



Dr. Cindy Vestergaard

Vice President Special Projects and
External Relations, RKVST

RKVST is thrilled to introduce Dr. Cindy Vestergaard, as our Vice President, Special Projects and External Relations. Cindy's expertise focuses on the impact of evolving international safeguards obligations on states and facility operators, and include demonstrating distributed ledger technology (DLT) as a secure, high value technology for international security regimes. Cindy's knowledge spans nuclear safeguards management, nuclear cooperation agreements and the nuclear fuel cycle (from mining to disposal). Her portfolio of expertise also includes chemical weapons disarmament, biosecurity, and trade controls.

While at the Stimson Center as the Program Director, Cindy led the Blockchain in Practice program, among the first to engage with international nonproliferation and disarmament organizations, national authorities, and private technology companies on the potential application of DLT to strengthen international security regimes.

Dr. Vestergaard was also a senior researcher at the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) in Copenhagen, Denmark. Prior to DIIS, she worked on non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament policy and programming at Canada's foreign ministry. Vestergaard has a B.A. in International Relations from the University of British Columbia, a M.A. in International Relations, and European Studies from Central European University (Budapest, Hungary) and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Copenhagen.

Cindy's success and contributions to the global nuclear industry include the prestigious award for *Innovation in Global Security*, which was awarded for the development and delivery of the SLAFKA project. SLAFKA is the *World's First Blockchain Prototype for Safeguarding Nuclear Material* developed for a national nuclear regulator. SLAFKA demonstrated how distributed ledger technology (DLT) can provide the most secure way to safeguard and provide the accounting of nuclear material, which is foundational to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Although currently most State records are kept electronically, data integrity and correctness remain a challenge. Additionally, with growing cyber threats, the need for these systems' security has increased significantly. This project paved the way for DLT solutions across the globe with nuclear operators and regulatory authorities around the world.

Cindy was also responsible for leading the *Monitoring and Tracking Chemicals (MATCH)* project at Stimson. By establishing a secure, authoritative distributed ledger to simulate transfers between hypothetical States Parties, this project answered key concerns within the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), specifically reconciling transfer data for commonly traded Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 chemicals covered by the Convention. The CWC requires that States Parties report annually on the transfer of chemicals listed under the Convention as part of ongoing efforts to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons programs.

Dr. Vestergaard's broad network includes global regulators, state parties, nuclear and chemical industry operators, suppliers, and distributors. Cindy has led testing and confirmation of DLT platforms to increase transparency and security in nuclear safeguards, nuclear security, and the trade of dual-use materials.

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