



ACADEMIC SECURITY AND COUNTER EXPLOITATION PROGRAM

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# THE OPEN SOURCE MEDIA SUMMARY

**August 18, 2021**

## **AI RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE NEEDS INPUT ON 'DEMOCRATIZING' RESOURCES**

*Aaron Boyd | Nextgov | August 17, 2021*

The National Science Foundation and the White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy are developing a plan to make high-performance computing, machine-learning datasets and other resources more widely available to artificial intelligence researchers at every level. Developing artificial intelligence tools and technologies requires lots of data and even more computing resources. Gaining a national advantage in this area will require a significant concentration of work that is currently limited to agencies and organizations that have those resources. But the best, groundbreaking ideas aren't always centered in places with the most resources. To address this issue, the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act charged NSF and OSTP with developing a plan to build up those resources and make sure they are available to people throughout the U.S. who can make good use of them.

Read the full article [here](#).

## **CHINA IS FAST OUTPACING U.S. STEM PHD GROWTH**

*Remco Zwetsloot, Jack Corrigan, Emily Weinstein, Dahlia Peterson, Diana Gehlhaus, and Ryan Fedasiuk  
Georgetown University Center for Security and Emerging Technology | August 2021*

This paper compares the STEM PhD pipelines of the United States and China. We find that China has consistently produced more STEM doctorates than the United States since the mid-2000s, and that the gap between the two countries will likely grow wider in the next five years. Based on current enrollment patterns, we project that by 2025 Chinese universities will produce more than 77,000 STEM PhD graduates per year compared to approximately 40,000 in the United States. If international students are excluded from the U.S. count, Chinese STEM PhD graduates would outnumber their U.S. counterparts more than three-to-one. Our findings also suggest the quality of doctoral education in China has risen in recent years, and that much of China's current PhD growth comes from high-quality universities. Approximately 45 percent of Chinese PhDs graduate from Double First Class (A) universities—the country's most elite educational institutions (see Appendix D)—and about 80 percent of graduates come from universities administered by the central government. While it is possible that the growing supply of STEM PhDs in China exceeds current labor market demand, the quality and quantity of a country's doctoral graduates is an important indicator of its future competitiveness, and China's capacity to produce skilled PhD-level STEM experts appears to be growing rapidly.

Read the full brief [here](#).



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# COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES (CFIUS) ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS

CFIUS | August 16, 2021

The Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS or the "Committee") is an interagency body of the U.S. Government that is authorized by law to review certain transactions involving foreign investment in the United States. The review is solely to determine the effect of the transaction on the national security of the United States. CFIUS member agencies include the Departments of the Treasury (chair), State, Defense, Justice, Commerce, Energy, and Homeland Security; the Office of the United States Trade Representative; and the Office of Science and Technology Policy within the Executive Office of the President. The Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the Department of Labor are ex-officio members, and five White House offices are observers.

Read the full report [here](#).

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## “HOW XI JINPING’S NEW ERA SHOULD HAVE ENDED U.S. DEBATE” WITH PETER MATTIS

Tanner Greer and Peter Mattis | *The Scholar’s Stage* | August 8, 2021

What kind of world does the Communist Party of China want? How can we know what they are thinking? These questions are the subject of “How Xi Jinping’s ‘New Era’ Should Have Ended U.S. Debate on Beijing’s Ambitions,” a report by National Intelligence University professor Dan Tobin that was originally published as testimony to Congress. This episode uses Tobin’s research as a starting point to discuss a web of issues at the core of Western attempts to understand the Chinese system. We talk about why Western analysts often struggle to understand the Communist Party, which parts of the “China watching” world are most successful doing this, and why any of this should matter to the “average” American citizen with no particular stake in China. Joining me (Tanner Greer) to discuss this report is Peter Mattis. Mattis is a Senior Fellow at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute and most recently was the Senate-appointed staff director at the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, where he was part of the legislative team that passed the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act, Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act, and the Tibetan Policy and Support Act.

Listen to the podcast [here](#).

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## A SPECIAL KIND OF LIMBO: IRANIAN STUDENTS’ TROUBLES GETTING TO THE U.S. THREATEN STEM PIPELINE

Karin Fischer | *The Chronicle of Higher Education* | August 13, 2021

Sahar feels like she has fallen into a black hole. The 26-year-old Iranian was accepted to an American doctoral program in biomaterials and biomedical engineering in 2020 but had to defer for a year because of the Covid-19 outbreak. This spring, she traveled to Pakistan for a U.S.-visa interview, but three months later, she still does not have the documents she needs to travel. Classes begin in just 10 days at the large public university in the South where she is enrolled. (The Chronicle is not identifying Sahar and her institution because she, like other Iranian students, fears that speaking publicly could jeopardize her chances of getting a visa.) Sahar, who plans to work on vaccine research, would like to go see her family, who lives several hours outside of Tehran. Once she goes to the United States, she won’t be able to return home until she finishes her studies, which could take five years or more. But if her visa were to come through at the last minute, going to say good-bye could jeopardize her travel to America. So she waits. “I do not know what to do, I do not know how to plan,” Sahar said. “I am lost.”

Read the full article [here](#).



## **LAWS COMPELLING CHINESE COMPANIES & CITIZENS TO ASSIST IN PRC SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE EFFORTS**

*National Counterintelligence and Security Center | August 10, 2021*

Entering an agreement with a company based in China? Understand the legal landscape. Below are some of the laws in the People's Republic of China compelling Chinese companies to provide data they obtain or information stored on their networks to China's state security apparatus upon request.

Read the full post [here](#).

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## **WHY AMERICA NEEDS A FEDERAL STRATEGY ON HE INTERNATIONALISATION**

*John Aubrey Douglass | University World News | August 14, 2021*

After decades of neglect, the Joe Biden administration appears to be on the verge of developing a coherent federal strategy for promoting the international engagement of American higher education with the larger world. Thus far, and unlike many of our economic competitors, international engagement has largely been self-funded and pursued by individuals and by universities and colleges, with the exception of what is, in reality, a small-scale Fulbright programme, and with vacillating visa policies. Federal leadership and funding for supporting international students and collaborative research has been unnecessarily timid – nothing on the scale of what the European Union Horizon programme, for example, is attempting. At the same time, states have seen international education as a distraction that displaces native students and even faculty, and universities and colleges have increasingly become focused on international students for income generation as opposed to larger and more coherent goals that can meet national and regional needs. In a seeming moment of enlightenment, however, the US Departments of State and Education issued a joint statement last week announcing big plans to strengthen international academic ties, including the exchange of students and collaborative teaching and research.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## **CHINESE AGENT TARGETED CANADIAN SCIENTIST IN BACTERIA-SMUGGLING PLOT: RCMP DOCUMENTS**

*Jeremy Hainsworth | Vancouver is Awesome | August 10, 2021*

A Chinese agent successfully targeted at least one government scientist for his infectious disease research, the results of which went to China for commercial use, RCMP documents show. It's a revelation that calls into question Canada's ability to protect scientific research from foreign agents as Parliament debates the possible Canadian origin of the COVID-19 virus and the involvement of Chinese nationals. Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) scientist Dr. Klaus Nielsen was targeted 20 years ago with espionage techniques aimed at obtaining his research on animal brucellosis, a highly contagious disease transmittable to humans, said RCMP documents obtained by Glacier Media under access to information laws. Nielsen was arrested in October 2012 headed to Ottawa airport en route to China. With him were 17 vials of brucella bacteria packed in a thermos of ice inside a child's lunch bag in carry-on luggage, a 2017 Ontario Court of Justice ruling said. "The brucella bacteria and the disease it causes, brucellosis, can infect people and animals such as sheep, cattle, goats and pigs," the decision said. And, Ontario Superior Court of Justice Heather Perkins-McVey said as she sentenced Nielsen to two years in prison, the case made clear that "Canada cannot protect [its] international property."

Read the full article [here](#).



## CAN BIDEN REFRAME US INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION?

Sandeep Gopalan | *The Hill* | August 12, 2021

The Biden administration's newly released Joint Statement of Principles in Support of International Education is a welcome endorsement of the importance of international education to U.S. interests at home and abroad. It commits federal agencies to "undertaking actions to support a renewed focus on international education." Will these principles be different from previous pronouncements? Will this finally end the pernicious coupling of international education with national security and instead marry it to the more harmonious partner, economic growth? The U.S. higher education sector has witnessed a long history of cheap talk, accompanied by political actions that are often counterproductive. Critically, international education in the U.S. has been primarily framed from a national security lens — negatively associated with terrorism and illegal immigration, rather than with the actual realities of its economic benefits, research innovation and job creation.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL IS 'HUNTING SPIES'

Joseph Brookes | *InnovationAus* | August 12, 2021

Ministerial vetoes of research grants and a "dossier" of applicants' potential foreign influence are putting Australian academics' reputations at risk and threatening the integrity of the national research funding agency, Labor senator Kim Carr has warned. The Opposition is pushing for greater transparency of the increased involvement by ministers and security agencies in research funding decisions, amid warnings from the research sector that procedural fairness and transparency is being damaged under a grant approval process yet to be formalised or clearly explained to academics. Senator Carr says the Australian Research Council (ARC), which is responsible for \$800 million in grants each year, is at risk of politicisation following revelations agency is collecting "sensitivities" on academics when they apply. It stems from concerns about the influence of China on international researchers, which Senator Carr says originated in the US but has been quickly adopted by parts of government in a "new cold-war" against the rising power, which is being fed by "lurid" News Corp media reports.

Read the full article [here](#).

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## VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY RESPONDS TO AG'S CONCERN CHINA IS 'INFILTRATING' INDIANA SCHOOLS

Johnny Magdaleno and Arika Herron | *Indy Star* | August 11, 2021

Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita announced Tuesday his office is launching a civil investigation into Valparaiso University and Chinese cultural institution the Confucius Institute over fears the relationship between the two is promoting communist propaganda in Indiana. The attorney general's office declined to tell IndyStar what specific evidence it has supporting the insinuation that Beijing is attempting to brainwash Hoosiers through the Valparaiso University-Confucius Institute relationship, which partially relies on funds from the Chinese government. "We are not able to comment on the specifics of an ongoing investigation," a spokesperson said. "The societal and political cost of the Chinese Communist Party infiltrating our universities and K-12 education institutes to indoctrinate our students is incalculable," the spokesperson said, when asked how much this investigation will cost taxpayers in Indiana. "Comparatively, the cost of our investigation is minimal, but will depend upon the details of the investigation." More than 100 U.S. colleges host Confucius Institutes through partnerships with Hanban, an affiliate of China's Ministry of Education.

Read the full article [here](#).



# ISSUE BRIEF: TOWARDS GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES FOR REGULATING FOREIGN INFLUENCE

Center for International Policy | July 2021

As the world continues to battle the COVID-19 pandemic, states are also waking up to the threats posed by a pandemic of a different kind: that of influence and interference campaigns orchestrated by foreign actors seeking to advance strategic and foreign policy objectives across international borders.<sup>1</sup> Through a mix of covert and overt interventions, these campaigns target a wide variety of stakeholders – ranging from policy-makers and elites to think tanks, academia, and the public at large. While not a new phenomenon, the threat from malign foreign influence has grown in scope, scale, and frequency alongside increasing globalization and technology developments. In response, states have begun considering, and implementing, new policy frameworks to counter these threats. These include deploying a variety of policy instruments ranging from foreign lobbying regulation to reforms that criminalize certain interference activities outright. Among these, an approach that has found increasing favor globally involves transparency-based foreign agent registration frameworks which intend to bring transparency to foreign influence campaigns by requiring individuals or entities ('foreign agents') engaging in certain types of activities on behalf of a foreign actor ('foreign principal') to register with the government and make disclosures concerning activities carried out under their principal-agent relationships.

Read the full brief [here](#).

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## PUTTING MONEY IN THE PARTY'S MOUTH: HOW CHINA MOBILIZES FUNDING FOR UNITED FRONT WORK

Ryan Fedasiuk | The Jamestown Foundation | September 16, 2020

Over the past two years, a series of government and think tank reports have shed light on the united front, the collection of organizations the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leverages to co-opt non-Party institutions and influence minority groups at home and overseas (USCC, August 2018; ASPI, June 2020). Facing heightened scrutiny, People's Republic of China (PRC) officials have repeatedly insisted that there is "no factual basis" to Western reporting on China's influence operations, and accused foreign analysts of "maliciously hyping up the normal foreign exchanges of the United Front Work Department" (MFA, June 2020; PRC Embassy in Sweden, August 2019). However, there is a universal truth known to government bureaucrats in every country: budgets speak louder than words. As this paper demonstrates, the scale and scope of funding for the united front system belie the Chinese government's claims about its importance and function. This article synthesizes information from more than 160 budget and expense reports from national and regional PRC government and Communist Party entities. [1] It finds that organizations central to China's national and regional united front systems spent more than \$2.6 billion in 2019, exceeding funding for China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA, 2020). [2] Nearly \$600 million (23 percent) was set aside for offices designed to influence foreigners and overseas Chinese communities.

Read the full article [here](#).

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