

Attachment B2

Technology and Innovation Cognitive Interview Guide for 2025 ABS

I. Introduction

The Annual Business Survey (ABS) collects and provides data on economic characteristics and demographics of U.S. businesses and owners. We are interested in gaining feedback from industry stakeholders to help us develop a module of survey questions about cybersecurity workers as well as refining questions on technology and innovation to place on a future cycle of the ABS.

About the Interviewee

Please briefly tell us about your business and your current position (for example, the number of employees, type of industry, and number of locations).

II. Technology

Please open the questionnaire that we emailed you. Once you have it open, please share your screen. Please read and answer the questions as if I were not here.

[P will complete technology questions on questionnaire. Shortened version below.]

During 2023, did your company engage in any of these technologies? **Select one for each row.**

- Advanced Computing
- Advanced Engineering Materials
- Advanced Gas Turbine Engine Technologies
- Advanced and Networked Sensing and Signature Management
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Artificial Intelligence
- Biotechnologies
- Clean Energy Generation and Storage
- Data Privacy, Data Security, and Cybersecurity Technologies
- Directed Energy
- Highly Automated, Autonomous, and Uncrewed Systems, and Robotics
- Human-Machine Interfaces
- Hypersonics
- Integrated Communication and Networking Technologies
- Positioning, Navigation, and Timing Technologies
- Quantum Information and Enabling Technologies
- Semiconductors and Microelectronics
- Space Technologies and Systems

[After P has finished answering]

Can you tell me more about how you chose Yes/No/DK for each technology? [Note: DK is a new option so we're interested in learning about when people may choose that option versus leaving it blank or reporting No]

[For DK responses] If there were no DK option, how would you respond?

Are you aware of or familiar with these technologies?

[For the Yes responses] What role do these technologies play in your business? How do they affect your business?

IV. Innovation

The next section you'll see on the questionnaire is about goods and services. Go ahead and answer those questions.

[P will complete goods and services questions on questionnaire. Shortened version below.]

During the three years 2021 to 2023, did this business introduce to the market any new or improved goods or services that differed significantly from this business's previous goods or services? *This includes the addition of new functions or improvements to existing functions or user utility. Functions include quality, technical specifications, reliability, durability, economic efficiency during use, affordability, convenience, usability, and user friendliness. User utility includes attributes such as affordability and financial convenience.*

Goods: usually a tangible object, such as a smartphone, furniture, or packaged software, but also includes digital goods, such as downloadable software, music and film. Exclude the simple resale of new goods or changes of a solely aesthetic nature.

Yes/No

Services: intangible activities, such as retailing, insurance, educational courses, air travel, consulting, etc.; also includes digital services. Exclude the simple resale of new services.

Yes/No

If you reported **No** to either question, please select the reason(s) that your business did not engage in new or improved goods or services. *Mark all that apply.*

- a. Lack of internal finance for innovation
- b. Lack of credit or private equity
- c. Difficulties in obtaining public grants or subsidies
- d. Costs too high
- e. Lack of skilled employees within this business
- f. Lack of collaboration partners
- g. Lack of access to external knowledge
- h. Uncertain market demand for your ideas
- i. Too much competition in your market
- j. Different priorities within this business
- k. Government Regulations

[After P is finished and if they answered the Reasons question]

Can you tell me more about what came to mind when selecting the reasons your business didn't engage in new or improved goods or services?

Are there any reasons that you don't see on this list?

If this question was only about the most important reason for not engaging in new or improved goods or services how would your answer change?

V. Financing

I want to ask you about potential credit sources for your business.

Are you aware of each of these kinds of funding sources?

- **Bank** (financial institution that accepts deposits and extends credit, either in person or online)
- **Credit union** (nonprofit financial institution that provides banking services, including loans, to its members)
- **Fintech/online lender** (type of finance company that operates exclusively online and/or by phone to issue loans or lines of credit, usually with no collateral requirements. Includes payment companies that offer loans and cash advances to merchants.)
- **Finance company** (company that provides loans or leases but, unlike a bank, does not accept deposits or offer banking services. Examples include mortgage companies, equipment dealers, and auto finance companies.)
- **Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI)** (financial institution certified by the U.S. Department of the Treasury that provides credit, financial services, and technical assistance to underserved people or places)
- **Crowdfunding** such as Kickstarter, Indiegogo, GoFundMe, Patreon, where individuals can provide funds for projects that interest them.

Do you have any experiences with crowdfunding? Can you tell us about that experience?

Do you know of other businesses that have raised funds using crowdfunding?

What about CDFIs or finance companies?

[NOTE for interviewers: We would like to know about the difference between larger and smaller firms.]

Closing

That's all the questions that we have for today. Is there anything else that we did not talk about today that we should be thinking about? [After discussion]. Thank you so much for your feedback and for your time today.