

Job Opportunity: Case Study Researchers for a Research Project on DNA Synthesis Screening in Asia

We are seeking researchers to contribute to case studies on DNA synthesis screening policies across Asia.

1. Background about the Project

DNA synthesis technology has greatly enhanced our ability to engineer biological systems, offering transformative benefits in areas such as vaccine development and sustainable energy. However, the associated risks—particularly the potential for accidental or intentional misuse of synthetic DNA to create dangerous pathogens—have sparked significant concerns within the biosecurity community.

In response to these risks, some governments and international industry associations have adopted policies, recommendations, or laws that require or encourage providers to screen DNA synthesis orders. Despite these efforts, a substantial knowledge gap remains regarding how and whether the biosecurity risks of DNA synthesis are regulated and governed across Asia.

To address this gap, the Asia Centre for Health Security, which is based in the National University of Singapore Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health, is undertaking a study to map the policy and regulatory landscape of DNA synthesis screening throughout Asia. By analysing the current framework and identifying existing gaps and opportunities, the study seeks to provide actionable recommendations to support the revision of existing laws and policies and/or the development of new policies for regulating DNA synthesis screening.

2. Position Overview

We are seeking experienced researchers to contribute to this project by developing **country-specific case studies** on the regulation of DNA synthesis screening.

3. Responsibilities

The researcher will conduct **desk research** to identify and analyse laws, policies, and governance frameworks related to DNA synthesis screening. The researcher will write a comprehensive and detailed **case study report** that captures the regulatory and governance dimensions of DNA synthesis in the respective country. The researcher will also identify gaps, challenges, and opportunities and propose recommendations. The researcher may also help lead future efforts to disseminate this research via **public-facing writings and briefings** or **events** for select stakeholders.

4. Target Countries

We are specifically looking for researchers based in or with expertise in:

- **India**
- **Indonesia**

- **Japan**
- **Malaysia**
- **Philippines**
- **South Korea**
- **Thailand**

5. Desired Qualifications

- Master's degree or PhD background in a relevant field (**biosecurity, biology, law, policy, etc.**).
- **Experience in policy/legal/regulatory research.**
- Ability to conduct **independent desk research and some interviewing.**
- Excellent research and writing skills, with the ability to synthesize complex information into a report.
- Familiarity with the **local language of the respective country.**
- **Familiarity with the legal, policy, and/or governance frameworks** related to biosecurity is an advantage.
- Communications and/or operations experience is an advantage

6. Deliverables

- A **case study report** (5,000–10,000 words) on DNA synthesis screening in your country.
- Documentation of research methodology, sources, and bibliography.

7. Duration

This is a **short-term, remote engagement**. Specific timelines will be agreed upon with selected candidates.

8. How to Apply

Interested candidates are invited to submit:

- **A CV.**
- A **cover letter** explaining your qualifications and interest in this role, including the country/ies and the languages you are familiar with.
- The names of two referees.

Please send your application to **A/Prof. Ayelet Berman** at ephv567@visitor.nus.edu.sg

Deadline for applications: 13 February 2025

This project offers a unique opportunity to contribute to cutting-edge research that intersects biotechnology, law, and biosecurity. By working with us, you will play a vital role in shaping future governance frameworks for synthetic DNA technologies in Asia. If you are passionate about this critical field, we encourage you to apply!
