



**Woodrow Wilson  
International  
Center  
for Scholars**

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*News Release*

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## **Responsible Science for Do-It-Yourself Biologists New Initiative Launched on Biosafety**

WASHINGTON, DC: Remember chemistry sets, ham radio, amateur astronomy, and early computing? Well, now it is biology's turn. Today, over 2,000 people from around the world belong to the Do-It-Yourself Biology (DIYbio) community, working on everything from microbial fuel cells, low-cost lab equipment, environmental surveillance, personal bio-monitoring, to new treatments for diseases.

The Synthetic Biology Project at the Woodrow Wilson Center is partnering with DIYbio.org, on a project to ensure safety within the rapidly expanding community of amateur biologists. The project is funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and will seek to promote innovation and education within the DIYbio community while ensuring safe science.

“The DIYbio community is positioned better than any other organization to develop a positive culture around citizen science and to ‘set the pattern’ for best practices worldwide by establishing a code of ethics, developing norms for safety, and creating shared resources for amateur biologists,” Said Jason Bobe, co-founder of DIYbio.org.

The project will identify relevant biosafety guidance and work with members to distill that information into user-friendly guidelines. In addition, basic codes of conduct will be developed, discussed, and disseminated in the community. “The goal is to grow a safety culture from within the DIYbio community through information sharing, discussion, and mentoring,” said David Rejeski, Director of the Synthetic Biology Project at the Wilson Center.

The **Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars** is the national, living memorial honoring President Woodrow Wilson. In providing an essential link between the worlds of ideas and public policy, the Center addresses current and emerging challenges confronting the United States and the world. The Center promotes policy-relevant research and dialogue to increase understanding and enhance the capabilities and knowledge of leaders, citizens, and institutions worldwide. Created by an Act of Congress in 1968, the Center is a nonpartisan institution headquartered in Washington, D.C. and supported by both public and private funds. The Center's Science and Technology Innovation Program brings new tools to bear on public policy challenges resulting from innovations in science and technology.

**DIYbio.org** was founded in 2008 and aims to help make biology a worthwhile pursuit for citizen scientists and amateur biologists. DIYbio is fast becoming the organizational hub for amateur biologists worldwide, uniting the movement's participants through its website, online forums, blog and local chapters.

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