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Sommario/riassunto	In September 2011, scientists announced new experimental findings that would not only threaten the conduct and publication of influenza research, but would have significant policy and intelligence implications. The findings presented a modified variant of the H5N1 avian influenza virus (hereafter referred to as the H5N1 virus) that was transmissible via aerosol between ferrets. These results suggested a worrisome possibility: the existence of a new airborne and highly lethal H5N1 virus that could cause a deadly global pandemic. In response, a series of international discussions on the nature of dual-use life science arose. These discussions addressed the complex social, technical, political, security, and ethical issues related to dual-use research. This Research Topic will be devoted to contributions that explore this matrix of issues from a variety of case study and international perspectives.