Soliciting Input on the Development of the Research Security and Integrity Information Sharing and Analysis Organization (RSI-ISAO)

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Presentation Overview

- **NSF's Office of the Research Security Strategy and Policy**

- **RSI-ISAO**
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  - RSI-ISAO Duties
  - RSI-ISAO Structure
  - RSI-ISAO Parameters
  - RSI-ISAO Benefits

- **Dear Colleague Letter (DCL)**
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  - DCL Questions

- **Q&A**

Background: NSF's Office of the Chief of Research Security Strategy and Policy (OCRSSP)

- The OCRSSP **leads NSF's efforts to safeguard the research enterprise**, developing policies and guardrails that balance the security of federally funded research with initiatives that maintain an open and collaborative international research environment

- The OCRSSP **collaborates with federal partners and the White House** to coordinate efforts aimed at improving research security and integrity at the federal level

- The OCRSSP **engages with international partners** to ensure current and future international collaborations continue to uphold core values such as openness, transparency, honesty, respect, and accountability

RSI-ISAO in CHIPS & Science: Requirement

CHIPS & Science includes several research security provisions, including:

- Prohibition of malign foreign government talent recruitment programs

- **Requirement to establish a Research Security and Integrity Information Sharing and Analysis Organization**

- Research security training requirement for all covered personnel

- Inclusion of research security training as part of Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research training

- Reporting on foreign financial transactions and gifts

- Prohibition of Confucius Institutes

RSI-ISAO in CHIPS & Science: Duties

1. **Serve as a clearinghouse for information** to help enable the members and other entities in the research community to understand the context of their research and identify improper or illegal efforts by foreign entities to obtain research results, know how, materials, and intellectual property;

2. **Develop a set of standard risk assessment frameworks and best practices,** relevant to the research community, to assess research security risks in different contexts;

3. **Share information concerning security threats and lessons learned** from protection and response efforts through forums and other forms of communication;

4. **Provide timely reports on research security risks** to provide situational awareness tailored to the research and STEM education community;

5. **Provide training and support,** including through webinars, for relevant faculty and staff employed by institutions of higher education on topics relevant to research security risks and response;

6. **Enable standardized information gathering** and data compilation, storage, and analysis for compiled incident reports;

7. **Support analysis of patterns of risk and identification** of bad actors and enhance the ability of members to prevent and respond to research security risks; and

8. **Take other appropriate steps** to enhance research security.

RSI-ISAO in CHIPS & Science: Structure

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** In establishing the RSI-ISAO, the Director shall take necessary steps to ensure the services provided are aligned with the needs of the research community

- **USG Steering Committee**: The RSI-ISAO will be operated by a non-governmental entity that would work closely with a U.S. government group of subject matter experts coordinated by NSF

- **Membership**: The RSI-ISAO "shall serve and include members representing institutions of higher education, nonprofit research institutions, and small and medium-sized businesses."

- **Board of Directors**: The RSI-ISAO "may establish a board of directors to provide guidance for policies, legal issues, and plans and strategies of the entity's operations." This board "shall include a diverse group of stakeholders representing the research community, including academia, industry, and experienced research security administrators."

- **Agreement Type**: "The [NSF] Director shall enter into an agreement with a qualified independent organization to establish a research security and integrity information sharing analysis organization."

RSI-ISAO: Parameters

RSI-ISAO Will

- Provide <u>uniform quality of service</u> to all members of the research community;
- Respond to <u>specific requests for assistance</u> from research institutions, and individual researchers *through their institution or affiliated research entity;*
- Handle <u>unclassified information only</u>, including publicly available information and de-classified intelligence from USG agencies; and
- Receive information directly from USG agencies, research institutions, and the private sector and <u>perform analyses and publish reports</u> based on this information for the benefit of research stakeholders.

RSI-ISAO Will Not

- Issue formal decisions or opinions, or provide official recommendations to the research community;
- Assume liability for how its products are used or the consequences arising from them;
- Hold or analyze classified information; or
- Conduct investigations.

RSI-ISAO: Benefits of the Organization

- RSI-ISAO will be a forum for dialogue between academic and governmental entities to communicate concerns and issues
- Empower academics and researchers as partners to address improper foreign government interference in academia and research
- Support a security-informed decision-making structure in academia
- Provide government officials with situational awareness and expertise from the research community

Forum for dialogue

Security-informed decision-making

Empower academics and researchers
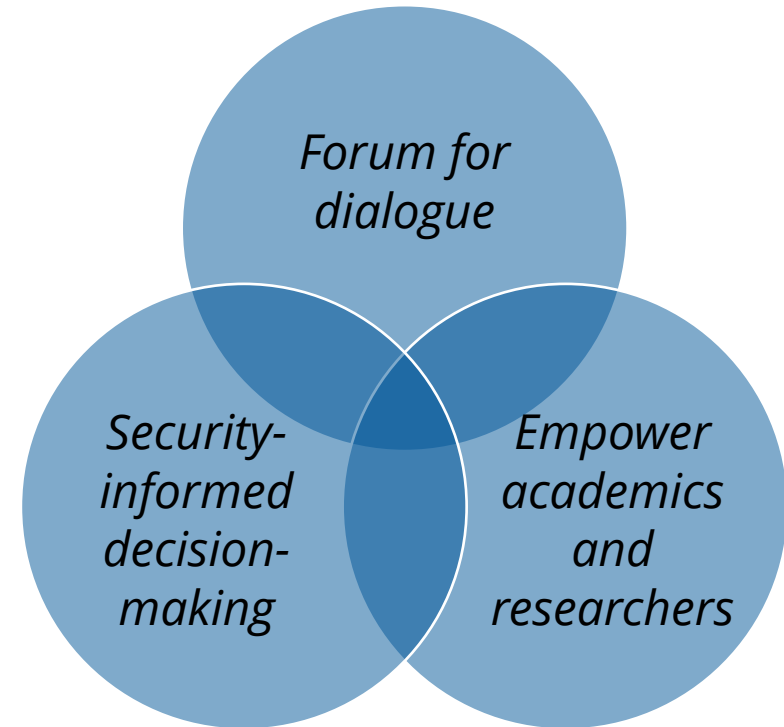
Dear Colleague Letter (DCL)

- **Purpose of DCL:**
  - Solicit feedback, ideas, and proposed recommendations from the research community
  - Ensure the products, services, and tools provided by the RSI-ISAO align with the needs and expectations of the research community

- **Information in DCL:**
  - *Background:* Context, mission, structure, stakeholders, and how it will be developed;
  - *Duties:* The eight duties of the RSI-ISAO as outlined in CHIPS & Science;
  - *Parameters:* What the RSI-ISAO will and will not do; and
  - *Questions:* Questions to solicit input from the research community.

Stakeholder Input: DCL Questions

1. **Current Research Security and Integrity Issues:**

   <u>What types of research security and integrity issues do you encounter on a day-to-day basis?</u> In the context of your institutional and organizational structure, what challenges does your organization's structure pose when attempting to address research security and integrity issues?

2. **Informational Resources:**

   Based on the duties for the RSI-ISAO specified in the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, <u>what resources should the RSI-ISAO provide to the research community</u> to inform decision-making, management, and mitigation of research security and integrity risks? For example, timely alerts on current research security and integrity concerns, reports in response to specific inquiries from research community stakeholders, broad assessments of research security and integrity risks, services such as webinars hosted by the RSI-ISAO that inform researchers of current research security and integrity concerns, etc.

3. **Prioritization of the RSI-ISAO's Duties:**

   Given the complex nature of the RSI-ISAO, its duties and capabilities will be developed via a phased approach. <u>What do you consider to be most important services</u> the RSI-ISAO can provide to the research community?

Stakeholder Input: DCL Questions (cont.)

4. **Integration:**

   Of the duties you listed as most important in question #3, <u>how would you envision the associated RSI-ISAO resources integrating into and adding value to your organization</u>'s research security and integrity decision-making processes?

5. **Benefits based on Position:**

   Given the position you hold in your institution or organization (e.g., faculty member, staff researcher, post-doc, research administrator, executive officer, compliance officer, research security official, legal counsel), <u>how do you foresee the RSI-ISAO's resources being beneficial to you</u>? In what ways would the RSI-ISAO's resources make research security and integrity risk-related decision-making easier for you based on your position?

6. **Liaison Role:**

   <u>Should the RSI-ISAO have a role in connecting research institutions with one another</u> to enhance awareness and sharing of best practices regarding matters of research security and integrity? Should the RSI-ISAO have a role in <u>connecting research institutions with USG representatives</u> to ensure strong working relationships in research security and integrity?

7. **Any other additional feedback:**

   Open question for additional feedback.

Questions?