



Protecting Scientific Freedom around the World

Professor Daya Reddy, ISC President & CFRS Chair
Frances Vaughan, CFRS Special Advisor





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Professor Saths Cooper, ISC Governing Board Member & CFRS Vice Chair
Vivi Stavrou, CFRS Executive Secretary



- 1** **Introducing the Committee for Freedom and Responsibility in Science (CFRS)**
- 2** **Protecting scientific freedom: case examples**
- 3** **Q&A**

Principle of Freedom and Responsibility in Science

“The free and responsible practice of science is fundamental to scientific advancement and human and environmental well-being. Such practice, in all its aspects, requires **freedom of movement, association, expression and communication for scientists**, as well as **equitable access to data, information, and other resources** for research. It requires responsibility at all levels to carry out and communicate scientific work with **integrity, respect, fairness, trustworthiness, and transparency**, recognizing its benefits and possible harms. In advocating the free and responsible practice of science, the Council **promotes equitable opportunities** for access to science and its benefits, and **opposes discrimination** based on such factors as ethnic origin, religion, citizenship, language, political or other opinion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or age.”

Committee for Freedom and Responsibility in Science (CFRS)



Daya Reddy



Saths Cooper



Richard Bedford



Craig Callender



Enrique Forero



Robin Grimes



Cheryl Praeger



Sawako Shirahase



Peter Strohschneider



Hans Thybo



Nadia Zakhary

CFRS is the guardian of the Principle of Freedom and Responsibility in Science.

The committee works to uphold and protect the freedoms that scientists should enjoy, and the responsibilities they carry, while engaging in scientific practice.

Committee Core Group



Daya Reddy
Chair



Saths Cooper
Vice-Chair



Vivi Stavrou
Executive Secretary



Frances Vaughan
Special Advisor

ISC Senior Science Officer Vivi Stavrou serves as the committee's Executive Secretary.

CFRS Special Advisor Frances Vaughan is based at the Royal Society Te Apārangi in Aotearoa New Zealand and is funded by the NZ government.

Addressing Threats to Scientific Freedom

The ISC seeks to uphold four fundamental scientific freedoms:

- Freedom of **movement**;
- Freedom of **association**;
- Freedom of **expression and communication**; and
- Freedom of **access to data and information**

CFRS monitors **individual and generic cases** of scientists whose freedoms and rights are restricted as a result of carrying out their scientific research.

The committee aims to provide assistance in such cases where its intervention can provide relief and/or support the activities of other relevant actors.

Case Identification and Monitoring

Potential cases typically arise through:

- Media coverage
- ISC Members and Affiliates
- ISC partner organizations

CANADA

**Government tightens foreign
research collaboration rules**



ISC Members can signal a case they wish to raise with the Committee by contacting the CFRS Executive Secretary.

The CFRS Special Advisor is responsible for researching potential new cases when they are raised, and advising the Committee on decisions relating to case selection and response.

Case Selection

CFRS uses the following criteria to guide their case selection:

- The issue(s) must be **concerned substantially with science**, or with the freedom of individuals **as a consequence of pursuing scientific activities** (human rights cases which happen to involve a scientist are generally out of scope);
- The issue should generally be one for which ISC can take a public view for **transparency and maximum impact** and for which there is a feasible pathway to impact. However, this does not preclude initiating non-public action where this is more appropriate, or taking stances even if positive influence is unlikely;
- There should be **sufficient evidence** available to support a defensible ISC position and which enables ISC's views to be crafted in a way which avoids perception of advocacy or uninformed opinion.

Case Responses

Actions are determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the sensitivity and severity of the situation. Potential actions include:

- Letters: **private or open letters** may be sent by the Chair of CFRS or the ISC President to relevant ISC Members, institutions, or Heads of States.
- Announcements: public comments about cases may be made on **social media and/or the ISC website**.
- Statements: a **public position** adopted by the CFRS and endorsed by the ISC Governing Board.
- Commentaries: commentaries in the form of **opinion pieces, editorials, etc.** may be published by members of CFRS.

Case Management Partners: ISC Members

Case identification

ISC Members, affiliated bodies and partners can **bring potential cases** to the Committee's attention.

Case responses

Where CFRS agrees to act, this would typically be preceded by **correspondence** with the relevant ISC Member/s, seeking further information and the Member's perspective on the case.

It is appropriate and often the case that **Members also act**, e.g. by issuing their own statement or publicizing the matter on social media.

Case Management Partners: International Networks



The CFRS Special Advisor is responsible for monitoring both new and previously selected cases on behalf of the Committee. This involves liaising with **international networks** for:

- Information sharing
- Strategic planning
- Collaborative case responses

CFRS Governance

Core Group



Committee

Deal with intersessional and urgent matters in communication with the full Committee.

Advise Core Group and ISC as per request; discuss full portfolio of cases at least twice per year

CFRS Governance

ISC Governing Board

Dealing with particularly sensitive matter, or signalling a significant position by CFRS/ ISC



Core Group

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Committee

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Case Study 1: Conference and Events Boycotts

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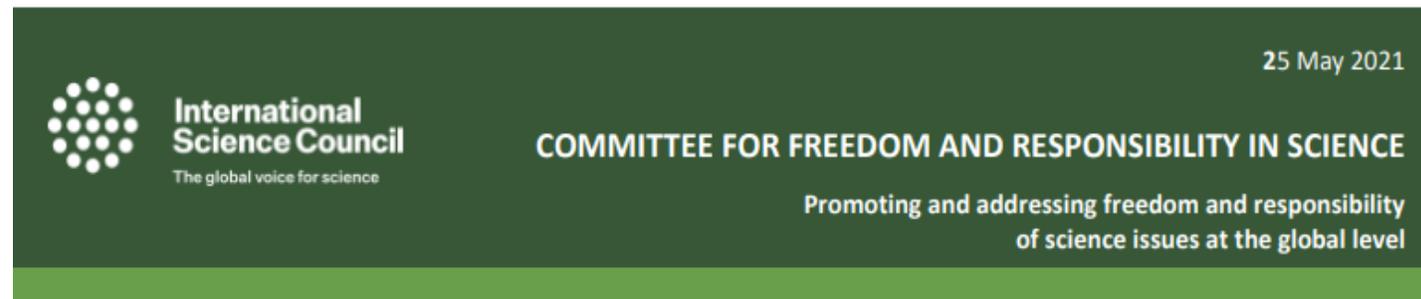


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Case Study 1: Conference and Events Boycotts



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ISC position on conference and event boycotts

Case Study 1: Conference and Events Boycotts

- The ISC's vision of science as a global good relies on **effective cooperation** between researchers across disciplines and parts of the world.
- The ISC promotes **equal opportunities** for all scientists to participate in scientific exchange and cooperation.
- Boycotts of conferences and events can **limit the sharing of knowledge** between scientists and further **isolate certain scientific communities** from opportunities to exchange with their peers.
- Individual scientists should be free to make their own choices about attending scientific meetings
- ISC Members that organize or sponsor international scientific meetings are expected to ensure that participation of scientists is **free from discrimination of any kind**.

Case Study 2: Dr. Andreas Georgiou



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- President of Greece's national statistical office from 2010 to 2015
- Investigated, tried and acquitted three times on charges of conspiring to artificially inflate Greece's deficit statistics (**validated by Eurostat since they were first produced**)
- Convicted for violation of duty for not submitting these statistics to a vote (**in keeping with European statistical principles**)
- Criminally investigated for seeking to protect statistical confidentiality (**in keeping with European statistical principles**)
- Charged for simple slander for defending the deficit statistics (**as required by statistical principles**)

Case Study 2: Dr. Andreas Georgiou



Letters to:

- Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic
- Presidents of the European Parliament, the European Council and the European Commission
- Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights

Additional actions:

- Public statement
- Consultation with the Academy of Athens, Greece
- Consultation with the office of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights

Discussion

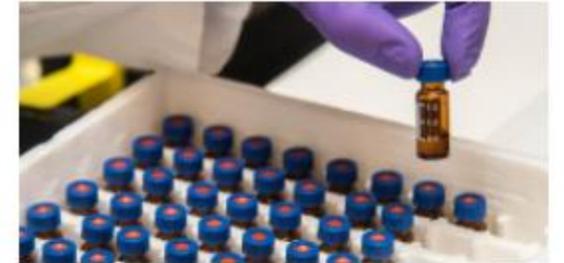
Please submit your questions in the **Chat Box** or raise your hand by clicking **Raise Hand** in the webinar controls.

Call for partners: collaborating on issues related to scientific freedom and responsibility in science

Online form within Members' section of the ISC website: <https://council.science/members/call-for-partners-scientific-freedom-responsibility-science/>



Scientific freedoms



Responsible science



Current projects



Science and human rights

Get in touch



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