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Abstract for an Invited Paper
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The Broader Impact Criteria- What's the solution? A panel discussion

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The need for social control of science—especially 20th and now 21st century science—has been debated for decades. Science is supported by society, and research results ultimately have large societal impacts. Physicists arguing for increased research budgets invariably point out the collateral benefits to society—often economic—of their discovery-based research. Congress agreed, and attempted to institutionalize this metric in the ‘America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010’ by insisting that researchers illustrate how their work will provide for (among other things) increased economic competitiveness of the United States and increased National Security. Is such a metric inevitable in these days of constrained resources? Is it desirable or even implementable? Can benefits be predicted, or are the most important societal consequences of basic research serendipitous? This talk will examine these questions, including looking at how other nations are attempting to deal with the issue, and present some suggestions for satisfying both society’s insistence on a return on their investment and scientists’ need for unfettered exploration. The program will conclude with a Q and A and panel discussion with all of the session’s speakers.