

NICE Community Coordinating Council Meeting Minutes March 25, 2025 | 3:30-4:45PM ET

I. Introduction and Ground Rules –Susana Barraza, NICE Program Manager

- The NICE Community Coordinating Council was established to provide a mechanism in which public and private sector participants can develop concepts, design strategies, and pursue actions that advance cybersecurity education, training, and workforce development.
- Members are encouraged to participate in the meeting via the platform chat space. We will also be introducing polls throughout the meeting.
- Reminder: The meeting is not intended for marketing or other commercial purposes.

II. Opening Remarks

- a. Academic Co-Chair – Zarina Blankenbaker, Ph.D., President, Tarrant County College – Northwest
 - i. Dr. Blankenbaker reaffirmed higher education’s vital role in cybersecurity workforce development.
 - ii. Dr. Blankenbaker highlighted the community’s shared values of leadership, commitment, and collaboration.
 - iii. Dr. Blankenbaker highlighted the importance of higher education in the evolving cybersecurity ecosystem and emphasized the meeting's collaborative spirit.
- b. Government Co-Chair - Rodney Petersen, Director of NICE
 - i. Rodney offered government insights on adapting to changes in administration and leadership.
 - ii. Rodney stressed the significance of flexibility and agility, aligning with the NICE framework.
 - iii. Rodney also noted the upcoming expiration of the current NICE Strategic Plan and outlined the four-phase cycle (Assess, Plan, Implement, Evaluate) that will guide the development of the next five-year plan (2026–2030).

III. Featured Content

- a. Strategy Stories – New Developments that align to NICE Strategic Plan

Security Analyst Lvl 1 (SAL1): Practical, real-world entry point in defensive security

Presented by Vlad Boldura, Content Engineering Manager, TryHackMe

URL: <https://tryhackme.com/>

Introduced SAL1, a practical entry-level certification for SOC analysts, focusing on real-world skills and hands-on experience.

- TryHackMe developed the certification to close the cyber skills gap with practical assessments and a simulated SOC environment.
- Key skills tested include log analysis, incident triage, and operating system fundamentals.
- The exam format includes multiple-choice questions and hands-on simulations with a 24-hour completion window.
- Vlad emphasized the certification's alignment with workforce readiness and encouraged partnerships with colleges and universities.
- Vlad also noted their approach to tool-agnostic training, while basing the exam on a specific SIEM tool.
- Developed in response to feedback from industry leaders like Accenture, Google, and Salesforce.

b. Report Roundup – Learning from Good Ideas

Cybersecurity Education and Labour Market Research & Next Steps

Presented by Fadime Keçe, Sr. Policy Advisor Cybersecurity Research & Innovation, Directorate Digital Economy, Ministry of Economic Affairs

URL: <https://hcaict.nl/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/PTvT-Management-summary-Cybersecurity.pdf>

- The Netherlands has seen exponential growth in cybersecurity job vacancies (from 8,000 in 2018 to 19,000 in 2022).
- Key findings included the need for a shared language, broader definitions of cybersecurity roles, and multidisciplinary expertise.
- Fadime presented 12 actionable recommendations targeting ecosystem coordination, labor market engagement, and educational reform.
- The Netherlands has launched a national human capital cybersecurity program based on these findings, supported by a public-private task force.

c. Framework Feature – Applications and Uses of Workforce Framework for Cybersecurity

CREST - Accreditation Standards

Presented by Jonathan Armstrong, Head of Accreditation, CREST

URL: <https://www.crest-approved.org/>

- CREST focuses on organizational capability, not just individual certification.
- Their framework incorporates both the NICE Framework and SFIA to assess teams' competencies.
- The new transparent standards are freely accessible and aim to support service providers, buyers, and regulators.
- CREST is also open to working with academic institutions to align training with industry certifications.

IV. Community Progress Reports

a. Community of Interest Update

- i. Modernize Talent Management
Lead: Marian Merritt, NICE
 - The group researched employee retention and developed a white paper outlining strategies for employers to improve employee engagement and development.
 - Key recommendations showcased on the paper include offering clear career pathways, regular manager check-ins, and skill-building opportunities.
- ii. Cybersecurity Skills Competitions
Lead: Marian Merritt, NICE
 - This group is being temporarily paused due to reduced participation, with the option to restart based on future community demand.

b. Project Progress Reports

- i. NICE Conference and Expo
June 1-3, 2025, Denver, CO
Presented by Cesar Cabot, Florida International University
URL: <https://niceconference.org/>
 - Registration is open until May 12 or until capacity is reached.
 - Four pre-conference workshops will be offered.
 - Sponsorships and discounted hotel rates are currently available.
 - Local Stakeholder Engagement Event recording is [now available](#).
- ii. US Cyber Games
Presented by Brad Wolfenden, Katzcy
URL: <https://www.uscybergames.com/>
 - Recapped the February virtual camp combining the US Cyber Team and US Women's Cyber Team.
 - Introduced new programming such as "Speed CTF" and athlete-focused skill-building workshops.
 - Season 5 launches on June 5, 2025 with open participation and events throughout the summer, including the international competition circuit.
- iii. NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference
December 8-9, 2025, Nashville, TN
Presented by Felicia Rateliff, iKeepSafe
URL: <https://www.k12cybersecurityconference.org/>
 - Planning for the 2025 conference is underway.
 - Sponsors and speakers are being confirmed.
 - Previous conference content, including the National Cyber Signing Day video, is [available online](#).

V. Featured Topic

NICE Framework v2.0.0 Components Release

Presented by Michael Prebil, Cybersecurity Workforce Analyst, NICE

URL: <https://www.nist.gov/news-events/news/2025/03/nice-releases-nice-framework-components-v200>

- The updated framework now includes 5 categories (down from 7), 41 work roles, and a new work role for OT Cybersecurity Engineering.
- Updates reflect improved accessibility, alignment with real-world job functions, and removal of DoD-specific roles.
- The new release features better alignment of task-knowledge-skill (TKS) statements.
- Cyber resiliency was introduced as a new competency area.
- JSON files and additional documentation are being developed to support implementation.

VI. Closing Remarks and Next Meeting Reminder

The next NICE Community Coordinating Council Meeting will be **June 24, 2025**, at 3:30PM ET.

Upcoming Meetings:

- [NICE Transform Learning Process WG](#): April 8, 2025, 2:00-3:00PM ET
- [NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education COI](#): April 10, 2025, 3:30-4:30PM ET
- [NICE Apprenticeships in Cybersecurity COI](#): April 11, 2025, 11:00 – 12:00 PM ET
- [NICE Cybersecurity Career Ambassadors COI](#): April 11, 2025, 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET
- [NICE Promote Career Discovery WG](#): April 16, 2025, 3:30-4:30PM ET
- [NICE Modernize Talent Management WG](#): April 17, 2025, 1:00-2:00PM ET

Upcoming Events:

- [NICE Webinar Series](#)
- [National Apprenticeship Day](#): April 30, 2025
- [NICE Conference & Expo](#): June 1-3, 2025, Denver, Colorado
- [Cybersecurity Career Week](#): October 20-25, 2025
- [NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference](#): December 8-9, 2025, Nashville, TN
- NICE Events [Calendar](#)