

2026/08/03 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

APA Justice Meeting – Monday, 2026/08/03
1:55 pm Eastern Time / 10:55 am Pacific Time

1. Update from CAPAC

Speaker: Judith Teruya, Executive Director, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), Judith.Teruya@mail.house.gov

Not on record.

2. Update from Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC

Speaker: Joanna YangQing Derman, Director, Anti-Profilng, Civil Rights & National Security Program, Advancing Justice | AAJC, jderman@advancingjustice-aaajc.org

- Advancing Justice | AAJC: [Anti-Profilng, Civil Rights & National Security Program](#)

Joanna provided a brief update as she has been traveling and that Dennis Jing is on well-deserved time off.

Key update: The House passed the FY27 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), H.R. 880, on July 22 by a bipartisan vote of 216-212. The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration and negotiation. As in past years, AAJC will send a letter to NDAA conferees outlining AAPI priorities, and is currently tracking relevant amendments in both House and Senate versions to inform that letter. More details on the letter and next steps will follow.

Otherwise: AAJC is using the August recess to catch up on lower-priority projects, including:

- Reviewing state-level "land laws" (state laws restricting land ownership by certain foreign nationals/entities) and updating their federal and state-level tracker — targeted for completion by the end of August recess.
- Reviewing other public-facing materials, including messaging guidance and a resource that helps individuals assess their own state's land laws and identify advocacy steps for community-level involvement.

3. Update from Asian American Scholar Forum

Speaker: Gisela Perez Kusakawa, Executive Director, [Asian American Scholar Forum](#) (AASF), gpkusakawa@aasforum.org

Gisela was on her way to host the 2026 Frontier & Pioneer Symposium from August 7–9, 2026, at Stanford University. She regrets not being to speak at the meeting.

4. Research Security Rules: What's Changing, What It Means for Universities

Speakers:

- [Tam Dao](#), Associate Vice President of Public Safety and Research Security, Rice University
- [Kenny Evans](#), Fellow in Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy, Rice University

Kenny Evans — "The Long Arm of Research Security"

Kenny opened by thanking APA Justice, noting he relies on the group's updates from Joanna, Judith, and others to track developments. He introduced Tam Dao, Rice's Associate VP for Research Security and Campus Safety, as a close collaborator who helps him navigate new rules as an active NSF grant recipient.

Main argument: Research security as a concept is reasonable in principle (protecting research from misappropriation and foreign interference), but the new NSF policy gets the approach wrong. Kenny argued research security should be researcher-centered — helping scientists stay in the U.S. and collaborate safely — rather than the direction NSF is taking, which he described as mirroring the Department of War's blanket securitization approach to fundamental science.

Key points:

- The new NSF guidance (issued July 8, effective FY2027) appears to eliminate the traditional "fundamental research exception" that historically let unclassified, non-sensitive basic/applied research proceed even under agencies with military ties.
- NSF has lacked a Senate-confirmed director since early in the Trump administration, which Kenny said has left a leadership vacuum allowing greater White House control

over internal NSF operations, including award reviews and alignment with OMB's uniform guidance.

- OMB's proposed uniform guidance (led by OMB Director Russ Vought) extends the logic of the Wolf Amendment (which restricts bilateral U.S.-China activities via OSTP/NASA, notably keeping China off the ISS) to nearly all federally funded science and countries broadly — despite reportedly 60,000-100,000+ public comments opposing parts of it.
- Kenny's three core objections to the NSF rule:
 - It doesn't clarify how it interacts with existing frameworks like NSPM-33 and the CHIPS and Science Act, which exempt universities under \$50 million in funding from certain research-security compliance requirements — an exemption absent from the new NSF guidance, potentially expanding covered institutions from roughly 180 to 1,800.
 - Treating all science as a security risk is, in his view, fundamentally the wrong blanket approach.
 - There is no clear evidence the policies are working, improving safety, or responding to a sufficient volume of actual research security incidents to justify such broad restrictions.

Tam Dao — Rice University's Operational Perspective

Tam followed with a practical, on-the-ground look at how Rice is interpreting NSF's Dear Colleague Letter, emphasizing that much of the language remains operationally undefined.

Key ambiguities he flagged:

Scope of "collaboration": Unclear whether the ban on collaborating with "restricted entities" applies only to the specific NSF-funded grant, or extends to a researcher's other (non-NSF) funding and activities.

Comparison to Department of War practice: DOW's approach, which NSF says it will follow, reportedly requires researchers to fully cut ties with restricted entities before funding — raising the question of whether NSF intends the same complete severance rather than a narrower, grant-specific restriction.

Retrospective review: DOW reportedly reviews past collaborations (4-5 years back) and allows researchers to explain/mitigate flagged relationships; NSF's letter doesn't address whether it will do the same, and Tam's own read is that such explanations likely won't be considered sufficient under NSF's approach.

Inconsistent lists across agencies: NSF reportedly maintains around 12 restricted-entity lists that don't fully align with those used by the Department of Energy, NIH, ARPA-H, or others — creating confusion for researchers who hold grants from multiple agencies.

Undefined "research support": It's unclear whether hosting a visiting student or having a lab conversation with someone from a restricted entity would count as prohibited "research support," even if that person isn't formally on the NSF-funded project.

Rice's risk-benefit concern: Tam noted many valuable collaborations are low-risk but high-benefit (e.g., accessing niche technical expertise unavailable domestically), and worried the new rules remove the ability for scientists to make individualized, evidence-based risk/benefit judgments — even when a collaboration would clearly benefit the U.S. more than the foreign partner.

Rice's current approach: Rather than enforcement, Rice's near-term focus is awareness and education — proactively informing faculty (especially those with long-standing, deeply personal international collaborations built over decades) that changes are coming in October, and beginning the complex work of helping them audit their existing collaborations, materials purchases, and international relationships against the various restricted-entity lists.

5. National Science Foundation Update (Postponed)

[NOTE] Sarah Stalker-Lehoux will not be able to speak as originally scheduled. Rebecca Lynn Keiser, Acting Chief of Staff and Chief of Research Security Strategy and Policy, National Science Foundation, will speak at the September APA Justice monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 1.]

6. A Scientist's Perspective on Pending Science Policy Changes

Speaker: [Roger Innes](#), Distinguished Professor, Biology, Indiana University

Professor Roger Innes, a plant scientist at Indiana University, spoke about his personal and scientific perspective on NSF/OMB policy changes while attending the American Phytopathological Society Conference in Providence, RI. He opened by noting as a vivid example of how essential international collaboration is to science, particularly in his field of plant disease resistance and food security, where researchers work to protect U.S. crops from pathogens crossing borders.

Personal impact of the NSF rule:

Roger is NSF-funded and has employed many international postdocs over the years, including several from China; he remains in contact with former lab members who have since returned to China and now run their own labs there.

He connected directly to the "vague definition of collaboration" problem Kenny and Tam raised earlier: routine scientific practices — like exchanging biological materials (plant seed, plasmid DNA) with international colleagues, which is both expected and often required by funding agencies and journals when publishing research — are now caught in ambiguity.

In response to the new rules, Indiana University has implemented a policy requiring express permission before shipping or requesting biological materials to/from any lab in China, with a review process taking about a month to determine compliance.

Roger argued this is significantly slowing down research and, in his view, is being used by government and universities to shut down collaborations outright — producing the opposite of the policy's stated goal (protecting U.S. science from IP theft), since it risks cutting off U.S. researchers from cutting-edge innovations happening in leading labs abroad, particularly in China, which he described as a leader in his field of plant disease resistance.

On the OMB proposal:

Roger called the OMB directive a "jaw-dropping" proposal, expressing alarm that it would politicize all federally funded work — pure science and social-support programs alike — by subjecting grant decisions to political appointee review rather than traditional peer review. He noted the scientific community's core concern: that funding should go to the best science, not the most politically palatable science, and that this policy risks effectively ending peer review as the basis for federal research funding.

He noted a strong pushback from the scientific community, with the open question being whether OMB will respond to those concerns, and whether Congress might act if it does not.

(Roger's remarks were briefly interrupted by a technical/connection issue mid-comment and he resumed to finish his point on the OMB directive after returning.)

7. Q&A and Discussions

8. Next Meeting

The first Monday in September is Labor Day, a federal holiday. The next monthly meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 1, 2026, starting 1:55 pm ET/10:55 am PT