



INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION
TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION BUREAU

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To:

- Administrations of Member States of the Union;
- ITU-T Sector Members;
- ITU-T Associates;
- ITU Academia

Copy to:

- The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Study Groups and Focus Groups;
- The Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau;
- The Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau

Subject: ITU Blockchain Secure Authentication (BSA) Application Challenge

Dear Sir/Madam,

1 It is my pleasure to invite you to participate in the **ITU Blockchain Secure Authentication (BSA) Application Challenge**. This Application Challenge is organised jointly by ITU and FNSV, Korea and is scheduled to run from 8th April 2024 and the closing date for submission of the projects for the challenge is 1st August 2024. The Challenge is focused on promoting the use of strong authentication in digital financial services (DFS) to implement passwordless authentication and enhance security in authentication processes. The challenge is set to inspire developers to harness Blockchain Secure Authentication (BSA) for stronger, more secure authentication methods beyond traditional passwords.

2 The [Digital Financial Services \(DFS\) Security Lab](#), hosted at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) was established in 2021 to provide technical guidance to regulators and DFS providers of emerging economies on the best practices for securing their infrastructure for digital financial services as per [WTSA Resolution 89 - \(Rev. Geneva, 2022\) - Promoting the use of information and communication technologies to bridge the financial inclusion gap](#). The lab supports the development and testing of advanced strong authentication protocols, including Blockchain Secure Authentication (BSA). This initiative is crucial in addressing the vulnerabilities of current authentication processes within DFS by encouraging the development of BSA-based authentication to replace conventional password systems with the more robust and secure protocol offered by blockchain technology.

3 The ITU BSA Application Challenge is designed to attract developers and regulators to concentrate on the implementation of strong authentication protocols in DFS applications, utilizing the advanced security features of blockchain technology.

4 Timeline of the Challenge:

- Launching of Application Challenge: 1st week of April 2024.
- Registration opens on 8th April 2024 (Closing date for registration is 30th April 2024).
- Induction Bootcamps: Scheduled for the weeks of 13th May, 20th May, and 24th June.
- Competition Period: From 13th May to 1st August 2024.
- Evaluation Phases: Preliminary evaluation in the second week of August, followed by Jury Evaluation in September 2024.
- Awards Announcement and Showcase: Winners will be announced on 13th October 2024, with a showcase event from 14th to 24th October 2024 during the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA).

5 The challenge is open to individuals and teams from ITU Member States, Sector Members, Associates, Academic Institutions. We encourage participation that fosters innovation and practical solutions to implement passwordless secure authentication for digital financial services.

6 Participation in the ITU BSA Application Challenge is an opportunity to contribute to the advancement of secure authentication technologies. Participants will receive ITU certificates of participation, and cash prizes. **Prizes for the challenge are as follows: First prize of USD 5,000, second prize of USD 3,000, and third prize of USD 2,000.** The top three solutions will be showcased at the World Telecommunications Standard Assembly (WTSA) and winners announced at the ITU Global Standards Symposium (GSS) on 13 October 2024.

7 To assist participants, ITU will organize a series of online bootcamps and further information on the can be obtained on the application challenge website. Furthermore, the Challenge encourages open-source solution submissions to foster collaboration and access to innovative solutions.

8 For more information about the challenge, problem statements, including registration details and participant guidelines, please visit the BSA Application Challenge webpage at <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/dfs/seclab/Pages/challenge.aspx>, interested participants should carefully review the participant guidelines on the challenge website. Registration for the Application Challenge will start on 8th April 2024 and the deadline for registering in the challenge is 30th April 2024.

9 For additional information and questions relating to the Challenge, please contact: dfsappchallenge@itu.int.

Yours faithfully,



Seizo Onoe
Director of the Telecommunication
Standardization Bureau