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# THE OPEN SOURCE MEDIA SUMMARY

**September 28, 2023**

## **SAFEGUARDING INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE: RESEARCH SECURITY FRAMEWORK**

*Gregory F. Strouse, Claire M. Saundry, Timothy Wood, Philip Bennett and Mary Bedner  
National Institute of Standards and Technology | August 31, 2023*

The U.S. science and research ecosystem retains its leadership by actively engaging with the global community through the conduct of mutually beneficial collaborative research and the welcoming of international scientists. Coupled with that, the national and economic security of the United States depends on effective risk management practices for organizations that engage in international collaborative research to protect against undue foreign influence and interference. The National Institute of Standards of Technology (NIST) Safeguarding Science Research Security Framework ("Framework") establishes guidance to assist the U.S. science and research community [e.g., U.S. Government (USG), academia, and industry] across the broad spectrum of international science and technology activities as well as Federal funding initiatives. This Framework is designed to enable organizations to implement a mission-focused, integrated, risk-balanced program through the application of research security principles and best practices that fosters the safeguarding of international science while mitigating risks to the integrity of the open collaborative environment.

Read the full article [here](#).

## **CODE REINS IN TOP SCIENTISTS, WHO MUST 'SERVE NATIONAL SECURITY'**

*Mimi Leung | University World News | September 14, 2023*

Members of the prestigious Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) have been barred from publicly expressing academic opinions 'unrelated to their field of expertise', amid tightened restrictions to ensure the nation's top scientists abide by 'national security' goals. A new code of conduct released by the CAS in August also has rules that seek to curb the use of 'academician' titles for non-academic purposes, including those for business ventures and promotions. 'Academician' is the highest title bestowed on scientists in China, which members retain for life. The latest version is the first change in the CAS code of conduct for approximately a decade. The new rules also lay down that academicians must be open to 'supervision from society' – a blanket term which usually means adhering to Communist Party of China control and not provoking public criticism.

Read the full article [here](#).

## **TICKING TIME BOMB OF FOREIGN STUDENTS MUST BE DEFUSED WITH DATA**

*Louise Nicol and Alan Preece | University World News | September 16, 2023*

It is ironic that daily reporting of undergraduate offers and acceptances by UCAS, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, has come to represent a phony war as far as international student enrolment is concerned. Everyone knows that the big numbers are going to be in postgraduate taught courses, where many universities in the United Kingdom are maximising their efforts. While the gap in timely data until the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) publishes enrolment numbers in 2025 may seem to provide them with cover, they should all beware the ticking time bomb of the Home Office visa data in January 2024. With an election probably less than a year away, a significant increase in international student numbers seems likely to be the perfect rationale for a vigorous backlash and more rigorous visa controls.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## **SECURITY VS OPENNESS: TOWARDS RESPONSIBLE INTERNATIONALISATION**

*Jan Petter Myklebust | University World News | September 22, 2023*

A high-level international panel discussion on the topic of 'responsible internationalisation' is Sweden's latest contribution to an ongoing debate over how far national security considerations can be taken before academic freedoms and institutional autonomy come under threat-and what 'responsible' really means. Held on 14 September, the discussion was around a debate that features prominently in today's Swedish academic landscape. It was organised by the Platform for Internationalisation (PLINT) of the Swedish Higher Education Authority, the Swedish Institute, the Swedish Council for Higher Education, the Swedish Research Council and Vinnova, in collaboration with Sweden's innovation and research councils in New Delhi, Brazil, Peking and the United States. The discussion confirmed that internationalization-which must be "truly mutual" and conducted in a responsible fashion-is essential both for high scientific quality and to meet global challenges, according to panel moderator Britta Fängström, a senior advisor at Formas.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## **FEDS HIT PENN STATE UNIVERSITY WITH FALSE CLAIM LAWSUIT OVER CYBER COMPLIANCE**

*Derek B. Johnson | SC Magazine | September 14, 2023*

The United States government is bringing legal action against Penn State University under the False Claims Act, saying the university lied or misled about its adherence to government cybersecurity protocols when contracting with the federal government. The suit is being brought on behalf of Matthew Decker, chief information officer at a Penn State research laboratory who also served briefly as interim vice provost and CIO for the university in 2016. Decker's claims and testimony about the university's malfeasance form the basis of the lawsuit. Like all defense contractors, Penn State receives and generates as part of its work what is known as controlled unclassified information-data which falls below the threshold of official government secrets, but must nonetheless be managed by contractors in highly specified ways to prevent malicious parties from using them to piece together gaps in government security or programs.

Read the full article [here](#).

## **ROMNEY, RICKETTS, COLLEAGUES INTRODUCE BILL TO STRENGTHEN OVERSIGHT OF U.S.-CHINA SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENTS**

*Mitt Romney Newsletter | September 21, 2023*

U.S. Senator Mitt Romney (R-UT), today joined 15 colleagues, led by Senator Pete Ricketts (R-NE) in introducing the *Science and Technology Agreement Enhanced Congressional Notification Act*. The bill would strengthen oversight of science and technology agreements (STAs) between the U.S. and the People's Republic of China (PRC) by requiring the Secretary of State to provide comprehensive details to Congress about any new, renewed, or extended agreement and establishing a minimum 30-day Congressional review period. This transparency and accountability provision includes thorough national security risk assessments, human rights considerations, and consistent monitoring mechanisms. "We must be clear-eyed that the Chinese Communist Party is on a quest to replace the United States as the world's economic, military, and geopolitical superpower," said Senator Romney.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## **CHINA'S QUEST FOR HUMAN GENETIC DATA SPURS FEARS OF A DNA ARMS RACE**

*Joby Warrick and Cate Brown | Washington Post | September 22, 2023*

Most of Europe was in lockdown in April 2020 when a plane arrived in the Serbian capital bearing a well-timed gift from the People's Republic of China. Inside was a Chinese invention called the Fire-Eye, a sophisticated portable lab that could detect coronavirus infections from tiny genetic fragments the pathogen leaves behind. And that, as Serbians soon discovered, was the least of its capabilities. The Fire-Eye excelled not only at cracking the genetic code for viruses, but also for humans, with machines that can decipher genetic instructions contained within the cells of every person on Earth, according to its Chinese inventors. In late 2021, with the pandemic still raging, Serbian officials announced they were working with a Chinese company to convert the lab into a permanent facility with plans to harvest and curate the entire genomes, or genetics blueprints, of Serbian citizens. Serbia's scientists were thrilled, and the country's prime minister, Ana Brnabic, praised China for giving the Balkan country the "most advanced institute for precision medicine and genetics in the region."

Read the full article [here](#).

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## **'DE-RISKING' CHINA IS NO EASY MATTER FOR UNIVERSITIES-REPORT**

*Nic Mitchell | University World News | September 20, 2023*

Having risked blowing the United Kingdom's research relationship with Europe through a three-year post-Brexit delay in rejoining the multi-billion-euro Horizon programme, British universities now face being caught up in another international government fallout, this time with China – its fastest growing research partner. With the United States and China locked in an intensifying contest for technological leadership that is drawing in the UK and many other countries, the threat that global scientific endeavour will be disrupted by geopolitics – with knock-on effects on student and academic mobility – has risen sharply over the last two years, warns a new report. Published by the Policy Institute at King's College London, the **report** titled *The China Question Revisited: 'De-risking' higher education and research*, highlights how growing geopolitical tensions and national security concerns have prompted the British government to adopt a tougher stance toward Beijing.

Read the full article [here](#).

## **INSIGHT: CHINA QUIETLY RECRUITS OVERSEAS CHIP TALENT AS US TIGHTENS CURBS**

*Julie Zhu, Fanny Potkin, Eduardo Baptista and Michael Martina | Reuters | August 24, 2024*

For a decade until 2018, China sought to recruit elite foreign-trained scientists under a lavishly funded program that Washington viewed as a threat to U.S. interests and technological supremacy. Two years after it stopped promoting the Thousand Talents Plan (TTP) amid U.S. investigations of scientists, China quietly revived the initiative under a new name and format as part of a broader mission to accelerate its tech proficiency, according to three sources with knowledge of the matter and a Reuters review of over 500 government documents spanning 2019 to 2023. The revamped recruitment drive, reported in detail by Reuters for the first time, offers perks including home-purchase subsidies and typical signing bonuses of 3 to 5 million yuan, or \$420,000 to \$700,000, the three people told Reuters. China operates talent programs at various levels of government, targeting a mix of overseas Chinese and foreign experts.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## **THE CHINA QUESTION REVISITED-“DE-RISKING” HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH**

*Jonathan Adams, Janet Ilieva and Jo Johnson | The Policy Institute King's College London | September 2023*

The UK has embraced internationalisation in research and higher education over the past 40 years, with international collaboration in research and inbound student mobility increasing significantly. China has been one of the most important partners for the UK in this period of globalisation. Amid worsening geopolitical tensions in the two years since we published *The China question: managing risks and maximising benefits from partnership in higher education and research*, the challenges facing UK universities in their relations with one of the most important players in global R&D have become increasingly stark. Geopolitical tensions and national security concerns have escalated, prompting the UK to adopt a tougher stance toward Beijing. UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has emphasised the need for “de-risking” in relations with China amid national security concerns. Although disappointing to advocates of “decoupling” within the Conservative party, this represents a shift from previous policies prioritising trade and investment over national security.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## **AUSSIE RESEARCHERS WARN CHINESE ‘OVERWHELMINGLY’ AHEAD IN SENSOR RESEARCH**

*Colin Clark | Breaking Defense | September 22, 2023*

“China’s research in several advanced sensor technologies vital to military navigation and targeting is overwhelmingly ahead of the three AUKUS partners, the United States, United Kingdom and Australia,” according to a new report by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute. It gets worse, if you’re a country competing with China: “Even if the three team up with like-minded Indo-Pacific countries Japan and South Korea, they do not match the Chinese output in high-impact research.” The conclusion is the latest from ASPI’s Critical Technology Tracker, created to look at the impact of top research around the world. This newest addition focuses on advanced sensors, including 10 technology areas, with China leading in: inertial navigation systems, magnetic field sensors, multispectral and hyperspectral imaging sensors, photonic sensors, radar, satellite position and navigation, and sonar and acoustic sensors.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## REVAMPED RESEARCH GRANTS AIM TO ENTICE SCIENTISTS TO RUSSIA

*UWN Reporter | University World News | September 12, 2023*

The Russian Ministry of Science and Higher Education is proposing to update the mega-grants programme and increase the maximum amount and terms of state support for scientific research under the guidance of leading scientists. It is planned that the value of the grants will grow from RUB30 million (US\$316,600) to RUB100 million (US\$1 million) per year for the duration of the grant period which ranges from three to five years. According to the Russian authorities, this increase could attract scientists who have previously left Russia. So far, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education has prepared a draft government decree to update the mega-grants programme aimed at creating world-class research laboratories in Russian universities and scientific organisations under the guidance of leading scientists, primarily foreign citizens and compatriots living abroad. Currently, the grant programme only runs for two years.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## CHIPS AND SCIENCE OPENS A DOOR FOR SOCIETY

*Issues In Science and Technology | August 30, 2023*

In August 2022, President Biden signed the CHIPS and Science Act into law, a bill my colleagues and I passed to ensure US leadership in semiconductor development and innovation across a multitude of sectors. The law secured historic authorizations in American manufacturing, support for our workforce in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and bolstering of the nation's research competitiveness in emerging technologies. A year later, Congress must find the political will to fund the science component of the act, while ensuring these investments are socially and ethically responsible for all Americans. In recent decades, emerging technologies were quickly perfected and rapidly proliferated to transform our economy and society. Powerful forces are now overwhelmingly at our fingertips, either through mass production or the digital superhighway brought on by fiber optics.

Read the full article [here](#).

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# THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

*The Academic Security and Counter Exploitation  
Program is coordinated by The Texas A&M  
University System Research Security Office as a  
service to the academic community.  
<https://rso.tamus.edu>*



# USEFUL RESOURCES

## **ACADEMIC SOLICITATION**

*Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency | September 2023*

DCSA defines academic solicitation as the use of students, professors, scientists, or researchers as collectors improperly attempting to obtain sensitive or classified information. Placing academics at, and requesting to collaborate with, U.S. research institutions under the guise of legitimate research in order to access developing technologies and cutting edge research.

View the full resource [here](#).

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## **FOREIGN VETTING IN CLEARED ACADEMIA**

*Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency | September 2023*

United States academic institutions, specifically U.S. Government Affiliated Research Centers within academia persist as a target of non-traditional collection and acquisition of fundamental research and essential technology. Solicitation and collection of vital information via academia allows adversaries to identify dual-use technologies and transfer proprietary research.

View the full resource [here](#).

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## **COUNTERINTELLIGENCE-BEST PRACTICES FOR CLEARED INDUSTRY**

*Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency | September 2023*

Our Nation's secrets and technological advantages are in jeopardy—the same secrets that make your company profitable. U.S. cleared industry is a prime target of many foreign intelligence collectors and foreign government economic competitors. The nature and extent of industry threat reporting suggests a concerted effort to exploit cleared contractors for economic and military advantage.

View the full resource [here](#).

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## **ASPI'S CRITICAL TECHNOLOGY TRACKER - SENSORS AND BIOTECH UPDATES**

*Australian Strategic Policy Institute | September 22, 2023*

Western democracies are losing the global technological competition, including the race for scientific and research breakthroughs, and the ability to retain global talent—crucial ingredients that underpin the development and control of the world's most important technologies, including those that don't yet exist. Our research reveals that China has built the foundations to position itself as the world's leading science and technology superpower, by establishing a sometimes stunning lead in high-impact research across the majority of critical and emerging technology domains.

View the full resource [here](#).

# ASPI'S CRITICAL TECHNOLOGY TRACKER - TOP 5 COUNTRY VISUAL SNAPSHOTS

Australian Strategic Policy Institute | September 22, 2023

View the full resource [here](#).

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