

Memorandum 21:18

Date: March 31, 2021

To: Presidents and Administrative Officers
Local, Federated and Provincial Associations

From: David Robinson, Executive Director

Re: **Update to Federal Policy Statement on Research Security**

The Government of Canada issued an update to their [Research Security Policy Statement](#) on March 24, in response to perceived threats of foreign interference and espionage. The Statement is calling on researchers to take extra precautions to safeguard their knowledge development, data, and intellectual property.

The government's Statement places emphasis on research theft and recent cyber threats to COVID-19 research—such as phishing campaigns, ransomware, and exploiting teleworking connections—and encourages members of the research community to use the [Safeguarding Your Research](#) web portal to access tools, information, and links to resources. The web portal also includes case studies, assessment worksheets, and steps to mitigate economic and geopolitical risks in sensitive research projects.

By summer 2021, the [Government of Canada - Universities Working Group](#) aims to develop specific risk guidelines to integrate national security considerations into the evaluation and funding of research partnerships. To this, the Tri-Agency research granting councils and the Canada Foundation for Innovation are reviewing their security policies and procedures to assist researchers in protecting their proprietary knowledge and innovative work.

CAUT is seeking a balanced approach to research security, one that addresses legitimate concerns about national security and espionage without leading to increasing restrictions on and threats to the global exchange of scientific research.

CAUT will continue to monitor and keep members apprised of further updates. If you have questions, would like to raise an issue, or require further information, please contact Pam Foster, Director of Policy and Communications, at foster@caut.ca.