



Australian  
National  
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College



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Defence**

# Call for Papers

## Technology Surprise Forum, May 2022

**The National Security College Futures Hub at the Australian National University is hosting, in partnership with the Defence Science and Technology Group (DSTG), a Technology Surprise Forum in early May 2022.** The Forum aims to highlight a range of high impact future technologies that could influence the Australian national security landscape over the next 5 to 10 years.

The Forum will bring together Science and Technology practitioners and researchers from across academia and government to build communities of interest that will generate further research on technology and national security issues.

We are seeking proposals for working papers to be presented at the Forum that address the following questions:

- What emerging technological innovations and convergences could surprise government in the medium to long term?
- How can government harness emerging civilian and military technologies to support national security?

Researchers should focus on problems they anticipate will be faced by the national security community, and put forward novel ideas and concepts to foster solutions to these problems. For this Forum, national security covers non-defence-related protection of Australia's borders, the threat of terrorism, espionage and foreign interference, and major organised crime.

Suggested topics include (though are not restricted to) technologies and issues such as: the metaverse as a vector for population or political manipulation; brain-machine interfaces; intelligence in the age of deep fakes (including identifying fakes and defeating biometric recognition); quantum computing, cryptography and sensing.

The working papers will also be expected to relate to at least one of the current [National Security Science and Technology Priorities](#):

1. *Technology Foresight*: The ability to monitor, analyse and evaluate the implications of scientific and technological developments to prevent strategic and tactical surprise.
2. *Intelligence*: The ability to collect, analyse, integrate, assess and disseminate intelligence with the accuracy, scale and speed required to support timely national security and intelligence decision making.
3. *Preparedness, Protection, Prevention & Incident Response*: The ability to appropriately equip and prepare Australian agencies to effectively address national security threats and natural or man-made destructive events, including mass-harm and mass-damage incidents, either by preventing their occurrence, or responding and recovering effectively if they have occurred.
4. *Cyber Security*: The ability to strengthen the cyber security and resilience of critical infrastructure and systems of national significance through the conduct of research and development, and the delivery of advanced cyber technologies, tools, techniques and education.
5. *Border Security and Identity Management*: The national security community's ability to protect and secure Australia's borders from disease outbreaks, hazardous material and threats to our community, including maximum disruption effect on illegal activity and migration with projected growth in people and cargo movement across Australian borders.
6. *Investigative Support and Forensic Science*: Law enforcement's ability to prevent, disrupt and prosecute terrorist and criminal activities in a complex transnational and evolving digital environment.

To be competitive, proposals should be 200 – 400 words in length, clearly outline what's new about your research (noting it could be material you've already been working on for some time) and its implications for national security policy, operations or intelligence. Due to the topics concerned, only proposals from Australian citizens and permanent residents can be considered.

Up to fifteen submissions will be selected for further development into 5-10 page working papers to be presented at the Forum. Selected reports will be funded at a fixed rate of \$10,000 (GST inclusive) – plus travel costs to attend the Forum in Canberra where appropriate.

Proposals should be emailed to [futureshub.nsc@anu.edu.au](mailto:futureshub.nsc@anu.edu.au) by **21 January 2022**. Please ensure that your name and contact details are included. Successful candidates will be advised within a week or two of the close of submissions. The Forum paper submission deadline will be **early March 2022**.