



# The Cyber 9/12 Strategy Challenge

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the Cyber 9/12 Strategy Challenge?**

The Cyber 9/12 Strategy Challenge is the only student competition devoted to high-level policy recommendations for real-time responses to a cyber incident. The European competition will take place on April 16-17 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Throughout the competition, university students will confront a serious cyber security breach by composing their ideal cyber policy recommendations and justifying the decision-making process used to rank priorities. During the course of the competition, the scenario will continue to evolve and escalate, forcing advancing teams to focus on key priorities during a cyber-incident against the European Union and its allies and partners.

By participating in the competition, students get the unique opportunity to apply their policy recommendations by briefing some of the world's leading cyber security policy experts, who will participate as judges.

### **How is the Cyber 9/12 Strategy Challenge Structured?**

The competition is divided into Qualifying, Semi-Final, and Final rounds. Approximately half of the teams will advance to the semi-final round. Teams advancing to the semi-final round will be announced at the qualifying awards reception at the conclusion of day one. Of the teams competing in the semi-final rounds, 4 teams will advance to the final round.

Throughout the competition, judges will assess each team's oral brief and provide feedback to the teams. At the qualifying awards reception on the first night, advancing teams will be provided with a new scenario inject and will work to adapt policy responses. In the same format as the qualifying rounds, teams advancing to the semi-final and final rounds will deliver an oral brief to a panel of judges on their policy recommendations given new developments.

### **Are GCSP and the Atlantic Council organising lodging for students?**

No, all teams are responsible for organising and paying for their own travel and accommodation.

### **How many teams are competing?**

In 2019, The Geneva Competition hosted 22 teams from 17 different universities in 13 different countries.

### **What prizes will be awarded?**

There will be awards for the top performing teams based on score, as well as team awards for best written brief, best oral presentation, best teamwork, and most creative policy response alternative.

### **What should I bring to the competition?**

There are no restrictions on what teams may bring with them to the venue. However, during the competition rounds, no electronic assistance (including tablets, kindles, laptops...) will be permitted. Teams are encouraged to use written/printed notes to help them during their presentations.

### **What is the format of the competition?**

The Cyber 9/12 Strategy Challenge consists of a fictional simulated cyber-incident scenario that evolves over the course of the competition, prompting teams to modify their policy priorities and recommendations as part of successive oral presentations.

All teams will submit written policy briefs in advance of the competition and compete in the qualifying competition round on day one. The judges' score of the qualifying round oral presentations will be combined with the team score from the more detailed written policy brief submitted in advance of the competition.

During the qualifying round, teams will deliver a 10-minute oral presentation based on written briefs prepared before the competition, followed by 10 minutes to answer direct questions from a panel of judges. Teams will receive feedback from a panel of judges who will score students based on their oral presentations. At the qualifying awards reception, advancing teams will be given an intelligence report that further alters the original scenario.

During the semi-final round, advancing teams will deliver a 10-minute oral presentation based on a new intelligence report received at the conclusion of day one, followed by 10 minutes to answer direct questions from a panel of judges. Teams will have to respond with only little preparation, testing their ability to analyse information as a team and synthesise a response with limited advance preparation.

After the teams advancing to the final round are announced, participants will receive the final intelligence report detailing further changes to the scenario and will be provided with a very short amount of time to use the new information to revise their policy responses. In the final round, advancing teams will deliver a 10-minute oral presentation, followed by 10 minutes to answer direct questions from a panel of judges.

## **What tasks are part of the competition?**

The competition develops using a single fictional, simulated cyber-incident scenario that will evolve and escalate through a series of intelligence reports. The competition encompasses tasks, both written and oral, that challenge students to respond to the political, economic, and security problems created by the evolving cyber-incident scenario. Teams will be provided with an intelligence report that sets the scene for the fictional cyber-incident.

### **Written Cyber Policy Brief**

Teams will write a brief providing analysis on the evolving scenario, and more detailed instructions on the task will be provided at a later time. The written task is not meant to test the team's ability to summarize the scenario, but rather to explain the reasons and confidence levels behind their analysis. No graphs, images, tables, and other graphics are permitted.

### **Oral Cyber Policy Brief**

Teams will be given 10 minutes to present their policy recommendations, followed by 10 minutes to answer direct questions from a panel of judges. Further detailed instructions will be distributed to teams selected for the competition.

### **Decision Document**

Teams will also be required to submit 8 copies of a "decision document" accompanying their oral presentation at the beginning of the first competition round on April 16<sup>th</sup>. The "decision document" will be a prepared form, maximum one single-sided page in length, outlining the team's decision process and recommendations. The teams should note that the document is not intended to summarize every detail of the recommendations, but to help the judges follow the oral presentation, and the judges will be given only 2 minutes to read it before the presentation begins. The decision document should be clear and concise. Graphs, images, tables, and other graphics are permitted, but count toward the one page limit.

## **Can presentation aids be used for the oral presentations?**

NO presentation aids (e.g., PowerPoint, props, posters, or electronic aids of any kind) are permitted.

## **What sources should I use to prepare my responses? How should these sources be cited?**

Sources and citations are not required for the written policy response. If used, they will count toward the total word count.

## **Can teams use charts in the written brief?**

Graphs, images, tables, and other graphics are NOT permitted in the written brief, but ARE permitted for the decision document.

**Is there a required format for the oral briefing?**

There is no requirement for the structure or format of presentations or the number of team members presenting. Presentations are limited to 10 minutes. Each team must decide how to best conduct their briefing.