

FOREIGN TALENT RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS

What you need to know

Research Security Division
Research Services



Foreign Talent Recruitment Programs

Foreign Talent Recruitment Programs (FTRP) are used by many countries to attract research talent in a specific field to advance their own strategic development goals.

A FTRP is a program, position, or activity that includes compensation, whether in the form of cash, in-kind support, research funding, complimentary foreign travel, appointments or awards, access to resources such as labs and equipment, or any other form of in-kind support.

This compensation is directly provided by a foreign country at any level of government, through a government sponsored individual or entity.

FTRPs typically contact researchers directly with an invitation to participate in the program.

Canadian Research Security Requirements

There are currently no *direct* prohibitions on participating in a FTRP in Canada; however, participating in a FTRP could cause potential problems under the federal [*Policy on Sensitive Technology Research & Affiliations of Concern \(STRAC\)*](#) and the [*Tri-Agency Framework on the Responsible Conduct of Research*](#).

Under *STRAC*, if you are participating in a FTRP offered by a [*Named Research Organization*](#), this could create an affiliation under the policy and make you ineligible for federal funding.

Under *the Tri-Agency Framework on the Responsible Conduct of Research*, researchers receiving federal funding are required to disclose foreign affiliations and funding. Failure to do so is considered a conflict of interest and breach of the policy. This could jeopardize your research funding from federal sources.

US Research Security Requirements

The US government, under the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, prohibits sponsored research personnel (*'covered individuals'*) from participating in Malign Foreign Talent Recruitment Programs (MFTRPs). The Act requires disclosure of participation in FTRP and prohibits recipients of federal funding from participating in MFTRPs.

These requirements extend to all sources of US Federal funding. This includes the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Department of Defence (DoD) and the Department of Energy (DoE), among others. This list is not exhaustive.

A *Covered Individual* is a researcher who contributes in a substantive, meaningful way to the scientific development or execution of a funded research project and includes senior and key personnel.

Penalties for failing to disclose or making a false certification regarding your participation in MFTRPs in US federal funding awards can include restrictions on funding, requirements to return any funding received, employee consequences, and other personal civil and/or criminal penalties.



What makes a FTRP malign?

A *malign* FTRP includes any attempts by a foreign state to unethically or unlawfully acquire research being conducted in Canada. A *malign* FTRP usually request one or more of the following:

- You are asked to transfer your knowledge, IP and/or expertise to a foreign government or entity
- You are offered incentives to relocate to a foreign country
- You are asked to sign a contract that creates a conflict of interest and/or commitment
- You are asked to establish a lab or company or accept a position/appointment in a foreign country
- You are asked to recruit others to the talent program, or to train other members of the FTRP
- You are asked to not disclose your participation in the talent program
- You are unable to terminate the FTRP contract, except under extraordinary circumstances

Foreign talent programs may also be *malign* if they are sponsored by: (i) foreign countries of concern, (ii) entities based in foreign countries of concern, or (iii) other designated entities under national defense legislation.

What is not considered participating in a malign FTRP?*

Making scholarly presentations and publishing research not otherwise impacted by government policies and guidelines.

Participating in international conferences, exchanges, research projects, or programs that are open and reciprocal aimed at advancing scientific understanding and is not otherwise impacted by government policies and guidelines.

Advising a student from a foreign institution or writing a recommendation for such a student, at the student's request.

*There are exceptions in respect of defense research, and relationships with certain designated academic institutions within certain countries (e.g. People's Republic of China, Russian Federation). Please contact Research Security if you have any questions.

What to do if you have been contacted by a FTRP

If you suspect that you have been contacted by a FTRP, or may be a member of one, please reach out to researchsecurity@ucalgary.ca for guidance on how to proceed. The Research Security Division will conduct a risk assessment to help you make an informed decision.

Do not agree to or sign any contract without first obtaining a detailed description of what is involved. Not all FTRPs are problematic; however, determine whether joining such a program could negatively impact your ability to receive funding in Canada, the US or other international jurisdiction over the long term and create other consequences.

Participating in a FTRP may conflict with the University of Calgary's [Code of Conduct](#) policy, including:

- Conflict of Interest
- Conflict of Commitment
- [Disclosure of Financial Conflict of Interest: US Public Health Services Funding](#)