



# Working Group on Communication of Dual Use Research Results, Methods, and Technologies





# Communication Working Group Charge

---

- **Identify concerns and examine options and strategies for addressing issues related to the communication of dual use research information**
- **Develop draft recommendations for the NSABB that will facilitate the consistent application of well-considered principles to decisions about communication of information with biosecurity implications**



# **Broad Target Audience**

---

- **Including:**
  - **Researchers**
  - **Students**
  - **Laboratory Directors**
  - **Institutional Review Bodies**
  - **Institutional Officials**
  - **Manuscript Reviewers**
  - **Research Administrators**
  - **Journal Editors**
  - **Research Sponsors**



# Working Group Roster

---

## Voting Members:

- P. Keim (Chair)
- A. Casadevall
- L. Enquist
- D. Franz
- J. Gordon
- D. Kasper
- S. Lemon
- M. Nance
- M. Osterholm
- T. Shenk
- A. Sorensen

## Federal Agency Representatives:

- Brenda Cuccherini (VA)
- Dennis Dixon (NIH)
- Terri Lomax (NASA)
- Boris Lushniak (FDA)
- Stuart Nightingale (HHS)
- Scott Steele (DoJ)
- M. Schmolesky/  
N. Comella (State)
- Ronald Walters (Intelligence)



# Working Group Deliverables

---

- **Develop for consideration by the NSABB:**
  - **Overarching principles for responsible communication**
  - **Framework for assessing risks and benefits of communicating dual use research**
  - **Principles and options for how and when to communicate information**
  - **Options for local review of work products containing information with national security implications**
  - **Workshop on communication of dual use information**



# Working Group Activities

---

- **Examine extant systems and proposed models for the review and communication of work products that may have national security implications**
  - **Federal policies and regulations**
  - **Policies of professional societies, scientific journals**
  - **Practices from other disciplines that deal with the control of sensitive information**



# **Working Group Activities**

---

- **Identify/develop case studies that highlight the issues and can serve as test cases for proposed approaches**
- **Identify outreach needs, both during the development of NSABB recommendations, and during the dissemination/ implementation of any new policies pertaining to the communication of dual use research**



# Overarching Principles

- **Communicate research to the fullest extent possible**
  - **Permits advancement of life sciences research to benefit public health and the environment**
  - **Restriction of scientific communication a rare exception rather than the rule**

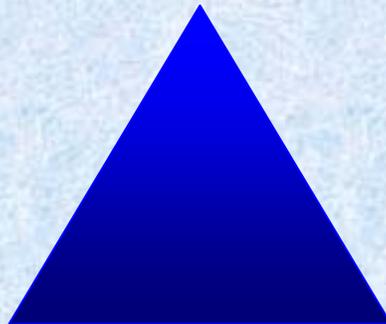


# Overarching Principles

## The Need for Balance

**Sharing of information and technologies underpins scientific progress**

**Mitigating the potential for deliberate misuse of information**



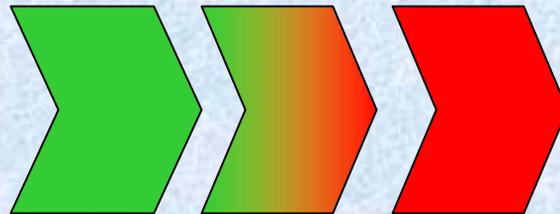


# Overarching Principles

- The decision to communicate information is not necessarily binary



**YES**



**NO**



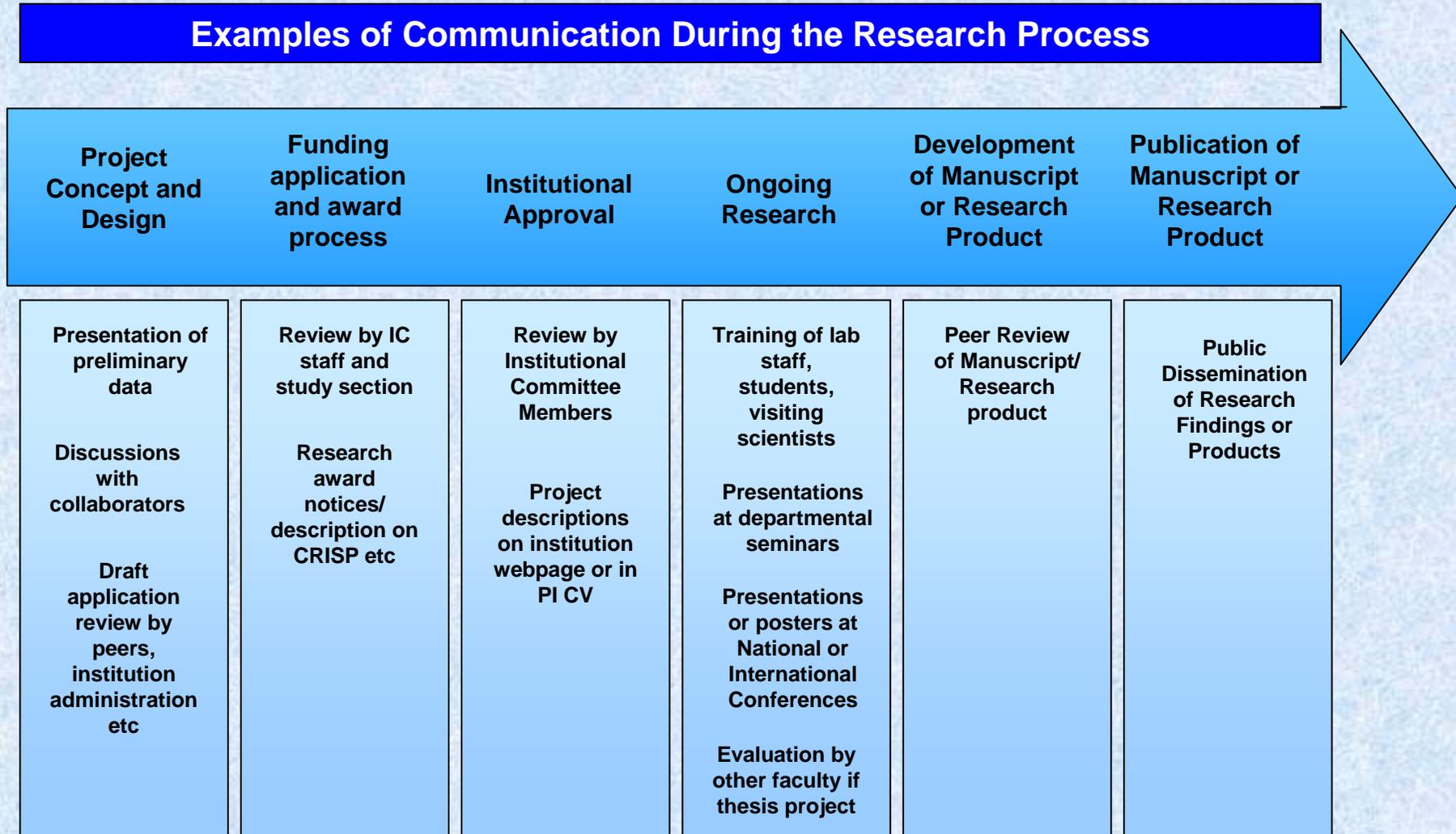
# Overarching Principles

- **Communication of dual use research occurs at multiple points throughout the research process**
  - **It is important to apply principles and practices of responsible communication throughout the research endeavor, at points well upstream of the publication stage**



# Overarching Principles

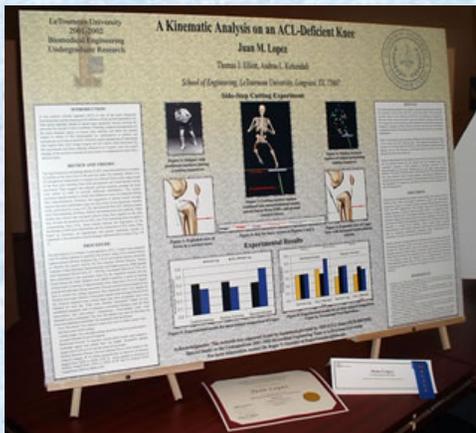
## Examples of Communication During the Research Process





# Overarching Principles

- Many modes of communication





# Overarching Principles

- **Need to consider not only what is communicated, but also the way in which it is communicated**
  - **Recognize communication of dual use information may raise biosecurity concerns, not only within the scientific community, but also general public**
  - **Consider potential for public concern, misunderstanding, and sensationalism**
  - **Consider need for inclusion of contextual/explanatory information to minimize concerns and misunderstanding**



# Key Considerations

---

- Life sciences research is dynamic and often unpredictable



- The scientific enterprise is global in nature
  - Consider international implications during development of a framework for the communication of dual use research

# Recommendation

---



- **Responsible communication of dual use research is an important value to incorporate into a code of conduct and ethics training**



# Tools for Communication of Dual Use Research

---

- **Framework for Assessing the Risks and Benefits of Communicating Dual Use Research Products**
  - **Need to make initial determination of whether there is risk to public health or national security**
  - **If so, weigh against potential benefits, considering for example:**
    - **Novel scientific information or technology**
    - **Potential benefits to public health or national security of broadly disseminating the information or technology**
    - **Time frame (e.g., immediate, near future, years from now) in which the information would be useable**



# **Tools for Communication of Dual Use Research**

---

- **Options for Communicating Dual Use Research**
  - **Spectrum of options, not necessarily mutually exclusive**



# **Tools for Communication of Dual Use Research**

---

- **Approaches to the Responsible Communication of Dual Use Research Results and Technologies**
  - **A communication plan is a critical part of decision to communicate**
    - **Not only what is said, but how it is said**
    - **Public understanding and trust**



# **Next Steps**

- **Further development of:**
  - **Principles for responsible communication**
  - **Algorithm for assessing risk and benefits of communication**
  - **Communication options**
  - **Points to consider in the development of a communication plan**
- **Continued planning of workshop on communication of dual use research**



# Questions

- **Comments on work plan?**
- **Additional tasks?**

