NSF SECURE Center Research Security Briefing

Vol. 1 No. 9: August 28, 2025

The SECURE Center distributes research security briefings and timely alerts via its listserv. The Briefing provides a centralized resource for research security-related information, including new statutory and research funding agency requirements, new or updated federal and community resources, and significant news items and scholarly works. The Center will also assess and provide commentary, interpretation, or implementation considerations on new requirements, notices and resources, working with higher education associations, legal partners, or agencies as needed.

Contents

Federal Agency News & Updates

Federal Agencies Issue *Safeguarding Academia* Bulletin (August 25, 2025)
The Office of the Director of National Intelligence's National Counterintelligence and Security Center released the bulletin *Safeguarding Academia*, in partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Education, and other federal agencies. The bulletin, aimed at the U.S. academic community, outlines potential threats posed by foreign adversaries, particularly foreign intelligence entities, to U.S. research, innovation, and talent within higher education institutions. Highlights include:

- Case studies providing real-life examples of the current risk environment, including talent poaching, transnational repression, talent recruitment programs, foreign research collaborations, and recruitment for espionage

- Information on indicators of potential threats, including elicitation, insider threats, and cyber threats

- Risk mitigation strategies for institutions and individuals

In addition to the bulletin, quick-reference guides are available for both institutions and researchers.

Professional Association Resources & Meeting Reports

COGR Updates to Research Security Quick Reference Table
On August 22, 2025, COGR announced its most recent update to the "Quick Reference Table of Current & Upcoming Federal Research Security Requirements." The latest version includes updates to reflect:

- The Department of Defense's (DOD's) updated "Component Decision Matrix to Inform Fundamental Research Proposal Mitigation Decisions"

- Updates to the Department of Energy (DOE) FAQ for required research security training

- The National Institutes of Health (NIH) announcement of required training on Other Support disclosure for all senior/key personnel

- Requirements included in the National Science Foundation's (NSF's) Important Notice No. 149, including: maintaining supporting documentation for activities included in researchers' current and pending (other) support; research security training (satisfied by the SECURE Center Consolidated Training Module) and certification by senior/key personnel and proposing institutions

- The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) "America First Memorandum for USDA Arrangements and Research Security" (for additional information, see SECURE Center Briefing No. 6, August 7, 2025)

Research Security News & Reports

Please note, articles linked below may require a subscription to view.
NSF SECURE Center cannot distribute copies of subscription-based articles.

MD Anderson Researcher Accused of Stealing Cancer Data, Trying to Take it to China
(Houston Chronicle, 8/25/2025) "Yunhai Li, 35, was charged with theft of trade secrets, a felony, and tampering with a government record, a misdemeanor, according to the Harris County District Attorney's Office. Li began working for MD Anderson in 2022. He was in the U.S. on a research scholar visa and was conducting breast cancer vaccine research funded by the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Defense." (more)

International Research Security Policy & Resources

ASPI Announces Tracker Update
The Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) announced they will be releasing an updated version of their widely referenced and used "China Defense Universities Tracker." From the announcement: "Developed by ASPI's Cyber, Technology & Security Program, the Tracker is a global reference tool for governments, research institutions and companies seeking to understand the military, security and technology risks linked to Chinese universities and research bodies." Release is anticipated in September 2025. (more)

Research Security-Related Events & Conferences

National Academies "Assessing Research Security Efforts in Higher Education - Meeting of Experts 2"
Following a two-day public workshop in May 2025, the National Academies will be holding its second "Assessing Research Security Efforts in Higher Education – Meeting of Experts" on Thursday, September 4, 2025, from 1:00-4:30pm. Convened by the Department of Defense, subject matter experts from universities and federal agencies will gather to discuss research security efforts, including potential measures of effectiveness and institutional perspectives. The meeting will be held in-person in Washington DC, with some portions available via webcast (registration required). (more)

FDP Virtual Meeting September 2025:
Monday, 9/15 - Wednesday, 9/17, 2025. Registration is now open for the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) Virtual September 2025 meeting, taking place Monday, September 15th (11 AM ET – 5 PM ET), Tuesday, September 16th (11 AM ET – 5 PM ET) and Wednesday, September 17th (11 AM ET - 2 PM ET). (more)

COGR October Meeting 2025:
Thursday, 10/23 - Friday 10/14, 2025. Registration is now open for October 23-24, 2025 COGR meeting in Washington D.C. at the Washington Marriott in Georgetown. ([more](#))

Save the Date for ASCE 2026:
Tuesday 2/24 - Thursday 2/26, 2026. Mark your calendars now for the 2026 Academic Security and Counter Exploitation Program. Next year is the 10th anniversary of the largest research security conference in the world: February 24 - 26, 2026. **Proposals are being accepted through noon (CST) on August 31, 2025** ([more](#))

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