

Dr. Chad Waddington Bio

Dr. Waddington received his PhD in Mathematics from Colorado State University. His early work focused on Synthetic Aperture Radar, Passive Source Localization, and Over the Horizon Radar. Over time, his focus shifted into the growing field of AI and Machine Learning.

Dr. Waddington was one of the co-creators of the [AFRL Skyborg Vanguard program](#) and served as its chief AI and Autonomy officer. He was the technical lead on an award-winning international collaboration in AI development with the United Kingdom, and he co-created the [AFRL Autonomous Air Combat Operations program](#), leading it as the Principal Investigator until his selection as the Special Assistant to the Chief Scientist of the Department of the Air Force.

Dr. Waddington served two years in the Chief Scientist's Office at the Pentagon, first under Dr. Richard Joseph and then under Dr. Victoria Coleman. He was awarded the Civilian Meritorious Service Medal for outstanding performance and was coined by Hon. Barbara Barrett, Secretary of the Air Force, for his work on the implementation of the USAF Science & Technology 2030 study. He worked on the Vice Chief of Staff's innovation board and was the lead S&T representative to the Secretariat Enterprise Support Functions Working Group which stood up the DAF HQ level offices for the newly created USSF.

Dr. Waddington was, in the words of USSF Director for Science, Technology, and Research, Dr. Joel Mozer, "instrumental in the creation of the Chief Technology and Innovation Office" as a 3-star command within the USSF HQ.

After his time in the Pentagon, Dr. Waddington returned to AFRL and took a position at the Transformational Capabilities Office where he leads the development of Space focused programs as its Space Strategist. He was also selected to simultaneously fill the role of Assistant Deputy Technology Executive Officer for Space S&T at AFRL Headquarters. In these roles, Dr. Waddington provides strategic support and oversight for AFRL Space programs and works closely with members of the Space futures community including the CTIO, SSDP, SWAC, and S5 offices. He also leads studies into the future operating environment, develops the AFRL Space AI/ML roadmap, and works with USSF operations organizations to determine current and future operator needs.

Dr. Waddington has been both president and vice president of the AFRL/RV Junior Force Council, and led a large cross-organizational effort to address issues with AFRL's IT systems. In his free time, Dr. Waddington is an avid reader and amateur triathlete.