



Dear Colleagues:

Over the past eighteen months, national security agencies, federal granting agencies, the White House, and members of Congress have raised serious concerns about systematic programs of foreign interference and attempts to exploit the U.S. research enterprise. These concerns include alleged academic espionage, theft of intellectual property, and threats to academic integrity. In light of these concerns, we are writing to ensure you are aware of all the requirements and regulations applicable to international activities and, equally, to affirm our support for our international community at Washington State University.

Unfortunately, recent events have also added to a sense of unease among many international students and scholars at universities across the country. This development is deeply concerning. Washington State University is privileged to welcome faculty, students, staff, and visiting scholars from all parts of the globe. This diversity of experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives immeasurably enriches our research and educational programs and our community. Washington State University remains unequivocally committed to maintaining an open academic research environment where all members of our community feel welcome and respected.

This commitment does not detract from our responsibility to comply with all of the legal and regulatory requirements that safeguard our research enterprise. Please note that not all obligations are related to federal grants. U.S. export control laws and regulations, WSU policies and procedures, and travel and data security best practices apply

regardless of sponsor. We would like to remind all WSU researchers to fully disclose external financial interests, affiliations, and activities; follow export regulations; and safeguard WSU resources and intellectual property.

At this time, there are no new statutory or regulatory requirements. However, federal agencies that support research are reviewing their policies and strengthening their attention to disclosure of other support and affiliations. We are seeing an increase in compliance actions related to existing requirements and expect close monitoring of disclosures to continue. In extreme cases, failure to disclose all relationships could result in the termination of funding for a project or ineligibility for future funding. Noncompliance can threaten not only the funding for individual projects or investigators, but the University overall.

For example, since August 2018, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has sent roughly 180 letters to more than 60 U.S. institutions about individual scientists it believes have broken NIH rules requiring full disclosure of all sources of research funding, resulting in investigations at 55 institutions and the well-publicized dismissals of five researchers from the MD Anderson Cancer Center and Emory University.

Recognizing that these requirements are complex, we have compiled a **[“Working with Foreign Entities” webpage](#)** with policies, regulations, sponsor guidance, and best practices for international travel and collaboration. The Office of Research will post federal agency guidance and clarifications to this webpage as it is released and be in communication with all research administrators.

The following are a list of key disclosure requirements, WSU policies, and travel recommendations related to international collaboration:

Travel and Data Security

- Please be aware that in certain countries, there are differing norms concerning internet privacy. This may result in electronic devices, such as laptops holding proprietary information, being accessed without your knowledge.
- Know your destination’s information technology security laws and practices. In most countries, you have no expectation of privacy in internet cafes, hotels, airplanes, offices, or public spaces. In some destinations, you may wish to employ additional precautions to protect your information.

- When traveling internationally:
 - Consider the use of “loaner” laptops.
 - Bring only the data and devices needed for the trip.
 - Do not leave devices unattended or physically unsecured.
 - Only connect to known and trusted networks.
 - Exercise caution when connecting other portable media to your device (e.g. USB drives).
- It is strongly recommended to register international travel to high-risk areas (see Department of State Travel Advisories).

Export Control

- U.S. export control laws and regulations restrict or require licensing for the export, even temporarily, of many items and technology to countries around the world. An export includes items or technology brought with you while traveling.
- WSU personnel must comply with U.S. export control regulations when traveling internationally and attending conferences, participating in international collaborations formally or informally, using proprietary information, working with international staff and students, hosting international visitors, shipping materials internationally, transferring technology, or engaging in any international transactions.
- Informal or unofficial agreements to restrict publication or sharing of research results are not permitted. WSU policy prohibits acceptance of publication restrictions in research, except in the case of unusual exceptions which can only be negotiated by WSU officials who have delegated authority to accept contracts and grants.

Federal Funding Agency Obligations

Investigators whose research is supported with federal funding should review and update their relevant documents and disclosures as needed:

- Documents such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) “Other Support”, National Science Foundation (NSF) “Current and Pending Support”, NSF “Collaborators and Other Affiliations,” and biosketches should be current and thorough.
 - Other/Current and Pending Support must include any direct research support provided to senior/key personnel, even if it is not administered by WSU.

- For NSF, Current and Pending Support includes all sources of support and commitments of time, even if not receiving salary support. Please see the **Statement on NSF's commitment to secure, open international research collaboration (July 11, 2019)** and **Dear Colleague Letter on Research Protection (July 11, 2019)**.
- The NIH issued **Reminders of NIH Policies on Other Support and on Policies Related to Financial Conflicts of Interest and Foreign Components (July 10, 2019)** and an associated **Frequently Asked Questions on Other Support and Foreign Components (rev. August 6, 2019)** stating that "other support includes *all* resources made available to a researcher in support of and/or related to *all* of their research endeavors, regardless of whether or not they have monetary value and regardless of whether they are based at the institution the researcher identifies for the current grant."
- Progress reports must include any inventions and must indicate any change in support to senior/key personnel that occurred over the last budget year.
- Some programs are requesting additional information on international affiliations and support in individual funding opportunity announcements rather than issuing general guidance. We recommend carefully reviewing individual announcements, as requirements may have changed.
- Effective June 7, 2019, U.S. Department of Energy does not allow its employees or contractor personnel to participate in foreign talent programs. At this time, the policy does not apply to grant-funded individuals, but further policy development is expected this year.
- Federal agency scientific peer review panels should note and comply with all requirements to maintain the confidentiality of the information in research grant applications.

WSU Policies and Procedures

- All proposals for extramural support must be submitted through the Office of Research Support & Operations. Awards must be made to "Washington State University" and must be signed by our authorized institutional official. See **ORSO Guideline 1: Proposal Review, Processing, and Submission**.
- Only designated personnel are authorized to accept gifts on behalf of WSU from any source. All gifts solicited from any domestic or international individual or organization should be disclosed to the WSU Foundation.

- All employees are expected to promptly disclose all intellectual property and any improvements to existing intellectual property to the WSU Office of Commercialization through the **Inventor Portal**. Faculty should remind members of their group to do the same.
- All faculty must disclose their consulting and extended professional activities as required by the Faculty Manual.

In collaboration with national organizations and our fellow academic institutions, we are examining how our current processes and controls can be adapted to the changing environment. Additional guidance and resources will be provided via the “Working with Foreign Entities” webpage. If you have any questions about these requirements please contact Jessica Smith-Kaprosy in the Office of Research Support & Operations at j.smith-kaprosy@wsu.edu or Erin-Kae Rice in the Office of International Programs at erin.rice@wsu.edu.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your ongoing support of our international students, employees, and visitors.

Sincerely,

Dr. Asif Chaudhry
Vice President for International
Programs

Dr. Christopher J. Keane
Vice President for Research



Office of

Research

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



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