

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q. What is the National Conversation on Homeland Security Technology?**

A. The National Conversation is a series of topic-based discussions intended to bring together everyone to play a role in shaping the future of homeland security technology. This means responders, operational users, citizens, academia, and industry. Through online forums and in-person discussions, we will help industry better understand the homeland security market, identify capability gaps, apply innovation, and create outcomes that will help keep us all safer while minimizing disruption to the pace of daily life.

## **Q. Who should participate?**

A. Everyone! Participants include responders; operational users; industry representatives, such as technologists, manufacturers, and fabricators; industry supporters, such as business incubators, accelerators, and venture capitalists; state, local, and federal governmental organizations; academic laboratories; and the general public.

## **Q. How can stakeholders participate?**

A. Stakeholders can participate online by posting questions, ideas, and feedback via the S&T Collaboration Community or attend virtual or in-person events.

Whether online or in-person, the National Conversation is structured around five sequential “dialogues,” each of which addresses a broad issue area.

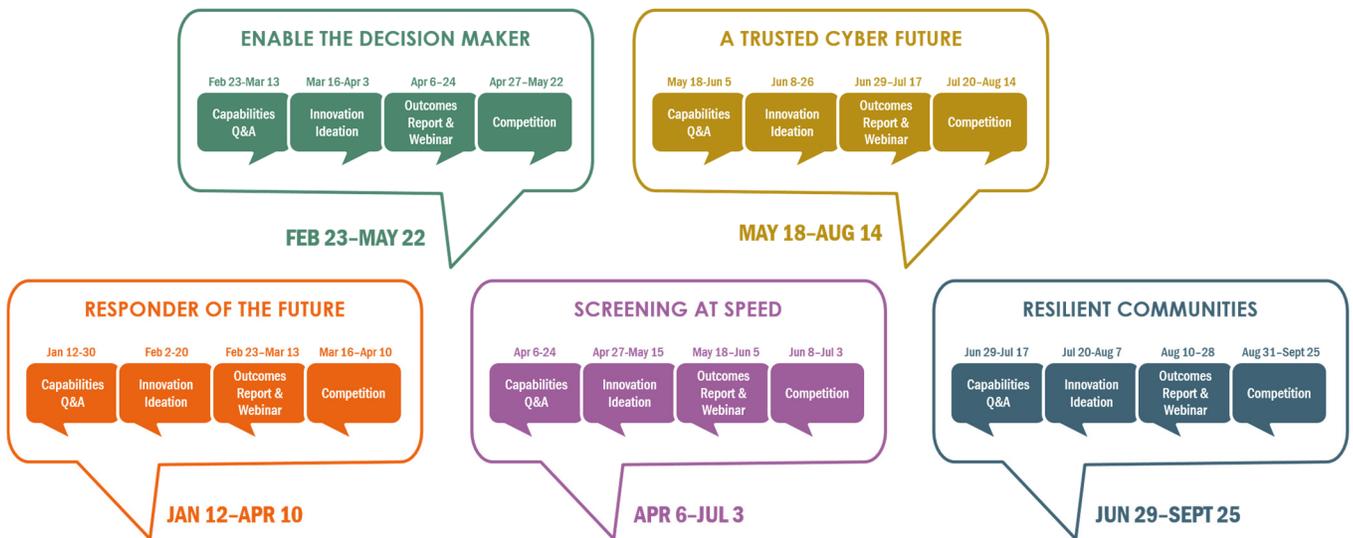
- Dialogue #1: Responder of the Future: wearables, communications, and information sharing
- Dialogue #2: Enabling the Decision Maker: data, interoperability, and actionable information
- Dialogue #3: Screening at Speed: accuracy, speed, and convenience
- Dialogue #4: A Trusted Cyber Future: mitigation, detection, and automation
- Dialogue #5: Resilient Communities: preparedness, mitigation, and recovery

Each dialogue will be comprised of four phases of activity:

1. A 3-week Capability Gaps Q&A Session
2. A 3-week Innovations and Ideation Session
3. A webinar that will present dialogue highlights and kick-off its Inspiration Awards Competition; and
4. A 4-week Inspiration Awards Competition (competition parameters and incentives will be designed around the outcomes of the dialogue’s Innovations and Ideation Session)

**Q. What is the schedule for the dialogues?**

A. Dialogues will be held sequentially; however, some sessions will overlap. Participants can contribute via the S&T Collaboration Community on a 24-7 basis.



**Q. May stakeholders start discussion on their own topics?**

A. Absolutely. In the S&T Collaboration Community, a page will be dedicated to new topics that can be posed in either Q&A or ideation format.

**Q. What is the S&T Collaboration Community?**

A: The S&T Collaboration Community allows participants to exchange ideas in a transparent setting. Participants can input their ideas and have them published publicly on the site so that others can comment on them. Participants can also vote on ideas so that the best ideas "bubble to the top." The Collaboration Community also allows users to provide anonymous comments, ensuring candid discussions among participants.

**Q. What is the difference between a "Q&A" session and an "Ideation" session?**

A: A Q&A session is where a question can be posted, and anyone can post an answer in response. An Ideation session is where an idea is posted, and participants can "vote" or "rank" the idea. Participants can also comment on ideas without ranking them.

**Q. May I participate in all sessions, or are only specific stakeholders allowed to participate in each?**

A: You can participate in any session for any dialogue. In fact, constant participation in all sessions across all dialogues is greatly encouraged. Many cross-cutting issues will arise and your perspective is valuable at every stage. Staying involved will help overcome disconnections that have caused barriers to addressing these issues in the past.

**Q. Why should I participate?**

A: Your input will guide future homeland security research and development. Your thoughtful feedback can lead to solutions to problems we are all facing. Participation could lead to new markets and solutions that will help keep us all safe and protected.

**Q. How often do I need to participate?**

A: How often you participate is entirely up to you.

**Q. How will my input be used?**

A: Your participation will make the efforts of every other stakeholder group stronger. Your comments and ideas will help all stakeholders advance their mission, goals, capabilities, and/or markets.

**Q. What will the government do with information that I post?**

A: An outcomes report and webinar will be conducted during each dialogue in order to promote dialogue highlights.

**Q. Will participants know who I am?**

A: You have two options for submitting ideas: 1) anonymously or 2) open for full transparency. All participants are encouraged to adjust their profile settings to create a unique user ID. The default user ID is your email address (minus the domain name). Participants will not be publicly identified without their consent and are encouraged to adjust profile settings to post anonymously.

**Q. What does it mean if someone “likes” my comment?**

A: If other people like your comment, they may show it by clicking on the thumbs-up icon. Likes represent social interaction by stakeholders and have no bearing on whether or not a comment or idea will be factored into an Inspiration Award Competition.

**Q. What can I win if I compete for an Inspiration Award?**

A: Inspiration Award competitions will be unique to each dialogue. In other words, a competition may call for submissions of a white paper while another competition may call for development proposals. Inspiration Awards will also vary per competition, and may include a number of incentives. For example, awards might be distributed in cash prizes, an audience with S&T leadership, or other offerings that may help industry collaborate on the development of innovative solutions.

**Q. How will Inspiration Award winners be selected?**

A: Inspiration Award competitions will be juried. Jury members will be selected based upon the substantive area and the nature of the competition.

**Q. If I win an Inspiration Award, am I guaranteed a business contract with the government?**

A: No. For more information on how to pursue doing business with S&T, go to <http://www.dhs.gov/science-and-technology/business-opportunities>.

**Q. My idea may be sensitive. How do I submit that?**

A: If you think your specific idea, or solution may run into the sensitive arena, please submit via email directly to [STIdeaScale@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:STIdeaScale@hq.dhs.gov).

**Q. How do I access the National Conversation?**

A: Go to <http://scitech.dhs.gov> to access the S&T Collaboration Community.

**Q. What if I'm having issues with the website?**

A: Please contact a support rep at <http://support.ideascale.com/customer/portal/emails/new>.

**Q. What browsers are recommended to access the S&T Collaboration Community?**

A: For best results, use the following browsers:

- Firefox 3 (or higher)
- Internet Explorer 7 (or higher)
- Safari 3 (or higher)
- Chrome 4 (or higher)

**Q. How do I participate via in-person engagements?**

A: There will be a variety of workshops and roundtable discussions conducted to inform that National Conversation. Go to <http://scitech.dhs.gov> to view the schedule. Note that the schedule will be updated frequently, so bookmark the site and keep checking back for new dates

