

**Ministry of Colleges and Universities**

**Research Security Guidelines for Ontario Research Funding Programs**

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## Purpose of the Research Security Guidelines for Ontario Research Funding Programs (RS Guidelines)

The Government of Ontario is taking active steps to ensure that the benefit of research being carried out in Ontario universities, colleges, academic hospitals, and research institutes under the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (Ministry) research funding programs is safeguarded to protect the province's long-term economic security and interests against risks that could result in the loss or misuse of publicly funded knowledge.

The Ministry's RS Guidelines outline the processes related to research security for all applications to Ministry research funding programs. Applicants who are the lead institutions applying for Ministry research funding programs are required to follow Ontario's research security process and meet the relevant requirements specified in the guidelines. The Ministry's research funding programs include:

- Ontario Research Fund-Research Excellence (ORF-RE)
- Ontario Research Fund-Genomics (ORF-Genomics)
- Ontario Research Fund-Large Infrastructure Fund (ORF-LIF)
- Ontario Research Fund-Small Infrastructure Fund (ORF-SIF)
- Ontario Research Fund-College Fund (ORF-CF)
- Ontario Research Fund-Biosciences Research Infrastructure Fund (ORF-BRIF)
- Early Researcher Awards (ERA)

### Definitions

- **Applicant:** The lead institution applying for a Ministry research funding program for a proposed project.
- **Conflicts of Interest (CoI):** May occur when Funding Beneficiaries have undeclared appointments, roles, and any material relationship with a foreign entity.
- **Conflicts of Commitment (CoC):** May occur when a p0-89 .7 (r)7.5 (e)-61.145 Td(o)Tj/TT (o)0.6j/TTins2.3 (t)Comh F

roles are stated in the Ministry research funding program application. They include a PI and co-investigators in the project. They do not include project members that may participate in the project, but are not named in the application (e.g., technicians, post-



association in Option B of the **Application Attestation Form**. In turn, the PI, when populating the risk mitigation section of the **Mitigating Economic and Geopolit**

- Assessment against other relevant open source resources, such as lists provided by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute and the U.S. Department of Defense, etc., and
- Potential Non-Disclosure of Collaborations, Conflict of Interests and Conflicts of Commitments.

The Ministry and SOLGEN reserve the right to seek additional information from the Applicant for the purposes of the adjudication stage related to RS.

**Important:** Results of the SOLGEN's RS due diligence review will be shared with ORFAB members and the Minister of Colleges and Universities as part of the adjudication process, thus may impact funding decisions.

#### **b). Risk Mitigation Process**

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The Ministry TPAs will include additional terms and conditions for high-risk projects, for example, Ministry approved risk mitigation plan obligations, as well as special provisions, such as a Ministry rights related to RS related audits.

## RS Guidelines: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### GENERAL

#### **Q1: How are the new Ontario RS requirements and processes different than what the Government of Ontario has been doing to date?**

A: In collaboration with the Ministry of the Solicitor General (SOLGEN), the Ministry first implemented RS assessments in 2019 for the ORF-Research Excellence program. Currently, security assessment protocols have been included in adjudication of *all* Ministry's competitive programs. Recognizing that many collaborations and relationships, which now may be deemed a risk, date from a different geopolitical context, in 2023

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- The Ontario government requires attestation from *all* Named Researchers in *all* applications to *all* Ministry programs, irrelevant of whether the research is classified as sensitive or not, and whether researchers are associated with NROs or not.
- The Ontario government allows Applicants with high risk proposals to propose a risk mitigation





