

## COALITION CALENDAR

### June 16: Proposal Deadline for 2023 AAAS Annual Meeting

The 2023 AAAS Annual Meeting will be held virtually and in-person in Washington, D.C., from March 2-5, 2023. The theme for the event is “[Science for Humanity](#).” The deadline to submit a proposal is June 16, and more information [is available here](#).

### June 30: Apply to be a Coalition FutureGen Scholar!

The Coalition invites applications from undergraduate and graduate students to become SciTech and Human Rights FutureGen Scholars. This annual initiative provides a \$5,000 stipend to support students in carrying out projects that address the intersections of science, technology, and human rights on their campus or in their community. Applications are due June 30, and more information is [available here](#).

## COALITION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### AAAS Hosts Scholars at Risk Student Advocacy Days

Scholars at Risk (SAR) [held its annual US Student Advocacy Days](#) in Washington, DC in early April, bringing together over 30 students and faculty from Drexel University, Muhlenberg College, Roger Williams University, and the University of Iowa to conduct advocacy in support of wrongfully imprisoned scholars and students. The event featured SAR’s Student Advocacy Seminars, faculty-led courses on advocacy and academic freedom that included student-led meetings with members of Congress, debriefing and planning sessions with SAR staff, and presentations by civil society. Theresa Harris, Interim Program Director of the AAAS Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights and Law Program, met with students to discuss the intersection of science and human rights and to encourage students to engage the scientific community in their advocacy, noting how scientific associations in particular have a commitment to both public and private advocacy.

In addition, as part of its podcast series *Free to Think*, SAR featured Brian Mello, a professor of political science at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, where he leads a SAR Student Advocacy Seminar, and one of his students, Bhavna Prakash, a biology major and political science minor. In the May 2 episode, “There’s No Way You Did That,” Prakash and Mello describe speaking with members of Congress to advocate on behalf of wrongfully imprisoned Egyptian scholars, the value of non-traditional classrooms, and their advice for students and faculty interested in getting involved on their own campuses. The podcast may be found [here](#).

### Updated Coalition Member Actions on Ukraine

Coalition members continue to offer their support for Ukraine by issuing statements, providing resources, and taking related action. Here are some recent developments:

[American Anthropological Association \(AAA\)](#): In order to raise wider awareness about the cultural, historical, and political context of the Russian invasion, AAA is opening up its [AnthroSource](#) archives to feature articles that are relevant to the events taking place in Ukraine. In addition, it will be pointing people to a number of resources being mobilized to coordinate a humanities and social science data rescue and website crawl to aggregate information online.

[American Chemical Society \(ACS\)](#): ACS is reaching out to its membership community in Ukraine to waive all dues and seek their advice for other ways in which ACS can support them, is assessing its

operations and editorial policies to align with U.S. and international sanctions levied against Russia, and stands ready to support the chemistry enterprise in Ukraine as needed.

[The American Mathematical Society \(AMS\)](#): AMS is working with other scientific professional societies on how the international mathematics community can best serve the Ukrainian mathematics community and has outlined a series of resources and actions in this effort.

### **Global Alliance Advocates for Mental Health of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children**

The Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice, which is focused on applying principles of human rights to policy development and community action to promote the well-being and mental health of vulnerable communities, including immigrants and refugees, issued a [statement](#) to advocate for the mental health needs of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) in the U.S. The group points to the failure of current immigration policy to address the developmental needs (e.g., guardianship, education, belonging) of UASC in a human rights framework and makes recommendations to address these policy limitations.

### **ACTION ALERTS**

#### **Scholar Dr. Ahmadreza Djalali at Risk of Execution in Iran**

On May 5, Scholars at Risk, an organization that works to protect threatened scholars and promote academic freedom around the world, issued an [action alert](#) to its network concerning [Dr. Ahmadreza Djalali](#), an Iranian-born resident of Sweden and scholar of disaster medicine. Dr. Djalali was arrested on a visit to Iran in April of 2016. He was convicted of “corruption on earth” in 2017 and sentenced to death, allegedly for providing intelligence to Israel. However, Iranian authorities have never provided evidence to support these allegations. Dr. Djalali has not been provided with proper medical care in prison and was scheduled for execution by May 21. Iranian authorities postponed his execution and [said on May 24](#) that his execution will proceed once the review procedure of his case has been completed, but it is feared that he could be executed at any time. Learn more about Dr. Djalali and the ways you can help [here](#).

### **WHAT WE'RE READING**

#### **Op-ed Weighs In On Recent Debate of Using Public Health Law in Immigration Policy**

A recent [op-ed](#) in *Nature Medicine* says that public health laws should not be misused to expel asylum seekers, as is the case in the U.S, where Title 42 of the Public Health Service Act of 1944, which is aimed at preventing the spread of communicable diseases in the country, has been used as an immigration tool to block migrants from claiming asylum. The Trump administration invoked Title 42 for the first time since its enactment in March 2020 as a way to help stop the spread of COVID-19 in immigrant detention centers, where many migrants are placed after they arrive at the U.S.–Mexico border. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently announced plans to end Title 42 on May 23 because COVID-19 cases have decreased and vaccines are widely available, but that decision was challenged in the courts. On May 20, a federal district court judge issued a nationwide injunction ordering the Biden Administration not to terminate the Title 42 order and to continue the prior Administration’s policy. The op-ed, which was written prior to these recent developments, provides historical context and other examples to assert that public health law should not be used as a tool in immigration policy.

#### **Article Highlights Efforts to Address Bias in Forensic Science**

A recent [article](#) in *Science* highlights the research and work of Itiel Dror, a cognitive psychologist and researcher at the University College London, on bias in forensic science. The article describes his decades-long work in this area and related experiments and research that suggest forensic scientists are subconsciously influenced by cognitive biases—biases that can determine if and how an individual is prosecuted for a crime.

## **CALLS FOR INPUT**

### **June 1: National Academies' Study of Population Descriptors in Genomics Research**

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine are [seeking input](#) on the current use of population descriptors, such as race, ethnicity, and ancestry, in genomics research and how the use of population descriptors could be improved upon in the future. The input will help inform a study that the National Academies are conducting that is reviewing and assessing existing methodologies, benefits, and challenges in the use of race and ethnicity and other population descriptors in genomics research and best practices. Input is due June 1, and can be provided via this [survey](#).

### **Sigma Xi Survey on Civic Science**

Coalition member Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Honor Society [is seeking input](#) on scientists' interests in science policy and what kinds of support would help scientists successfully engage. Responses will help inform the development of a digital platform to provide empirical evidence, guidance, and resources that will help scientists gain a better understanding of the policy process and successfully engage in policymaking. To take the survey, please [click here](#).

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

### **June 1: Thriving Earth Exchange Community Science Fellowship**

Thriving Earth Exchange, an organization focused on collaborations between scientists, community leads, and sponsors to solve local challenges related to natural resources, climate change and natural hazards, is seeking applications for its July 2022 cohort of Community Science Fellows. Fellows are committed volunteers who facilitate and lead collaborative, co-developed community science projects that have on-the-ground impact in local communities. They can have any background, experience level, or location. Applications are due June 1, and further information may be found [here](#).

### **June 9: Symposium: The Right to a Healthy Environment in U.S. Law**

The Human Rights and the Global Economy Program at the Northeastern University School of Law and the Bringing Human Rights Home Lawyers' Network are holding an online symposium on June 9, "The Right to a Healthy Environment in U.S. Law: Justice for Communities Today and Tomorrow," to discuss the newly endorsed right to a healthy environment and the connections between this right and efforts to promote environmental justice in the U.S. Further information, including how to register, may be found [here](#).

### **June 15: International Council of Psychologists Human Rights Award**

The International Council of Psychologists (ICP), an international professional association of psychologists with the goal of supporting human rights, dignity, justice, and international cooperation for peace and understanding, is accepting nominations for its new [Human Rights Award](#). Nominations are due by June 15, and more information is [available here](#).

### **June 30: 2023 AAAS Award for Scientific Freedom and Responsibility**

AAAS is now accepting nominations for its Award for Scientific Freedom and Responsibility, which honors scientists, engineers, and their organizations whose exemplary actions have demonstrated scientific freedom and/or responsibility in challenging circumstances. Nominations are accepted through June 30. For more information, to read about past recipients, and to submit a nomination, [click here](#).

## **SCIENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USA**

### **Reproductive Rights & Laws Engender Human Rights Concerns**

The debate over reproductive rights and law following news that the U.S. Supreme Court could overturn *Roe vs. Wade*, the 1973 ruling that established that abortion was protected under a women's right to privacy, has engendered human rights concerns.

Human Rights Watch, along with Amnesty International and the Global Justice Center, provided a brief on the human rights implications of a ban on abortion. The [brief](#) highlighted the statistical relationship between restrictive abortion legislation and increases in maternal mortality and morbidity and the negative impact on health of pregnant women, particularly from marginalized groups, including people living in poverty, young people, and Black, Indigenous, and other people of color. Human Rights Watch also [outlined privacy concerns](#) over reported incidences of firms selling location data from U.S. clinics to identify women seeking abortion. In addition, a [recent NPR article](#) describes why experts are increasingly concerned about how data collected from period-tracking apps, among other applications, could potentially be used to penalize anyone seeking or considering an abortion.

### **U.S. Gov't Creates Patent Pool for COVID-19 Technologies for Developing Countries**

The U.S. government has agreed to put licenses for 11 medical technologies developed at the National Institutes of Health into a patent pool to make it easier for low- and middle-income countries to gain access to vaccines, drugs, and diagnostics for COVID-19. President Joe Biden made the announcement earlier this month at the Global COVID-19 Summit. A recent [Science article](#) details the announcement and its impact.

### **Historical Redlining Is Associated with Present-Day Air Pollution Disparities in U.S. Cities**

A recent [article](#) in *Environmental Science and Technology Letters* puts forth information on how communities of color in the U.S. are systematically exposed to higher levels of air pollution. The article explores how redlining, a discriminatory mortgage appraisal practice from the 1930s by the federal Home Owners' Loan Corporation, relates to present-day intraurban air pollution disparities in 202 U.S. cities.

### **NIH Tightens Rules for Reporting Sexual and Workplace Harassment**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) [announced](#) earlier this month that—at the direction of Congress—it is tightening rules for reporting sexual and workplace harassment by NIH-funded investigators. Institutions will now be legally required to tell NIH if a grantee has been disciplined because of harassment findings. A [recent Science article](#) examines the new rules and their implications.

### **U.S. Issues Guidance on Disability Discrimination in Employment Decisions Using AI**

Earlier this month, the U.S. Department of Justice and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) each [released](#) a technical assistance document about disability discrimination when employers use artificial intelligence (AI) and other software tools to make employment decisions. Employers increasingly use AI and other software tools to help them select new employees, monitor performance, and determine pay or promotions. These tools may result in unlawful discrimination against people with disabilities in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Justice Department issued a guidance document, [Algorithms, Artificial Intelligence, and Disability Discrimination in Hiring](#), to provide a broad overview of rights and responsibilities. The EEOC released a technical assistance document, [The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Use of Software, Algorithms, and Artificial Intelligence to Assess Job Applicants and Employees](#), which focuses on preventing discrimination against job seekers and employees with disabilities. The EEOC's technical assistance document is part of its Artificial Intelligence and Algorithmic Fairness Initiative to ensure that the use of software, including AI, used in hiring and other employment decisions complies with federal civil rights laws.

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

## **Human Rights Groups Call for End to AI-enabled Emotional Tracking**

Fight for the Future, an organization advocating for human rights in technology and digitalization, and 27 human rights organizations [are calling](#) on Zoom to end development of AI-enabled emotion-tracking and analysis over concerns of privacy and human rights. The groups sent a [letter](#) to Zoom's CEO in response to reports that the company is developing such technology and launched a [campaign page](#), where individuals can sign a petition.

## **UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Comments on Human Rights in the Digital Age**

In a [speech](#) late last month, Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, outlined challenges in protecting human rights and democracy brought on by the digital world, such as online hate speech and disinformation, online attacks and increased surveillance of journalists, politicians and human rights defenders, and Internet and media shutdowns by governments. "Safeguarding human rights and democratic space in the digital age has become more crucial than ever," she said. She outlined three key rights to protect against such threats: (1) the right to participate in civil society, which includes journalists and civil society actors having open and secure access to online spaces, free from surveillance and censorship, and the responsibilities of States and online companies to ensure this right; (2) the right to freedom of expression online and offline while addressing online hate speech and disinformation; and (3) the right to privacy in the digital realm and the need to protect it against surveillance measures by governments and the private sector.

## **Human Rights Groups Raise Hate Speech Concerns over Pending Acquisition of Twitter**

A recent [Reuters article](#) details Human Rights Watch's and Amnesty International's concerns over future policies on hate speech on Twitter in light of the pending acquisition of the company by Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla, who has said Twitter needs to become a genuine forum for free speech. The human rights groups have raised concerns about Musk's views and what they may mean for the company's policies in moderating hate speech. Musk [made](#) a \$44 billion bid to acquire Twitter last month, but the deal is now on hold pending further evaluation of calculations used to determine the level of spam/fake accounts in the company's user base. A [report](#) from Rest of World, an international nonprofit journalism organization, also outlines human rights concerns.

## **Science in Exile Declaration Supports At-Risk, Displaced & Refugee Scientists**

Late last month, The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS), the InterAcademy Partnership (IAP) and the International Science Council (ISC) [launched](#) the Science in Exile Declaration titled "[Supporting at-risk, displaced and refugee scientists: A call to action](#)" to advocate for affected scientists. The Declaration outlines six key commitments necessary for both immediate and long-term support and protection for scholars and scientists who are at-risk, displaced or refugees, so they can continue to make their rightful contributions to science. The Science in Exile initiative brings together at-risk, displaced and refugee scientists along with like-minded organizations who work together to strengthen systems that support, protect, and integrate such affected scientists. 67 scientific, academic and related organizations have thus far endorsed the Declaration (see [here](#)).

## **The Public's Role in Ukraine in Documenting War Crimes, Human Rights Abuses**

A recent [blog post](#) from Human Rights First describes how the public in Ukraine has become an important source in documenting and reporting on human rights abuses. The blog includes input from Truth Hounds, a Ukrainian human rights organization established in 2014 to document war crimes in the eastern and southern regions of the country following the Russian-backed invasions that year, on how it is assisting the public in documentation. The organization has produced illustrated guides on what to collect, how to collect it, and where to send it. It has also just released a two-minute video (in Ukrainian) with instructions for filming the consequences of war crimes.

## NEW REPORTS AND RESOURCES

### **GAO Issues Report on Scientific Integrity at Four US Gov't Agencies**

The US Government Accountability Office issued a new [report](#) that evaluated four agencies within the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)—the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR)—for scientific integrity, including having procedures in place that define political interference in scientific decision-making or describe how it should be reported and addressed. All four selected agencies—the CDC, FDA, NIH, and ASPR—train staff on some scientific integrity-related topics, such as public health ethics, but only the NIH includes information on political interference in scientific decision-making as part of its scientific integrity training. GAO made seven recommendations to the CDC, FDA, NIH, and HHS, including that the agencies develop procedures for reporting and addressing allegations of political interference and train staff to report such incidences.

### **New Report Stresses Technology Development with Human Rights Focus**

Afsaneh Rigot, a fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at the Harvard Kennedy School at Harvard University, has published a new [report](#), “Design from the Margins: Centering the Most Marginalized and Impacted in Design Processes from Ideation to Production,” to promote the “design from the margins” (DFM) method in technology development. DFM is an approach to build technologies from the beginning of the design process for decentered cases or so-called “edge cases,” which represent atypical or less common use cases for a product, rather than retrofitting them post-deployment to cater to communities with what are perceived to be extra needs. The report outlines the value and strategies of DFM to reduce harms, especially human rights abuses that are carried out through the misuse of technology, and for increasing user protections if design and development processes start from those “edge cases” or margins. The report is part of the Technology and Public Purpose Project, which seeks to ensure that emerging technologies are developed and managed in ways that serve the overall public good.

### **Article: Mapping the Use of Open-Source Research in UN Human Rights Investigations**

A recent [article](#), “Mapping the Use of Open Source Research in UN Human Rights Investigations” in the *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, analyzes how open-source information is used in practice by UN human rights fact-finding missions, commissions of inquiry, and other official human rights investigations and its benefits and limitations in such investigations. The article argues in favor of institutional buy-in of open-source research as well as for related resourcing and methodological rigor to guide its use.

### **Input by Student Participants in AAAS-Partnered Project Mapping Mass Graves in Syria**

A [blog post](#) from the University of Dayton’s Human Rights Center features an interview with two student participants in a project mapping mass graves in Syria. The project was conducted by the Human Rights Center, its Mann Chair in Natural Sciences, and its Department of Geology and Environmental Geosciences, along with the AAAS Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights and Law Program. They undertook a new Geographic Information Systems and human rights investigation at the request of the Syria Justice and Accountability Centre, a non-profit justice and legal documentation organization that monitors and reports on violations by various actors in the Syrian conflict.

### **Article Examines Metal Contamination in Water Systems for Environmental Justice**

A recent [article](#) in *The Lancet Planetary Health* outlines the findings of a study that examined the extent of metal concentrations in community water systems (CWSs) across the U.S. to determine if sociodemographic or regional inequalities in the metal concentrations exist and to identify patterns of concentrations for these metals. The study found that uranium is an under-recognized contaminant in CWSs, and that metal concentrations (including uranium) are elevated in CWSs serving semi-urban,

Hispanic communities, independent of location or region. The authors say the findings highlight environmental justice concerns. An [article](#) in *Eos*, the science news magazine of the American Geophysical Union, further examines the key findings.

### **UNESCO Brief on the Right to Science and COVID-19**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has issued a [brief](#) on the right to science and COVID-19. “The right to do science and access its findings must be defended as part of the fight for human rights and equality, including gender and racial equality, not least because a successful recovery from the pandemic will need more science, not less,” says the brief. UNESCO is urging government officials, scientists from across disciplines, UN entities and other stakeholders to disseminate the brief to raise awareness and advocacy for the right to science in its different dimensions.

### **WHO Launches Case Studies of Best Science Communication During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

The World Health Organization has [launched](#) a series of case studies to showcase the creative yet rigorous approach of several science communication initiatives worldwide to communicate science during the COVID-19 pandemic. The examples were collected through an open call that received 78 submissions. All examples were reviewed by two members of the WHO science translation team and analyzed with regard to their (i) scientific accuracy, (ii) innovation factor, (iii) consideration of gender, equity and human rights aspects, and (iv) evaluation of their impact. Selected submissions were consequently written up as case studies in collaboration with the originators of the initiatives. The launch features the 20 most highly rated good practice examples, including initiatives directed at the health workforce, media representatives, researchers, and the public, including older people and children and adolescents. Featured examples showcase the ways with which science communicators make the science behind COVID-19 more accessible, understandable and meaningful to their audiences. The case studies may be found [here](#).

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