



## Agenda

### Annual Dinner 2025 National Competitiveness Forum

#### Location

Salamander DC  
1330 Maryland Avenue SW  
Washington, DC

#### December 15, 2025, Annual Dinner (All Times Eastern)

6:00 pm – 6:45 pm: Registration and Reception  
6:45 pm – 9:00 pm: Annual Dinner and Awards Ceremony

#### December 16, 2025, National Competitiveness Forum

7:15 am – 8:00 am: Registration, Breakfast, and Networking  
8:00 am – 12:00 pm: NCF Programming  
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm: Lunch  
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm: NCF Programming

#### Government Identification Required

A government-issued ID is required by all attendees for the Annual Dinner and National Competitiveness Forum.

## National Competitiveness Forum Sponsors

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## December 15, 2025, Annual Dinner

**6:00 PM REGISTRATION AND RECEPTION**

**6:45 PM WELCOME**

- Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith, President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness

**7:00 PM CHAIR'S ADDRESS**

- Mr. Erik Fyrwald, CEO, IFF, and Chair, Council on Competitiveness

**7:15 PM ANNUAL DINNER**

**8:00 PM 2025 NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS AWARD CEREMONY**

- Hon. Laurie Locascio, Under Secretary of Commerce and Director Emeritus, National Institute of Standards and Technology; President and CEO, American National Standards Institute
- Hon. Sethuraman "Panch" Panchanathan, Director Emeritus, National Science Foundation; University Professor of Technology and Innovation and Foundation Chair in Computing and Augmented Intelligence, Arizona State University
- Dr. Steven Ashby, Laboratory Director Emeritus, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory; Senior Vice President for Strategic Partnerships, Battelle
- Hon. Steve Isakowitz, President & CEO Emeritus, The Aerospace Corporation

**9:00 PM ANNUAL DINNER CONCLUDES**

## December 16, 2025, National Competitiveness Forum

### 7:15 AM REGISTRATION, NETWORKING, AND BREAKFAST

### 7:50 AM CONTEXTUALIZING COMPETITIVENESS: THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2026

Council leadership will share the policy vision for the organization in the context of the economic, global, and political realities facing the United States as we enter 2026.

- Mr. Erik Fyrwald, CEO, IFF, and Chair, Council on Competitiveness
- Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith, President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness

### 8:20 AM RIDING A WAVE OF DISRUPTION AND DISCONTINUITY

As the Council prepares to mark its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2026, the competitiveness landscape continues to shift—and the changes are accelerating across many fronts: economic, social, technological. At the same time, the United States now faces its most formidable set of national security challengers in decades. This uncharted territory is characterized by great uncertainty and opportunity.

Key issues:

1. What are today's competitiveness-altering trends reshaping U.S. productivity, national security, and overall prosperity? Does the country have the policy foundations in place to leverage these trends for economic growth?
  2. At the cusp of our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, what does a proactive, anticipatory national competitiveness strategy look like—what are its key elements? Are U.S. leaders putting into place these strategies to anticipate, counter, and leverage these disruptions and discontinuities? Where policy gaps remain?
  3. Amid growing global uncertainty, which areas of innovation or capability should the U.S. prioritize to secure long-term competitiveness — what truly matters for the next 40 years?
- Ms. Joan Gabel, Chancellor, University of Pittsburgh, and Academic Vice-Chair, Council on Competitiveness
  - Ms. Leticia Gonçalves, President, IFF Health and Biosciences
  - Hon. Steve Isakowitz, President and CEO Emeritus, The Aerospace Corporation
  - Dr. Thom Mason, President and CEO, Triad National Security, LLC, Laboratory Director, Los Alamos National Laboratory, and Co-Chair, National Commission
  - Dr. Gary S. May, Chancellor, University of California at Davis
  - Dr. Justin Schwartz, Chancellor, University of Colorado Boulder
  - **Moderator:** Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith, President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness

**9:00 AM FIRESIDE CHAT — AN OUTLOOK ON THE U.S. AND GLOBAL ECONOMY AND CAPITAL MARKETS ENVIRONMENT**

This candid, forward-looking conversation will offer attendees a strategic perspective on where the United States, global economies, and capital markets are headed — and how the United States can stay competitive in a fast-changing world.

- Mr. Charles O. Holliday, Jr., Chair Emeritus, Council on Competitiveness, and Chair, Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils (GFCC)
- Mr. Thomas Sheehan, Chair, Global Corporate & Investment Banking, Bank of America

**9:20 AM THE FUTURE OF UNIVERSITIES AND U.S. COMPETITIVENESS**

The United States' universities remain the backbone of our innovation economy — conducting the research that drives discoveries and cultivating the talent that powers *the next economy*. Today, these institutions are navigating a period of profound transition. Shifting public expectations, rapidly evolving workforce needs, mounting financial pressures, demographic headwinds, and new political and social dynamics are reshaping how higher education operates and delivers value. In this forward-looking conversation, a group of higher education leaders will explore how institutions are adapting and thriving amid these changes — ensuring U.S. universities continue to propel national competitiveness and economic opportunity for decades to come.

Key issues:

1. Universities have long been engines of innovation and talent—what bold changes do you believe are necessary to ensure higher education continues to fuel U.S. competitiveness in a rapidly evolving economy?
2. As public expectations shift and demographic and financial pressures mount, how are your institutions rethinking the value proposition of a university education—both for students and for society?
3. The next economy will demand new kinds of talent, partnerships, and research capacity. Where do you see the biggest opportunities for universities to lead nationally—whether through technology development, workforce pipelines, or new models of collaboration with government and industry?

- Dr. Jennifer L. Mnookin, Chancellor, University of Wisconsin – Madison
- Mr. Jere Morehead, President, University of Georgia
- Dr. Susan Poser, President, Hofstra University
- Dr. G. Gabrielle Starr, President, Pomona College
- Dr. Elisa Stephens, President, Academy of Art University
- Dr. Gregory Washington, President, George Mason University
- **Moderator:** Adm. Walter “Ted” Carter Jr., President, The Ohio State University

## 10:00 AM A CALL TO ACTION FOR IGNITING THE UNITED STATES' INNOVATION-DRIVEN ECONOMY

Amid rapid breakthroughs in AI, quantum, biotech, advanced materials, etc., America's competitiveness hinges on its ability to innovate at speed and scale. The Council's *Compact for America*—shaped by 50 leading CTOs over two years—offers 10 bold recommendations to build a new, tech-driven industrial base and national innovation ecosystem. This session will challenge leaders to identify and discuss the key levers needed to drive action, investment, and collaboration necessary to secure U.S. innovation leadership for decades to come.

Key issues:

1. The 10 recommendations in the *Compact for America* span the spectrum from accelerating technology commercialization to expanding the geography of innovation. Is there a particular one for which you see a sense of urgency to unlock new waves of innovation and prosperity if acted on now—and how might it reshape the U.S. innovation landscape?
  2. America must innovate at speed and scale—what strengths can we build on right now to accelerate that momentum and amplify the country's competitiveness?
  3. If the United States embraces this roadmap—aligned as it is with the September 23 Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies from the Executive Office of President Trump—what could the next decade of U.S. innovation and industry look like at its best? How might it expand opportunities for growth, security, and shared prosperity? Conversely, what do we risk losing if we fail to act?
  4. Do we have the people and skills in this country to leverage our innovation ecosystem to economic growth?
- Dr. Taylor Eighmy, President, University of Texas at San Antonio
  - Dr. Jeffrey P. Gold, President, University of Nebraska System
  - Ms. Deborah Gracio, Laboratory Director, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
  - Dr. Mark Peters, President and Chief Executive Officer, MITRE Corporation
  - Dr. Jud Virden, Laboratory Director, National Laboratory of the Rockies
  - **Moderator:** Mr. Chad Evans, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Council on Competitiveness

## 10:45 AM MORNING KEYNOTE: HOW THE GENESIS MISSION WILL REVOLUTIONIZE U.S. R&D FOR THE NEXT DECADE AND BEYOND

- Hon. Darío Gil, Under Secretary for Science, U.S. Department of Energy, and Director, Genesis Mission

**11:00 AM TECH TALK — FROM QUBITS TO BREAK THROUGH: THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN INNOVATION**

- Dr. Raj Hazra, CEO, Quantinuum

**11:10 AM FORGING THE FUTURE: QUANTIFYING QUANTUM, AMPLIFYING AI, AND SCALING SUPERCOMPUTING**

Computing is rewriting the rules of innovation — and the United States must lead. This panel will explore how quantum breakthroughs, AI advancements, and supercomputing at scale are accelerating discoveries across biotech, energy, and beyond. Panelists will spotlight strategies to democratize ethical and secure access to advanced computing, advance next-generation technologies in partnership with global allies, and cultivate the diverse, highly skilled workforce powering the United States greatest innovation frontier.

Key issues:

1. As quantum computing, AI, and supercomputing each evolve rapidly, how can the United States apply these technologies to accelerate discoveries in biotech, energy, and other critical sectors?
2. How can we ensure advanced computing technologies are accessible, ethical, and secure, particularly for startups, academic researchers, and smaller companies often at the heart of innovation?
3. Given the highly specialized skills required to operate and innovate with these technologies, how can we cultivate the workforce and needed to maintain U.S. leadership in this global innovation frontier?

- Dr. Kimberly S. Budil, Laboratory Director, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
- Mr. Christopher Geiger, Vice President, Internal Audit and Enterprise Risk, Lockheed Martin
- Ms. Laura J. McGill, Laboratories Director, Sandia National Laboratories
- Mr. Gunjan K. Sinha, Founder and Chairman, OpenGrowth.Ventures
- **Moderator:** Dr. Darryll J. Pines, President, University of Maryland

**12:00 PM LUNCH**

**12:40 PM THE BIPARTISAN BIOTECH CAUCUS ON ADVANCING THE U.S. BIOECONOMY**

The U.S. bioeconomy is a key driver of innovation, growth, and global competitiveness. Leadership from the bipartisan House BIOtech Caucus will share insights into the policies, partnerships, and investments needed to keep the United States at the forefront of biotechnology, advanced manufacturing, and bio-based innovation.

- Rep. Stephanie Bice, U.S. Representative (R-OK)

**1:00 PM BREAK**

**1:10 PM PHARMA 4.0: ACCELERATING THE TRANSITION TO AN AI-FIRST ECOSYSTEM**

- Dr. Mehmood Khan, CEO, Hevolution
- Dr. Jason Paragas, CEO, DVLP Medicines

**1:30 PM BUILDING THE “BIO+” ECONOMY: PRIORITIES, POLICIES, POTENTIAL**

The global bioeconomy is projected to scale to \$30 trillion by 2050. What must the U.S. public and private sectors do today to capture the benefits of innovation, expand industrial capacity and capabilities, and create high-earning jobs from this generational growth opportunity?

Key issues:

1. The bioeconomy is expansive and diverse. How do you think about and define it; and what are the key links along its value chain?
  2. What are the challenges and opportunities in optimizing the bioeconomy for growth?
  3. What are the most groundbreaking advancements in genetic engineering, synthetic biology, biomanufacturing, etc. — and how will they improve the health and prosperity for Americans, and strengthen supply chain security in the United States?
- Mr. Brooke Coleman, Executive Director, American Alliance for Biomanufacturing
  - Mr. Tim Fowler, General Manager for Sweeteners and Acidulants, Primient
  - Dr. Paul Kearns, Laboratory Director, Argonne National Laboratory
  - Hon. Laurie E. Locascio, President and CEO, American National Standards Institute
  - Mr. Mark Warner, CEO, Liberation Bioindustries
  - **Moderator:** Dr. Jonathan McIntyre, Founding Partner, Nodl Advisors and Distinguished Fellow, Council on Competitiveness

**2:15 PM SEEKING A PATH FORWARD FOR U.S. COMPETITIVENESS**

A high-level conversation exploring how policy, innovation, and industry leadership can shape a stronger, more competitive future for the United States.

Key issues:

1. In an increasingly multipolar world, what does U.S. leadership look like — and what strategies can ensure America remains the most attractive place in the world for innovation, investment, and talent?
2. How should the United States position itself on the global stage to lead in setting the standards, norms, and rules that will govern emerging technologies and the next-generation economy?

3. How can industry and government work together more effectively to accelerate breakthroughs in emerging technologies—such as biotechnology, advanced materials, and AI—that will define future economic strength?

- Ms. Ester Baiget, President and CEO, Novonosis
- Mr. Erik Fyrwald, CEO, IFF, and Chair, Council on Competitiveness
- **Moderator:** Mr. Vincent Valk, Senior Editor, Chemical Week at S&P Global

## **2:45 PM COMPETITIVENESS CONVERSATIONS ACROSS AMERICA: EMERGING “NEXT PRACTICES” IN PLACE-MAKING INNOVATION**

Since 2024, the Council has crossed the nation uncovering bold ideas and “next” practices that are shaping the United States’ innovation capacity and capability. This session dives into the lessons from 2025’s Competitiveness Conversations Across America, teases what’s coming in 2026, and previews a game-changing Competitiveness Conversation Toolkit — designed to give policymakers actionable strategies to supercharge U.S. innovation.

Key issues:

1. What does it mean to be a “nation of innovators,” and why is that important?
2. The traditional view of place in the context of innovation is becoming outdated. How do you think about “place” today?
3. What enabling conditions—across industry, academia, the national laboratories, labor, and government—are necessary to rapidly expand the innovation economy across the country?

- Dr. Sunil Kumar, President, Tufts University
- Dr. Theresa Mayer, Vice President for Research, Carnegie Mellon University
- Dr. Jeffrey Rhoads, Vice President for Research and Professor, Department of Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering, University of Notre Dame
- Mr. Jon Rosenberger, Director, IBEW
- Dr. David Wilson, President, Morgan State University
- **Moderator:** Mr. Josh Parker, Chairman and CEO, Ancora

## **3:30 PM NCF 2025 RECAP & PATH TO THE 2026 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

Building on a day of bold ideas, this discussion will focus on actionable next steps to strengthen U.S. leadership in next-generation computing, energy, the bioeconomy, and place-based innovation in an age of disruption and discontinuity. Leaders from the Council on Competitiveness will also share perspectives on how the Council can advance its mission during its 40th anniversary year—and help shape the nation’s competitiveness in the decade ahead.

Key issues:

1. How can the United States transform this moment of disruption and discontinuity—driven by technological convergence, geopolitical shifts, and economic realignment—into a new era of innovation, productivity, and shared prosperity?
  2. What will it take for leaders across industry, academia, labor, and government to stay agile and aligned—adapting faster than the pace of change to seize emerging opportunities in computing, energy, the bioeconomy, and place-based innovation?
  3. As the Council on Competitiveness marks its 40th anniversary, how can it leverage this milestone to mobilize the nation’s innovators and chart a bold new agenda for U.S. competitiveness in the decade ahead?
- Mr. Erik Fyrwald, CEO, IFF, and Chair, Council on Competitiveness
  - Hon. Deborah L. Wince-Smith, President and CEO, Council on Competitiveness

**3:45 PM NCF CONCLUDES**