



Agenda

Competitiveness Conversations Across America: Tennessee — Redefining Place and Building the Future Innovation Ecosystem for Mobility, Energy & Manufacturing

April 25-26, 2024

Student Life Center Ballroom
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tennessee

Thursday, April 25, 2024

Noon - 1:10 pm CT:	Registration
1:10 - 4:40 pm CT:	Competitiveness Conversation, Day 1
4:40 - 6:15 pm CT:	Chancellor Reception
6:15 - 8:00 pm CT:	Competitiveness Conversation Dinner

Friday, April 26, 2024

7:30 - 8:30 am CT:	Registration & Breakfast
8:30 am - 12:15 pm CT:	Competitiveness Conversation, Day 2

Competitiveness Conversations Across America: Tennessee — the Future of Mobility, Energy & Manufacturing

Thursday, April 25, 2024

Noon Registration

**1:10 pm Putting Competitiveness in Context —
Challenges and Opportunities for 2024**

Leadership will share the policy vision for the “[Competitiveness Conversations Across America](#)” — under the auspices of the [Council on Competitiveness](#) “National Commission on Innovation and Competitiveness Frontiers” — in context of the economic, global, and political realities facing the State and the United States in 2024.

Daniel Diermeier, Chancellor, Vanderbilt University

Donde Plowman, Chancellor, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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

**1:30 pm The Pillars of Innovation: Deploying Tech-based Innovation at Speed and
Scale, Accelerating the Future of Sustainability, and Defining the Future of
Work and the Workforce**

Leaders explore the key pillars of innovation as articulated in the Council’s “National Commission on Innovation & Competitiveness Frontiers” — highlighting both key challenges and opportunities in the State, as well as suggesting best practices to scale nationally, with a goal of dramatically increasing the nation’s innovation capacity and capabilities.

Key questions to consider:

- What are some of the key policies and partnership you see as foundational for a place-based innovation economy?
- How important is the alignment between industry and other stakeholders — like the education community, from K-12 to research universities and beyond — to develop the workforce skills for the future?
- Looking at all the grand challenges facing the world — and focusing on the strengths of Tennessee — what are you doing to drive and leverage technological disruption for competitive advantage?
- What is one challenge and/or opportunity you see for advancing innovation-based competitiveness in Tennessee and the nation in the next 4 years?

Robert (Rob) Carter, Executive Vice President, FedEx Information Services, Chief Information Officer of FedEx Corporation

Pablo Di Si, President & CEO, Volkswagen Group of America; CEO of Volkswagen Brand North American Region

Paolo Ferrari, BSAM Executive Chairman, Bridgestone West CEO, Bridgestone Corporation J GCOO

Jérémie Papin, Chairperson, Nissan Americas, Member of the Global Executive Committee & Sr. Vice President, Nissan Motor Co., Ltd.

Moderator: Dan Helfrich, Chair and CEO, Deloitte Consulting LLP

2:15 pm **Redefining “Place” in the 21st Century: Broadening and Deepening Tennessee’s Innovation Ecosystem**

As competition in the global innovation landscape intensifies, there is a growing urgency to capitalize on untapped talent, technology, investment, and infrastructure. To boost competitiveness, the United States — and Tennessee — must focus on expanding and deepening both the demography and the geography of innovation, meaningfully engaging different communities and diverse populations as workers, innovators, entrepreneurs, and beneficiaries.

Key questions to consider:

- How are leaders across the State rethinking traditional models to define, coordinate, and support local, state, and regional innovation hubs?
- How are leaders investing in expanding and retaining the local talent base?
- How is the State strengthening local innovation ecosystems by leveraging technology?

Jamari Brown, Director of Economic and Community Development, Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County

Tim Kelly, Mayor, City of Chattanooga

Indya Kincannon, Mayor, City of Knoxville

Ted Townsend, President & CEO, Greater Memphis Chamber

Moderator: Chad Evans, Executive Vice President, Council on Competitiveness

3:00 pm **Competitiveness Conversation Coffee Break**

3:15 pm **Innovation Talks: Leveraging Tennessee’s Tech & Innovation Prowess to Amplify America’s Potential**

3:15 pm I-24 MOTION Project

How Tennessee built the smartest roadway in the world along a six-mile stretch of I-24.

Jonathan Sprinkle, Professor of Computer Science, Vanderbilt University

Josh Westerhold, Senior Manager, Mobility, Nissan Americas

Dan Work, Associate Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Vanderbilt University

3:30 pm Quantum Information Science

Katherine (Kate) Evans, Director, Computational Sciences and Engineering, Oak Ridge National Laboratory

3:45 pm Developing Tennessee's Innovation Economy

The future of innovation will rely increasingly on integrated, multidisciplinary, and multidomain partnerships that span and connect research, development, and deployment of new technologies at scale. This panel is a case study on Tennessee's bid to connect, compute, power, fuel, and lead.

Key questions to consider:

- What are the emerging engines of tech-driven innovation in your organizations and Tennessee — and how resilient are they? What factors will either limit or accelerate growth of the tech-based opportunities you foresee in Tennessee?
- How do you and your organizations foster a culture of innovation to empower collaboration and partnership? What models work — and what could be scaled across the State and Nation?
- Universities, national laboratories, industry, government — they all play a role in upskilling and building the workforce of the future. How are you fostering greater collaboration and partnership to address workforce needs — models for Tennessee and the Nation?

Lindsey Cox, Chief Executive Officer, Launch Tennessee

Deb Crawford, Vice Chancellor for Research, Innovation, & Economic Development, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Susan Hubbard, Deputy Laboratory Director for Science and Technology, Oak Ridge National Laboratory

Jason Maynard, Executive Vice President, Oracle

Moderator: Joe Hoagland, Vice President of Enterprise Relations and Innovation, Tennessee Valley Authority

4:30 pm Day 1 Wrap-Up — and Day 2 Preview

Daniel Diermeier, Chancellor, Vanderbilt University

4:40 pm Chancellor Reception

6:15 pm Competitiveness Conversation Dinner

United States Senator Bill Hagerty

8:00 pm Dinner Concludes

Friday, April 26, 2024

7:30 am Registration & Breakfast

8:30 am Day 2 Kickoff

Donde Plowman, Chancellor, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

8:40 am Powering Tennessee’s Future — Leveraging the State’s Energy Portfolio to Build and Advance Industries

This leadership panel will explore the energy productivity-driven renaissance in research, services, and manufacturing across the State — and explore how leaders are creating and using an energy matrix to support growth across many industry sectors.

Key questions to consider:

- How are leaders across Tennessee boosting investment in the research, development, and deployment of promising, essential energy technologies?
- What, from your perspective, are the key elements of a state and national policy ecosystem to foster clean energy innovation and transition? Are there solution paths for speeding the development of energy projects in particular — exemptions for permitting, etc.?
- What are leaders across the State doing to shore up key supply chains for advanced manufacturing?
- What sort of partnerships are emerging in Tennessee — across labs, universities, and industry — to accelerate energy and manufacturing competitiveness? Any lessons for the Nation?

Brent Baker, Vice President – Chief Customer and Innovation Officer, Nashville Electric Service

Jeff Lyash, President & CEO, Tennessee Valley Authority

Katie Ottenweller, Southeast Lead, Energy Policy & Markets, Google

Padma Raghavan, Vice Provost for Research and Innovation, Vanderbilt University

Stephen Streiffer, Director, Oak Ridge National Laboratory

Moderator: Chad Holliday, Chair Emeritus Royal Dutch Shell, Chair Emeritus, Council on Competitiveness, Co-Chair Mission Possible Partnership

9:30 am Innovation Talks: Leveraging Tennessee’s Tech & Innovation Prowess to Amplify America’s Potential

Innovation Talks highlighting the state’s tech and innovation assets.

9:30 am Future of Energy

Brian Wirth, Governor’s Chair Professor for Computational Nuclear Engineering, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

9:45 am Tech Continuum Across the State — Urban to Rural

Michael Aikens, Founding Director, Center for Rural Innovation; Chair, Rural Reimagined Grand Challenge, Office of Research and Economic Development at Tennessee Technological University

10:00 am Taking Tennessee’s Talent to the Next Level — Mobilizing the State’s Workforce for a More Innovative Future

This leadership panel will explore the talent conundrum. Hailed as the State’s greatest asset and in many ways its greatest challenge, ensuring Tennessee has the skilled workforce to prosper in an increasingly turbulent local, state, national, and global economy is the critical competitiveness challenge. Lessons learned here can also inform national strategies for building the most agile and resilient workforce of the 21st century.

Key questions to consider:

- How confident are you that the current system of education and training is up to the task of preparing students and workers for the job opportunities of the next 5-10 years? Why? What is working — or not working?
- Tennessee is betting and planning hard for a future optimized for research and technology-driven innovation. What challenges could stand in the way of this?
- The State — and Nation — have many workforce needs, but the skillsets for one industry or firm may be quite different from that of another. What is the opportunity space in Tennessee for technically trained workers with or without a college degree? Are there other pathways and examples of success the State could reinforce, and that the Nation could model?
- What are Tennessee’s successes — real and projected — in aligning its talent base with the incredible opportunities anticipated here?

Joe Bales, Vice President for University Advancement, Middle Tennessee State University

Bill Hardgrave, President, University of Memphis

Jothany Reed, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Tennessee Board of Regents

Deniece Thomas, Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Moderator: Liliana Ramirez, Director of Workforce Development, Ford Motor Company

10:45 am **Competitiveness Conversation Coffee Break**

11:00 am **Tennessee Governor's Address with Governor Bill Lee**

11:30 am **Mapping the Enabling Conditions for Tennessee's Competitiveness Strategy for the Next 25 Years**

This leadership panel will examine the enabling conditions essential for Tennessee's competitiveness strategy over the next 25 years. As the state plans for its future economic growth and prosperity, it is important to identify and understand the key factors that will drive competitiveness in various sectors. The panel will explore the intersection of policy, infrastructure, education, innovation, and workforce development, aiming to provide insights into creating an environment conducive to sustainable economic advancement.

- What do you envision as the most significant opportunities and challenges for Tennessee's economic competitiveness over the next 25 years?
- What initiatives are necessary to foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in Tennessee?
- What steps can leaders in the State take to ensure Tennessee's long-term economic success and prosperity?
- What key learnings from Tennessee should be elevated to the national level to improve the productivity and innovation capacity of the United States?

Randy Boyd, President, University of Tennessee System

Daniel Diermeier, Chancellor, Vanderbilt University

Stuart McWhorter, Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development

Donde Plowman, Chancellor, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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

12:15 pm **Tennessee Competitiveness Conversation Concludes**