

Ministry of Electronics & IT



Cyber Security Innovation Challenge (CSIC) 1.0 launched by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)

MeitY, Data Security Council of India (DSCI) and Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) Hyderabad unveiled the Cyber Security Innovation Challenge 1.0 for students and researchers under the ISEA Initiative

The initiative exposes students to real-world cyber security challenges, positioning the field as a viable career path and strengthens India's homegrown cyber resilience

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In a landmark initiative to strengthen India's cybersecurity ecosystem, Shri S Krishnan, Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched the **Cyber Security Innovation Challenge (CSIC) 1.0** under the **Information Security Education and Awareness (ISEA) Project** of MeitY. The launch event was held at Electronics Niketan, MeitY, New Delhi on 24.11.2025 in the presence of Government officials, industry experts and academia.

Shri S Krishnan unveiled the concept video, website & registration portal (https://innovation.isea.app/cyber_security_innovation_challenge), and Rule Book of CSIC 1.0. Emphasizing the need for a two-pronged national cyber security strategy—expanding awareness of emerging threats while strengthening technological capabilities—he highlighted that CSIC 1.0 addresses both imperatives. The initiative exposes students to real-world cyber security challenges, building not only skilled professionals and positioning cyber security as a viable career path, but also catalyzing homegrown, product-oriented solutions that deepen India's cyber resilience. Shri Krishnan emphasized that cyber security demands a 'whole-of-nation' approach, echoing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a 'whole-of-government' strategy. Acknowledging the collaborative presence of MeitY, CERT-In, NSCS, AICTE, C-DAC, DSCI, and leaders from academia and industry, he stressed the importance of nurturing winning ideas beyond the Minimum Viable Product (MVP) stage, creating pathways for them to evolve into scalable solutions through collaboration with startups and industry partners.

Shri Vinayak Godse, CEO, Data Security Council of India, provided an engaging walkthrough of CSIC 1.0's five-stage structure and extensive problem statements, developed through months of intense deliberation between DSCI, C-DAC, and the ISEA team. He highlighted that this first-of-its-kind initiative enables students and researchers to innovate and develop entrepreneurial mindsets from the early stages. The focus on domain-specific problem statements ensures practical, deployable solutions for India's critical sectors—including BFSI, telecom, and healthcare—while the emphasis on diversity support aims to foster a culture of innovation across the student community. He expressed confidence that the challenge will accelerate the journey from research to product development, strengthening India's cyber security landscape.

Prof V Kamakoti, Director IIT Madras mentioned that the innovation challenge under ISEA Project highlights our enhanced understanding of core challenges and positions us to craft transformative solutions. The ten domain specific problem statements highlight areas which are aligned to the cyber security needs of the nation and require fresh, innovative thinking.

Prof Sukumar Nandi, Sr. Professor, IIT Guwahati highlighted that the launch of the CSIC 1.0 embodies the collective strength of MeitY, C-DAC, DSCI, and 50 institutions participating under the ISEA Project, who worked together to identify, analyse, and curate problem statements for generating innovative solutions to be shaped up by the students.

Shri Narendra Nath, Joint Secretary NSCS pointed out the risks of increasing technological dependence and reaffirmed the need for Atmanirbhar Bharat by strengthening the nation's technological sovereignty. He praised the steps taken under the ISEA Project and applauded the Innovation Challenge for advancing homegrown capabilities and solutions.

Dr. Sanjay Bahl, Director General, CERT-In, highlighted ISEA's critical role in fostering innovation that shifts the paradigm from reactive defense to proactive security. Dr. Bahl noted that the Innovation Challenge creates a vital platform uniting R&D, academia, and industry, with solutions from academic institutions envisioned to reach the market as deployable products. He stressed that building 'Aatmanirbharta' in cyber security has never been more essential, as the nation's digital transformation demands breakthrough innovations from our own institutions.

CSIC 1.0 is strategically designed to foster indigenous, research-driven cyber security solutions from the academic ecosystem and is open to students and researchers. The Innovation Challenge would focus on problem statements across 10 domains including Computer & Network Security; Mobile Device Security; Systems & Software Security; Hardware Security; Security in Futuristic Technologies; Cryptography; Security in Distributed Wireless Networks; Cyber Forensics; Governance, Operations & Services; and Fintech Security. Through its five-stage structure, it will nurture promising ideas from conception to Minimum Viable Product (MVP). The challenge will promote development of robust cyber security innovation ecosystem by offering dedicated mentorship to top 20 teams through expert-led webinars on technical topics, pitching, along with hands-on mentorship sessions from industry leaders. Complete information about the innovation challenge can be found at: <https://www.dsci.in/content/cyber-security-innovation-challenge-10>

About ISEA Project

Information Security Education and Awareness (ISEA) Project is an initiative of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India for generating human resources in the area of Information Security and creating general awareness on cyber hygiene/cyber

security among the masses. The project is aimed at human resources development for safe, trusted, and secure cyber space. The project is implemented by 50 premier academic and autonomous institutions (IITs, NITs, IIITs, C-DAC & NIELIT Centres) and Technical Universities and supported by C-DAC) Hyderabad and DSCI as nodal agencies. For more details, visit: <https://isea.gov.in/>

About Data Security Council of India

Data Security Council of India (DSCI) is a not-for-profit, industry body on data protection in India, setup by Nasscom®, committed towards making the cyberspace safe, secure and trusted by establishing best practices, standards and initiatives in cybersecurity and privacy. DSCI works together with the Government and their agencies, law enforcement agencies, industry sectors including IT-BPM, BFSI, CII, Telecom, industry associations, data protection authorities and think tanks for public advocacy, thought leadership, capacity building and outreach initiatives. For more info, visit: <https://www.dsci.in/>

About C-DAC

Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) is the premier R&D organization of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) for carrying out R&D in IT, Electronics and associated areas. As an institution for high-end Research and Development (R&D), C-DAC has been at the forefront of the Information Technology (IT) revolution, constantly building capacities in emerging/enabling technologies and innovating and leveraging its expertise, caliber, skill sets to develop and deploy IT products and solutions for different sectors of the economy. For more info, visit: <https://www.cdac.in/>

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