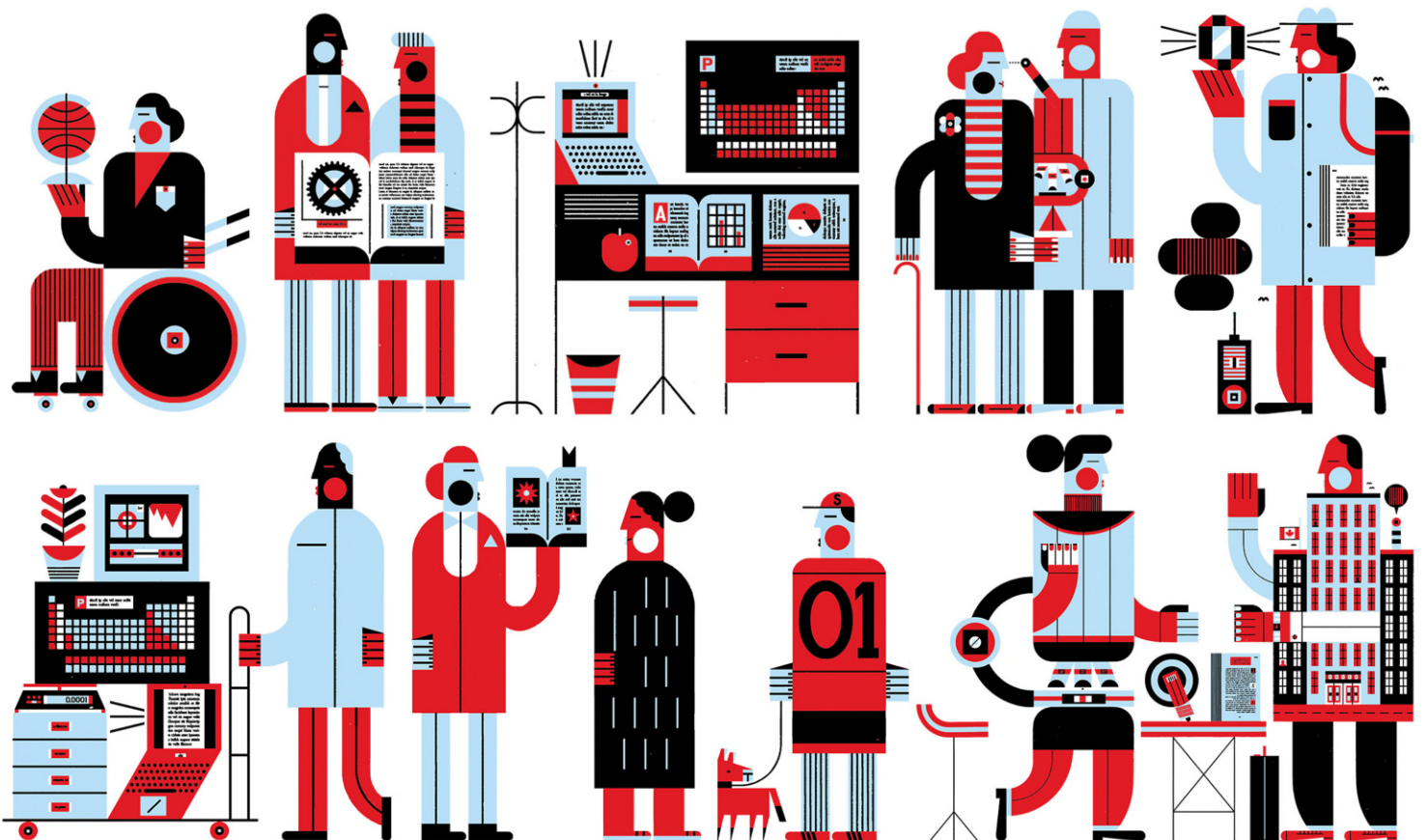


Frequently asked questions for the letters on new measures to enhance research security

April 2023



These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) address potential questions related to the letters that have been appended to notices of decisions (NODs) for research grants from the federal granting agencies, with regards to the [statement on protecting Canada's research](#) issued by the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, the Minister of Health, and the Minister of Public Safety, on February 14, 2023.

Why are the federal research granting agencies sending letters with their NODs for research grant awards?

- The letters are intended to notify researchers and institutions of the new research security measures that will be implemented in accordance with the tri-ministerial [statement on protecting Canada's research](#).

What is the purpose of these new research security measures?

- The [statement](#) requests that the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) and Canada's federal research granting agencies—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)—implement new measures to ensure that research grant applications proposing to conduct research in a sensitive research area will not be funded if any of the researchers working on the project are affiliated with a university, research institute or laboratory connected to military, national defence or state security entities of foreign state actors that pose a risk to Canada's national security.
- The Government of Canada, the federal research granting agencies, and the research community have a shared responsibility to protect the integrity of our research ecosystem and to safeguard it from activities that undermine its foundational principles of openness, transparency, merit, academic freedom, and reciprocity. Accordingly, the federal research granting agencies are committed to ensuring that the open and collaborative research we fund does not contribute to advancements in military, security, and intelligence capabilities of foreign state actors that pose a threat to Canada.

Do these new research security measures impact the research grant awards that are being issued?

- The new measures requested by the tri-ministerial [statement](#) on February 14, 2023, have not yet been implemented. The letter is intended to provide further information about these upcoming measures and to encourage Canadian researchers to exercise due diligence when managing their research and establishing and/or continuing international partnerships and collaborations.

When will these new measures be implemented?

- The new measures requested by the tri-ministerial [statement](#) on February 14, 2023, will apply to research grant applications that are submitted after the policy takes effect.
- The implementation date for this policy has not yet been determined. The federal research granting agencies are currently working in close collaboration with Government of Canada partners, including the national security departments and agencies, to assess the full impact of these new measures on their processes.

- Clear guidance will be provided by the Government of Canada in the coming months to ensure that the research community can appropriately comply with these new measures once they are implemented.

Will the new measures apply to all research grant applications?

- The federal research granting agencies, in collaboration with Government of Canada partners, are looking at their respective suite of programming to determine the scope of the new measures.

Why is the content of the letters different between the three granting agencies?

- The federal research granting agencies have a coordinated approach to research security, working with Government of Canada partners, and are committed to providing clear communications to the research community. However, the granting agencies are currently at different stages of implementing processes to address, where required, determinations of unacceptable national security risk by the Government of Canada with regards to any given research grant. Such processes are being implemented by each agency in a manner that is coordinated, risk-informed and appropriate to their respective programming. This difference is reflected in the language of the individual letters issued by each granting agency.

Will these new measures replace the National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships?

- No, the phased implementation of the [National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships](#) (the Guidelines) will continue separately from these new measures.
- Since 2021, the federal research granting agencies have been engaged in the development and implementation of the Guidelines as a tool for researchers and research institutions to conduct due diligence when establishing and/or continuing partnerships with private sector organizations. These Guidelines currently apply as a mandatory requirement for applications to NSERC's Alliance Grants program, as well as applications to the second stage of the integrated Canada Biomedical Research Fund and Biosciences Research Infrastructure Fund (CBRF-BRIF), that include one or more private sector partner organizations.
- While the Guidelines address risks regarding research partnerships with private sector partner organizations, the new measures requested by the Ministers will address risks related to universities, research institutes, and laboratories that are connected to military, national defence or state security entities of foreign state actors that pose a risk to our national security. This enhanced policy will build on the robust efforts already underway to strengthen Canada's research security, while continuing to support an open and collaborative research environment.

What is the Government of Canada doing to ensure that these new measures do not lead to discrimination?

- Equity, diversity, and inclusion is a guiding principle to the implementation of these new measures, as with all research security measures that aim to safeguard Canada's world-leading research ecosystem. Freedom from discrimination is a fundamental and internationally recognized human right, that is necessary for all aspects of the research enterprise.

- The Government of Canada, the federal granting agencies, research institutions and researchers have a shared responsibility to ensure that these new measures do **not** lead to discrimination against or profiling of any member of the research community. This principle has been similarly reinforced in the Guidelines' [Risk Assessment Form](#), updated on March 24, 2023, which states that excluding any individual from participating in a research project on the basis of their citizenship or country of residence is **not** an acceptable risk mitigation measure.
- The Government of Canada and the federal research granting agencies will continue to support and to work with the research community, to safeguard Canada's research alongside our continued commitments to open science, to international collaboration, and to equity, diversity, and inclusion. Together, we can cultivate a strong, globally competitive research and innovation system in Canada, such that the fruits of Canadian research and development are realized by those that perform it and for the benefit of Canadians.