

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE STRATEGIC COMPETITION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE CHINESE
COMMUNIST PARTY

Protecting American Innovation: The Federal Research Security Enterprise

July 15, 2026

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U.S. National Science Foundation

Questions for the Record

Questions submitted by Chairman John Moolenaar (MI-02), Select Committee on China

1. **The National Science Foundation (NSF) awarded approximately \$67 million through the SECURE Center initiative to develop research security best practices, compliance frameworks, and institutional safeguards. However, multiple participating institutions have previously been the subject of federal investigations, civil settlements, research security compliance reviews, foreign funding disclosure concerns, collaborations with entities associated with the People's Republic of China's defense research and industrial base, or other research security-related scrutiny. Many universities (including the ones part of the SECURE CENTER initiative) derive significant financial, academic, and reputational benefits from international collaborations, foreign funding, foreign students, publication volume, and research expenditures. As a result, institutions may face incentives to prioritize research growth and output over research security restrictions that could limit those activities.**
 - a. **What evidence does NSF have that SECURE Center participants are willing to implement reforms that may reduce funding opportunities, restrict certain collaborations, or negatively impact research output when those institutions have historically benefited from maintaining an open collaboration model?**

Compliance with NSF policies and award terms and conditions is a requirement of receiving NSF funding. Research security-related terms and policies are no exception and NSF is committed to ensuring that all awardees adhere to those requirements and to take appropriate action if / when violations occur.

2. **NSF recently announced its proposed prohibition on the use of NSF funds for collaborations involving entities appearing on U.S. government restricted-party lists. Will NSF commit to implementing this prohibition regardless of whether OMB finalizes proposed revisions to 2 CFR Part 200 and regardless of any opposition, pressure, or objections from other federal agencies, departments, universities, or external stakeholders? If not, please identify the circumstances under which NSF would reconsider, delay, weaken, or abandon the proposed policy.**

NSF thanks Chairman Moolenaar and the committee for continued engagement on these efforts critical to protect the nation's research initiatives. NSF has determined that the risk from collaborations involving entities on U.S. government restricted party lists is high enough that a prohibition of these collaborations is merited. NSF is committed to partnering with agencies across the Administration as we carefully consider public comments and any interagency feedback on the proposed rule to reform federal financial assistance. NSF is a cosigner on the proposed rule and supports the implementation and the underlying policy, especially part 200.220 which would prohibit use of federal funds for covered foreign collaborators. These proposed revisions would improve transparency, accountability, and oversight for Federal awards across the Federal Government. This includes ensuring that American tax dollars are not wasted or misused, activities performed under Federal awards are consistent with law and policy, and recipients are held accountable when they fail to meet relevant standards. As with all NSF policies, NSF will implement it in a manner consistent with applicable laws and regulations.