

Press Releases: State Department Announces Zoohackathon 2018

Media Note
Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC
March 6, 2018

The Department of State's Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES) in partnership with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) will host the third annual global Zoohackathon over two weekends in 2018: September 15-16 and September 22-23.

The Zoohackathon aims to harness the power of innovation to counter the scourge of international wildlife trafficking. The poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products funnels billions of dollars to criminal networks each year. Following the hackathon model, Zoohackathon volunteer participants are hosted by zoos and collaborate in teams to develop tech solutions for real wildlife conservation problems. Experts working on the frontlines of wildlife protection will provide the problem sets for participants. Solutions created during a Zoohackathon can take many different forms including websites and mobile apps. At the end of the event, teams pitch their ideas to an expert panel of judges who select which teams will win prizes and potentially receive support to develop and deploy their solutions in the field.

Wildlife trafficking remains a pernicious transnational crime that threatens security, economic prosperity, the rule of law, long-standing conservation efforts, and human health. The United States is committed to combating this urgent problem. On February 9, 2017, President Trump signed Executive Order 13773, which highlighted wildlife trafficking as one of four priority areas in the effort to dismantle organized crime syndicates.

Now in its third year, the Zoohackathon will build on its previous success, expanding the networks of conservationists and technologists who can work together to deliver innovative products that can help end wildlife trafficking.

For more information, visit the [Zoohackathon website](#) or contact zoohackathon@state.gov. Be sure to follow the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs on Twitter @StateDeptOES and #Zoohackathon.

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