

NCAE-C National Competition Communications Plan: Launching NCAE Cyber Games

The Program

The National Security Agency's National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity is implementing a national competition program that will be distinguished by a focus on recruiting new competitors—students who have not competed before, particularly those from underrepresented groups in the field. Branded “NCAE Cyber Games,” the program will use a sports bracket system with local events leading to regional qualifiers and concluding with a national championship event. NCAE Cyber Games will focus on learning, skills improvement, and teamwork.

The NCAE Cyber Games Narrative

The cybersecurity competition culture is well-established and can feel intimidating to the uninitiated. This campaign aims to inspire and encourage new competitors to the mix by addressing the issues that may be leading them to self-select out of the competition realm and stressing the value of competitions in expanding and building skills and helping to create a competitive resume. The chief challenges we aim to overcome are an historical lack of gender and ethnic diversity and a lack of experience/knowledge of the competition culture and unwritten protocols. We are addressing the latter by creating an entire competition program for new competitors. We aim to address the former through consistent visual representations of diverse students and professionals; supportive video messages and AMA (ask me anything) sessions featuring diverse professionals; highlighting the personality traits and soft skills that benefit the field, such as diligence, curiosity, altruism, and composure; and creating a sense of community by posting student profiles, sharing team stories and videos, and celebrating local and regional efforts on the website and through social media. Additionally, (time-permitting) the website will feature a glossary of terms and video explainers to review the terminology used and overall “how cyber competitions work.”

Communicators must be cautious not to use gendered language, e.g., “Hey guys!” and to minimize the use of insider jargon, particularly military terms, which may be unfamiliar to new players.

Key Messages

- The competition for first-time competitors
- The competition for people, not stereotypes
- Connect, have fun, and build your resume

Channels

- Ncaecybergames.org
- Instagram: [@NCAECyberGames](https://www.instagram.com/NCAECyberGames)
- Twitter: [@NCAECyberGames](https://twitter.com/NCAECyberGames)
- Hashtag: [#NCAECyberGames](https://twitter.com/NCAECyberGames)

- Hashtag: NCAE-C

Conventions

- Always refer to the program as “NCAE Cyber Games” in the first reference. “Cyber Games” or “the Cyber Games” are acceptable on subsequent references.
- Encourage tagging the program’s social media accounts and using the official hashtag in any related social media posts so we can share your stories!
- We encourage you to retweet our content when possible or quote tweet with your own spin

For Local Programs with Established Brands

If your cyber competition club/program has an established brand, we encourage you to build on your existing program recognition by co-branding any events offered as part of the NCAE Cyber Games initiative. You may add the tagline: “An NCAE Cyber Games regional event—ncaecybergames.org” to your program advertising. You may also include the national program logo if you choose and if space allows.

For Local Programs without Branding

For those programs that do not have an established name or brand, we invite you to make full use of the NCAE Cyber Games brand. The program communications team can provide you with branded content that includes the program brand and your local school brand when allowed (we will comply with any brand guidelines provided by the school). Reach out to whitakerk@cyberflorida.org to request things like email graphics and printable posters to promote the program within your organization.