



ACADEMIC SECURITY AND COUNTER EXPLOITATION PROGRAM

<https://asce.tamus.edu>

# THE OPEN SOURCE MEDIA SUMMARY

**November 2, 2023**

## **U.S. GAVE \$30 MILLION TO TOP CHINESE SCIENTIST LEADING CHINA'S AI RACE**

*Didi Kirsten Tatlow | Newsweek | November 1, 2023*

The U.S. government gave at least \$30 million in federal grants for research led by a scientist who is now at the forefront of China's race to develop the most advanced artificial intelligence—which he compared to the atomic bomb due to its military importance, a *Newsweek* investigation has revealed. Pentagon funding for Song-Chun Zhu, former director of a pioneering AI center at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), continued even as he set up a parallel institute near Wuhan, took a position at a Beijing university whose primary goal is to support Chinese military research, and joined a Chinese Communist Party "talent plan" whose members are tasked with transferring knowledge and technology to China. *Newsweek's* revelations underline how the United States, with its open academic environment, has not only been a source for China of advanced technology with military applications but has also actively collaborated with and funded scientists from its main rival. Only as tensions with China have grown over everything from global flashpoints to trade to technology has the research started coming under growing scrutiny.

Read the full article [here](#).

---

## **TILLIS, COLLEAGUES INTRODUCE CONFUCIUS ACT TO FIGHT COMMUNIST CHINA'S INFLUENCE AT U.S. COLLEGES**

*U.S. Senator Thom Tillis | Press Release | October 24, 2023*

Senator Thom Tillis recently co-introduced the Concerns Over Nations Funding University Campus Institutes in the United States (CONFUCIUS) Act to prevent Chinese-backed Confucius Institutes on U.S. college campuses from suppressing students' freedom of speech. Confucius Institutes are education organizations funded and arranged by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The institutes enroll more than nine million students around the world, including many in the United States. They spread false narratives about historical events such as the Tiananmen Square massacre. "Confucius Institutes are an echo chamber for the Chinese Communist Party and threaten academic liberty and free speech in American colleges and universities," said Senator Tillis. "This legislation will work to address concerns about Confucius Institutes on American campuses so that speech can be protected and to minimize the CCP's anti-American influence campaigns on our students."

Read the full article [here](#).

## **HONG KONG UNIVERSITIES UNDER PRESSURE AS ACADEMICS HEAD FOR EXITS**

*Chan Ho-him | Financial Times | October 24, 2023*

As a political scientist in Hong Kong over the past seven years, Tetsuro Kobayashi found it increasingly difficult to access the public opinion data that played an important role in his research. This year, he decided to leave. The effects of Beijing's crackdown on civil liberties in the Chinese territory was one major factor in Kobayashi's decision to give up his higher Hong Kong salary for a lower-paid position in Tokyo, he said. "The space for freedom has diminished" in Hong Kong, he said. Kobayashi is not alone in seeking a more liberal academic environment. Last year, 361 academics left Hong Kong's eight public universities, a turnover rate of 7.4 per cent and the highest mark in more than two decades, according to official data. Their decisions "to forfeit the high salary in Hong Kong and move to another country suggests a strong motivation to leave", said Kobayashi, who left the City University of Hong Kong for Waseda University. The territory, which boasts a handful of the world's top-100 ranked universities, has long been an intellectual hub for western academics and a haven for liberal Chinese scholars.

Read the full article [here](#).

---

## **EDITORIAL | WHY ARE JAPANESE UNIVERSITIES AIDING CHINA'S MILITARY AGENDA?**

*Editorial Board, The Sankei Shimbun | Japan Forward | January 5, 2021*

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and 45 Japanese universities blithely entered into agreements with seven universities that are integral part of China's military-defense complex. That showed a disturbing lack of any sense of responsibility for national and global security. Dozens of Japan's institutions of higher learning currently have research collaboration agreements with Chinese universities which are intimately involved in research designed to strengthen the People's Liberation Army (PLA), according to a recent report. The Kyodo News report published at the end of November 2020, describes how 45 Japanese universities, both public and private, have such ties to seven Chinese universities known for producing research of value to the PLA. In fact, nine of the Japanese schools are conducting joint research in highly sensitive fields, including nanotechnology (Hokkaido University) and nuclear science (Osaka University).

Read the full article [here](#).

---

## **WHY CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS ARE SO TENSE**

*Lindsay Maizland | Council on Foreign Relations | April 18, 2023*

Taiwan, officially known as the Republic of China (ROC), is an island separated from China by the Taiwan Strait. It has been governed independently of mainland China, officially the People's Republic of China (PRC), since 1949. The PRC views the island as a renegade province and vows to eventually "unify" Taiwan with the mainland. In Taiwan, which has its own democratically elected government and is home to twenty-three million people, political leaders have differing views on the island's status and relations with the mainland. Cross-strait tensions have escalated since the election of Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen in 2016. Tsai has refused to accept a formula that her predecessor, Ma Ying-jeou, endorsed to allow for increased cross-strait ties. Meanwhile, Beijing has taken increasingly aggressive actions, including by flying fighter jets near the island. Some analysts fear a Chinese attack on Taiwan has the potential to draw the United States into a war with China.

Read the full article [here](#).

## **IN RESEARCH COLLABORATION, DRAWING RED LINES WITH CHINA ISN'T EASY**

*Rebecca Arcesati, Sylvia Schwaag Serger and Francesca Ghiretti | Merics | October 24, 2023*

European governments and academic institutions still struggle to grasp and address the complexity of research collaboration with China, say Rebecca Arcesati, Francesca Ghiretti and Sylvia Schwaag Serger. They will need to carefully balance the risks and rewards. Pressure – from government, research funders and media – is growing on European research institutions to reconsider and effectively cut ties with Chinese partners in high-tech areas. Often these demands emerge before any clear policy and/or legal framework has been established. Furthermore, they can conflict with academic freedom and the pursuit of research excellence and career development, creating friction between national security concerns and scientific enterprise. Drawing hard red lines around entire fields of science can also sacrifice opportunities.

Read the full article [here](#).

---

## **CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY ‘TOOK £26M FROM HUAWEI FOR SENSITIVE RESEARCH’**

*Ali Mitib | The UK Times | October 29, 2023*

Cambridge University has received more than £26 million from Huawei and its subsidiaries for research into sensitive areas such as artificial intelligence and mobile network technology, a report has found. Research by UK-China Transparency, a charity, found that the university accepted at least £4.8 million from the Chinese telecoms giant after the government announced its intention to ban it from Britain's 5G mobile network in 2020 amid concerns about national security. The findings come as world leaders and technology firms prepare to discuss the growing impact of AI at a government "safety summit" next week. Rishi Sunak has faced criticism for inviting China, despite tensions over its alleged spying in Westminster, with the former prime minister Liz Truss urging him to rescind the invitation. According to the report, compiled using responses to freedom of information requests, the university accepted £18.4 million in research grants, £698,764 in research funding and £7.6 million in donations from 2016.

Read the full article [here](#).

---

## **CHINESE SCIENCE OFFICIALS TOUR EUROPE IN BID TO STRENGTHEN TIES AMID GROWING US SANCTIONS**

*Ling Xin | South China Morning Post | October 29, 2023*

Top Chinese science officials have taken a whirlwind tour across Europe in an effort to strengthen ties there, as pressure from the US mounts for Europe to join it in imposing sanctions against Beijing. The US government has imposed a growing number of sanctions on China in recent years, with hopes that its European allies would also take part. Italy is considering quitting the Beijing-led Belt and Road Initiative and some German universities have reportedly rejected applications from government-funded Chinese students. But in mainstream European scientific research communities, the call for collaboration with China remains strong. At the invitation of his European counterparts, Hou Jianguo, president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), the world's largest research institution, led a delegation to Germany, France, Britain and Italy to discuss collaboration and joint talent training, among other topics, according to the CAS website.

Read the full article [here](#).

## **MODERNIZATION AND THE MILITARY-CIVIL FUSION STRATEGY**

*Capt Alexander E. Farrow, USAF | Air University Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs | September 21, 2023*

Every nation amasses national power as a countermeasure against external influence or potential threats from other countries.<sup>1</sup> Thus, it comes as no surprise that China would inevitably pursue regional and global influence. What is truly remarkable is the rapidity of China's economic ascent. Numerous factors have contributed to this ascent, including the United States' policy of granting China "most favored nation" status and China's accession to the World Trade Organization.<sup>2</sup> However, this article scrutinizes China through the specific lens of its state's internal economic mechanisms, particularly after entering the global marketplace. From this nuanced perspective, the subsequent analysis sheds light on China's strategy of harnessing economic prowess to fuel military modernization, chiefly through its military-civil fusion strategy. China's state priorities and resource allocation have steered the nation's economic trajectory for several decades. Examples of such endeavors encompass the establishment of special economic zones, agricultural reforms, and the promotion of private enterprises.

Read the full article [here](#).

---

## **CONFIDENCE IN SCIENCE: HOW TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE AND TRUSTWORTHY CHANNELS OF SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION?**

*Brandon Mitchener | Science|Business | July 2023*

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought the importance of science into sharp focus. It has also highlighted significant challenges for the research community, including the need to navigate an increasing amount of misinformation and greater public scrutiny of research than ever before. Trust and confidence in research are vital for our collective ability to tackle the most pressing global challenges, from climate change to future pandemics. In parallel, there have been growing calls for "open science" over the past decade, especially in Europe, and in part to meet the challenges of developing trustworthy and reliable scientific findings. The Council of the European Union recently emphasised the importance of a high-quality, transparent, open, trustworthy and equitable scholarly publishing system in supporting open science for the public benefit. This paper summarises a multi-stakeholder roundtable discussion regarding mechanisms to support the EU in the creation of an environment in which "the outcomes of research and innovation are understood and trusted by informed citizens and benefit society as a whole."

Read the full article [here](#).

---

## **FACT SHEET: PRESIDENT BIDEN ISSUES EXECUTIVE ORDER ON SAFE, SECURE, AND TRUSTWORTHY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

*The White House | October 30, 2023*

Today, President Biden is issuing a landmark Executive Order to ensure that America leads the way in seizing the promise and managing the risks of artificial intelligence (AI). The Executive Order establishes new standards for AI safety and security, protects Americans' privacy, advances equity and civil rights, stands up for consumers and workers, promotes innovation and competition, advances American leadership around the world, and more. As part of the Biden-Harris Administration's comprehensive strategy for responsible innovation, the Executive Order builds on previous actions the President has taken, including work that led to voluntary commitments from 15 leading companies to drive safe, secure, and trustworthy development of AI.

Read the full article [here](#).

## EMERGING PROCESSES FOR FRONTIER AI SAFETY

Gov.UK Department of Science, Innovation & Technology | Policy Paper | October 27, 2023

The UK recognises the enormous opportunities that AI can unlock across our economy and our society. However, without appropriate guardrails, such technologies can pose significant risks. The AI Safety Summit will focus on how best to manage the risks from frontier AI such as misuse, loss of control and societal harms. Frontier AI organisations play an important role in addressing these risks and promoting the safety of the development and deployment of frontier AI. The UK has therefore encouraged frontier AI organisations to publish details on their frontier AI safety policies ahead of the AI Safety Summit hosted by the UK on 1 to 2 November 2023. This will provide transparency regarding how they are putting into practice voluntary AI safety commitments and enable the sharing of safety practices within the AI ecosystem. Transparency of AI systems can increase public trust, which can be a significant driver of AI adoption.

Read the full article [here](#).

---

## SEVEN CRITICAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR WINNING THE NEXT WAR

Emily Harding and Harshana Ghosh | Center for Strategic and International Studies

April 18, 2023

The next war will be fought on a high-tech battlefield. But which technologies will make a real difference? Where will the United States find a technological edge? This CSIS report identifies the seven technologies that could make the difference in a fight against a near-peer adversary. Three are “sprint” technologies, where the United States should aggressively pursue advancement with considerable resources and focused commitment: quantum sensing and computing, biotechnology, and secure, redundant communications networks. Four are “follow” technologies, where the United States should support and shape efforts ongoing in the private sector: high-performance batteries, artificial intelligence/machine learning, space-based sensors, and robotics. The consequences of failure on any of these technologies are tremendous—they could make the difference between victory and defeat. This report aims to focus efforts on the areas that count, across intelligence work, hybrid warfare, competition, and conflict, to prepare for competition today and potential conflict in the future.

Read the full article [here](#).

---

## 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

## ON CHINA

*Center for Strategic and International Studies*

On China is a leading resource for policymakers confronting a new era of great power competition, with innovative research, diverse viewpoints, and cutting-edge multimedia from across CSIS.

View the full resource [here](#).

---

## STAY SAFE AND SECURE ONLINE DURING CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS MONTH — AND ALL YEAR

*Chad Boutin | U.S. Department of Commerce National Institute of Standard & Technology  
October 25, 2023*

As Cybersecurity Awareness Month winds down for 2023, we've released a cornucopia of information about security and privacy in the digital world — including four blog posts from NIST experts whose work focuses on developing best practices for staying safe and secure online. What are the main things you as a consumer can do to protect your own security and privacy? Here's what our four blog authors had to say. Enable multifactor authentication, or MFA, to prove you are who you say you are online. MFA uses a combination of:

- something you know, such as a password;
- something you have, such as an authentication application on your phone; and/or
- something you are, such as fingerprint or face recognition.

View the full resource [here](#).

---

## 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>*