

ACD Working Group on Foreign Influences on Research Integrity Update

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

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Dear Colleagues:

For many decades, the
participated in producti
universities and academi
discoveries that have le
NIH is proud to help su
diverse perspectives an

The NIH-funded biome
successful, must be fai

NIH Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD)

ACD Working Group for Foreign Influences on Research Integrity

December 2018 Report



- U.S. scientists routinely collaborate productively with investigators in foreign countries ... We must rely on productive research collaborations with foreign entities.
- Individuals violating laws/policies represent a small proportion of scientists working in and with U.S. institutions. We must not reject brilliant minds working honestly and collaboratively to provide hope and healing.

- Diversion of proprietary information in grant applications or produced by NIH-supported biomedical research to other entities
- Sharing of confidential information by peer reviewers with others, including foreign ... otherwise [influencing] funding decisions
- Failure by some researchers to disclose substantial resources from other[s] ... including foreign governments, which **threatens to distort decisions about the appropriate use of NIH funds**

- Outreach to over 60 institutions
- **Failure to disclose** substantial foreign resources
 - Foreign employment arrangements
 - Foreign grant support: problems with overlap, over-commitment
 - In many cases, American institutions unaware
- **Failure to disclose** significant foreign financial COI
- Peer review violations

- **Non-disclosure** of substantial foreign research support
 - Talents awards, employment, foreign grants
 - Hidden transfers of information, know-how, data, person-time
- **Non-disclosure** of significant financial conflicts of interest
 - Equity in foreign companies
 - Foreign patents that leverage NIH-funded work
- What's the problem?
 - Overlap, overcommitment, **distorted funding decisions**

ACD Recommendations Regarding Other Support

- Broad awareness campaign, work with outside groups
 - Ongoing (e.g. AAU, APLU, COGR, NAS, FDP)
 - Coordination: ONS, OIG, DNI, FBI, DOE, DoD, NSF, State
 - JASON study: Collaboration with national / economic security
- Re-evaluate existing policies and forms
 - Ongoing, coordination with NSF
- Contact and work with recipient institutions



- Law enforcement
- Staff see inconsistencies of publications, grant documents
- Peer reviewers' reports
- Complaints from co-workers, other scientists
- Institution self-report

POLITICS

NIH asks inspector general to investigate 12 allegations of foreign influence in U.S. research



MD ANDERSON RESEARCHERS OUSTED AS NIH AND FBI TARGET DIVERSION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

How R01 applications ended up emailed to China, secret professorships, and other tales of corruption.

www.cancerletter.com



BY TARA LAW MAY 25, 2019

SCIENCE • CHINA

Emory University Fires 2 Neuroscientists Accused of Hiding Chinese Ties

Actions Taken by Universities to Address Growing Concerns about Security Threats and Undue Foreign Influence on Campus

Updated - April 22, 2019

AAU and APLU are identifying and sharing practices that universities are employing to ensure the security of research, protect against intellectual property theft and academic espionage, and prevent actions or activities by foreign governments and/or other entities that seek to exert undue foreign influence or which infringe on core academic values (e.g. free speech, scientific integrity, etc.).

- Awareness building, training, coordination
- Review of foreign gifts, grants, contracts, collaborations
- Review of faculty foreign financial interests, affiliations
- Protection of data, cybersecurity
- Protection of IP, technology control plans
- Interactions with federal security, intelligence services
- Foreign travel safeguards; safeguards for visitors
- Export control compliance

Thanks to AAU, APLU





PennState
Vice President for Research

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Related Resources for Investigators Collaborating Internationally:

[University Research Council & Associate Deans for Research \(ADRs\)](#)

[Global Programs - Collaborating Internationally](#)

[Data & Information Security \(Report IT Threats or Compromised Accounts\)](#)

[Penn State International Travel Requirements](#)

[Export Compliance Manual](#)

[Export Compliance & Foreign Transactions](#)

[Office of Sponsored Programs - Export Controls Info](#)

Related Policies:

[AD89 - Policy on Export Compliance](#)

[RA40 - Policy on Federal Export Regulations](#)

International Relationships and Activities

[Background](#) | [How to Protect Yourself](#) | [Outcomes](#) | [Get Assistance](#) | [FAQ](#)

Introduction

The U.S. Government has expressed serious growing concerns regarding inappropriate influence by foreign entities over federally funded research (see Sources below). One issue that has moved to the forefront is the failure of federally-funded researchers at U.S. institutions to disclose their relationships and activities with foreign institutions and funding agencies. Several Federal agencies have indicated that failure to disclose foreign relationships and activities may jeopardize eligibility for future funding.

Penn State encourages international collaborations, but it is important for our investigators to be transparent about their foreign relationships and activities.

Penn State's Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) has compiled the following information to provide guidance and resources to remind Penn State researchers of their compliance obligations to federal sponsors.

Rising Concern (Background)



Penn State's publishing collaborations in the last five years.

Source: Pure.psu.edu

https://www.research.psu.edu/international_affiliations



NIH National Institutes of Health
Office of Extramural Research

Key Point: Encourage but be Transparent

- “Most international collaborations are acceptable and encouraged, we urge researchers to err on the side of transparency.”
- “It protects everyone’s interests – the Federal government, Penn State, individual researchers, and their international collaborators – to have international relationships disclosed and vetted to determine if there are any potential conflict of commitments, duplications of research, and/or diversion of intellectual property in the performance of federally funded research.”



ACD Recommendations Regarding Peer Review

- Mandatory electronic confidentiality, COI certifications: done
- Notifying institutions of allegations: being done
- Improved systems controls, cybersecurity: in progress
- Limit access, download capability: being considered
- Specialized training: being done and being expanded
- Grant terms and conditions: being considered



- For NIH, a new type of threat
- Implementing ACD recommendations
- Extensive institutional outreach has yielded results
- Working closely with other agencies and stakeholders
- We reiterate the importance of the contribution of foreign scientists to biomedical research; we must not create a climate that is unwelcoming to them