

Research Security at York U

Update & Strategy

REBECCA IRWIN

YORK U





Research Security Measures

Involve the actions to identify and protect research from the activities and behaviours that compromise its integrity

Research Integrity Measures

Involve adhering to the values and best practices that uphold research quality. These measures ensure confidence in research and protect its integrity



Integrity of Research

Research integrity is the foundation of domestic and international research

Bad Faith Actors

Engage in activities and behaviours that have adverse economic, strategic, and/or national security implications for research

Overview


WHAT IS RESEARCH SECURITY?

RESEARCH SECURITY REFERS TO THE ABILITY TO IDENTIFY POSSIBLE RISKS TO YOUR WORK THROUGH UNWANTED ACCESS, INTERFERENCE, OR THEFT AND THE MEASURES THAT MINIMIZE THESE RISKS AND PROTECT THE INPUTS, PROCESSES, AND PRODUCTS THAT ARE PART OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND DISCOVERY.

(INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)



Why does research security matter?

 Reuters

Canada moves to restrict research funding to protect intellectual property

Canadian authorities on Tuesday announced new restrictions on research grants designed to block funding to projects that include researchers...

Feb 15, 2023




 Newsweek

Exclusive: U.S. Gave \$30 Million to Top Chinese Scientist Leading AI Race

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...

1 day ago



 Global News

[CSIS warned Canadian company unwittingly supplying drone tech to Russia: Director - National | Globalnews.ca](#)

Five Eyes spymasters gather in California to discuss emerging technologies and national security, with China's theft of intellectual...

2 weeks ago




 CBC

Laurentian University is being targeted by foreign hackers, security chief says

State-sponsored hackers have been targeting Canadian universities to steal researchers' intellectual property, the country's top cyber...

Jul 13, 2023



 The Times

[Iran using research partnerships with UK 'to develop weapons'](#)

The government is under pressure to crack down on academic collaborations between Britain and Iran as evidence emerges of the regime using...

Jul 30, 2023



Guiding Principles

In developing their Research Security Plan, organizations should adhere to principles of research security, including but not limited to:

- maintaining a commitment to **open science**;
- allowing for a high degree of **adaptability** in their research security measures;
- ensuring **accountability** as well as **responsibility**; and
- ensuring responses are **risk-proportionate**.

Any actions on research security should continue to uphold the principles of **research integrity**, including **academic freedom, institutional autonomy, equity diversity and inclusion**, and **transparency**, among others.

(ISED)

Vision

Create a culture of research security awareness at York University such that staff and faculty have information and tools to develop safe, mutually-beneficial and transparent global relationships while safeguarding valuable research and institutional reputation.

Short Term Objectives



Create an office of research security excellence to support York University researchers navigate evolving application requirements and support York U researchers access funding successfully.



To contribute to the creation of safe, transparent and mutually beneficial partnerships between York University and external partners related to funding, collaborations, entrepreneurship, commercialization, data governance and cybersecurity.



Collaboratively create and maintain secure research environment, including increasing awareness, ensuring sufficient research data management processes, reviewing partnership and funding opportunities, supporting review of partnerships that could have reputational concerns

Research Security Frameworks

- Ontario Research Fund
- National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships
- Sensitive Technology Research Areas of Concern (STRAC)
- International



Developing Area

Sensitive Technologies Research Areas of Concern STRAC

➤ Starting in early 2024, research grant and funding applications submitted by a university or affiliated research institution to the federal granting councils and the Canada Foundation for Innovation involving research that **advances a sensitive technology research** area will not be funded if any of the researchers involved in activities supported by the grant are **affiliated with, or in receipt of funding or in-kind support, from a university, research institute or laboratory connected to military, national defence, or state security entities** that could pose a risk to Canada's national security. To support this, Canada is releasing two lists that provide clear, defined, and transparent guidance so that researchers can quickly and efficiently determine if these new requirements apply to their research.

- May 1, 2024



STRAC



Applies to

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)

Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC)

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)

Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI)

Aspects of The National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships impacted **immediately**

Ontario Research Fund – Implications likely



Two new lists will support the implementation of the STRAC

List of Sensitive Technology Research Areas

List of Named Research Organizations



Attestation

Those named in a grant proposal that relates to advancing a Sensitive Technology Research area will now sign an attestation regarding that researcher's current affiliation with a Named Research Organization (NRO).



Compliance

Grant recipients responsible for ensuring that HQP understand their responsibilities with regard to this policy and to the terms and conditions of the grant, prior to them beginning their work on the research team.

Spot checks post award
Intentional inaccuracies subject to recourse based on the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research.

Termination of funding, reimbursement, denial of all future applications, and/or an academic integrity investigation.

References

[Policy](#)

[STRA](#)

[NRO](#)

[FAQ](#)

Key Definitions



Sensitive Technology Research Area: Areas of research listed under the *Sensitive Technology Research Areas* list.



Researcher: Any person conducting research. For the purposes of federal funding applications, researchers can hold different roles, such as applicants, co-applicants, collaborators, and highly qualified personnel.



Activities supported by the grant: Any contribution to research related to the funded grant and throughout the lifecycle of the research project(s), up to and including the dissemination of research results.



Affiliation: Any organizations at which an individual is employed, appointed, or conducts research.



Funding or in-kind support: Monetary or non-monetary contributions, that include but are not limited to goods, equipment, materials and supplies, professional services, use of facilities, software, technologies and databases. **PENSIONS** are included.



Entities that pose a risk to national security: Defined by the List Named Research Organizations connected to the security or defence apparatus of foreign actors that may pose a risk to Canada's national security



Province of Ontario

In **sensitive research areas**, Ontario conducts open-source due diligence checks on all project partners covering previous two years to identify association to **entities of concern**.

Indicators:

- Talent programs, co-publications, joint research, advertised exchanges, speaking engagements, etc.
- Positions in or links to companies, NGO, or research institutes of concern

Risk can usually be mitigated – Engage Research Security

- New ORF application form
- Attestation process
- Audits of mitigation strategies
- Mandatory disclosure of all research agreements with foreign entities to MCU by March 2024



Elsewhere

Research Security conversations taking shape elsewhere

> USA

- DOD National Security Presidential Memorandum 33
- SECURE ‘Safeguarding the Entire Community in the US Research Ecosystem’ clearinghouse
- DETERRENT Act – an acronym for ‘Defending Education Transparency and Ending Rogue Regimes Engaging in Nefarious Transactions’.

> AUS

- Defence Trade Controls Amendment Bill
- Australian Strategic Policy Institute

> EU & UK

- Recommendations forthcoming
- Centre for Research Security will be established

Next Steps

BRIEFINGS

- › Briefings in progress

TRAINING

- › Training for Research support staff
 - Open-source research to support new requirements.

PRESENTATIONS / SPEAKERS

- › Arrange presentation of research security modules
 - Public Safety modules
 - Town Hall / Open format
 - Specific Audiences

SUPPORT STAFF

- › Hiring of Research Security support staff member