Introducing the
NATO Communications and Information Academy

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The NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCI Agency) has been supporting NATO and the Alliance through defining moments as the world continues to innovate and NATO reinforces its technological edge. It is wholly appropriate then, that the education and individual training practices employed by our Alliance are constantly evolving to the current and future needs of our students.
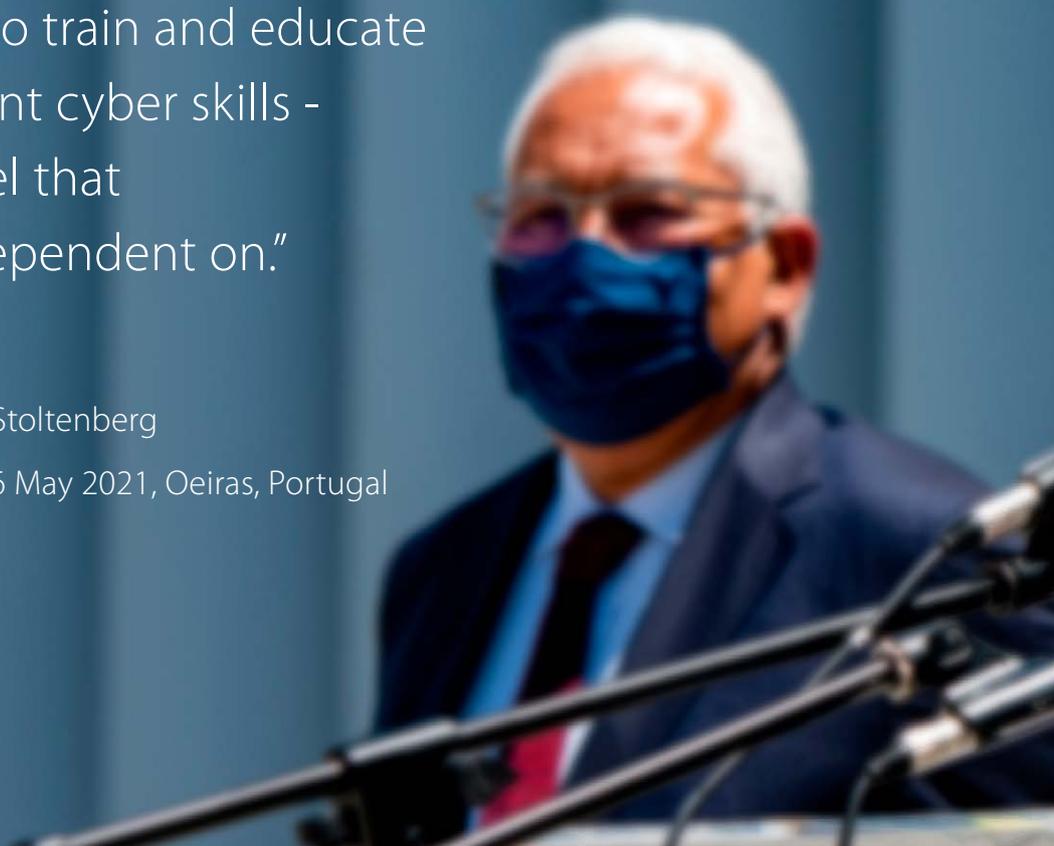
The NATO Communications and Information Academy (NCI Academy) is embedded firmly in the NCI Agency as an organizational entity with unique operating parameters within the NATO learning, education and training profession. Emerging from the integration of several independent education and individual training entities, the NCI Academy stands on a long tradition of delivering education and training in the area of Consultation, Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) and cyber. With our new facility, technical infrastructure and redesigned personnel establishment, we have defined some of the most crucial criteria to achieve the Academy's mission.

The NCI Academy envisions a wider role to serve the breadth of the NATO enterprise and to cover the entire domain of cyberspace learning, focusing on customers' needs and ultimately becoming their first choice for all cyberspace learning requirements.

NATO is the most successful Alliance in history for different reasons, but one of the most important reasons is that we have always been able to change, adapt and maintain our technological edge. This cyber academy is helping to do exactly that for the future. It helps to train and educate personnel in different cyber skills - the future personnel that our Alliance is so dependent on."

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg
NCI Academy inauguration, 26 May 2021, Oeiras, Portugal

Foreword by NCI Agency General Manager, Ludwig Decamps

At the 2022 NATO Summit in Madrid, NATO Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to bolster NATO's technological edge over the next decade and beyond. The NATO Communications and Information Academy, is a pioneering venue for NATO, partners and Nations to advance their C4ISR, cyber security and cyber defence skills.

The NCI Academy, inaugurated in May 2021, aims to broaden the scope of education and training historically offered by the NCI Agency, particularly by expanding the available training options in the cyber domain. The Academy is actively optimizing its cyber curricula which will be used to train NATO's cyber security workforce and cultivate new technical and operational talent for the Alliance.

The COVID-19 crisis has only underlined and accelerated the Alliance's desire for digital transformation and the availability of more online training options. During this difficult time, the Academy adapted from a hands-on classroom and mobile training model to a more blended and flexible approach. We piloted new ways of learning such as micro and e-learning, virtual classrooms and augmented reality. We also launched a new and improved training management system for Academy courses to support our customers better.

The NCI Academy's talented staff, rich in diverse identities and perspectives, will continue supporting, educating, and training the Alliance. We recognize that the pace of technological change demands continuous upskilling of our workforce, to serve our NATO and national customers. Further to our in-house talent, continuing to collaborate with industry and academia will also be crucial to the Academy's success.

This brochure contains some basic information on who we are and what we do; however, since we are a rapidly evolving and responsive organization, I urge readers to consult our webpage: https://www.ncia.nato.int/what-we-do/nci-academy.html. Here you will find the most recent information about our cyberspace education and training services and facilities.

I look forward to continuing this fascinating journey with our NCI Academy in close collaboration with our strategic partners and host nation Portugal.
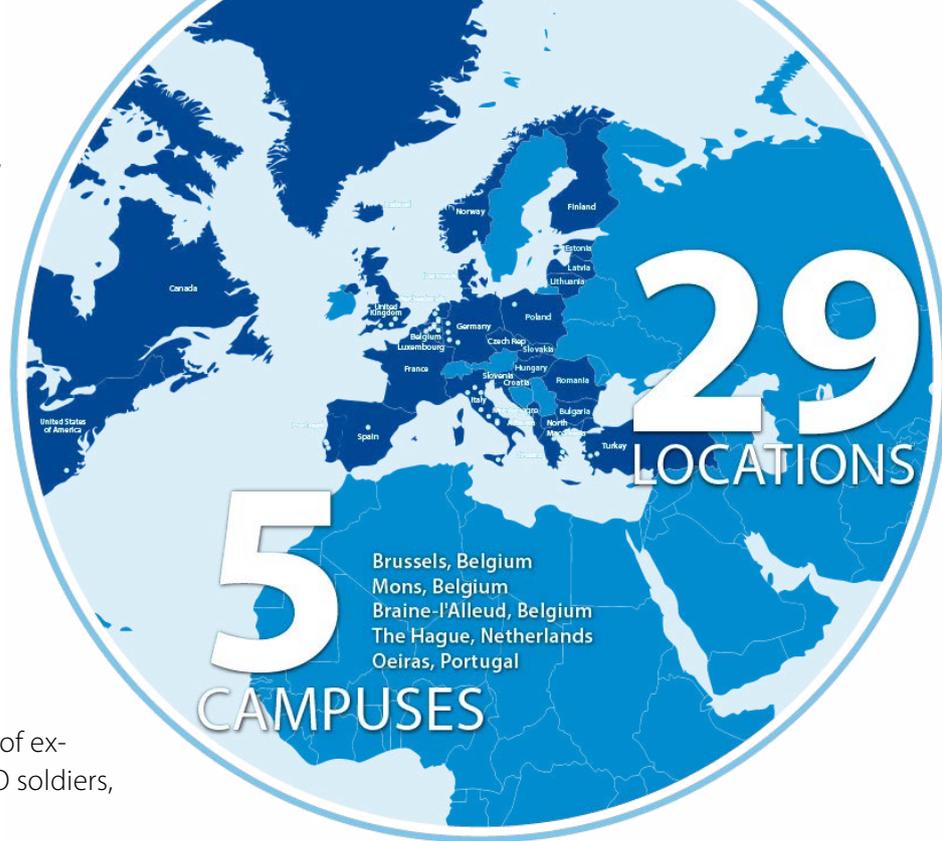
Ludwig Decamps
General Manager

About the NCI Agency

The NCI Agency helps NATO and its member countries communicate and work together to fulfil their mission to preserve peace and security of nearly one billion citizens.

The Agency was established on 1 July 2012 as part of a NATO reform; however, it stands on a 65-year legacy as our predecessors supported Allied operations long before. The Agency has a team of 3,000 civilian and military staff members, located in 29 sites throughout Europe and North America and decades of experience working side-by-side with NATO soldiers, sailors and air personnel.

29 LOCATIONS

5 CAMPUSES

Brussels, Belgium
Mons, Belgium
Braine-l'Alleud, Belgium
The Hague, Netherlands
Oeiras, Portugal

The Agency's experts provide capabilities and services critical to NATO's ability to fulfil its core tasks of deterrence and defence, cooperative security, and crisis prevention and management. The Agency achieves this by working in partnership with industry, academia and not-for-profit organizations. The Agency is the frontline against cyber threats, protecting NATO's networks 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to prevent debilitating attacks.

The NCI Agency helps NATO keep its technological edge and the NCI Academy plays a crucial role in ensuring that edge remains sharp and is maintained, by providing education and individual training across the full spectrum of cyberspace and learning design.

NCI Academy mission and vision

What we do
Collectively, we identified the starting point for the strategy and the current mission of the NCI Academy:

"To deliver essential technical, operational and managerial training."

Where we stand
As a merger of several education and individual training organizations, the NCI Academy stands on a long tradition of delivering training in the area of cyberspace. With its new facility, IT infrastructure and personnel establishment, we defined some of the most important criteria to achieve our mission. As a result, the NCI Academy is embedded firmly in the NCI Agency as an organizational entity with unique operating parameters within the NATO learning, education and training profession.

Where we want to be
The aim of the NCI Academy strategy is to lead the way towards its vision:

"To reinforce NATO's technological edge through excellence in cyberspace learning."

While continuing to provide excellent training on Agency services, we envision a wider role for the Academy to serve the breadth of the NATO enterprise and cover the entire cyberspace learning domain. We also see ourselves providing more dynamic learning experiences closely aligned with the needs of our customers and with NATO 2030 in mind.

NCI Academy locations

The NCI Academy facility in Oeiras, Portugal, is our flagship delivery location; however, we also have fixed campuses in The Hague, Netherlands, Braine-L'Alleud, Brussels, and Mons in Belgium, as well as local options delivered through mobile training teams.

It is no longer a constraint that students need to travel to attend all of our courses. On behalf of and sponsored by our customers, the NCI Academy has invested in e-learning capabilities with more hybrid and blended approaches. Students are now more able to follow training where and when it suits them.

Although offline and e-learning offers many possibilities, it is simply not applicable to the entire spectrum of cyberspace learning offered by the Academy. Training with a group and instructors in a classroom provides collaborative and networking opportunities and remains the right option for many courses. This is backed up by data from thousands of course assessments and quality checks.

Through the NCI Academy, the NCI Agency ensures the delivery of state-of-the-art, high quality cyberspace training to NATO and the Nations of our Alliance. Moreover, the NCI Academy plays a pivotal role in developing NATO's digital workforce in the 21st century, addressing current challenges and new and evolving operational requirements.

Oeiras

Mons

Braine-L' Alleud

Brussels

The Hague

NCI Agency The Hague
Netherlands

NCI Agency Brussels
Belgium

NCI Agency Braine-L'Alleud
Belgium

NCI Agency Mons
Belgium

NCI Agency Oeiras
Portugal

NCI Academy facilities

Overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, the NCI Academy facility in Portugal was designed from the outset to be a state-of-the-art capability focused on education and individual training delivery. The facility reached its initial operating capability on 2 September 2019 and is well on the way to achieving its full operating capacity in 2023.

Academic facilities include:

- Laboratories and classrooms designed to receive up to 8,000 students yearly;
- Training facilities equipped with every C4ISR system that NATO currently employs and can accommodate any new systems planned for delivery;
- The Academy Learning Environment, which encompasses the full interactivity of classroom training and engagement with instructors and peers to remote audiences;
- Offices that can accommodate more than 110 staff and instructors;
- A library and research facilities;
- A 256 seat-auditorium equipped with an audio system, video projectors and simultaneous translation technology.

The Academy in Oeiras is the NCI Agency's main location in terms of training capabilities. Students benefit from networked multimedia technology such as video cameras, smart boards and video-teleconferencing, which together provide an adaptable learning space for any teaching plan including remote, hybrid and blended learning.

We also host training in permanent training rooms in The Hague and Mons. Our training rooms are equipped to enable learners to connect remotely from any location to live online classes.

Cyberspace education and training offered by the Academy

All cyberspace learning opportunities available at the NCI Academy are included in a single comprehensive catalogue, including all courses organized and delivered by the Academy and many offered by its commercial partners. Potential students will also be able to access course details such as learning paths, course objectives, prerequisites, pricing and other necessary information.

The catalogue is a living document reflecting the ever-changing learning environment and customer requirements. Updated every year, the 220+ courses covering the entire spectrum of NATO-specific cyberspace learning are grouped under three training delivery branches.

NCI Academy
Cyberspace learning catalogue
2024 / Version 8

The Communications and Deployable Systems Training Branch delivers world-class training under the domains of deployable and static communications and information systems, and deployable, transportable and static NATO communication terminals and tactical radios. This is building knowledge to support NATO's mission by connecting NATO's Static Ground Station Network to deployed NATO forces.

Supporting NATO's mission, the Command and Control and Functional Services Training Branch is responsible for delivering both technical and user training on command and control systems (air, land, maritime and NCOP), and functional services (LOGFAS, TOPFAS) provided by the NCI Agency. Through the Cores Services Section at the NCI Academy in Mons, it delivers formal training on NATO CIS software.
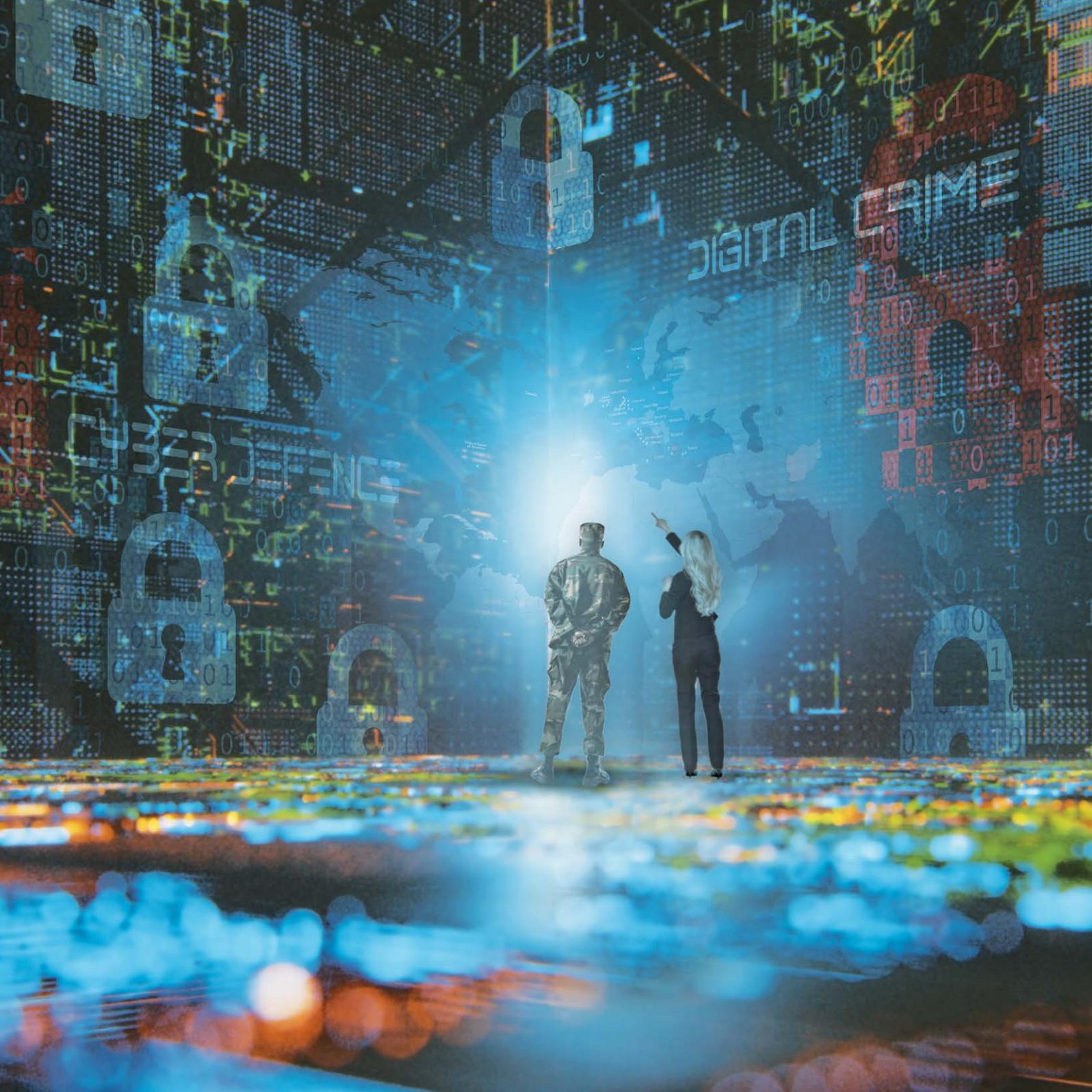
The Cyber Training Branch is responsible for delivering technical and management courses under the cyber

security and cyberspace operations knowledge domains. Our close relationship with the NATO Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and other NATO or national stakeholders ensures the maintenance of high-level quality training and knowledge sharing.

Along with the commitment to our external customers, the NCI Academy is also committed to training and educating our own staff through the NCI Corporate Academy. We work with all Agency organizational elements to deliver the required professional development, such as project and programme management, IT service management, behavioural and soft skills training and team development interventions.

Our catalogue can be found at https://catalogue.academy.ncia.nato.int/.

Cyber vision: building a NATO cyber curriculum

In July 2016, NATO Allies recognized cyberspace as a domain of operations in which NATO must defend itself as effectively as it does in the air, on land and at sea. Cyber threats to the security of the Alliance are complex, destructive and coercive, and are becoming ever more frequent. They have the potential to undermine NATO's mission and hamper the ability of the Alliance to deliver collective defence.

Everyone in NATO has a role to play in protecting from these threats - from non-technical personnel, to IT and cyber security practitioners, all the way up to NATO's leadership. As a training and education hub for NATO, Allies and partners, the NCI Academy has a defining role in ensuring everyone has the necessary knowledge and skills to defend Allied networks and systems and conduct operations in cyberspace.

The NCI Academy provides a full spectrum of training solutions to meet the challenges of operating in cyberspace as effectively as in other domains. We combine the best and most reliable commercially available training and tailor them to specifically meet NATO's training requirements. With bespoke training solutions targeting knowledge and skills specific to NATO, the NCI Academy is the holistic provider of NATO's cyber curriculum.

Learning transformation

In addition to offering the latest insights and content to meet the technological challenges of the future, the NCI Academy is re-imagining its training methodologies. Traditional training methods are insufficient to meet future needs for various reasons.
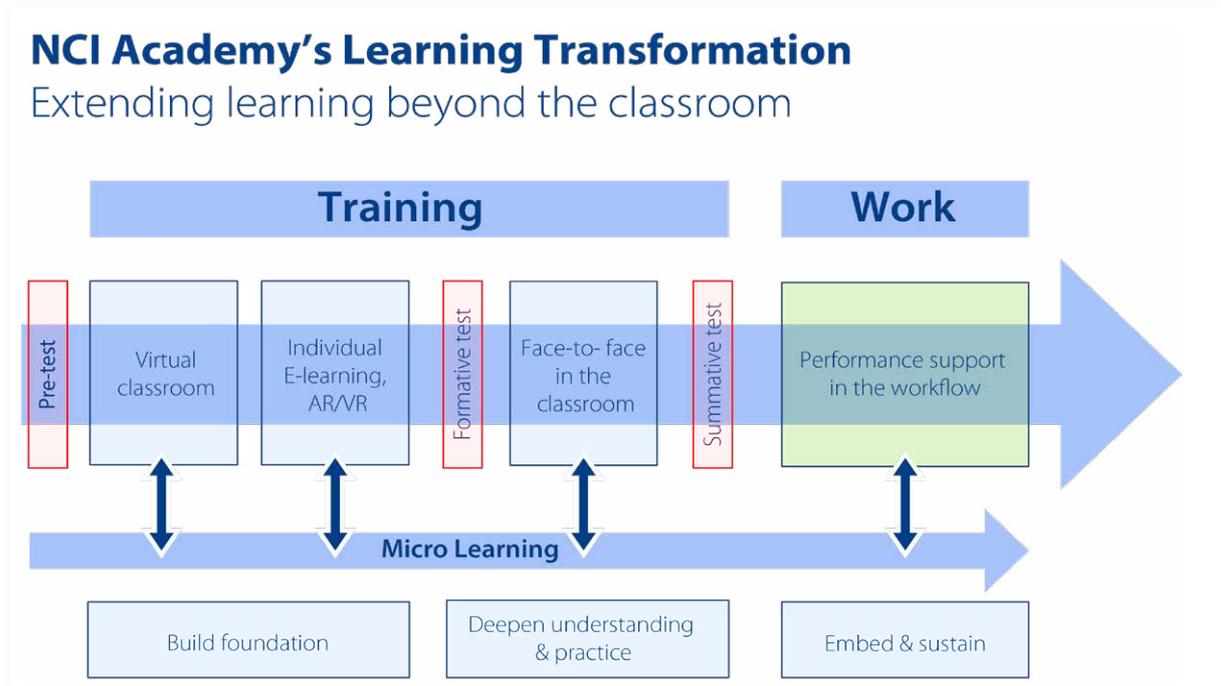
Firstly, it is a constant challenge to deliver classroom training at the right place and time, as travel is often necessary. This challenge is only aggravated by the COVID-19 crisis, which accelerated the NCI Academy's efforts to deliver large parts of our offering online. Secondly, even outside the COVID-19 crisis, national travel budgets are already under pressure. Thirdly, the traditional ways of training are not scalable. There is a growing demand for training and the technologies we teach are increasingly complex, thus, we cannot solely depend on training delivery in one geographical location. Finally, the new generation coming into our workforce has other expectations regarding training, learning and development- relevant content should not exclusively be conveyed by an instructor but always within reach and online. To engage our new workers, training should be as interactive and collaborative as possible and tailored to individual needs instead of being a 'one-size-fits-all'.

Therefore, the NCI Academy aims to extend learning beyond the classroom, leveraging new technologies that increase training effectiveness and reduce training time. True development of knowledge and skills should be supported anywhere and integrated into practical situations

on-the-job. For example, performance support. After completing a course, students can refer to 3-5 minutes of practical online instruction (micro-learning) to support when they need to apply new skills in their work. This is currently being utilized in the training of widely used systems such as TOPFAS, LOGFAS and JChat. By enhancing classroom training with tailored online resources, we aim to increase retention but mainly support the performance of our audiences at the time when they need it most - in their work.

Other innovation domains pertain to the use of artificial intelligence to make cyberspace learning adaptive. Current adaptive learning technologies make it possible to tailor learning content to individual learners' needs and proficiency levels in real time. This technology further enables a more efficient distribution of digital self-paced learning content that continuously assesses where a learner stands and subsequently offers content and exercises that align with that need.

Finally, the NCI Academy is investing in creating immersive learning such as using virtual and augmented reality in training for Deployable Communications and Information engineers.

NCI Academy's Learning Transformation
Extending learning beyond the classroom

Training					Work
Pre-test	Virtual classroom	Individual E-learning, AR/VR	Formative test	Face-to-face in the classroom	Summative test	Performance support in the workflow

Micro Learning

Build foundation	Deepen understanding & practice	Embed & sustain

Partnering with the Academy: building a cooperative network

We have a great deal of expertise within the Academy and the Agency; however, partnerships with other organizations further strengthen our knowledge. We are keen to consider various partnership initiatives such as:

- Strategic partnerships with national bodies;
- Smart defence initiatives;
- Multinational approaches;
- Working with academia and industry.

To work with our partners, we seek guidance from several stakeholders from different levels:
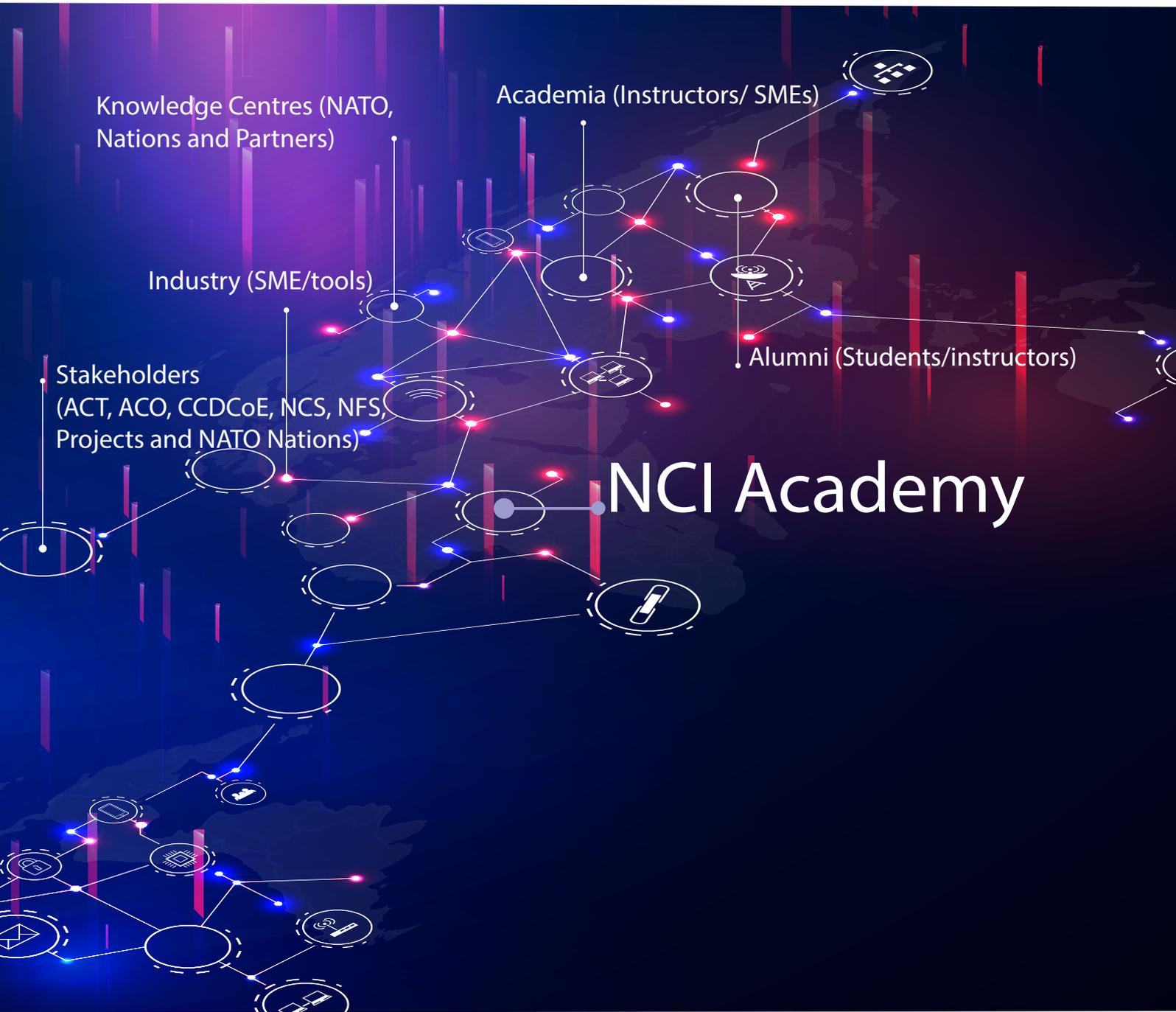
Agency Supervisory Board (ASB)
The Agency Supervisory Board is composed of a representative from each NATO member country. The ASB, which reports to the North Atlantic Council, delivers directives and decisions on fundamental issues such as policy, finance, organization and establishment, all of which require unanimous agreement by all member countries.

Academy Board (AB)
The Academy Board performs as a strategic consultation body to ensure high-level NATO-wide strategic digital workforce partnership. Specific goals of the AB are to:

- Ensure the NCI Academy remains aligned with the digital workforce requirements of its stakeholders;
- Ensure the NCI Academy upholds the highest standards, ethics and business practices;
- Inform NCI Academy stakeholders about strategic level aims, plans and activities;
- Enable better cooperation with other education and training facilities, industry and academia;
- Gain commitment from NCI Academy stakeholders to utilize its services where possible and invest in its future where required.

Knowledge Centres (NATO, Nations and Partners)

Academia (Instructors/ SMEs)

Industry (SME/tools)

Stakeholders (ACT, ACO, CCDCoE, NCS, NFS, Projects and NATO Nations)

Alumni (Students/instructors)

NCI Academy

A flexible framework for the delivery of education and individual training services

Following direction by the Nations through the NATO Resource Policy and Planning Board, the NCI Academy must be entirely customer-funded. While requirement planning remains crucial for future education and individual training delivery, the process needs to be flexible in the delivery phase as priorities may change over a year. To this end, the NCI Academy has developed the Service Support Training (SST) Agreement. The SST is a unique agreement in the NCI Agency focused entirely on Academy services, giving rise to a funding framework that offers flexibility for both the customer and provider.

The full NCI Academy offering and further details on how to develop an agreement can be found in the Academy Catalogue of Cyberspace Learning, available at https://catalogue.academy.ncia.nato.int/.
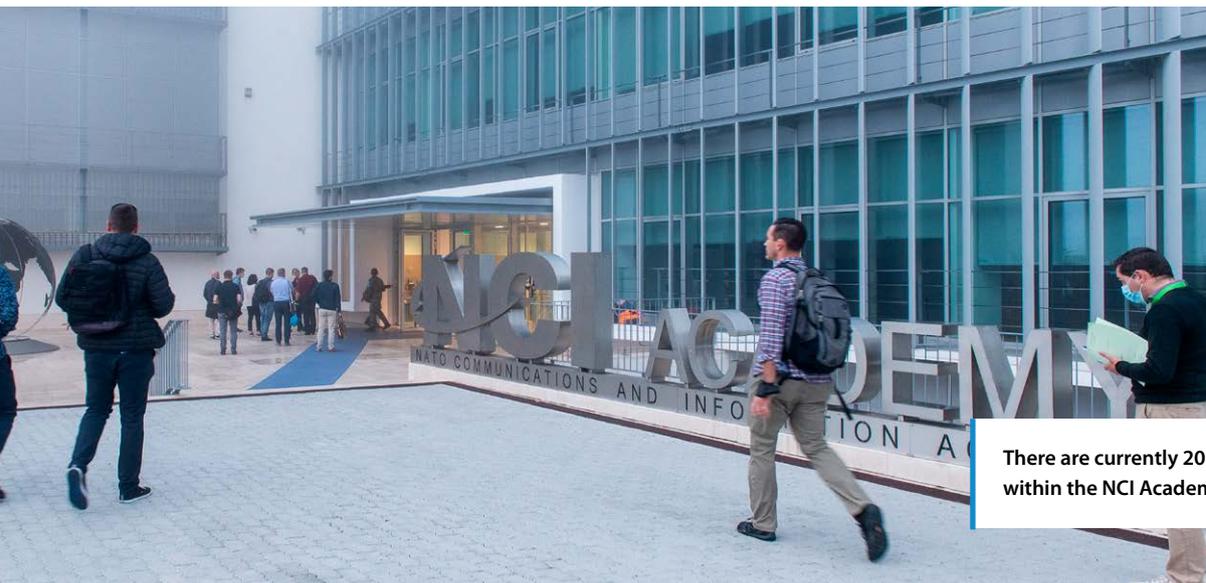
Our people

As part of the NCI Agency, Academy personnel consists of many different nationalities and cultures. Using the expertise that comes with our civilian and military environments and different backgrounds, we work together to deliver education and training services to the Alliance.

129 Active Staff & Nationalities
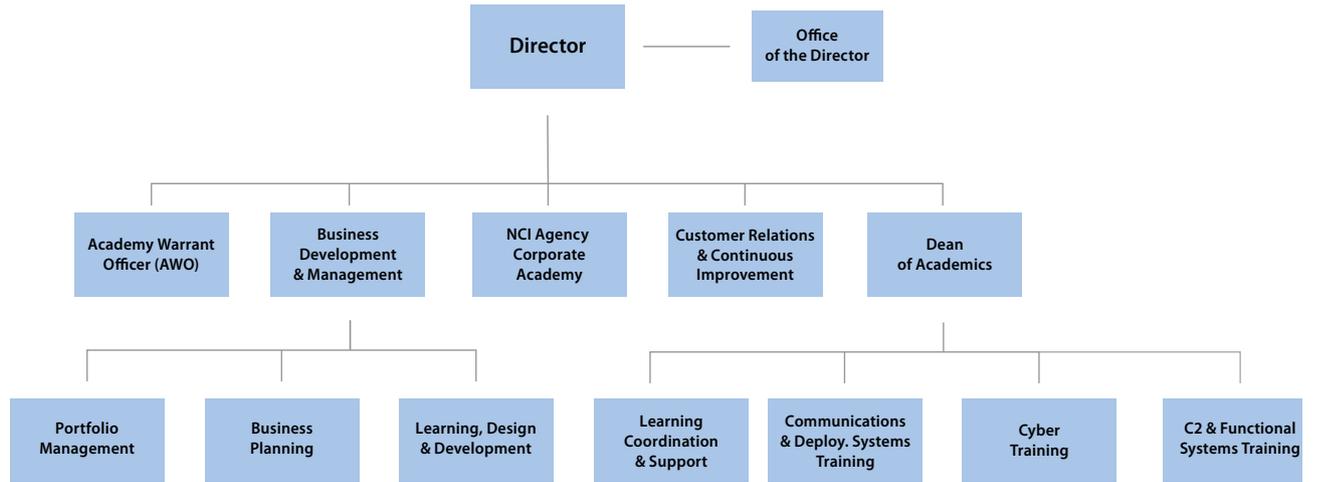
» 65 Civilians
» 30 Military
» 34 Contractors

104 Oeiras

8 The Hague

4 Mons

6 Braine-L'Alleud

7 Brussels

5 Locations

There are currently 20 different nationalities within the NCI Academy personnel.

NCI Academy organization chart

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                          ┌──────────────┐         ┌──────────────┐
                          │   Director    │─────────│    Office     │
                          │              │         │ of the Director │
                          └──────────────┘         └──────────────┘
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Academy Warrant Officer (AWO)	Business Development & Management	NCI Agency Corporate Academy	Customer Relations & Continuous Improvement	Dean of Academics

Portfolio Management	Business Planning	Learning, Design & Development	Learning Coordination & Support	Communications & Deploy. Systems Training	Cyber Training	C2 & Functional Systems Training

Leadership structure

Dr Garry Hargreaves, Director

The NCI Academy Director has the responsibility of leading the Academy and is accountable for the delivery of its education and training services and overseeing the effective management of the Agency's fourth campus in Oeiras.

"I see my primary role as clearing the way of anything that prevents my superb team from bringing the best version of themselves to the fore every day. When I can do that, I am confident that we are delivering a learning service of excellence to our customers and those who depend upon us."

Col António Pedro Velez Quaresma Rosa, Dean

The Dean of Academics maintains a relevant training curriculum, delivers a successful and professional training programme to our customers, and continually improves the Academy's training services.

"To be Dean of Academics is a very challenging role, but it is an honour, and I feel fortunate to have the best cadre of instructors and subject matter experts to support the NCI Academy mission."

Sarah Ragle, Business Manager

The Academy Business Manager oversees the business aspects of the Academy, progresses customer funding and develops business for new approaches to cyberspace learning.

"The NCI Academy serves as a critical enabler for achieving NATO's cyberspace objectives. We must build upon our excellence in learning with innovation and agility, leveraging our talent towards the success of this vision."

Boris Bamberger, Warrant Officer

The Academy Warrant Officer is an essential function that provides stability and mentorship for the Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) of all the nation's military in the organization, and offers sage advice to the Academy Director on all matters of civilian-military interaction.

"As the Academy Warrant Officer, I am proud to be the nexus between NCOs and the Director of the Academy, as well as between the military and the civilian part."

A message from NCI Agency Chief of Staff: bringing it all together

As someone who appreciates the importance of retaining highly knowledgeable and well-qualified people to address our complex challenges, it is a privilege to bear witness to the highly motivated professionals of the Academy who provide this impressive NATO education and training capability. I am proud to see how far we have come, and it is an honour to guide the Academy's team in continuing this good work.

Though the NCI Academy's facility in Oeiras was only recently inaugurated, it is reassuring to know that it draws upon a legacy of more than 60 years of best-in-class C4ISR and cyber education and training services to our soldiers, sailors, air personnel and civilians. Three years have passed, and today, the Academy is an established education and individual training capability with a laser-sharp focus on our customers' needs. More recently, the NCI Academy has received the unconditional NATO Quality Assurance Accreditation, bearing testimony to just how far we have come in maturing the Academy's education and training.

It is one of my top priorities to ensure that the Academy will explore ways to continuously improve and expand its course offerings and services. This will cement the Academy as a leading cyberspace education and individual training capability for NATO and its partners. To our stakeholders, I thank you for your patronage and support – we are here to serve you.

MGEN Hans Folmer
Major General
Chief of Staff

Working in the Academy

"I am impressed by the emphasis on 'people' at the Academy and throughout the Agency. The focus on the digital delivery of education and training is key, but the students, instructors and supporting staff from across the Agency prioritize the human elements of enabling the Alliance. As a mid-career professional, I am fortunate to be in a place and on a path from which to progress and contribute for years to come."
Walter Gamblin, Learning and Coordination and Support Branch

"This organization has given me a chance to control my career, improve my skills and offers a culture that allows for brilliant work-life balance."
Fatih Goksen, Satellite Communications Instructor

"Teaching colleagues from 30 different countries is the most beautiful task there is. I equip NATO staff members with the skills to do their job more efficiently, giving me a great sense of pride and honour."
Paul Kuijer, Training Manager

"In my role, I see the Agency's commitment to the professional and personal development of people in the workplace. As part of the wider NCI Academy team, I am able to draw upon a wealth of knowledge from a wide range of professionals to ensure that the services delivered are visionary, relevant and help drive improved performance and results. I recommend working at the NCI Academy to anybody who is excited by developments in learning and who believes in the future vision of our Academy in support of the NATO Alliance."
Louise O'Loughlin, Training Coordinator

"The NCI Academy is a dynamic organization transforming NATO's training and education landscape. I appreciate the working environment, where new ideas can be developed and explored."
LTC Johannes van Benthem, Customer Relations

"Our team provides individual education and training services to ACO and ACT in direct support of NATO's military operations and political objectives. Working closely with government and industry subject matter experts in a constantly changing operational work environment has been a truly fulfilling experience. I would recommend working for the NCI Academy with highly motivated and resilient professionals."
Marie Ratkovic, Project Manager

"The NCI Academy is supported by a motivated and diverse team of professionals who provide quality and relevant education and training services. This, combined with the team's attitude to keep improving, creates a challenging and satisfying work environment."
Yves Doelwijt, Business Analyst

For more information

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NCI Academy Web Page
https://www.ncia.nato.int/what-we-do/nci-academy.html

Our addresses

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Reduto de Gomes Freire	Oude Waalsdorperweg 61	Rue Grande - N6	Avenue Léopold III	Place du Luxembourg 3-4
Estrada da Medrosa	2597AK The Hague	7010 SHAPE Mons	1110 Brussels	1420 Braine-L' Alleud
2780-070 Oeiras	Netherlands	Belgium	Belgium	Belgium
Portugal				