

## Membership Updates – June 2025

### HEECA 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference – Thank You!

A sincere thank you to all delegates, speakers and sponsors who contributed to making this year's conference such a valuable and engaging event. Over the course of two days, we welcomed 125 organisations and more than 180 delegates to discuss a broad range of topics related to Economic and Research Security.

Now in its fourth year, the Annual Conference continues to evolve – this year's event built on the expanded 2-day format introduced in 2024, offering even greater opportunity for in-depth discussion and collaboration across the UK higher education sector, government and our international partners.

The post-conference delegate portal will remain live for the next four weeks, and all attendees should have received log-in details via email. We encourage you to access the available materials and share your feedback to help shape HEECA's future priorities and events.

As always, we take away a wealth of insight and look forward to carrying this momentum into HEECA 2026!

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### National Security Strategy 2025: Security for the British People in a Dangerous World

Last week the Cabinet Office released the National Security Strategy 2025, '**Security for the British People in a Dangerous World (NSS 2025)**', identifying the main challenges the UK faces in an era of radical uncertainty and setting out a new Strategic Framework covering all aspects of national security and international policy.

The Strategic Context describes an intensification of great power competition and greater prospect of geopolitical volatility including confrontation with adversaries, competition with other states, and wider cooperation, with the framework setting out principles to guide the UK's response to this context.

The three key principles that underpin this are:

- **Security at Home** - defending our territory, making the UK a harder target and building resilience to future threats. Delivering on the security and resilience of our homeland and people, both in the physical and online world, is critical for delivering economic growth and this Government's missions to improve the lives of the British people.

- **Strength Abroad** - bolstering collective security, renewing and refreshing key alliances and developing new partnerships in new domains. Using all the levers of state and national power to achieve influence abroad in a more challenging international environment.
- **Increasing Sovereign & Asymmetric Capabilities** - rebuilding our defence industrial base, developing and maintaining sovereign capabilities and pursuing asymmetric strategies. Ensuring our national security agenda aligns with our mission to grow the economy and increase opportunity for the British people by reducing our dependence on others and their ability to coerce us.

Access the [National Security Strategy 2025 on the GOV.UK website](#) here.

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## **FIRS Post-Launch Webinar – Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2pm**

The Foreign Influence Registration Scheme (FIRS) aims to strengthen the resilience of the UK political system against covert foreign influence and provides greater assurances around the activities of certain foreign powers or entities where there is a national security risk. Compliance with the scheme does not mean that activity is illegal or must cease but encourages transparency and deters harmful state threats.

The Home Office is aware that some organisations were unable to attend the pre-launch webinars or would benefit from a refresher following the scheme's launch on 1 July. As sessions are not recorded, **a further live webinar will take place on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July at 14:00 BST.**

This one-hour session will provide an overview of the scheme, run through key examples based on stakeholder input and include plenty of time for questions. While it will not be possible to comment on specific registrations, questions are encouraged around the scope and process of the scheme.

If you're able to join, please click accept on the invite, and ask those you share the link onto to do the same.

[Access the meeting link here.](#)

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## **DfE 'Protective Preparedness For Education Settings' Webinar**

In partnership with the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO), the Department for Education (DfE) will shortly be hosting a **Protective Preparedness for Education Settings** webinar, focusing on counter terrorism protective security and preparedness specifically tailored to the education sector.

This webinar will provide an overview of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 – commonly known as 'Martyn's Law' – outlining its expected implications for education settings.

NaCTSO will also deliver a briefing on practical steps that institutions can take to strengthen protective measures, with reference to scalable approaches appropriate across a range of settings.

This is an opportunity to gain up-to-date guidance directly from national authorities and understand how evolving legislation may affect your institution.

**To register, check out the DfE webinar flyer attached and submit your details via one of the available session slots.**

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## **Trusted Research and Innovation: How Knowledge Leakage Affects the Research & Innovation Ecosystem**

The **Innovation & Research Caucus** has recently published a new report ‘Trusted Research and Innovation: How Knowledge Leakage Affects the Research & Innovation Ecosystem’. The report highlights how innovation, underpinned by a strong Research and Innovation ecosystem, is central to economic growth, social well-being and national resilience. However, the leakage of valuable knowledge can disrupt this system, undermining both innovation and national interests.

The report begins with an overview of the TR&I context, with a particular focus on policymaking, before reviewing the literature on knowledge leakage and related concepts. It then presents an exploratory data analysis using novel empirical data to assess the extent of knowledge leakage and its impact on economic areas of defence, and national and economic security.

The report provides valuable insight for policymakers aiming to strengthen research security and support a more resilient innovation environment.

[Access the full report here.](#)

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## **UK and EU Security & Defence Partnership Launched**

Last month, the UK Government announced a new Security and Defence Partnership with the EU, signalling renewed cooperation on a range of shared challenges. The partnership establishes a structured dialogue covering areas such as peace mediation, conflict prevention and resolution, crisis management, and joint support to third countries. It also includes co-operation in the field of the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), with a focus on exchanging best practices and exploring opportunities for joint training.

The dialogue will span a broad set of issues, including maritime and space security, cyber threats and emerging technologies, hybrid threats and critical infrastructure resilience, foreign information manipulation, counterterrorism, and the links between climate and security. It will also address external dimensions of economic security and irregular migration.

While still in its early stages, the partnership may open the door for future UK participation in specific EU defence initiatives, marking a step forward in UK–EU security and defence relations.

Check out the [GOV.UK announcement here](#).

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## **China Audit: Foreign Secretary's Statement**

Last week, UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy made a statement to the House of Commons following the Government's long-anticipated China Audit. The statement outlines a new strategic direction for UK-China relations, underpinned by what the Foreign Secretary describes as 'progressive realism', with a focus on engaging where possible and challenging where necessary.

He emphasises the need for renewed UK-China dialogue on issues including climate, development, global health, science and trade, while China remains the UK's second-largest research collaborator, contributing to 11% of British research output – at the same time, acknowledging that the UK has lacked the structures needed to manage both the opportunities and the risks of deep bilateral ties.

The statement also noted plans to strengthen the UK's internal capability to understand and engage with China, including investment in language training and policy expertise. The audit is expected to guide future policy on research collaboration, economic engagement and national security.

Read the [full statement on the GOV.UK website here](#).

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## **EC Releases New Dual-Use Research and Innovation Publications**

The European Commission has published two independent expert reports examining dual-use research and innovation (R&I), aimed at supporting strategic thinking and informed decision-making for future EU funding programmes.

The first, a policy brief by the ESIR expert group, emphasises the importance of adopting a 'dual-use by design' approach to enhance security, competitiveness and sustainability. It highlights the potential of dual-use R&I to increase research productivity and foster collaboration between civil and defence sectors, while also addressing the need for appropriate governance and ethical oversight.

The second report, authored by experts from both communities, offers case studies and practical insights into how dual-use R&I is implemented across research organisations, SMEs and start-ups. It also reviews national strategies and funding models from other countries.

Together, the reports provide a complementary view of policy and practice, offering guidance for future EU research frameworks. Read the [publications on the EC website](#) here.

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## U.S. DoS Releases Fundamental Research Proposals – Risk Matrix

The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) has released its 2025 Decision Matrix to Inform Fundamental Research Risk Decisions, effective for all proposals submitted on or after 9<sup>th</sup> May 2025. The matrix is intended to help DoD programme managers assess fundamental research proposals for signs of foreign influence and determine appropriate risk mitigation measures. It reflects the Department's ongoing commitment to safeguarding research critical to U.S. national security while preserving the scientific openness that drives innovation.

Key updates include:

- A ban on collaborations with institutions listed under Section 1286 of the FY 2025 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)
- Removal of the requirement for institutional policies prohibiting participation in malign foreign talent recruitment programmes
- Elimination of the distinction between 'association' and 'affiliation'
- Revised trigger dates for mitigation actions

The matrix also clarifies that co-authorship with listed entities will not automatically disqualify proposals but may warrant mitigation on a case-by-case basis.

Access the [Decision Risk Matrix here](#) or check out other information available on the [DoD Academic Research Security webpage](#).

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## Follow us on LinkedIn

We are on [LinkedIn](#). To help continue to grow our page and the wider HEECA network, follow us and keep up to date with the latest news and events!

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## NEW Vacancies

**No current vacancies listed**

### Disclaimer:

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