



Home Office



Border Force

WCO Technology Conference and Exhibition Ha Noi, Vietnam

Session Eight: Fostering innovation through collaboration.

Trevor Francis
Technical Manager
United Kingdom Border Force
12th October 2023



An illustration of how customs may innovate with detection technology.

- Customs is a small market compared to the security sector and volume sales.
- Customs has benefited from the investment in the security market for off-the-shelf products.
- Innovation is very costly with no guarantee of success
- It can take 10 years from concept to product with sustained funding.

Border Force is involved in 2 innovation-related activities which intersect.



PEN-CP Customs Partners

- Albania
- Austria
- Belgium
- Estonia
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Macedonia
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Slovakia
- UK

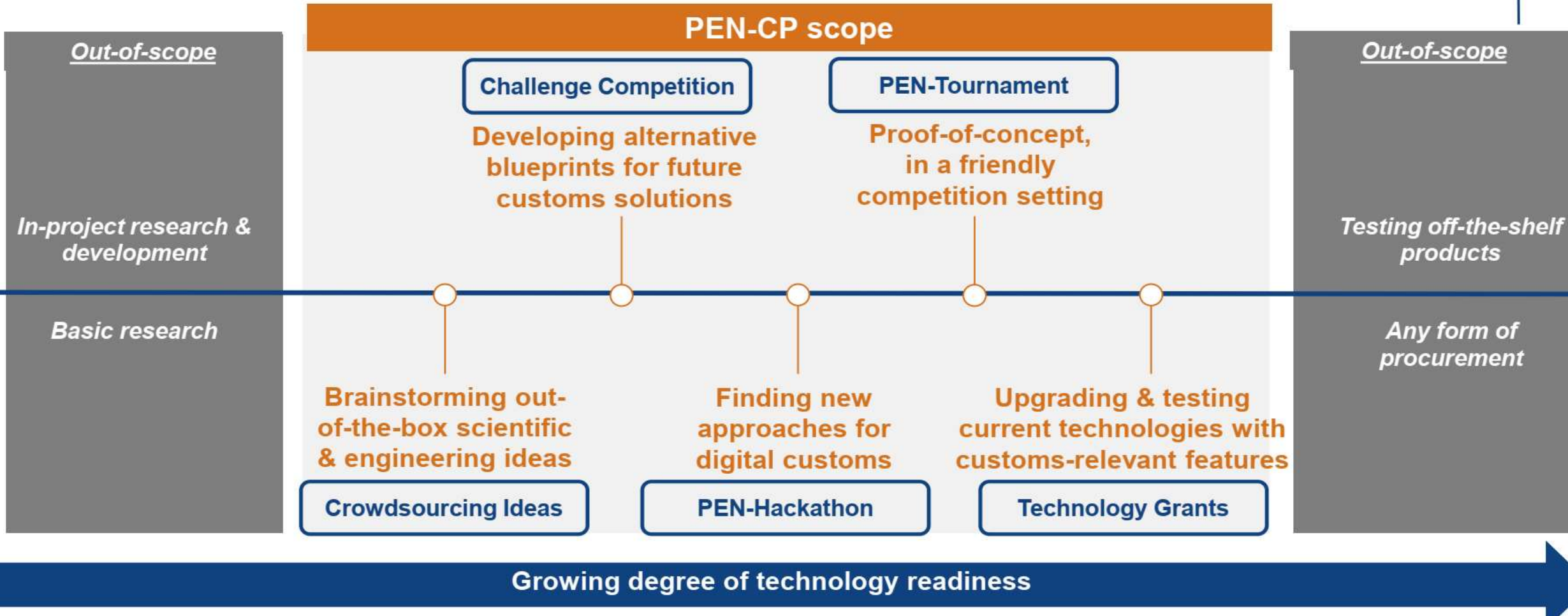
RESEARCH & ADMINISTRATION PARTNERS

- TU-Delft (Netherlands)
- UNIL (Switzerland)
- ARTTIC (France)
- CBRA (Switzerland)



- PEN-CP, the Pan-European Network of Customs Practitioners, acts as a European Customs innovation-boosting network, powered by an innovation-centric online platform, and tailored innovation intermediary services.
- PEN-CP focuses on accelerating innovation efforts across three core customs technical areas: Data and Risk management; Detection Technologies; and Laboratory equipment.
- We have a broad variety of innovation and knowledge instruments in use, including technology grants, challenge competitions, Innovation awards, Annual studies and Expert reports.
- PEN-CP grant runs from August 2018-January 2025, with plans for PEN-CP v2.0

Spectrum of PEN-CP Innovation Instruments & Upcoming calls for submissions





Defence and Security
Accelerator

Innovative Research Call 2023 for Explosives and Weapons Detection

- Funded and supported through a collaborative action of several government departments and law enforcement agencies. (7 UK + 1 USA)
- Competition seeks proposals for screening of:
 - Buildings
 - Goods
 - Vehicles
 - People and / or their possessions



Home Office



Defence and Security
Accelerator

Innovative Research Call 2023 for Explosives and Weapons Detection

- 3 year cycle
- Runs in 2 phases
 - Phase One - 6 months (proof of concept)
 - Phase Two – 24 months (demonstrator/prototype)
- Similar to a number of customs interest areas (e.g. People, goods, vehicles)

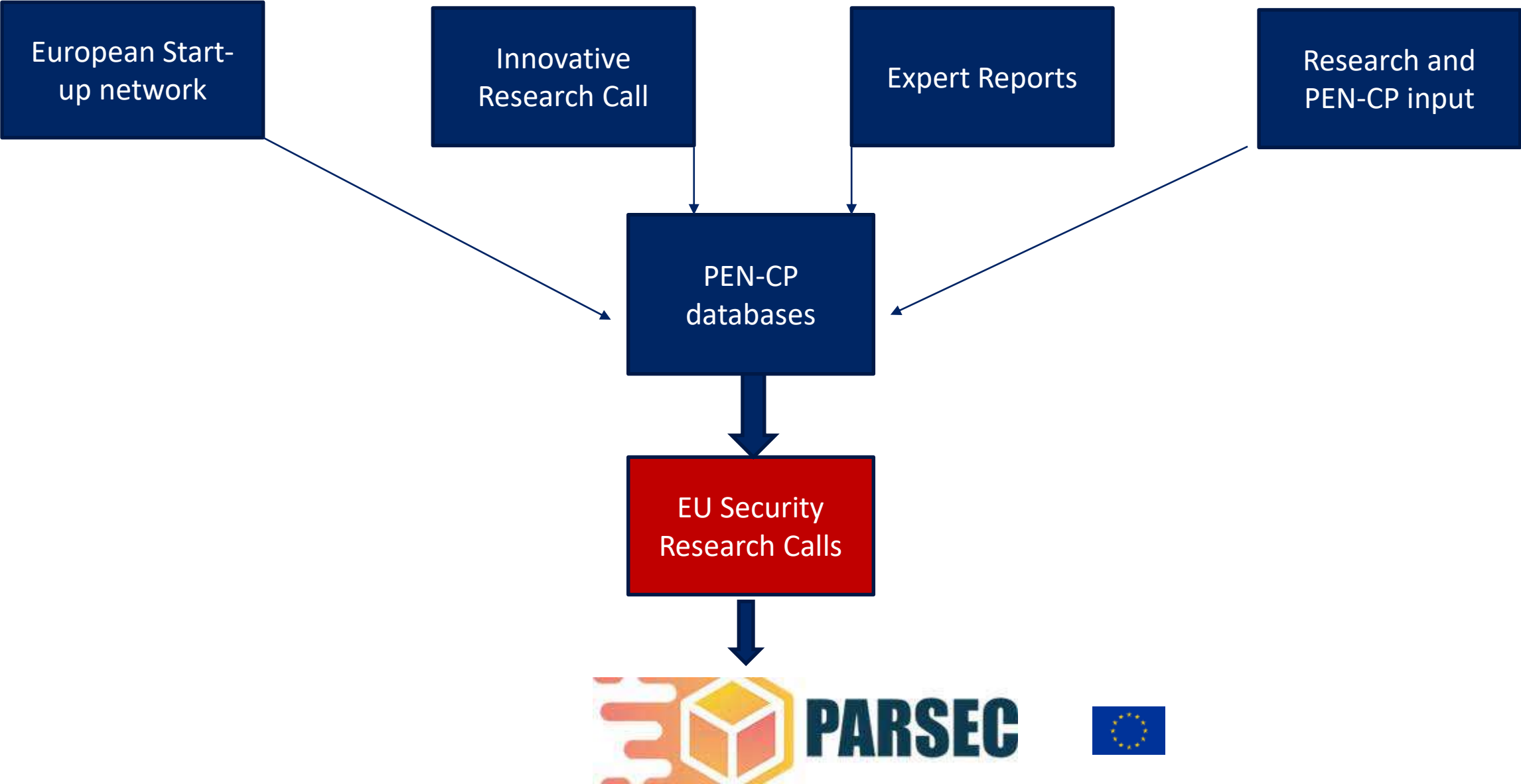


How this work can benefit PEN-CP

- Suppliers flag likelihood of their technique to detect to illicit drugs.
- PEN-CP has engaged with DASA managers who recognise customs could be a potentially useful exploitation route for some projects.
- PEN-CP has invited presentations from some IRC projects.
- Completed IRC projects with relevance to customs applications are incorporated in PEN-CP database. (Permissions/public domain)



Practical use-case of PEN-CP information to push innovation.





Home Office



Border Force

Thank You

Breaking Boundaries in Detection Technology: Leveraging Innovation to Enhance Customs Control Efficiency

Trevor Francis
Technical Manager
United Kingdom Border Force
12th October 2023

