

RESEARCH SECURITY ADVISORY

September 26, 2023

ENGAGING WITH CSIS

OVERVIEW

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) is Canada's national intelligence agency. Its mandate is to investigate activities suspected of constituting threats to the security of Canada, defined in law as relating to terrorism, state-sponsored espionage, and foreign interference. These threats could come in various forms, and may include activities that could undermine Canada's research ecosystem. While CSIS could conduct interviews of members of the university community or general public, it is important to note that CSIS officers are not law enforcement personnel. In this research security advisory notice, we aim to provide guidance in the event that a CSIS officer would like to speak with a UVic researcher, such as a UVic faculty member, postdoc or graduate student, for an interview.

WHAT TO DO

Before engaging with any third party (including CSIS officers), it is important to verify that such third party is legitimate. Typically, a verification step is needed to avoid the risk of engaging with an impostor or scammer. In general, CSIS will not attempt to contact you via email, unless from its Academic Outreach & Stakeholder Engagement unit. Instead, a CSIS officer may contact you through a phone call to initiate an interview or may approach you in person. Hence, it is suggested that you consider the steps below when approached by a supposed CSIS officer:

1. Ask for the purpose of the interview.
2. Note the name, time and location of the encounter with the CSIS officer.
3. At the initial encounter, you may decide not to engage for an interview right away. Instead, you may politely inform the CSIS officer that you will verify the interview request first. This verification step will rule out potential incidence of impersonation.
4. Call the CSIS phone number: **(613) 993-9620, Option #4**. Provide the details of the initial encounter with the CSIS officer, and ask to confirm the legitimacy of the interview request. The CSIS representative will provide guidance going forward, and can provide a code to you for use in communicating with the CSIS officer.
5. In subsequent meetings with the CSIS officer, you are welcome to bring a trusted companion of your choice. Examples of possible companion may include a relative, a



friend, a fellow faculty member, a Department Chair or Dean, a Faculty Association Representative, or a lawyer.

6. If asked to provide details of any UVic research project that is governed by a research agreement with a third party, please contact UVic's Research Security Unit (researchsecurity@uvic.ca) so you can be guided with the proper approach to ensure compliance with such research agreement.
7. If you have privacy-related question relating to CSIS interview, please contact the Privacy and Access to Information Office (privacyinfo@uvic.ca) for guidance.

If you have any questions regarding this advisory, please contact researchsecurity@uvic.ca.