

The **Scientific Freedom** Advocate

Ethical regulation should not stifle curiosity-driven research or slow down innovation.

This viewpoint emphasizes the importance of scientific freedom as a fundamental driver of progress and human well-being. Proponents of this view argue that while ethical oversight is necessary, it must be carefully balanced against the need to foster curiosity-driven research and avoid overly restrictive regulations that could hinder innovation. The right to engage in scientific inquiry and to share knowledge is seen as a fundamental human right.

A key concern for scientific freedom advocates is the potential for **over-regulation** to stifle creativity and slow down the pace of discovery. They argue that ethics review boards and other regulatory bodies must be mindful of not placing undue burdens on researchers that could discourage them from pursuing novel or unconventional lines of inquiry.

This perspective also highlights the **dual-use dilemma**, where scientific research with benevolent intentions could potentially be misused for harmful purposes. While acknowledging this risk, advocates for scientific freedom argue that the primary responsibility for ethical conduct lies with the scientists themselves. They call for researchers to be trained in the responsible conduct of research and to be aware of the potential societal implications of their work.

However, this view does not advocate for a complete absence of ethical oversight. It recognizes that society sets the boundaries for what is considered acceptable scientific practice and that science operates with a "social license." This license is maintained through transparency, accountability, and a commitment to agreed-upon ethical standards. Therefore, the goal is not to eliminate regulation, but to ensure that it is reasonable, proportionate, and does not unnecessarily impede scientific progress.

In essence, the scientific freedom advocate calls for a system of **responsible self-regulation** within the scientific community, supplemented by legal and ethical frameworks that protect both research participants and the freedom of inquiry. This view holds that a society that values progress and innovation must also value and protect the freedom of its scientists to explore the unknown.

How might overly strict ethical regulations in this case stifle important scientific progress? What is the potential cost to society if we don't do this research? How can we balance safety with the need for innovation?