Advanced Technology Academic Research Center
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STATE AND LOCAL CYBER GRANTS WORKING GROUP CHARTER

Mission Statement

The Advanced Technology Academic Research Center (ATARC) State and Local Cyber Grants Working Group's mission is to increase access to cyber security services for state and local governments.

Purpose

The State and Local Cyber Grants Working Group is chartered to establish guidance and assistance documentation for state and local government organizations applying for Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) cyber grants.

Context

DHS and CISA were established to secure and defend America's critical infrastructure against these cyber threats. One of their initiatives is to provide cyber grants, or funding, to state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) government organizations to bolster their cybersecurity capabilities. However, navigating the application process and making the most of these grants can be complex and challenging, especially for smaller organizations with limited resources or technical knowledge.

This is where the State and Local Cyber Grants Working Group steps in to help. This working group exists to help state and local officials understand the cyber grant initiatives and to make the application process less daunting. We also work to influence the legislative environment by sending official correspondence to Congress members, advocating for increased cyber grant funding and outlining the critical needs identified. By doing so, the Group not only supports the current needs of SLTTs but also works to ensure the sustainability and growth of the cyber grant program. We exist to act as a bridge between DHS, CISA, and SLTT organizations, aiding in the application and effective use of cyber grants. In doing so, it plays a critical role in enhancing the cybersecurity posture of state and local governments across the country, and consequently, in the protection of the nation's critical infrastructure.

Scope

The scope of the State and Local Cyber Grants working group includes:
- Identifying recommended uses of DHS and CISA cyber grant funding
- Discovering and faithfully representing the perspectives of SLTTs through a purposeful outreach program.
- Developing periodic, official correspondence from the Working Group to members of Congress advocating for increased cyber grant program funding and outlining identified critical needs.

Objective

The objectives of the State and Local Cyber Grants Working Group are:
- *To increase access to cyber security services or technology.* Success of this working group will be measured by the increased access to cyber security "services or technology" that the grant process provides to state, local, tribal and territorial governments.
- *To improve the speed and approval rate of participating entities.* To account for the time sensitive nature of these unmet Cyber Security needs, the quality of the grant evaluation process shall be measured by the operational efficiency of the grant evaluation process.

Deliverables

The deliverables of the State and Local Cyber Grants Working Group will support the mission and objectives through creating best practice guidance documents and recommendations. Deliverables include, but are not limited to:
- Two separate security best practices guides focused at entry and intermediate level professionals to increase the overall information security posture at local municipalities and counties that are not mature enough in their cybersecurity model to handle current threats. These documents shall be reviewed biennially.
- A White Paper for identifying critical needs for state and local organizations for future cyber grant initiatives specifically written for members of Congress. This document shall be reviewed every two years.

Working Group Membership

Working Group Chairs

Sean Fay, South Carolina Department of Social Services, Government Chair
Trey Caryl, State of New Hampshire, Government Vice Chair
Mike Melore, IBM, Industry Chair

Working Group Chairs will:
- Attend and contribute to each Working Group meeting
- Prepare the meeting agenda, solicit topics for discussion, assign members to address discussion topics, and distribute meeting materials
- Share information of relevance; provide an update/introduction at the beginning of each meeting to encourage member engagement
- Define Working Group initiatives and activities
- Assist in forming and providing feedback on deliverables

Working Group Members
Working Group Members will:
- Participate in meetings, including exchanging technical information, experiences, and best practices to develop a shared understanding of the topic(s)
- Gather information and work on group deliverables outside of meetings as needed
- Provide feedback on draft deliverables as requested
- Co-lead or participate in Sub-Working Groups (breakout teams/project teams) as needed
- Provide input on meeting agendas as requested

ATARC Support
> *Elizabeth Wyckoff, Working Group Program Manager*
> *Amy Karpowicz, Working Group Associate*
> *Tim Harvey, Director of Government Engagement*

ATARC support will:
- Serve as program manager for the Working Group
- Coordinate and drive group projects and deliverables forward
- Schedule Working Group meetings
- Develop Working Group meeting agendas along with the chairs
- Facilitate Working Group meetings along with the chairs
- Assist in distributing relevant documents and materials to Working Group members
- Send meeting minutes, post-meeting decisions, and action items to Working Group members after each meeting
- Assist in preparing final proposals/recommendations
- Provide marketing services for the Working Group (promoting completed deliverables, etc.)
- Develop strategies to improve Working Group engagement, including applicable cross-overs with other Working Groups and relevant events
- Coordinate Working Group Labs as applicable

Rules of Engagement

The Working Group rules of engagement are described as below:
- Meet bi-weekly from 2022 to 2024, or until amended by ATARC Support
- Follow the Working Group's ground rules developed in the charter
- Join Working Group meetings prepared and with requested action items completed
- Provide respectful and constructive feedback to yield the best decisions for the Working Group's objectives
- Final decisions are made by the Working Group Co-Chairs and ATARC Support

The Working Group will:
- Meet every other Thursday from 10:45AM to 11:30AM EST.
- Form Sub-Working Groups (breakout teams/project teams) as needed
- Follow the group's ground rules developed at one of the Working Group meetings
- Strive to make decisions by unanimous agreement. All members of the Working Group have a voice and will be listened to.
- If a Working Group member misses a meeting, decisions will be made in their absence. The Working Group will decide on a case-by-case basis if a decision made in the absence of a member shall be revisited.

File Sharing and Collaboration Tools

Access to the ATARC Box Account is managed by ATARC Support.

Disclaimer: Products and communications by ATARC's State and Local Cyber Grants Working Group do not necessarily represent the plans or preferences of any company or government agency.