

**Press Release**

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**Questions about Biosafety? Ask a Biosafety Expert**

*New Website Launched to Help DIY Biologists*

**WASHINGTON**— The rapid decline in costs associated with many common laboratory techniques, such as DNA sequencing and synthesis, has led to their adoption by individuals outside of traditional university or industrial settings, giving rise to a rapidly growing Do-It-Yourself Biology (DIYbio) community.

DIYbio.org and the Synthetic Biology Project at the Woodrow Wilson Center this week are launching the “Ask a Biosafety Expert” service (<http://ask.diybio.org>) in order to provide this emerging DIYbio community with free and timely access to professional biosafety advice. The project comes amidst growing interest in and concerns about the DIYbio community.

In recent years, the DIYbio movement has created new venues for the general public to learn, access and engage in biotechnology, with DIYbio groups and community laboratories forming in dozens of cities around the world. The movement attracts amateurs, entrepreneurs, citizen scientists, educators, hackers and the intellectually curious to participate in hands-on workshops, group projects and self-directed research activities.

“The long-term success of the movement to make biotechnology more accessible will require a strong safety ethos, responsible practice and expert guidance and support resources,” said Jason Bobe, co-founder of DIYbio.org.

The aim of the “Ask a Biosafety Expert” service is to provide advice from experts about laboratory safety, disposal and other bio-related issues to members of the DIYbio community. Questions submitted anonymously to the DIYbio.org website will be sent to a panel of professional biosafety experts for prompt and user-friendly feedback. The responses will be posted and archived on the public website providing a growing resource for DIYbio enthusiasts.

Questions can be asked and answers will be posted at: <http://ask.diybio.org/>

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**About DIYbio.org**

[DIYbio.org](http://diybio.org) was founded in 2008 with the mission of establishing a vibrant, productive and safe community of do-it-yourself biologists. Central to the group's mission is the belief biotechnology and greater public understanding about it has the potential to benefit everyone.

**About the Synthetic Biology Project**

The Synthetic Biology Project is an initiative of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars supported by a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. The Project aims to foster informed public and policy discourse concerning the advancement of synthetic biology. For more information, visit: <http://www.synbioproject.org>

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