

COUNCIL BIOECONOMY INITIATIVE

10X Bioeconomy Working Sessions Plan
August 26, 2026

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

Grow the U.S. bioeconomy from a scientific strength into an economic powerhouse.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The Council's Bioeconomy Initiative will identify a focused set of high-impact opportunities to accelerate U.S. leadership in the global bioeconomy and translate them into ambitious, practical recommendations for policy, investment, infrastructure, innovation, and impact.

APPROACH

The Council will convene six one-hour, subject matter expert-driven working sessions during September and October 2026. Each session will bring together a cross-sector group of practitioners, researchers, investors, industry executives, policymakers, and other leaders to examine critical challenges, debate high-leverage opportunities, and develop practical solutions.

The process will move rapidly from issue identification and expert debate to recommendation development and finalization. The goal is to identify where the U.S. bioeconomy system is breaking down, determine the greatest opportunities for change, and distill those insights into a small number of core recommendations, while bringing the Council's voice and convening power to an increasingly important national priority with growing political interest and public attention.

The resulting strategic recommendations report will stand alone, as well as serve as the bioeconomy pillar of the Council's 10X recommendations to be unveiled at the 2026 National Competitiveness Forum.

In 2027, the Council will build on the release of this report with an education and engagement campaign designed to elevate the recommendations, deepen understanding of the U.S. bioeconomy opportunity, and engage policymakers, industry leaders, and other stakeholders around implementation. We will also develop an ongoing drumbeat of further thought leadership focused on specific opportunities to strengthen the U.S. bioeconomy, including agriculture, finance, etc.

THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE SIX WORKING SESSIONS

The initiative will structure the expert dialogue around three complementary lenses or focus areas within the U.S. bioeconomy, each explored through two working sessions. The outputs from each pair of sessions will then be reviewed by SMEs, who will have an opportunity to assess the emerging analysis and recommendations and provide feedback through an open comment period.

Working Session Prep. Roughly one week before each virtual session, Council staff will circulate a concise briefing package to give participants enough context to engage immediately without creating a burdensome preparation process. The packet will contain:

- A short framing memo with key data and issues
- Relevant Council research and recommendations
- Selected external research
- A handful of questions for discussion

Additionally, in advance of each working session, Council staff will contact two to three registered working session attendees, asking them to participate as kickoff discussants.

Working Session 1. The first working session for each focus area will identify opportunities and brainstorm potential solutions. Specifically, we will:

- Surface emerging trends, disruptive developments, and chokepoints in the system
- Debate where the United States is falling behind or has an opportunity to lead
- Identify policy, market, investment, technology, talent, infrastructure, and ecosystem barriers and needs
- Generate potential solutions and recommendations

Working Session 2. Following the first session, Council staff will synthesize the discussion into a short recommendation memo identifying key challenges and opportunities, proposed actions, potential actors, barriers or implementation considerations, and questions requiring further debate.

The second virtual session will then:

- Review and challenge the proposed recommendations
- Consider feasibility, impact, and unintended consequences
- Identify gaps or additional opportunities
- Prioritize the recommendations with the greatest potential for 10X (i.e., transformational) impact

Comment Period. Following each working session, the Council team will circulate a shared document summarizing the discussion and highlighting key recommendations and areas for further exploration. All project participants will be invited to provide feedback, which the Council team will consolidate and use to inform the ongoing work and recommendations.

THREE WORKING SESSION TOPICS

1. Build Fast, Scale Big: Investment, Commercialization, and Biomanufacturing Leadership

10X opportunity. What would it take to make the journey from biological discovery to commercial production dramatically faster, cheaper, and more predictable in the United States?

Discussion will explore:

- Accelerating the path from discovery to pilot, demonstration, and commercial scale
- Closing financing gaps across the commercialization lifecycle
- De-risking private investment through public-private partnerships
- Optimizing agricultural production, strengthening domestic supply chains, and reducing strategic dependencies
- Using AI, advanced computing, automation, and bio-digital technologies to increase productivity
- Developing shared infrastructure and scale-up capabilities
- Expanding U.S. biomanufacturing capacity

2. Win the Market: Demand and Global Competitive Advantage

10X opportunity. How can the United States create durable markets for bio-based products and technologies, and translate technological leadership into global economic advantage?

Discussion will explore:

- Accelerating adoption of bio-based products across major industries
- Creating demand for emerging technologies before they reach full commercial maturity
- Federal, state, and commercial procurement as market-creation tools (e.g., procurement mandates, purchasing requirements, etc.)
- Commodity market entry
- Strategic trade and international economic policy
- Strengthening trusted supply chains and strategic partnerships
- Capturing first-mover advantage in high-growth global markets
- Developing standards and regulatory frameworks that support U.S. competitiveness
- Building consumer and public confidence in bio-based products

3. Build National Capacity: Talent, Hard and Soft Infrastructure, and Ecosystem Leadership

Core question:

10X opportunity. What national infrastructure, talent, policy, and ecosystem changes would enable the U.S. bioeconomy to scale rapidly?

Discussion will explore:

- Building the talent pipeline across scientists, engineers, technicians, operators, and entrepreneurs (e.g., modernizing education, workforce development, apprenticeships, and credentialing)
- Strengthening regional bioeconomy ecosystems and innovation hubs
- Expanding physical, digital, and research infrastructure
- Modernizing regulation, permitting, and governance across the entire bioeconomy value chain, which is spread across EPA, FDA, USDA, DOE, and DOD
- Improving coordination among federal agencies, states, universities, industry, national laboratories, and investors
- Monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) costs
- Strengthening biosafety, biosecurity, intellectual property, and trusted innovation frameworks
- Building interoperable bio-data infrastructure and shared digital capabilities

2026 WORKING SESSION SPRINT

The six sessions will be conducted during September and October, with each topic receiving two sessions roughly two weeks apart.

Timing	Session
Wed., 9/17	SCALE — Session 1
Wed., 9/24	MARKET — Session 1
Wed., 10/1	SCALE — Session 2
Wed., 10/8	CAPACITY — Session 1
Wed., 10/15	MARKET — Session 2
Wed., 10/22	CAPACITY — Session 2

60-minute Session Structure:

- **5 minutes — Opening and framing.** Purpose, context, and desired outcome.
- **10 minutes — Expert framing.** Two or three (previously teed-up) kickoff discussants briefly identify the most important issues from their perspective.
- **40 minutes — Working discussion.** Open discussion, debate, challenge, and recommendation development.
- **5 minutes — Synthesis and next steps.** Identify areas of emerging consensus, unresolved questions, and issues for the second session.

FROM WORKING SESSIONS TO 10X RECOMMENDATIONS

The working-session process will conclude at the end of October with a set of expert-informed recommendations across the three focus areas.

In November, Council staff will:

1. Synthesize the recommendations across all three topic areas

2. Identify cross-cutting themes and dependencies
3. Prioritize the highest-impact opportunities
4. Develop the final 10X recommendations
5. Engage Council leaders to review and further refine the recommendations
6. Design and finalize the report and recommendations

The final product will be concise and action-oriented, focused on identifying high-impact interventions that could have outsized impact on U.S. competitiveness. The report will be released in December as part of the National Competitiveness Forum.

2026–2027 TIMELINE

- **August 2026 — Prepare and Kick-off Working Session.**
 - Share working session proposal with key Council leaders, finalize working-session plan, and engage participants
 - Begin buildout of working session prep materials
- **September–October 2026 — Expert Working Sessions.**
 - Prepare session prep materials
 - Conduct six one-hour sessions across the three topic areas
 - Develop session summary reports and circulate with project participants for comment
- **November 2026 — Synthesis & Recommendation Development.**
 - Convert working-session insights into a prioritized set of 10X recommendations and garner Council review, input, and approval.
- **December 2026 — National Competitiveness Forum.**
 - Develop a release plan
 - Unveil the bioeconomy recommendations as part of the Council’s 10X agenda at the 2026 NCF.
- **2027 — Education & Engagement Campaign.**
 - Build a sustained campaign around the recommendations to educate policymakers and stakeholders, elevate the bioeconomy as a national competitiveness priority, and develop implementation support.
 - Explore critical topics that emerge in 2026 through additional working sessions, thought leadership, and detailed recommendations.