



Compete Connect

July 2024 Edition

From the CEO's Desk



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

Dear Council on Competitiveness
Members and Community,

As we look to the future, we must acknowledge U.S. strength in innovation and scientific discovery rests on a solid foundation of basic research. From the invention of the laser to the development of mRNA vaccines, our research has given rise to technologies that have fundamentally transformed our world. Today, we stand at the threshold of a new era of discovery and innovation, with artificial intelligence poised to revolutionize every scientific discipline, based on decades of investments in fundamental research.

If the United States intends to maintain its competitive edge on the global stage and address society's most pressing challenges, we must make the necessary investments to keep America at the forefront of innovation. In my latest Forbes.com piece, titled "[America—A Country Of Pioneers Who Never Stop Charting New Frontiers](#)," I emphasize the critical need to prioritize federal funding for basic research and to upgrade our aging laboratory facilities. I hope you will read and share the article.

Also, please mark your calendars for the Council's flagship event of the year, our Annual Gala Dinner and the 2024 NCF, which will take place at the Willard InterContinental Hotel in Washington, D.C., on December 2 and 3. [Registration](#)

[opened today!](#) And you can support the nation's premier competitiveness gathering by [sponsoring the NCF](#) (please contact Council Executive Vice President Chad Evans at cevans@compete.org for details). And for our University Leadership Forum leaders, we are organizing a separate in-person gathering on December 2 ahead of the Gala Dinner. More details will follow, so please stay tuned.

As we build on our April success in Tennessee and bring the Council next week to Boise, ID, for the next edition of our “Competitiveness Conversations Across America” series, we will continue to share our message of regional investment in innovation. The agenda for the Mountain West Conversation is centered on semiconductors, advanced nuclear technologies, and cybersecurity, and the speaker roster is outstanding. We will hear from the Honorable Brad Little, Governor of Idaho, President and CEO of Idaho Power Ms. Lisa Grow, President of Utah State University Dr. Elizabeth (Betsy) Cantwell, and many other leaders. My cohosts for the Conversation are Dr. Marlene Tromp, President of Boise State University, and Dr. John Wagner, Director of Idaho National Laboratory, and they, along with their talented teams, are bringing the region’s highly dynamic innovation community together for this event. Contact [Mr. Evans](#) if interested in learning more about the August 6-8 Conversation.

Following Boise, we will gather in West Lafayette, IN, at Purdue University on September 9 for our third Competitiveness Conversation, which will focus on chips, qubits, and molecules—exploring the critical topics of semiconductors, quantum computing, and advanced biology. This Conversation will be co-hosted by Dr. Mung Chiang, President of Purdue University, Dr. Paul Kearns, Director of Argonne National Laboratory, and Dr. Robert J. Jones, Chancellor of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. You can [register for this Conversation](#) today.

We look forward to seeing you at these Council convenings. And thank you for your leadership and dedication to advancing U.S. competitiveness.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Deborah L. Wince-Smith
President & CEO
Council on Competitiveness

Council News



SAVE THE DATE 2024 Dinner & National Competitiveness Forum

December 2–3, 2024
The Willard Washington, D.C.

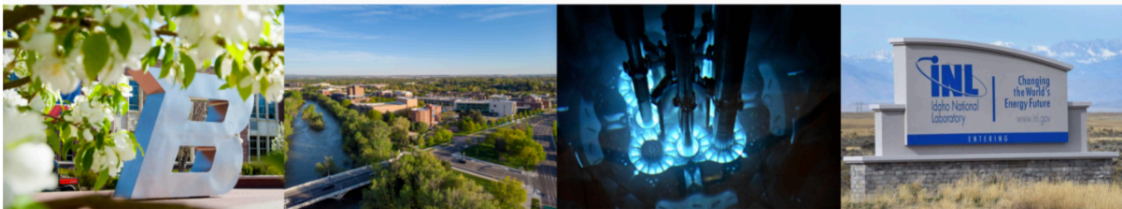


The 2024 National Competitiveness Forum (NCF) will arrive at a pivotal moment in American history, coinciding with the transition to a new administration and the 119th Congress. Against this backdrop, the Council will present its latest major report and recommendations from the National Commission, outlining a roadmap of priorities aimed at enhancing America's competitiveness and delivered to the incoming leadership. We invite you to join the Council on Competitiveness, along with its members from industry, academia, national laboratories, and labor unions, for the Council's annual Gala Dinner on December 2, followed by the 2024 NCF on December 3, both held at the Willard InterContinental in Washington, D.C.

Register Today

Sponsor & Support America's Premier Competitiveness Forum!

Competitiveness Conversations Across America



A Competitiveness Conversation in the Mountain West: Powering and Securing Innovation—Semiconductors, Clean Energy, Advanced Nuclear, and Cybersecurity

August 6-8 | Boise, Idaho

The Department of Energy's Office of Technology Transitions (OTT) is joining Boise State University, Idaho National Laboratory, and the Council on Competitiveness for the upcoming Competitiveness Conversation in Idaho. With the mission of enhancing the impact of the DOE's R&D initiatives while advancing national economic, energy, and security interests, the OTT is a distinctive partner for the Mountain West Conversation, which will explore the region's growth as a global leader in microelectronics and semiconductors, cybersecurity, and advanced nuclear.

Curious to learn more?

- [Draft Agenda](#)
- [Speakers & Bios](#)
- [Boise Area Visitor Guide](#)



A Competitiveness Conversation:
The Indiana-Illinois Innovation Corridor—
Chips, Qubits, and Molecules

September 9, 2024
West Lafayette, Indiana

While the Quantum Proving Ground captured headlines and imaginations, this once-in-a-generation-scale project only scratches the surface of the innovation being unleashed across semiconductors, quantum computing, and advanced biology in the Indiana-Illinois corridor. Join our hosts Mung Chiang, President of Purdue University, Paul Kearns, Director of Argonne National Laboratory, Robert Jones, Chancellor of University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and Deborah Wince-Smith, President & CEO of the Council on Competitiveness, to learn what is making this region such a hotbed for new ideas, technology, and businesses.

[Register Today](#)

Council Community News

U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Office Awards \$504 Million to 12 Technology Hubs

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Officer, under the direction of the Biden-Harris administration, announced the awarding of \$504 million in funding for 12 technology hubs around the country in the second round of its [Tech Hubs Program](#).

Council members play a major role across the Tech Hubs, including in [the Elevate Quantum Tech Hub in Colorado and New Mexico](#), which includes Los Alamos National Laboratory, Sandia National Laboratories, the Colorado School of Mines,

and the University of Wyoming, which are all actively involved in the Council. The Elevate Quantum Hub received \$127 million in funding, a clear demonstration of both the emerging national focus on quantum computing and of the extraordinary work happening in the field in Colorado and New Mexico.

Other tech hubs with Council connections that received funding include:

- iFab Tech Hub, an Illinois-based hub focused on using fermentation technologies to turn excess corn supplies into usable products, in partnership with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
- Heartland Bioworks, an Indiana-based consortium focused on expanding the region's biotech leadership, in partnership with Purdue University
- South Carolina Nexus for Advanced Resilient Energy, focused on bolstering the state's energy capacity, in partnership with the University of South Carolina and Clemson University
- South Florida Climate Ready Tech Hub, looking to create a more environmentally friendly and climate-change resilient technology and infrastructure base, in partnership with Florida International University, Northeastern University, and the University of Miami
- Tulsa Hub for Equitable & Trustworthy Autonomy, focused on promoting and advancing autonomous technologies for community benefits, in partnership with the University of Oklahoma
- Bioforward Wisconsin, with a focus on promoting the state as a center for advanced biomedical technologies, in partnership with the University of Wisconsin, Madison



“Quantum technology has the potential to transform the modeling and simulation capabilities that are the backbone of scientific and national security missions at Los Alamos National Laboratory and other institutions across the nuclear security enterprise. In a rapidly shifting geopolitical environment, it’s imperative that America’s national labs remain at the forefront of quantum R&D; the creation of this tech hub represents an exciting leap forward in our country’s quest for leadership in this critical field.”

Thom Mason

National Commission on Innovation and Competitiveness Frontiers Co-Chair; Director of Los Alamos National Laboratory

Illinois Bets Big on Quantum Science

In July, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker, alongside members of Illinois' Congressional delegation and representatives from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), announced the creation of a new "Quantum Proving Ground" to be built in the state. \$500 million will be put towards the creation of the new campus, providing facilities for business and university researchers to explore quantum science and compete for federal quantum grants. The facility is expected to have an economic impact of up to \$60 billion. The facility is being planned and built in partnership with the Chicago Quantum Exchange, which includes Council members Argonne National Laboratory, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Purdue University, and the Ohio State University. [Read more here.](#)

The University of Pittsburgh Receives Excellence in Sustainability Award

The National Association of College and University Business Officers has awarded the University of Pittsburgh with its 2024 Excellence in Sustainability Award. Pitt was the only university to receive the award this year, which it earned through its commitment to reducing the environment impact of its campus activities. Pitt has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 37 percent since 2008, and it is on track to be carbon neutral by 2037. This has been made possible by the "[Pitt Climate Action Plan](#)," the university's landmark carbon neutrality effort. So far, the university has estimated a savings of \$377 million thanks to these emissions reductions. [Read more here.](#)

Argonne National Laboratory Spearheads Deployment of AI to Enhance Grid Reliability

With greater reliance on the grid with each passing year, the reliability of American's electrical infrastructure is a critical component of its competitiveness and security. The need for a renewed focus on grid reliability was underlined this past month by the prolonged power outages in Houston left in the wake of Hurricane Beryl. Researchers at Argonne National Laboratory's Advanced Grid Modeling Group are facing this challenge head-on, pioneering the use of AI to monitor the power grid to help improve its reliability. Using AI may help utilities maintain a grid that is safer, more efficient, and more reliable. [Read more here.](#)

Mark Peters Named as the 10th President and CEO of the MITRE Corporation



Longtime Council partner Mark Peters has been tapped to lead the MITRE Corporation as its tenth President and CEO. With decades of experience leading nuclear research institutions, including as Executive Vice President of the Battelle Memorial Institute and as Director of Idaho National Laboratory, Peters has the experience to lead the research corporation dedicated to solving problems for a safer world. [Read more about Peters' work here.](#)

Other News and Updates

Artificial Intelligence Offering the United States an Investment Advantage

While artificial intelligence has made headlines over the past two years with how much it has grown, its potential future growth may be driving greater investment today. Research from Federal reserve economists has uncovered that, as investors anticipate future AI-powered growth in productivity, they have increased their investments today. There is the potential that this could give the U.S. economy a significant boost over its European counterparts, given a more dynamic artificial intelligence industry and a lower expectation of restrictive guidelines. [Read more here.](#)

NSF and Department of Commerce Announce Funding for Semiconductor Workforce Development

The National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Department of Commerce have announced the creation of a new National Network Coordination Hub charged with addressing anticipated shortages of skilled semiconductor workers. Funded with \$30 million from the CHIPS and Science Act, the Hub will put together a plan to collaborate with higher education institutions to develop semiconductor-focused curricula and promote work in the microelectronics industry as a viable and attractive career path. [Read more here.](#)

Council Insights

New Study Highlights Reliability Risks Facing Government Data

Presented in Partnership with Keybridge Research

Falling Response Rates Threaten Reliability of Government Data

BLS Current Population Survey response rate, 2013-2024



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey



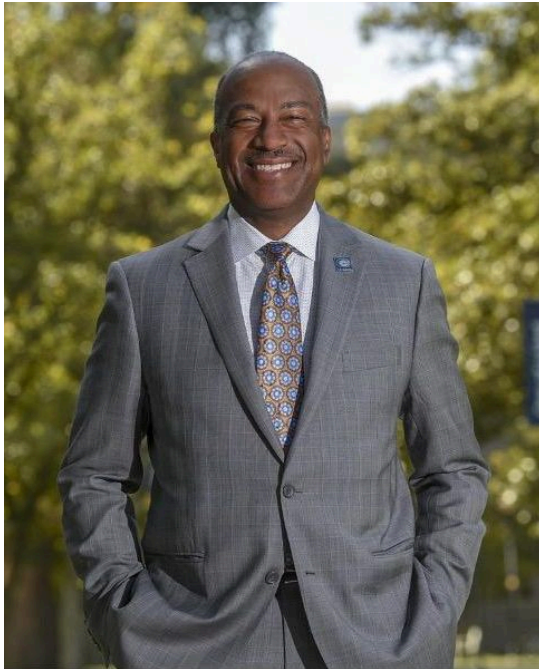
Robust data is a critical enabling condition of the innovation economy, and government data is in many cases the gold standard—it provides highly reliable and granular insights on many different aspects of the economy and demography. Policymakers rely on it to make informed decisions, investors use it to direct capital, and researchers from many different disciplines and industries incorporate it into their models. But a new report from the American Statistical Association has found that the reliability of many government statistics may soon be compromised.

While the report concludes that government statistics are currently reliable, shrinking budgets, falling survey response rates, and the potential for political interference endanger future reliability and integrity, particularly for economic data. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and Census Bureau are both facing rapidly declining response rates, in part due to privacy concerns and cellphone-only households. Meanwhile, data collection needs are growing. For example, we need more and better data collection on employment to better capture work in the gig economy.

Unfortunately, agency resources to improve and expand data collection are falling. Since 2009, BLS has seen an 18% reduction in real funding, making it harder to ensure that data is collected and reported broadly, consistently, and accurately. Addressing these challenges will be important for maintaining the integrity of the many decisions supported by government data.

In the Community

University of California, Davis Chancellor Gary S. May Joins the Council's Executive Committee



The Council on Competitiveness is honored to welcome longstanding Member University of California, Davis Chancellor Gary S. May to its Executive Committee. Upon his acceptance of the invitation, May shared, "I'm thrilled to join the Executive Committee. I believe strongly in demonstrating the positive outcomes of connections between leading research universities and broader communities. Together we can create and innovate, spurring ideas, investments, products, and services that address global challenges. We can foster social equity by building and training a workforce that is representative of the communities we serve. The result of this collective effort is a dynamic economic impact locally and nationally, where livelihoods are transformed, and communities are better equipped to adapt to change."

Oak Ridge National Lab Director Stephen Streiffer Joins the National Commission on Innovation and Competitiveness Frontiers as a Commissioner



The Council on Competitiveness is honored to welcome Stephen Streiffer, Director of Oak Ridge National Laboratory, as its newest Commissioner on the National Commission on Innovation and Competitiveness Frontiers. Earning his doctoral degree in Materials Science and Engineering at Stanford University, Streiffer has spent a career pursuing advanced research in some of the United State's most prestigious research institutions, including 24 years at Argonne National Lab and serving as interim director of the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory before being tapped to lead Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

On becoming a National Commissioner, Streiffer said "With more than 25 years as part of the national lab system, I've had a tremendous opportunity to observe and help lead the nation's scientific enterprise for impact across energy, security, and the economy. It has been an incredible journey, and I'm excited for what's ahead as the national labs work closely with universities, industry, government, and others to make groundbreaking scientific advancements to ensure the nation's leadership on a global scale."

International



CO-HOSTS



To learn more, contact Council EVP, [Chad Evans](#)

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