Reaffirming the value of international collaborations

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Scientific collaborations across the globe are an important part of modern research. However, political and economic strife between governments, such as current tensions between the U.S. and China, can

threaten these vital connections, according to an article in *Chemical & Engineering News* (*C&EN*), the weekly newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society.

With recent advances in communication and travel, international collaboration is easier than ever in many ways. Scientists often reach out to colleagues across the globe for their expertise in certain niche areas. Others value the unique intellectual environments that different cultures bring. Some researchers even have labs in multiple countries, bridging resources and human capital. But despite these benefits, international collaborations face challenges because of political and economic realities, Senior Editor Andrea Widener writes.

Current tensions between the U.S. and China exemplify these hurdles. On Sept. 16, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy issued an open letter to the research community, expressing concerns about foreign nations possibly exploiting and undermining U.S. research activities. These concerns arose from rare cases of scientific misconduct, which critics say are not enough to justify a revamp of U.S. security policies. Meanwhile, some scientists of Chinese origin feel unfairly targeted and unwelcome in the U.S., which could hurt recruitment of graduate students and postdocs. Also, some Chinese scientists have reported difficulties obtaining travel visas to the U.S. for collaborative work. Although the future of research collaborations between the two nations is currently unclear, many scientists believe the harms of tightening research security rules will far outweigh the benefits.

More information: "Science Bridges International Borders," cen.acs.org/careers/Science-br … ional-borders/97/i38

Provided by American Chemical Society

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