay, but also running and maintenance costs.

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