



# Advice and Prep for Sponsors

The following describes the role of Sponsors engaged with participants at a CyberSci in-person event.

*It presumes you will also attend a mandatory "Sponsor Prep Meeting"*

*You will receive two calendar invitations. Choose one.*

**3pm (EDT) Nov. 3 -OR- Noon (EDT) Nov. 4**

If you have never attended a similar event, that prep meeting will greatly contribute to your success at hiring a great candidate at CyberSci.

## Locations

Saint John - NBCC	12 noon ADT	Montreal - Polytechnique	11am EDT
Ottawa - Carleton University	11am EDT	Toronto - York University	11am EDT
Calgary - SAIT	9am MDT	Vancouver - SFU	8am
PDT			

For details see "Locations and Addresses" file.

## Covid Protocol

None at this time

## Answer Key (document)

Super Secret! - Emailed separately

## Agenda

## Agenda - Eastern

Version: 22.11.02

All times are Eastern Daylight Time

**November 5, 2022 11:00 - 18:00**

**11:00 Opening Remarks, Welcome, Instructions**

**11:15 Move to RegionalS and Hacking begins**

- Participants notify sponsors as they find each flag.
- Sponsors confirm flag and explanation, and give students a code for the scoreboard points.

**15:00 Scoreboard disappears. Hacking continues.**

**15:00 Scoreboard closes. Hacking is over.**

- \*Sponsor presentations\*
- Feedback, comments, survey
- Explain interview process, incl. "extra candidates"!

**15:15 Awards and Recognition**

- Winners and Prizes and Thank You

**15:30 Break for Food and Drink**

- \*Sponsors invite extra candidates\*
- Organizers confirm interview schedule

**16:00 Interviews Begin - 35 minutes each**

16:00-16:35 First Interviews  
16:40-17:15 Second Interviews  
17:20-17:55 Third Interviews

17:55 Sponsors Huddle. Students wait.

**18:00 Sponsors make offers to students**



Agenda linked to file: CS2223-RGNL-Slides Opening.gslides.



## A.) Preparation Before Event

### You absolutely must do these three tasks:

1.) **Read this document** right through. Enjoy it. Picture the event unfolding. Picture the kind of candidate you are seeking. **20 minutes well spent!**

2.) **Attend the “Sponsor Prep Meeting”** a few days before the event.

- We will review this doc, and answer questions.

**30 minutes**

3.) **Bring the “Answer Key” document with you.**

*You will receive it a few days before the event.* Take a glance right away. Have it handy on event day. It's a long list of answers but don't worry - during the event you will only need to focus on a single answer at a time.

- **It is Super Secret!** Do not print the Answer Key doc while you're walking around the event. It's too easy to put down and leave exposed. Keep it on your phone or tablet only.

**2 minutes**

### This task will be extremely useful to you:

We will send your company most **student resumés a week in advance**, and the remainder the night before. Some people print and bring them (for taking notes during the day. Up to you.)

- If you can look through them in advance, you will be more effective on event day.

**Variable time**

### This is optional, but will help the technical people:

You will also have access to a “Walkthrough” document.

- This is a more elaborate version of the Answer Key.
- If you are technically oriented you should probably read the Walkthrough doc before the event. It's long, but again, you will only need to focus on one challenge at a time once the event starts.

**minutes**

**Optional - 15**

## B.) Social Media

Best is a post on **LinkedIn** using **@cybersci**

Or follow us at <https://www.linkedin.com/company/cybersci> ← *Best place for wide visibility, few posts.*

Also feel free to **tweet** using **#cybersci**

Or follow us at <https://twitter.com/CyberSci> ← *Best for series of multiple posts, but less followers..*

## C.) On Event Day

**10:30 EDT (11:30 ADT, 8:30 MDT, 7:30 PDT) - Students arrive and set up**

Sponsors can set up a banner, or hand out SWAG. It's fine to chat with students, but be aware they will be nervous, and focused on preparing for the day - so it's not ideal.

Sponsors should talk to the Local Organizer about the projector, if they have a couple of slides or a video to present (details below).

Students will be working on their laptops, in teams of four or five, to attack a virtual computing environment set up in the Cloud. They will be faced with six to eight unique "cyber security challenges", and will score points for each challenge they solve.

Where permitted under Covid protocol, **Coffee and Muffins** will be provided.

### **11:00 EDT ( \_\_\_:\_\_\_ local) - Opening remarks - National**

Ideally there will be a projector and speakers in each room.

- Fallback is for students to watch on laptops. Ear buds work better than speakers.

### **11:10 ( \_\_\_:\_\_\_ local) - Opening remarks - Regional**

This is where the event becomes "Regional" for the rest of the day.

Each Sponsor is invited to give a 2-minute pitch on why students should work at their company.

- We are trying to ensure a projector and screen is available.
- Pitches can be done all at the beginning, or by one sponsor each hour, if preferred. Ask local organizer. If spread out, tell students it is mandatory to *stop* their hacking work for 2 minutes to ensure their attention.

### **11:20 ( \_\_\_:\_\_\_ local) - Hacking Begins - Interaction and Scoring**

As a sponsor, your primary role is judging the teams' answers. As they solve each challenge, the team must present their answer to you.

## **Remember, this is your chance to chat them up!**

You will have an answer sheet with the correct "flag" they needed to find. And you will have a walk-through document with an explanation of how to find the flag - but the walk-through doc is optional. It is up to the students to explain what they did - *and do so at a level that you will understand.*

So don't be shy about asking more questions like "How did you get that answer? Where did you learn that skill? Was this easy or hard for you?" etc.

Once you are satisfied with the answer, you will give the team a "Scoring Code":

- They must have the flag exactly 100% correct.
- They should have an explanation that shows they actually did the challenge (not just overheard the answer somewhere in the room). We are very generous with accepting explanations.

Note: If a team gets the answer wrong, there is no "penalty". They can rethink and raise their hand to try again later if they want.

The teams will enter the Scoring Code into the scoreboard to gain points.

Expect lulls of 10-15 minutes while teams are working on their stuff, then flurries of activity as they find answers and request you visit them.

If other student teams are “listening in”, then you can ask the responding team to join you in a secluded corner of the room, or out in the corridor, for this interaction.

### **15:00 ( \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ local) - Hacking Ends - Awards**

There may be a short delay while organizers verify the winning teams and confirm the scoreboard in each region is clear and final.

The Local Organizer will close the event, and make sure:

- The winning students (top 3 teams) understand the interview process.
- Other students understand they may get invited to an interview anyway.

Once confirmed, the Local Organizer or Sponsors can announce winning team #3, then #2, then #1.

It is also a good time for students to answer the satisfaction survey. It is very short.

*Will add more precise mini-agenda here - Tom*

### **15:15 ( \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ local) - Lunch and Snacks**

Everyone should eat - especially if you are heading into 2.5 hours of interviews!

The Local Organizer will ensure the interview schedules are clear, and the winning teams sign-up on the interview sheets. Typically, a few spare places will open-up (as some individuals already have a job)

Sponsors will confer with their company colleagues who are present, and decide which students (from non-winning teams) they want to add to the interview process.

Sponsors and Local Organizer should have a 3-minute confab to agree on how to place these “other” students into the teams where a few winning students have left openings. (Adding an “extra” person to a team interview group also works fine in a pinch.)

Sponsors should then invite the “other” students to sign-up on the Interview Sheets.

### **16:00 ( \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ local) - Interviews Begin**

There will be 3 winning teams, so 3 interview rooms. This drives the whole schedule. A maximum time of 2.5 hours needs to be maintained - for everyone’s sanity.

Sponsor companies should each choose *and stay* in one interview room. If 4 or 5 companies, then they need to double-up. (See 2.5 hour rule above.)

Students will circulate between interview rooms.

The Local Organizer will politely interrupt interviews 5 minutes ahead of time, to ensure everyone stays on time! Then they will guide the students between interview rooms.

There are no rules about interview questions, but be aware:

- The hacking event does not cover all technologies. A few technical questions may be in order.
- Remaining questions need to cover immediate issues such as: What kind of work are you looking for? When do you want to start?
- Then cover more far-reaching topics.

Note: Please avoid the temptation to divide the 40 minutes into four or five 10-minute interviews. It's been tried before. It failed.

The 10 minutes you plan actually gets cut down to 8 minutes, due to roll-over time and *that's too short*. Interviews stretch, delays ensue, and due to all the students and all the companies being on one fixed schedule, *everyone involved* is brought to a complete halt while waiting for the interviews to end.

**18:15 ( \_\_\_:\_\_\_ local) - Sponsors Huddle. Students Wait.**

Tell the students there will be decisions made in 10 minutes, so they should hang around.

Each sponsor is allowed to protect one (1) student. So there needs to be a consensus amongst sponsors on who chooses whom.

Sponsors should confer amongst their own colleagues for 5 minutes. Consider the top two or three candidates you liked. Then the Local organizer will collect all sponsors into a single interview room and a consensus about who protects which student is usually reached almost immediately.

Candidates are "protected" for 10 days after the event. No is allowed to approach other "protected" students than their won. After 10 days, this rule is lifted.

**18:25 ( \_\_\_:\_\_\_ local) - Sponsors Make offers to Students**

Sponsors can approach their selected candidates immediately, and make whatever level of commitment they are authorized to make on the spot.

Sponsors can also approach "un-protected" students immediately, if they wish.

Hints: Interacting with Students

### Judging Criteria

The *main answer* (the Flag) should be easy to determine from your Answer Key document.

The *explanation* will be more subjective. But we expect all teams to be able to explain themselves, and you will almost always give all teams the Scoring Code. Be generous.

You don't have to distinguish good answers from not-so-good. It's either acceptable, or not. Rarely not.

- The only teams where you might not accept their answer is if you think they did not actually do any work, but got the answer from another team (in their school perhaps).

You'll want to get to know the students during this portion of the event. If the students' "explanation" is too short, prompt them for more detail. If it's already perfectly accurate, extend the conversation with prompts like:

- "Where did you learn that?"
- "How long did it take you just now?"
- "I am not a technical person. What did you mean by \_\_\_\_\_?"
- "How can companies/developers avoid this kind of issue?"

Or, in general,

- "C'mon you guys. There are *big points* involved here. I need more than that."

### Hinting

The winning team in each region gets a great prize, and a lot of pride, so we must be completely fair at all times. And we must be honest and open about that so all teams can see the fair play.

Teams will beg you for hints. Or sometimes you are just chatting with them and notice they really *need* a hint. They are sooooo close. You want to help them. But you want to be fair.

- If you feel the team really needs a hint, remind them they can buy a hint from the scoreboard. It will be a Big Hint. But it will cost them half their points. Their choice.
- If you think the organizers should give out a hint to everyone, talk to the Local Host/Organizer in your region, and or the Tech Support person there. Perhaps you see a fault in one of the challenges. Or recognize that many teams are having the same problem.
- If the issue you identified has a simple solution, you may want to implement it in your region. But just remember, students may send messages to other regions, which would be unfair if you hint only got to certain students elsewhere. This is why we strongly discourage hints from anyone in any region.
- If the issue is complex, or seems to apply to *\*everyone\**, then your local Organizer or Tech Support person can discuss it with our national support, and a solution for all regions can be decided and disseminated fairly.

Be careful to avoid teams trying to "social engineer" you for more hints and answers. :-)

**Crisis resolution:** if you accidentally give away too much information, and you realize it later, then contact the National organizers so we can post your info to all other regions as well. This might anger any teams who are leading, so we hope to never resort to this.

### Hints: Interacting with Students' Coaches

This is almost never, ever a problem. But just in case it comes up in your region...

Team coaches (usually teachers) are fantastic partners for this event. They keep the students involved year after year - which is crucial since the actual student team members will graduate and move-on before next year. Furthermore, some coaches spend a lot of time preparing and coaching their teams. This activity is the single most important benefit of the whole challenge. It helps build the future cyber experts for Canada. We love these coaches!

Most coaches are friendly advocates for their students: making sure everyone is present, able to interact with the cyber range, and the team is being treated fairly. Advocating is fine.

**But some coaches go too far.** They outright interfere by helping the students. It's not fair to other teams, so we strongly discourage this. Even the nice coaches, with responsible attitudes, can't seem to resist this sometimes. So we never give the coaches the hints or answers.

One coach we met went *way* too far by trying to intimidate the organizers in order to gain an advantage for his students. And he was forthright about it, saying it was his job to do "whatever it takes" for his team to win. But he was aggressive and unpleasant - not at all in sync with our goals of building a community and helping everyone equally. If you see this behaviour from any coaches, refer them to Tom Levasseur Contact me by phone 613-720-1232. We will set up a channel to resolve the situation.