

National Centre for Biosecurity



The University of Sydney

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INVITATION

to an Interactive Seminar on

'The Dual Use Dilemma in the Life Sciences'

Thursday 23 July 2009

4:00pm to 6:00pm

Lecture Theatre 2
Westmead Education and Conference Centre
Westmead Hospital

International concern about biological weapons has increased significantly, particularly since the anthrax attacks of 2001 in the United States. Biotechnology research has great potential to benefit health and agriculture, but questions arise as to whether it might aid the deliberate spread of disease. Traditional concerns about laboratory biosafety are being increasingly complemented by growing attention to biosecurity practices within and outside of laboratories. In Australia, this is reflected in the 'security-sensitive biological agents' (SSBA) scheme being introduced in 2009. Beyond legal regulations, ethical questions remain including what novel threats might stem from life science research, whether and how scientists should contribute to national defence, and whether some lines of investigation are too contentious to pursue.

This interactive seminar has three aims:

1. Inform participants about current international discussions surrounding 'dual use' and 'biosecurity'.
2. Generate debate about the merits and pitfalls of proposed policy responses.
3. Provide examples of educational programs and oversight measures related to dual use research.

Topics for discussion will include the funding of research, communication of research results, oversight of experiments, the responsibilities of scientists and other biosecurity stakeholders, and examples of national and international governance measures being implemented or considered.

Facilitators:

Dr Christian Enemark, Centre for International Security Studies, University of Sydney
Dr Belinda Herring, Department of Infectious Diseases and Immunology, University of Sydney
Dr Michael Selgelid, Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics, ANU

Seating is limited. **RSVP by 6 July 2009** to lou_orszulak@wsahs.nsw.gov.au

*This interactive seminar is part of a pilot project on raising awareness in Australia of the dual use dilemma in the life sciences, funded by the **Alfred P. Sloan Foundation**.*

www.biosecurity.edu.au