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US Government Advisors Advocate for Increased International Quantum Technology Cooperation

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RECENT DEVELOPMENT

A recently released [US government report](#) prepared by the US National Science and Technology Council, a cabinet-level council of advisors to the US President, presented a compelling argument for robust international cooperation in quantum information science and technology (QIST). The group called for dedicated funding mechanisms and improved US government interagency coordination to bolster global QIST collaboration. Key motivations cited for standing up a centralized US government cooperative QIST program included opportunities to advance QIST capability at a faster pace, to grow, attract, and engage international talent, to promote robust access to necessary QIST resources and their eventual markets, and to strengthen international engagement with nations considered to be aligned with US economic and national security interests. The report recognized that US government departments operate under an autonomous funding model with individual agencies having their own programmatic mechanisms, complicating the options for those agencies to participate in large-scale, multinational cooperative partnerships either individually or collectively.

ANALYST COMMENT

A comprehensive US government plan to coordinate QIST development offers the strong potential to accelerate US progress in addressing department-level QIST mission requirements and better coordinate a whole-of-government strategy that can minimize duplicate efforts, ensure that promising lines of research are adequately addressed, and that take the fullest possible advantage of US government QIST resources, particularly QIST expertise. Extending this model to include international partners offers perhaps even more significant synergistic benefits. Navigating the complexities of national and international QIST coordination, however, will be a daunting task that must effectively address the broad and likely conflicting national-level economic and national defense issues endemic in most QIST applications. Such an effort may require significant change in the way that US and potential partner nations determine, commit, and allocate research budgets, requiring, most likely, some form of a centralized albeit multilateral governing body. Ultimately, a strong international community of collaborative QIST development could go a long way towards ensuring that the US and its partners stay at the leading-edge of QIST development and deployment.

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