

Contact

www.linkedin.com/in/robert-j-murray (LinkedIn)

Top Skills

Innovation Management
Business Innovation
Strategic Leadership

Languages

French (Limited Working)
English (Native or Bilingual)
German (Elementary)

Honors-Awards

Napier Medal
George Potts memorial prize
Qualified Weapons Instructor:
Intelligence, Surveillance and
Reconnaissance (ISR)

Publications

NATO needs a bank
How NATO makes the unknown
known
NATO can learn from Ukraine's
defence innovation
Profile piece
Harnessing Allied Space capabilities

Rob Murray

Experienced Executive Leader
United Kingdom

Summary

I firmly believe that amazing things happen through the power of teams, leading people well, and delivering on promises, regardless of the type of business you're in.

These core principles have been the bedrock of my work ethic for over 25 years.

After 10+ years as a British Army Officer, deploying all over the world on various operations and missions, I left the military to join NATO's International Staff. I wanted to improve both 'what' and 'how' NATO nations invest in defence. My MBA from the University of Chicago equipped me with the tools I needed to identify untapped opportunities for both national administrations and their troops.

I'm proud to have been intimately involved in some of the biggest investment deals (multi-billion dollar) NATO has undertaken over the last decade. As Head of Innovation for the Alliance, I had the privilege of leading innovative endeavours across NATO and working with brilliant people to solve some of the most challenging problems we face while maintaining the defence and security for over 900 million citizens. This led to the conception and creation of both the NATO Technology Accelerator (DIANA) and NATO Innovation Fund (a one billion dollar VC fund).

After NATO, I was lucky enough to teach the next generation of leaders and thinkers to drive forward innovation and entrepreneurship across the globe, through my role as a Professor at Johns Hopkins University.

Having left Johns Hopkins I joined Saab to redefine what a twenty-first century defence company is all about.

Now I am using all of this experience to help nations, firms, and entrepreneurs prepare for the future.

Experience

DSR Bank Development Group

Chief Executive Officer

March 2025 - Present (4 months)

United Kingdom

Working with nations to build the multilateral Defence, Security and Resilience bank (dsrb.org)

Atlantic Council

Senior Fellow

June 2023 - Present (2 years 1 month)

I'm a Non-resident Senior Fellow in both the Transatlantic Security Initiative and the Forward Defence programme at the Council. My research looks at the intersection of technology, national security and finance with a specific focus on technology adoption across NATO nations.

The Johns Hopkins University

4 years 10 months

Associate Professor of Practice

October 2024 - Present (9 months)

Researching and teaching strategy, leadership, management, and applied innovation.

Senior Lecturer

September 2020 - October 2024 (4 years 2 months)

Back Row Angels

Partner

July 2018 - Present (7 years)

Angel and Venture Capital (VC) investor

Saab, Inc.

Chief Innovation Officer

July 2023 - February 2025 (1 year 8 months)

Passionate about reimagining what a twenty-first-century defense company can be. I focus on bringing together incredible people, creative thinking, and exponential technologies from start-ups, VCs, and other innovative sources to see them adopted across Saab. By fostering collaboration and embracing new

ideas, I aim to contribute to Saab's journey of innovation and strategic growth in the defence industry.

NATO

9 years 5 months

Head of Innovation

January 2020 - September 2022 (2 years 9 months)

Brussels Area, Belgium

Appointed as NATO's inaugural Head of Innovation by the Secretary General.

-Conceived and successfully negotiated NATO's first-ever technology accelerator (DIANA) at the Heads of State and Government level, spanning across Europe and North America.

-Conceived and negotiated the foundational agreement for the world's first multi-sovereign venture capital fund (NATO Innovation Fund), targeting investment in dual-use deep tech firms.

-Led NATO's policy work on emerging and disruptive technologies, including the creation of the Alliance's first strategy that aimed to develop sectors including: AI/data, robotics, space, quantum, biotechnology, and hypersonics.

-Spearheaded the development and negotiations of NATO's first AI strategy, which incorporated the world's first set of multinationally agreed principles for responsible use.

Vice Chairman Of The Board

January 2018 - October 2020 (2 years 10 months)

Vice-chair of both NATO's Army and Maritime Armaments Groups.

These groups are responsible for \$multi-billion programmes and nearly 10% of all NATO standards (300/3000). They also set the strategy for Allied capability development focusing on actual hardware and 'kit'. The combined groups represent a community of over 2000 people across 30+ nations.

It was my job to help nations adopt the latest equipment and technology through these groups.

Head of Intelligence | Land | Maritime: Defence Investment

January 2018 - January 2020 (2 years 1 month)

Bussels Area, Belgium

NATO's Defence Investment division seeks out investment opportunities for all NATO nations (investors).

In this senior executive role, I was responsible for NATO investments across the Intelligence, Land, and Maritime portfolios and their adoption by nations.

Responsibilities:

- Advise investors (NATO nations) on matters regarding current and future relevant NATO investments;
- Plan the strategic direction for NATO Intelligence, Land, and Maritime investments across a large, diverse cross-functional team;
- Conduct due diligence;
- Oversee the portfolio of existing investments across Intelligence, Land, and Maritime environments through engagement with multiple management entities, with a view to enhancing national adoption of technology;
- Lead a team of 12 direct reports and a large matrix team;
- Represent investors on various boards and governing bodies of portfolio assets.

Achievements:

- Commended for sourcing innovative new investment opportunities and helping Allies to procure new technology, while raising new funds (>\$120m) for allies to purchase new capabilities;
- Developed a new investment strategy that established synergies across the portfolio, meaning nations could acquire and adopt equipment in a multinational way;
- Implemented a new business model that increased staff output by over 33%, enabling the broad and complex portfolio to be managed more efficiently and in line with NATO's strategic objectives.

Head of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance: Defence Investment

May 2013 - December 2017 (4 years 8 months)

Brussels Area, Belgium

Responsibilities:

- Advised investors on NATO Intelligence capabilities;
- Oversaw three major NATO acquisition programs (c. \$2bn) within NATO's broader investment portfolio;
- Led the development and implementation of portfolio reforms (c. \$5.5m program);
- Managed a team of 5 direct reports.

Achievements:

- Secured investor agreement for a \$1bn add-on investment to an existing portfolio entity;
- Created, sourced funding, and successfully exited a portfolio investment that generated significant returns for investors;
- Designed and secured initial funding for a new fund.

UK Ministry of Defence

UK Army Officer

October 2001 - April 2013 (11 years 7 months)

Worldwide

Specialised in Surveillance and Reconnaissance during 10+ years of service as an Army officer. Deployed on numerous operations worldwide, leading multiple teams ranging from a discreet four-man unit to a group of 140 soldiers and officers.

Developed expertise in utilizing multiple sources of information, such as imagery satellites, drones, manned aircraft, ground reconnaissance troops, and many others, to plan highly coordinated Surveillance and Reconnaissance missions.

Education

The University of Chicago Booth School of Business

Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) · (2016 - 2018)

University of Lincoln

Master of Science (MSc), Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance
Management · (2012 - 2014)

Staffordshire University

MA, International Policy and Diplomacy · (2006 - 2009)

UK Weapons School

Qualified Weapons Instructor (ISR), Intelligence, Surveillance and
Reconnaissance · (2012 - 2012)

Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

Queen's commissioning course, Military and Strategic
Leadership · (2001 - 2002)