



Open Source Media Summary

February 22, 2024

WHY THE WHITE HOUSE IS TAKING SO LONG TO ISSUE NEW RESEARCH SECURITY RULES

Jeffrey Mervis | ScienceInsider | February 16, 2024

Despite broad bipartisan agreement that U.S. academic research is vulnerable to threats from China, the White House remains deadlocked over how to implement a policy issued by former President Donald Trump's administration in its last week that is intended to protect data, technology, and other fruits of federally funded scientific studies from foreign interference. University administrators have spent the past 3 years trying to anticipate what will be expected from their institutions to comply with the pending standards, which will regulate the conduct of every scientist who receives government support. And their wait isn't over, Arati Prabhakar, President Joe Biden's science adviser, told the science committee of the U.S. House of Representatives during a hearing yesterday called to examine why the standards have been delayed for so long. "Getting research security right is more complex [than expected] and has taken much longer than I would have liked," Prabhakar testified. "But it remains a significant priority for me." Although the rules will apply to all foreign interactions by U.S.-funded scientists, China's increasingly aggressive approach to acquiring innovative technologies has made scientific collaborations with that country the focus of U.S. efforts to improve research security.

Read the full article [here](#).

ACADEMICS IN US, UK AND AUSTRALIA COLLABORATED ON DRONE RESEARCH WITH IRANIAN UNIVERSITY CLOSE TO REGIME

Jonathan Yerushalmy and Johana Bhuiyan | The Guardian | February 14, 2024

Academics in the UK, Australia and the US collaborated on research related to drone technology with an Iranian university that is under international financial sanctions and known for its close ties to the military, the Guardian can reveal. The collaborative research was described by one security expert as having direct military applications, while another called it potentially "very dangerous". Iranian-made drones have been responsible for a number of deadly attacks in the Ukraine and Middle East conflicts, and their development is known to be a top priority for the government in Tehran. The Guardian has seen no evidence that the research contravenes any sanctions or breaks any laws. The research was published in 2023 by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, a global platform which hosts peer-reviewed studies. It examined the use of drones – known as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) – in wireless networks and as communications hubs.

Read the full article [here](#).

US LAWMAKERS CALL FOR SANCTIONS ON CHINA'S WUXI APPTEC BIOTECH FIRM

Michael Martina | Reuters | February 12, 2024

The U.S. should review Chinese biotech firm WuXi AppTec and its affiliate WuXi Biologics for sanctions, a bipartisan group of lawmakers told top Biden administration officials on Monday. In a letter dated Feb. 12 and seen by Reuters, the lawmakers told Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo that the global pharmaceutical giant's links to China's Communist Party and military threatened U.S. national security. The letter, signed by the Republican chair and Democratic ranking member of the House select committee on China, Representatives Mike Gallagher and Raja Krishnamoorthi, and Senators Gary Peters and Bill Hagerty, is Congress' latest effort to highlight what it says are risks posed by China's biotech leaders. Congress has introduced legislation that would restrict federally-funded medical providers from allowing China's BGI Group, WuXi AppTec and other biotech firms from getting genetic information about Americans.

Read the full article [here](#).

CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY STEALING SECRETS, HARASSING STUDENTS ON US CAMPUSES

Representative Mike Gallagher | Fox News | February 15, 2024

This week, the Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party will be in Boston to discuss a difficult truth: for decades, the CCP has exploited the openness of our academic institutions to fuel the PRC's military modernization and obtain American technology to enhance its repressive surveillance state. The Chinese government is not shy about this. They even have a phrase for it: "picking flowers in foreign lands to make honey in China." These are not empty words. Here is what we have seen the CCP do: The Chinese Communist Party operates nearly 500 foreign talent programs. Its members are contractually obligated to return to China with secrets and expertise, gained in foreign universities and labs, in order to drive military modernization and other technological development.

Read the full article [here](#).

CMMC PROGRAM PROPOSED RULE PUBLISHED - PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD BEGINS

U.S. Department of Defense | Chief Information Officer

On December 26, 2023, the Department of Defense published for comment a proposed rule for the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) 2.0 program at <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/DOD-2023-OS-0063>. Concurrent for comment with this proposed rule, DoD is also requesting comment on eight CMMC guidance documents, which can be accessed at <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/DOD-2023-OS-0096>, and several new information collections, which are available at <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/DOD-2023-OS-0097>.

- Information about NIST standards, see <https://www.nist.gov/standardsgov/resources>.
- The American National Standards Institute maintains an "Incorporated By Reference Portal", located here <https://ibr.ansi.org>, which provides access to standards which have been incorporated by reference in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). These standards incorporated by the U.S. government in rulemakings are offered at no cost in "read only" format and are presented for online reading. There are no print or download options.

Read the full article [here](#).

HIGHER EDUCATION FACES A MORE FRAGILE AND CONTESTED FUTURE

Simon Marginson | *University World News* | February 17, 2024

What is higher education? In a world of ever-emerging difference, the core has scarcely changed in 3,000 years, across almost every variation of time, place and culture: *the cultural formation of persons*. The methods of person formation have also been largely constant. The self-forming student is immersed in *knowledge*, guided by teachers. Everywhere the same technologies have been used: knowledge expressed in texts, on paper and now on screen, classroom organisation, educational assessment, student selection by examination, and certification. The different forms of higher education have another common feature: a dual spatiality. Higher education typically combines a *place-bound* materiality and identity, with universalising knowledge and the *mobility* of ideas and persons. Hence when the one big change happened in 1810, it eventually went everywhere. That was Wilhelm von Humboldt's plan for the University of Berlin, which added intellectual inquiry and research to the intrinsic core of learning and knowledge.

Read the full article [here](#).

AUKUS LAW RINGS ALARM BELLS AT DEFENCE FIRMS, UNIVERSITIES

Australian Financial Review | *University World News* | February 16, 2024

Defence contractors and universities in Australia have sounded the alarm on key AUKUS legislation, warning that new controls on military technology will hamper their ability to sell products to, or collaborate with, researchers outside the United States and United Kingdom, writes Andrew Tillett for the *Australian Financial Review*. The bill is being considered by parliament's influential intelligence and security committee now. The Group of Eight universities submission said that while the group strongly supported the intent of the legislation, a better definition was needed for "fundamental research", which is intended to give researchers an exemption from the new regime. "It will be unclear to researchers whether their results may be restricted for national security reasons, and therefore trigger the non-applicability of the 'fundamental research' exemption," the submission said. "This could result in researchers declining to collaborate due to concerns that their work may not be captured by the exemption and therefore requiring permits."

Read the full article [here](#).

THE ANTI-CHINA ACADEMIC PANIC IS HURTING AMERICA

Rory Truex | *The Hill* | February 16, 2024

Chinese social media has been abuzz with the disturbing story of a Chinese woman, referred to by the pseudonym "Meng Fei," who was pursuing a Ph.D. in America. When traveling back to the U.S. to complete her studies, Meng was detained in a "little dark room" at Dulles International Airport in Washington D.C. for over eight hours, then left in solitary confinement for another 12 hours. She was unable to speak to family or friends during this time. She was then sent back to Beijing — forced to pay for her \$3,700 ticket on the spot — and has since been banned from entering the United States for five years. Upon returning to China, Meng Fei was able to connect with 10 other Ph.D. students who had had similar experiences. None had conducted confidential research, and none had undergraduate majors appearing to fall in the scope of Presidential Proclamation 10043, a Trump-era policy banning Chinese students from entering the U.S. if they attended universities with suspected ties to the People's Liberation Army.

Read the full article [here](#).

RESEARCHERS MUST BE WISE TO CHINA'S EXPLOITATION OF DATA, US OFFICIAL SAYS

Micah McCartney | Newsweek | February 19, 2024

Members of Congress on Thursday pressed Biden administration officials on measures to protect cutting-edge research conducted in the U.S. from being used to benefit China. "The Chinese Communist Party has made it clear they intend to surpass us as the global leader in science and technology, and they have no qualms about using intellectual property theft, force technology acquisition, and other illicit means to do so. That's why this committee has been proactive in our response to this threat and has passed multiple bills to protect American research," Oklahoma Republican Representative Frank Lucas said at a hearing of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. The concern expressed by hearing participants echoes FBI director Christopher Wray's remarks in October that Beijing poses an unprecedented threat with its government-directed technology theft and wielding of disruptive tech like artificial intelligence and biotechnology without the legal constraints of its democratic rivals.

Read the full article [here](#).

HOUSE COMMITTEE RELEASES REPORT TO "RESET" RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA; RECOMMENDATIONS ON RESEARCH FUNDING, RESEARCH SECURITY, AND HIGH SKILLED IMMIGRATION FEATURED PROMINENTLY

Brian Mosley | Computing Research Association (CRA) | February 2024

Last month, the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party, commonly referred to as the China Committee, released a bipartisan report aimed at resetting the, "economic and technological competition," between the two countries. The report, titled "Reset, Prevent, Build: A Strategy to Win America's Economic Competition with the Chinese Communist Party," makes nearly 150 recommendations in a wide range of areas, including research funding, research security, and high skilled immigration. The recommendations are organized into three pillars:

- Pillar I: Reset the Terms of Our Economic Relationship with the PRC (People's Republic of China)

Read the full article [here](#).

EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATION IN MANUFACTURING REGENERATIVE MEDICINE THERAPIES

Michelle Drewry, Joe Alper, and Sarah H. Beachy | National Academies Sciences Engineering Medicine February 2024

In 2017 the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Forum on Regenerative Medicine held a workshop on manufacturing of early-generation regenerative medicine products and measuring their quality (NASEM, 2017). This workshop raised issues associated with product critical quality attributes and emerging technologies capable of meeting the manufacturing needs and regulatory standards of these products. Since 2017 the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved 32 cell and gene therapies, with more approvals anticipated, said Claudia Zylberberg, founder and former chief executive officer of Akron Biotech.

Read the full article [here](#).

RESEARCH ESPIONAGE THREAT COULD HINDER GLOBAL COLLABORATION

James Laurenceson | The Mirage | February 16, 2024

Australia's research institutions are targets for nefarious actors, from China and elsewhere. The Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) has publicly tabled an "awareness" of various attempts to compromise the sector. What are we doing about it? Not enough, according to critics. One recent charge is that Australia "lags behind" its allies and partners in responding to threats to "research security" such as espionage, foreign interference and theft of intellectual property, emanating overwhelmingly from China. This is far from the case. On the contrary, Australia's flexible and proportionate response to the threat of foreign interference manages the risks without hampering the international collaboration that is essential to research in the 21st century.

Read the full article [here](#).



USEFUL RESOURCES

FULL COMMITTEE HEARING - EXAMINING FEDERAL SCIENCE AGENCY ACTIONS TO SECURE THE U.S. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ENTERPRISE

House Committee on Science, Space and Technology Republican | February 15, 2024

The purpose of this hearing is to examine the actions taken by federal science agencies to implement recent guidance and laws to protect proprietary technology and scientific discoveries, including the Guidance for Implementing NSPM-33 on National Security Strategy for United States Government-Supported Research and Development and the research security provisions in the 2020 and 2021 National Defense Authorization Acts and the Chips and Science Act of 2022. The Committee will discuss the status of implementation of these provisions across the federal government, barriers to compliance, as well as newly identified risks and threats to the security of federally funded research.

Read the full article [here](#).

PROTECTING PERSONAL HEALTH DATA FROM FOREIGN EXPLOITATION

The National Counterintelligence and Security Center | Safeguarding our Future | January 31, 2022

Foreign companies and some U.S. businesses with facilities abroad have been partnering or contracting with U.S. organizations to provide diagnostic tests and services that in some cases collect specimens, DNA, fitness / lifestyle information, or other personal health data from patients or consumers in the United States. Some of these companies may be subject to foreign laws that can compel them to share such data with foreign governments, including governments that exploit personal health data for their own ends and without regard to individual privacy.

Read the full article [here](#).

CHINESE MILITARY COMPANIES OPERATING IN THE UNITED STATES TRACKER

Data Abyss

The "Chinese Military Companies Operating in the United States Tracker" is an innovative tool designed to monitor entities identified as Chinese Military Companies operating in the United States, as per Section 1260H of the William M. ("Mac") Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116-283). This tool adeptly filters S&T publications associated with these entities while scrutinizing their connections with US institutions. Notably, the "All Agencies" filter comprehensively encompasses a range of U.S. funders listed in the dropdown menu, providing a broad overview of funding sources.

Read the full article [here](#).

CRITICAL AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES LIST UPDATE

The White House | Executive Office of the President of the United States | February 2024

Critical and emerging technologies (CETs) are a subset of advanced technologies that are potentially significant to U.S. national security. The 2022 National Security Strategy identifies three national security interests: protect the security of the American people, expand economic prosperity and opportunity, and realize and defend the democratic values at the heart of the American way of life. The NSTC established this Fast Track Action Subcommittee in 2020 to identify critical and emerging technologies to inform national security-related activities. This list identifies CETs with the potential to further these interests and builds on the October 2020 National Strategy for Critical and Emerging Technologies, which contains an initial list of priority CETs. This updated document expands upon that original CET list and the February 2022 update by identifying subfields for each CET with a focus, where possible, on core technologies that continue to emerge and modernize, while remaining critical to a free, open, secure, and prosperous world. While enabling or supporting technologies are sometimes referenced, other enabling capabilities, like a modernized, technically capable workforce, are excluded. Though certain enabling capabilities are not explicitly included, they remain critical to the promotion and protection of all CETs.

Read the full article [here](#).



EVENTS OF NOTE

TRUST, BUT VERIFY: THE SECURITY CLEARANCE PROCESS AND EXPERIENCE

RAND | Virtual | February 29, 2024

Trust...but first, verify. The security clearance process is the mechanism the U.S. government uses to determine who can be trusted to safeguard America's secrets and most sensitive facilities. The government requests detailed and personal information from an applicant, investigates and verifies whether the information they provided is true, and determines whether anything about that individual's behavior or actions presents an unacceptable risk to trusting the individual—ultimately seeking to weed out potential leakers, spies, and violent actors who would breach that trust. For many who have gone through it, this process has been seen as cumbersome, opaque, and time-intensive—and to some, too intimidating to even embark upon. As part of its Trusted Workforce 2.0 security clearance transformation efforts, the U.S. government is working to modernize information collection from individuals who apply for a clearance while improving the customer experience and adhering to principles of fairness and equity.

View the full resource [here](#).

THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

The Research and Innovation Security and Competitiveness Institute