

Exclusive: US government funding yielded hundreds of patents for China-based researchers

WASHINGTON, Aug 29 (Reuters) - The U.S. Defense Department, NASA and other government agencies funded research that led to more than 1,000 U.S. patents for China-based inventors since 2010, including in sensitive fields such as biotechnology and semiconductors, data from the U.S. patent agency showed.

The U.S. patent data, which was reviewed by Reuters and has not been reported previously, will amplify calls to cancel or renegotiate the landmark U.S.-China Science and Technology Agreement, a cooperation deal that critics say disproportionately benefits Washington's top geopolitical rival.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office supplied the data this month to the House of Representatives' select committee on China. In June, it asked the agency whether U.S. funding resulted in Chinese breakthroughs, aiming to highlight what it views as the risks of renewing the pact.

According to the patent office, the agency granted 1,020 patents from 2010 through the first quarter of 2024 that were both funded at least in part by the U.S. government and involved at least one China-residing inventor. The data does not detail whether U.S. entities or individuals share the patents.

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