

# Wrap-up of the TESS Request for Bright Ideas (RFBI)

16 July 2019

For over a year now, the TESS (Telecoms Security Standards) project has collaboratively worked with United Nations (UN) and NGO partners, the public and private sector as well as individuals, to standardize the currently used technologies and procedures on security communications under TESS Streams 1 & 2.

Stream 3 of the TESS project **kicked off in May 2019 with the launch of a “Request for Bright Ideas” (RFBI)**. TESS Stream 3 asks the question: what should the **future standards** of UN/NGO security communications look like across three layers – connectivity, application, and procedures. The RFBI focus was on the **connectivity layer**.

Through the RFBI we crowdsourced **33 Bright Ideas** from the private sector, humanitarian organisations, universities and individuals all who had something to share. The purpose of the RFBI was to source ideas to inspire us and validate our use cases at the same time; it was not about collecting concrete proposals... that’s still to come!

Our contributors offered us many Bright Ideas, some that were still in prototype phase. With the spread of contributors, we received ideas that were more generic in nature offering suggestions and advice, some proposing solutions by integrating different technologies to address the different use cases, and those that have custom solutions to fulfill one or more of our use cases.

We did not stop at just *collecting* the 30+ Bright Ideas. We put our contributors to the test by inviting them to pitch their Bright Idea in the **TESS Dragons’ Den** in a global online event on 10 July 2019. The Dragons’ Den provided an opportunity for those who submitted a Bright Idea, for a **five-minute pitch** on their idea, with feedback from the **dragons**.

The enthusiasm from our contributors was fabulous - we had **15 pitches** across two sessions. We also had people joining us online from across the world to hear about the projects’ vision and listen to the pitches. All up, we had 30 people dialing into the morning session, and 55 people in the afternoon session. **Participation in the online event was open to anyone interested**, and in the **spirit of inclusivity** we held two sessions to cater for people in different time zones.

The panel of “dragons” was open to members from the TESS Inter-Agency Steering Group. In the two sessions, we had a total of 5 dragons from WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF and DOS. The dragons, along with the **80+ people who dialed in to listen**, posed questions to the pitchers in our **interactive and fun** event.

## What’s next?

We will be releasing a formal **Request for Proposals (RFP)** by the end of **July 2019**. Once more, we will crowdsource this RFP and circulate it publicly.

The deadline for RFP submissions will be **31 August 2019**.

Early **September 2019**, we will shortlist the proposals that fit our purpose, and invite those that submitted a shortlisted proposal to participate in a second powwow (planned for 16-18 Sept). This will be held in Munich, Germany, with the possibility to participate online.

We learnt from the RFBI process, that some information cannot be disclosed in public fora due to commercial sensitivities, so our second powwow will offer an opportunity for public pitching as well as closed pitching to members of the TESS Inter-Agency Steering Group.

Based on the selection of solutions received through the RFP, our lab and field testing will run from **November 2019 to April 2020**.

In **June 2020** the full TESS Stream 3 proposal will be ready to put to the IASMN for endorsement.

#### **Where do you get the details on the further steps?**

We will broadcast every step via the TESS online community.

#### **Questions?**

If you have any questions, you can always contact us via [TESS@wfp.org](mailto:TESS@wfp.org)

#### **About the TESS project:**

*TESS ('TElecoms Security Standards') is an interagency project, requested and initiated by the Inter-Agency Security Management Network (IASMN) Technology Advisory Group (TAG) and the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), mandated by UNDSS (United Nations Department of Safety and Security).*

*TESS' goal is to make clear recommendations on the standardizations of future UN and NGO Security Communications Systems ("SCS") supporting staff safety and security. TESS works at the level of connectivity, applications and procedures.*

*The project's final aim is a new security telecommunications business model that is approved and supported by all stakeholders.*

*The project is a collaborate effort between UN agencies, funds and programmes, NGOs, the private sector, government entities and individual technical / operational / security specialists. TESS is facilitated by WFP (UN World Food Programme) on behalf of all stakeholders.*

*As TESS will only succeed with the involvement of all stakeholders, including the end-users of our systems, we have an active online community we closely involve in the progress of the project. If you want to join our community, just send an email to [TESS@wfp.org](mailto:TESS@wfp.org) with your name, organization and function, and we will include you.*