

FDP Federal panel entitled “Foreign Influence Management – Enhancing the Security and Integrity of America’s Research Enterprise”

Wednesday, August 26, 2020, 11:30am – 1:00pm EDT

[Session Recording](#)

[Pamela Webb/ Jim Luther Slides](#)

[Rebecca Keiser’s Slides](#)

[Jean Feldman’s Slides](#)

[Michelle Bulls’ Slides](#)

This virtual panel session, moderated by Pamela Webb (University of Minnesota) and Jim Luther (Duke University), focused on the significant changes related to managing foreign influence in research over the last six months. Representatives from NSF, NIH, and DoD provided updates on recent steps taken by their agencies to address the findings of the JASON report, specifically the need for a coordinated approach and common understandings between the government and research organizations to mitigate the risks of foreign influence, balanced with preserving an open research environment and being mindful of administrative burden. Rebecca Keiser, NSF’s Chief of Research Security Strategy and Policy, described the ongoing efforts of JCORE to foster harmonization of agency efforts, develop guidance for federal departments and agencies, best practices for universities and research organizations, and educational materials to highlight risks and examples. Clear definitions of Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment are a key outcome of this effort, and analytical tools are being developed to detect potential security challenges to the research enterprise. She concluded with a detailed clarification of the role that agency inspectors general play in managing foreign influence concerns, and the range of potential agency administrative actions in response to findings of improper conduct.

Jean Feldman of NSF, Michelle Bulls of NIH, and Barbara Orlando of the Department of Defense then provided an overview of recent developments and anticipated future changes at their respective agencies to address the issue of foreign influence. NSF has updated its guidance in the 2020 PAPP Guide to provide clarifications on disclosure requirements, specifically in the appointments section of the Bio Sketch and in the Current and Pending Support list. They are also developing new requirements for the inclusion of updates to current and pending support as part of the project reporting process. NIH, likewise, has recently updated and clarified its guidance on disclosures in Bio Sketches and Other Support lists, and further updates can be expected in the future, including changes to the Appointments section and removal of the Research Support section in Bio Sketches, as well as new format pages for Other Support that include guidance for in kind contributions and gifts. More information will be presented at the Fall NIH Virtual Seminar. Upcoming changes at DoD are expected to include additional data collection in RPPRs on project personnel and current and pending support, data management plans to address the storage and protection of project information, and agency risk assessments prior to issuing awards.

The closing question and answer session covered the anticipated government definition for talent recruitment program, institutional due diligence in managing research integrity and foreign influence, and the desire for any potential agency enforcement actions to be aligned with the level of clarification and transparency afforded to universities and research organizations.