



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

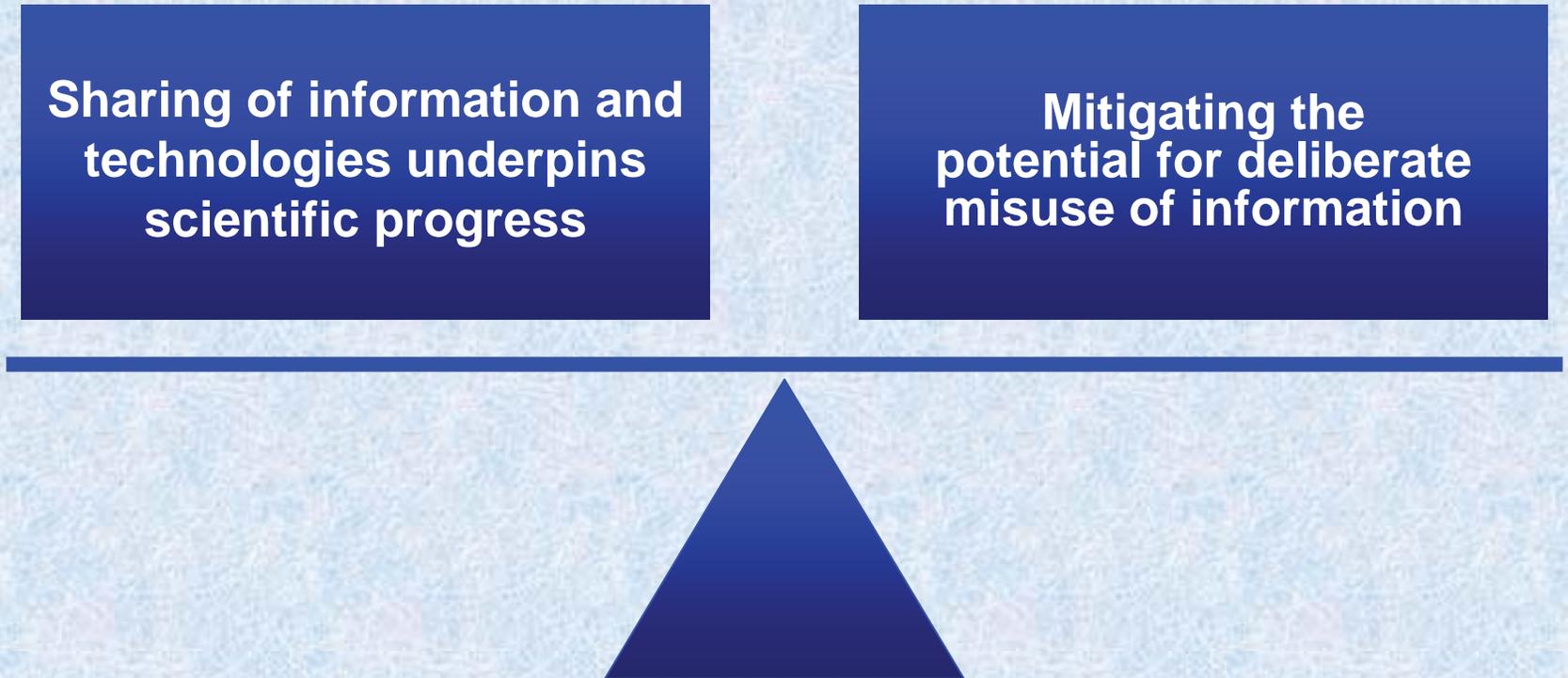
- **Communicate research to the fullest extent possible**
 - **Permits advancement of life sciences research to benefit public health and the environment**
 - **Restriction of scientific communication a rare exception rather than the rule**

Overarching Principles

The Need for Balance

Sharing of information and technologies underpins scientific progress

Mitigating the potential for deliberate misuse of information



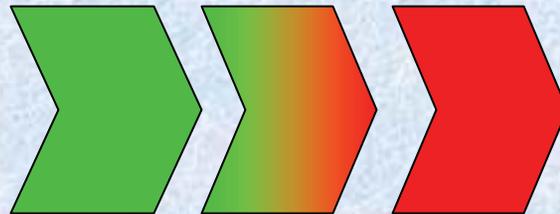


Overarching Principles

- The decision to communicate information is not necessarily binary



YES



NO



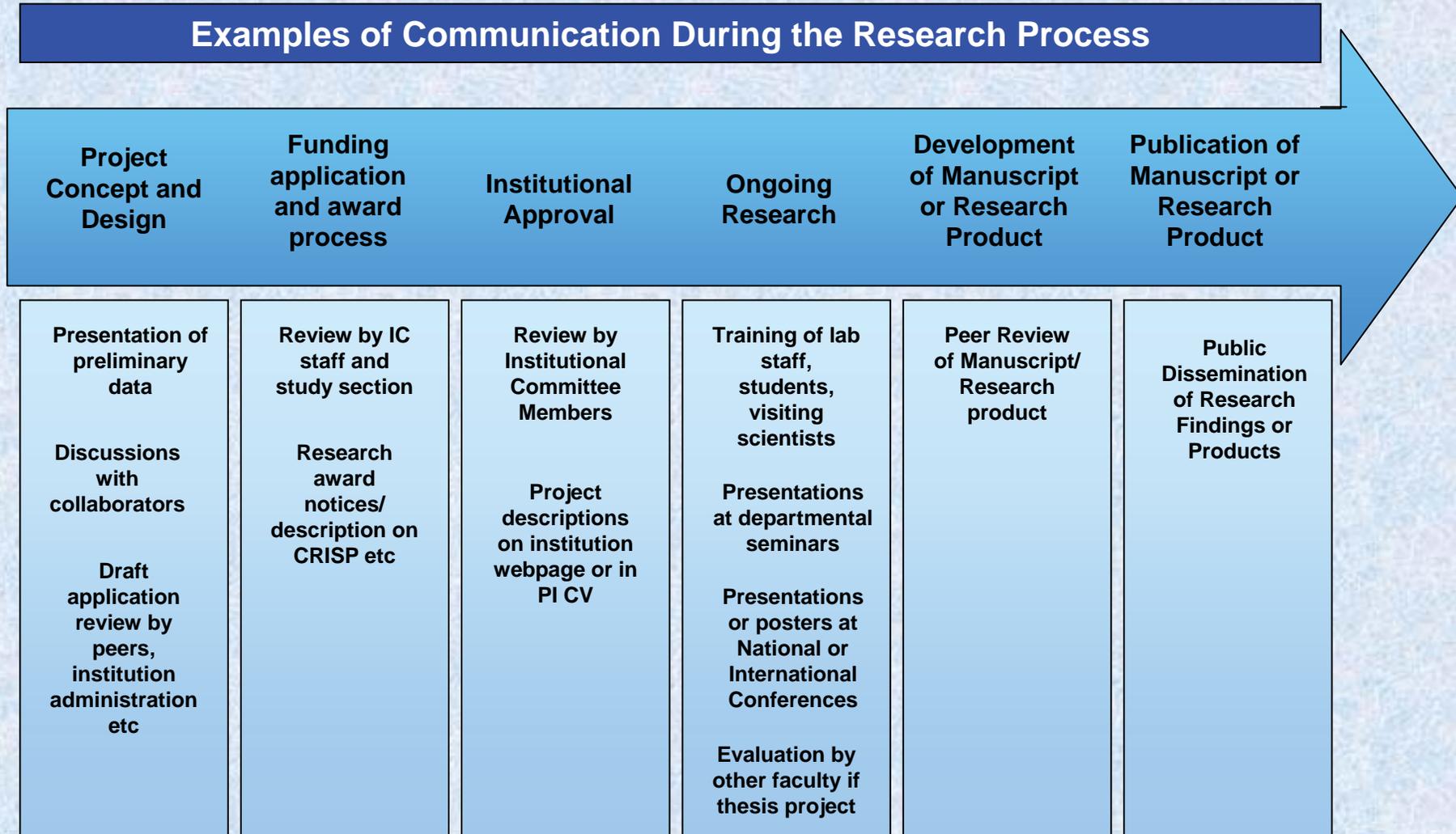
Overarching Principles

- **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

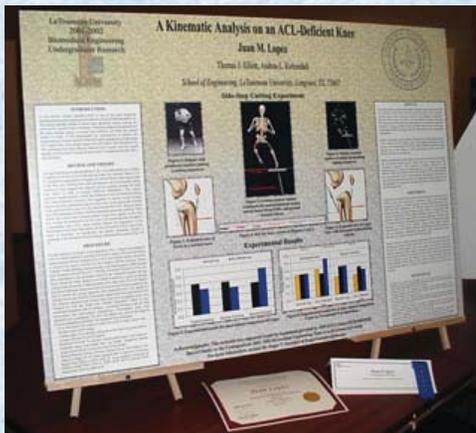
Examples of Communication During the Research Process





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?

