Best Practices
For
Academics Traveling Overseas

American academic freedom and the advanced research & development (R&D) [illegible] conducted at Academic Institutions [illegible] are still some considerations to help protect your students and your R&D from being stolen by other researchers, or used by hostile foreign governments / their military agencies.

✓Prior to your travel, be sure to visit www.state.gov/travel and/or www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html to obtain country background, updated travel advisories and the current political situation of the countries being visited.

✓Do not travel with any unnecessary information or current research on a laptop. Avoid placing internet addresses, [illegible] on any laptop you take. Take only that which you will present or discuss at the conference. Do not leave your laptop unattended. Make sure your laptop is password protected. [illegible] strangely stolen in foreign countries. [illegible] before and after travel. Recognize that your personal belongings may be searched several times.

✓Understand that foreign universities, foreign companies, and foreign governments are often interconnected, such that any inquiry from persons or businesses while traveling, actually may be from a hidden interest with an ulterior motive.

✓Not all conference attendees with whom you come in contact will be genuinely interested in your research. Some may be inquiring on behalf of another country or researcher.

✓Be aware of unsolicited requests sent to you on the internet, persons asking questions about your research, and persons requesting your opinion [illegible] as to the status or other research being conducted at the Academic Institution. Information about failures in research can be as valuable as successes. Be careful in discussing any research that is not your own.

✓Recognize not all foreign students who contact American professors are doing so on their own accord. Some are directed to do so by competitor or foreign intelligence services.

✓Obtain business cards of all personnel with whom you have extensive contact while traveling. Put the date of contact on the back and retain them for future reference.

✓Do not speak about or comment on the status of research and development being conducted by others in your department. Refer questions to those professors directly.

✓Avoid political conversations, or offering political opinions, while in foreign countries. This includes in person, on the telephone, or on the internet.

✓Do not take any provocative or suggestive literature with you to other countries.

✓After meeting with the appropriate research [illegible] your academic institution, [illegible] report any unusual personal, telephonic, or internet contacts to your local office of the FBI.