



UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA

2025 IMPACT REPORT



Safeguarding Research Office
Office of the Vice-President (Research)
University of Alberta

Letter from the Director

It is my pleasure to introduce the **Safeguarding Research Office's 2025 Impact Report**. In 2025, we were able to solidify and expand our efforts, and deepen our relationships with important partners across the campus and the country. Some of the major milestones during the year included the full operationalization of our [Implementation Support Program](#), working with our Information Services and Technology (IST) partners to include a loaner device component to our [Travel Security Program](#), and the release of [request forms](#) to support our [Responsible Open Source Due Diligence Protocol](#). Another major development was the introduction of [required research security training](#) for those submitting [Attestation Forms](#) or [Risk Assessment Forms](#) with a funding application. This was a challenging roll-out given the simultaneous institutional migration to Canvas, and I appreciate the patience of our community as we refined that process.

In addition to providing new resources for our community (co-developed with great institutional partners) on topics including [Mitigating Risks of Foreign Interference and Transnational Repression on Campuses](#) and [related supports](#), [Open Science and Research Security](#), and the [Modern Researcher Mindset](#), I was pleased to have the opportunity to connect with new groups across campus including through presentations to [iSMART](#), [Faculté Saint-Jean](#) researchers, staff at the [Undergraduate Research Initiative](#), start-ups and innovators gathered at Enterprise Square, and during events like [Hannover Messe](#), [Upper Bound](#), and



Jacqueline Littlewood
Director, Research Security

the [Alberta Aviation, Aerospace and Defence Summit 2025](#). We also held our first annual [University of Alberta Research Security Day](#), holding events on all five campuses and sharing insights with colleagues nationally.

Our expanded and improved internal [SRO portal](#) served as the perfect foundation for a successful presentation on our institutional approach to research security to all of our Team Canada Community of Practice colleagues. In addition to ongoing participation in that national community of practice,

we benefited from partaking in dedicated communities of practice for universities participating in the Contract Security Program and Controlled Goods Program. The Alberta Research Security Community of Practice continued to be a priority in 2025, and that group's [Annual General Meeting \(AGM\) and Workshop](#) was a highlight of the year. I was also glad to offer support to our institutional defence and dual-use research efforts (see Page 8 for more) and to serve as a member of the [Council of Canadian Academies Expert Panel on Sensitive Research of Concern](#).

Alongside these activities focused externally, I was also grateful to see our team fully staffed and to work with the support of amazing colleagues in [HRHSE Organizational Development](#) to create a Designed Team Agreement, as well as related developments to our SRO plan for the implementation of [Forward Together: The University of Alberta People Strategy](#). What's more, we worked with colleagues in North Power Plant to host a lecture on the important topic of [Building Connections Around Perimenopause in the Workplace](#) and closed out the year by [adopting a week for the Community Food Pantry](#).

What's Coming Up?

In 2026, I am looking forward to:

- Hosting colleagues for a presentation and a reception for our 2nd Annual University of Alberta Research Security Day where we will also mark the first anniversary of our research security podcast, the [Power Plant Sessions](#).
- Working with our Indigenous and Indigenous-focused researchers, as well as colleagues in the [Research Partner Network](#), to co-develop related training or guidance following on several focused discussions in 2025.

- Hosting our provincial colleagues and collaborators for the 3rd Annual Alberta Research Security Community of Practice AGM and Workshop in June, and presenting at the annual national [research security conference](#) in Winnipeg in May.
- Continuing to support the University of Alberta's commitment to being a trusted partner in defence and dual-use research, including through ongoing support for the [Centre for Applied Research in Defence and Dual-Use Technologies](#).
- Strengthening our institutional ecosystem by drawing on recommendations provided in a Research Security Readiness and Maturity Assessment commissioned by the U of A's Internal Audit and Enterprise Risk Management group.
- Connecting with additional individuals and groups across campus and developing training materials and content to continue increasing awareness of and capacity for research security.

We welcome your feedback and your suggestions! Please don't hesitate to reach out to the dedicated members of the Safeguarding Research Office team.

We're here to help!

Jacqueline Littlewood
Director, Research Security
University of Alberta

Team, Services, & Community



Implementation Support Program

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <u>Contract Security Program</u> | <u>Controlled Goods Program</u> | <u>Travel Security Program</u> |
|--|---|--|

Our Services

- In-person or virtual consultation
- Risk assessment support
- Risk mitigation planning and implementation assistance
- Research security guidance, advice, and resources
- Training and capacity-building opportunities

100%

Fully funded by Government of Canada, Research Support Fund
\$1,434,979 for 2025-26

10

Staff members available to support researchers

518

Total researcher engagements in 2025

Our Communities of Practice

- Alberta Research Security
- Team Canada

Our Governance

- Research Security Impacts Committee
- Risk Assessment Sub-Committee

Milestones



Power Plant Sessions podcast launch

February 4, 2025

A first-of-its-kind research security podcast produced by the Safeguarding Research Office at the University of Alberta



Director, Research Security appointed Chair of Alberta Research Security Community of Practice for a one-year term

June 17, 2025

Directors at U of A and U of C switch between Chair and Secretary roles annually



Introduce new Due Diligence request procedures

July 30, 2025

New request procedures for due diligence at the U of A mean a more streamlined process for researchers and practitioners



Consultations on Indigenous research data management (College of Social Sciences + Humanities, College of Health Sciences)

August 20, 2025

Our first of three consultations - one with researchers and practitioners in each College - to discuss approaches to Indigenous data sovereignty and research data management at the U of A



Open Science and You

October 9, 2025

Open Science and You content shared at the 1st Canadian Conference on Open Science and Open Scholarship



SRO marks its 900th total engagement

December 16, 2025

Since our inception in 2023, the Safeguarding Research Office has provided risk assessment, management, and implementation guidance, briefings, events, resources and more, totalling over 900 engagements with the U of A community and beyond



1st Annual Research Security Day

March 21, 2025

Research Security Day provided opportunities for members of the U of A community across all five campuses and at home to learn more about safeguarding research and the role of the Safeguarding Research Office



Cohost 2nd Annual AB RS CoP AGM & Workshop at UCalgary

June 18-20, 2025

The Safeguarding Research Office was welcomed by the U of C research security team to participate in this annual event that boosts practitioner knowledge and networking



Research security training migration to Canvas

August 1, 2025

Migrated the Government of Canada research security training course (consisting of three modules) to the new institutional platform for researcher and practitioner ease-of-access



Research Security Review one-year anniversary

September 2, 2025

The Safeguarding Research Office celebrates the 1st anniversary of *Research Security Review*, the bimonthly research security newsletter that builds capacity and knowledge institutionally, provincially and nationally



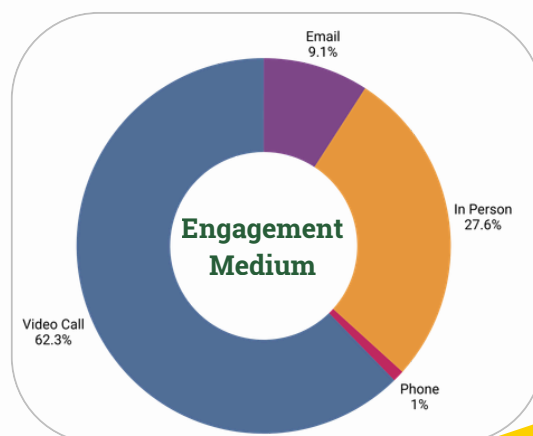
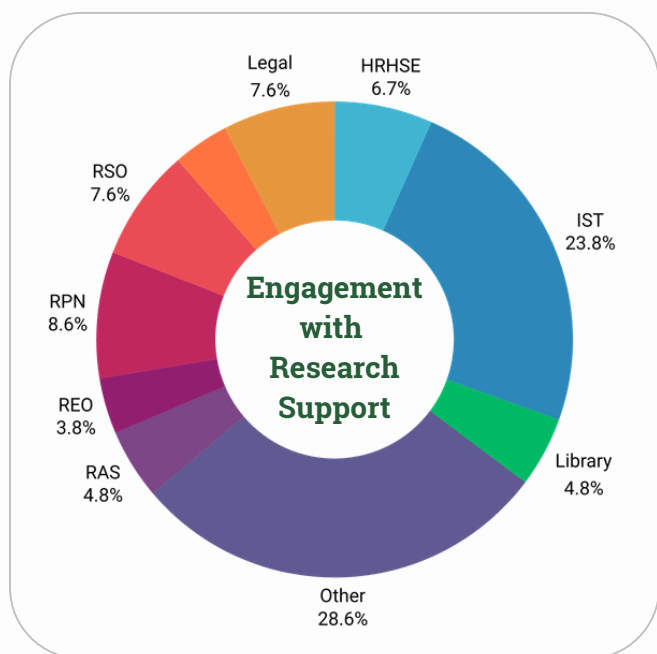
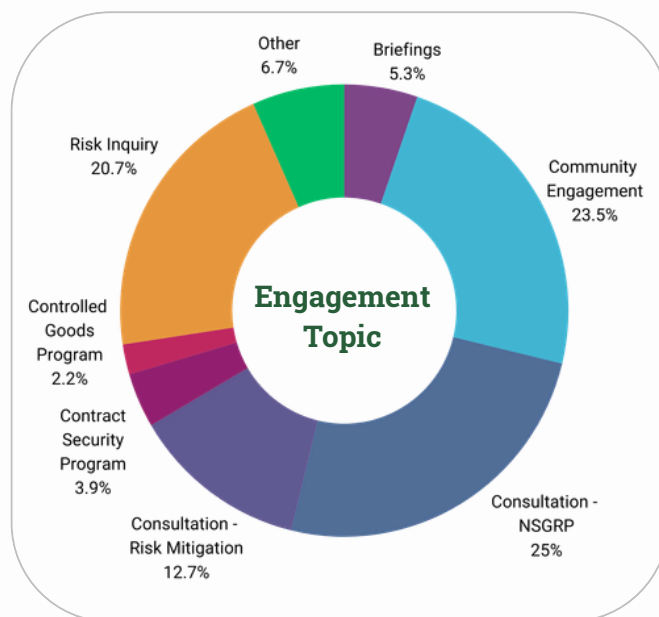
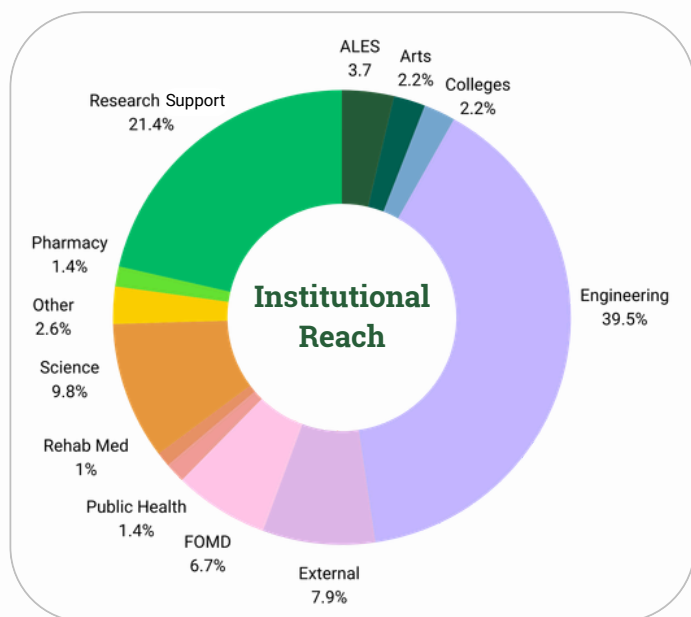
Introduce resources on Foreign Interference and Transnational Repression

December 15, 2025

The Safeguarding Research Office, in consultation with Protective Services and the Student Conduct and Accountability Office, establishes resources for reporting and protecting community members against foreign interference and transnational repression

SRO by the Numbers

The Safeguarding Research Office supported our community through 518 total engagements in 2025 – that’s risk consultations and assessments, briefings on risk mitigation and implementation, faculty and committee outreach, training and capacity building, grad student events, research administration coordination, communities of practice work, and more!



SRO by the Numbers

92 Risk Assessment Forms approved

21 Risk Assessment Sub-Committee meetings

291 Reviewed entities using responsible due diligence

11 Alberta Research Security Community of Practice meetings

36 Lab tours/visits

15 Team Canada Community of Practice meetings

277 Grad students registered in research security training

1,192 Subscribers to curated SRO content

661 Faculty, staff registered in research security training

4,322 Clicks on campaign content

4 Research Security Impacts Committee meetings

561 Power Plant Sessions podcast downloads



Join our community!

Cultivating Talent

Undergrad student job shadow: A quick interview

We hosted an up-and-comer undergraduate student for a Day in the Life of a Research Security Practitioner – their lessons learned were significant!

What was a key takeaway/eye-opening moment during your visit?

I learnt a lot about the scope of activities the SRO does: from educating others and helping researchers comply with policy, to advancing Alberta's research security efforts, I realized just how important the work is. I also realized just how difficult it is, so I gained a greater respect and appreciation for what they do.

How will you apply what you've learned about research security to your field of study?

Through observing and interacting with the people at the SRO, I learnt both new skills and also a greater understanding of policies the university has to comply with. I want to do research, so learning that the SRO can help improve the security of both the research and researchers is reassuring and makes everything less daunting. If I ever find myself traveling, I know I can turn to the SRO to help make my journey as safe and secure as possible.

Based on what you've learned, what advice, if any, would you give to your peers about research security?

Make sure to keep personal information private, and try to learn about research security early. It is also important to keep deadlines in mind, and to communicate what you want as effectively as possible; and, if you're filling out applications, a draft would be greatly appreciated!



Dual-Use & Defence Research

One significant area of focus for the Safeguarding Research Office in 2025 was supporting a secure and compliant research ecosystem for defence and dual-use research.

Research security considerations were integrated into the activities and governance framework of the [Centre for Applied Research in Defence and Dual-use Technologies \(CARDD-Tech\)](#), and the Director, Research Security was appointed as a member of CARDD-Tech's Centre Management Committee.

Research security and compliance considerations were also integrated into a University submission to the [Defence Innovation Secure Hub \(DISH\) Request for Information](#) and to another project, led out of the Faculty of Engineering, to create a Dual-Use Ecosystem for Future Engineering, National Defence and Sovereignty (DEFENDS).

To provide research security input and visibility for its inclusion in U of A defence activities, the Director, Research Security attended Hannover Messe, the Alberta Aerospace, Aviation and Defence Summit, and supported a campus visit in August by the Minister of National Defence.

The SRO team also put together a Security Deep-Dive workshop for CARDD-Tech and provided security advice and feedback to all the CARDD-Tech lab teams as part of a lab tour event. We're looking forward to doing more to support this institutional priority in the year ahead, and to build on initial efforts to establish a strong security culture across campus.



Resources & Guidance

Check out some of our 2025 guidance materials available on the SRO Portal!



[Foreign Interference and Transnational Repression](#)



[U of A Research Data Storage Service](#)



[CIHR Project Grant Program Research Security Requirements](#)



[NSERC Discovery Research Grant Security Requirements](#)



[The Mindset of the Modern Responsible Researcher and Acquisition Guide](#)



[Open Science and You](#)



[Power Plant Sessions, the Research Security Podcast](#)



[Updated Completing Your Risk Assessment Form Guidance](#)

We're here to help!

From Our Community

Working and coordinating with Jacqueline and her team at the SRO has been such a wonderful experience in learning and collaboration within the One University we share. Through the SRO's outreach work, the CSJ community was included to ensure that we understand the stakes. Their efforts to come to CSJ on several occasions, to give bilingual workshops, to answer specific questions in a very timely manner, and to co-produce with us French materials has been stellar. Un grand merci à cette équipe de champions.

Dr. Samira ElAtia
Associate Dean (Research)
Graduate Studies and International CSJ

Research security is the foundation of Canada's defence innovation ecosystem. The SRO enables trusted collaboration between universities, government, and industry by ensuring that sensitive research can be conducted responsibly and securely. For initiatives like DEFENDS, this trust is what allows us to co-locate with the Canadian Armed Forces and industry partners, accelerate technology development, and protect Canadian innovation from global threats.

Dr. James Hogan
Director, Centre for Applied Research in Defence and Dual-Use Technologies

The SRO has proven invaluable to the activities of CARDD-Tech as we've set up research collaborations in the defence and dual-use space, from open-source due-diligence checks to developing risk mitigation plans to serving as a single point of contact on research security matters as we chart new territory in this area. Through this expert guidance, training, and hands-on support, the SRO team is embedding a strong culture of research security across the University of Alberta, reinforcing our reputation as a trusted partner for sensitive, defence-oriented, and dual-use research.

Dr. Ashwin K. Iyer
Director, Centre for Applied Research in Defence and Dual-Use Technologies

The Safeguarding Research Office has played a critical role in supporting CNAS researchers, reflected in the invaluable perspective they provided to our team when attending the 2025 Hannover Messe. Similar engagement related STRAC compliance of grant applications has assisted our researchers as they pursue external funding opportunities.

Dr. Jon Veinot
Associate Dean (Research)
College of Natural and Applied Sciences

