



[Original The Paper Report](#)

Committee of 100 survey: More than half of scientists of Chinese descent in U.S. feel fear of being surveilled by the government

BY Dong Liu, OCTOBER 29, 2021, The Paper

On October 28 local time, a joint study by the Chinese American organization Committee of 100 and the University of Arizona shows that 50.7% of Chinese professors and researchers in the United States feel fear and anxiety that they are being surveilled by the U.S. government.

“What is clear from this research is that U.S. scientists and researchers of Chinese descent and non-Chinese descent experience the world and their work very differently because of racism, stereotypes, xenophobia, and government policies,” said Dr. Jenny J. Lee, Professor in the Center for the Study of Higher Education, College of Education, at the University of Arizona.

The study is aimed to explore racial profiling in science and research, particularly, professors and researchers of Chinese descent in the U.S. report far more difficulty in the environment of academic exchanges and cooperation between China and U.S. are affected by political disputes. A nationwide blind survey was administered to scientists both of Chinese and non-Chinese descent including faculty, postdocs, graduate students at top U.S. colleges and universities over the Summer of 2021. The final sample consisted of 1,949 scientists across the country.

Results show that overall, scientists of Chinese descent and non-Chinese descent both recognize the value of scientists of Chinese descent and support collaboration with China. 96.8% of scientists of Chinese descent and 93.6% of scientists of non-Chinese descent believe that scientists of Chinese descent make important contributions to research and teaching programs in the U.S.

42.2% of scientists of Chinese descent feel racially profiled by the U.S. government, while only 8.6% of scientists of non-Chinese descent feel so. 38.4% of scientists of Chinese descent experience more difficulty in obtaining funding for research projects in the U.S. as a result of their race/ethnicity/country of origin, compared to only 14.2% of scientists of non-Chinese descent. 50.7% of scientists of Chinese descent feel considerable fear and/or anxiety that they are being surveilled by the U.S. government, compared to only 11.7% of scientists of non-Chinese descent. 39.7% of scientists of Chinese descent believe the U.S. should be tougher on China to prevent the theft of intellectual property, while 74.8% of scientists of non-Chinese descent feel so.

The survey data also shows that the China Initiative is producing a wave of fear among scientists of non-Chinese descent as well, where scientists have described cutting ties with their collaborators in China, no longer hiring Chinese postdocs, and limiting communications with scholars in China, even at the expense of their own research projects.

Scientists of Chinese descent indicate in the survey that they have purposely not pursued federal funding for projects for fear of increased scrutiny, compared to scientists of non-Chinese descent. This can lead to smaller teams, downsizing of projects, and working with reduced resources. Scientists of Chinese descent have also started to consider working in less hostile climates outside the U.S., which could affect talent retention. The enrollment of new international graduate students from China has already been declining.

“The U.S. is the global leader in scientific research, yet suspicions of scientists of Chinese descent in the U.S. have made progress and exchange more difficult,” said Zhengyu Huang, President of Committee of 100. (END)