



Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on March 30, 2022

## Of Laptops and Labs: Did Hunter Biden Fund Ukraine Bio-research?

Hunter Biden's investment fund helped raised money for biolab projects in Ukraine, according to e-mails from the laptop he abandoned at a Delaware repair shop in 2019. It is the same laptop that his dad, then-presidential candidate Joe Biden, denied being Hunter's, instead blaming a Russian disinformation campaign. Since the story broke, major media and leftist pundits helped bolster that narrative until, on March 16, the *New York Times* finally [admitted](#) the laptop's authenticity.

Narrative-bolstering fact checkers have likewise vehemently denied allegations of U.S.-funded Ukrainian biolabs. The Security Service of Ukraine "and the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine have said the claim of U.S. labs is false," [reported](#) *USA Today* in February. "Numerous reports indicate it is tied to a years-long Russian disinformation campaign aimed at discrediting the United States."

Since then, officials have altered the story somewhat: The laboratories exist, but only to detect and prevent pandemics, not to manufacture bioweapons. They had to admit the labs are there, after Victoria Nuland, U.S. undersecretary of state for political affairs, [testified](#) on March 8 before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee that her agency is "now quite concerned" about research materials from those biological facilities "falling into the hands of Russian forces."

The next day, the U.S. State Department rebuffed claims by the Russian [ambassador](#) to the United States and Russia's foreign ministry [spokesman](#) that their country's troops discovered U.S.-funded military biolabs in Ukraine. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation further reported having recovered [documentation](#) issued February 24 — the first day of the invasion — ordering "urgent eradication of highly hazardous pathogens" and believed the labs made this move "to prevent exposing a violation of Article I of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) by Ukraine and the United States."

"The Kremlin is intentionally spreading outright lies that the United States and Ukraine are conducting chemical and biological weapons activities," an indignant U.S. State Department spokesman [fumed](#), calling this Russian disinformation "total nonsense." The Pentagon's press secretary John Kirby [tweeted](#), "We are not developing biological or chemical weapons inside Ukraine. This is textbook Russian propaganda."

Yet a February 25 [article](#) in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* quotes Robert Pope, director of the



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U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, worrying that the Russian invasion of Ukraine “may put at risk a network of US-linked labs ... that work with dangerous pathogens.” While disclaiming any research or production of bioweapons, Pope echoed Nuland’s unease, admitting that the labs “may hold pathogen strains left over from the Soviet bioweapons program.”

Why such concern if the purpose of the labs is restricted to research, as Pope claimed? If they are not bioweapons facilities, how have they suddenly become a national security liability for Ukraine? If they have such potential, why has the United States funded this research just a few hundred miles from Russia’s border? And why such widespread denial of the biolabs’ existence until recently, when ample evidence belies those assertions?

Take the example of a 2011 [report](#) from the National Academies Press detailing more than “4,000 registered microbiological laboratories in Ukraine,” two of which were cited as responsible for especially dangerous infectious agents and funded by a “cooperative agreement” between Ukraine and the U.S. DOD. Then-Senators Barak Obama (D-Ill.) and Dick Lugar (R-Ind.) [forged](#) that partnership in 2005 under the U.S. Cooperative Threat Reduction Act, as [reported](#) by The National Pulse.

Then there was the 2014 DOD [grant](#) of \$18.4 million to Metabiota, a San Francisco-based health-tech firm, which helped fund Ukrainian research projects. The National Pulse [noted](#) that one of the results was a 2019 [study](#) of African swine fever, the authors of which were Metabiota employees and scientists from three Ukrainian labs. Researchers disclosed funding from DOD’s Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA).

Hunter Biden’s laptop reveals deep ties to Metabiota. The disease-risk analysis firm started out as the non-profit Global Viral Forecasting (GVF) in 2008 “with seed funding from [Google](#) and the [Skoll](#) Foundation,” [reported](#) VentureBeat. GVF’s founder, Nathan Wolfe, made *Time* magazine’s 2011 [list](#) of the 100 most influential people in the world, and the company has a long-standing [relationship](#) with EcoHealth Alliance, the infamous funding [conduit](#) between the U.S. National Institutes of Health and China’s Wuhan Institute of Virology. EcoHealth and Metabiota are partners under the U.S. Agency for International Development’s PREDICT [project](#), with a stated goal of predicting and preventing global diseases.

Since 2012, Metabiota has been a for-profit venture, landing a huge funding boost in 2015 with \$30 million from Rosemont Seneca Technology Partners (RSTP), the investment firm directed by Hunter Biden and Christopher Heinz, stepson of former U.S. Secretary of State and current climate czar John Kerry. The National Pulse [said](#) Metabiota’s board of advisors includes former Clinton official Rob Walker, featured in a 2014 e-mail on Hunter’s hard drive promising to reach out to Obama’s DOD on behalf of the health-tech firm. Metabiota representatives later joined DOD officials to discuss “on-going cooperative projects” at [September](#) and [October](#) 2016 meetings in Ukraine, per that country’s Science & Technology Center. Metabiota even runs a Ukrainian regional [office](#) in Kyiv.

And now Hunter’s laptop strikes again, as the Daily Mail [reports](#) that Russian allegations claiming RSTP is funding Ukrainian bioweapons labs “may well be true,” based on his e-mail records. In April 2014, Metabiota vice president Mary Guttieri wrote Hunter about “how we can potentially leverage our team, networks and concepts to assert Ukraine’s cultural and economic independence from Russia and continued integration into Western society.”

Former senior CIA officer Sam Faddis told the Daily Mail that statement “raises the question: what is



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the real purpose of this venture? It's very odd."

Faddis also [commented](#) on Hunter's e-mails that reveal he was trying at the same time to establish a partnership between Metabiota and the Ukrainian energy firm Burisma. (Hunter was serving on the latter's board, and the company was headed by a former Ukrainian minister accused of large-scale corruption.) "His father was the vice president of the United States and in charge of relations with Ukraine. So why was Hunter not only on the board of a suspect Ukrainian gas firm, but also hooked them up with a company working on bioweapons research?" Faddis asked. He wants to know, "Why is the disgraced son of the vice president at the heart of this — the guy with no discernible skills and a cocaine habit?"

Faddis is not the only one wondering about the situation. In a video [posted](#) at DailyMail.com, a spokesman for the Russian Ministry of Defense, Igor Kirillov, states (in sub-titled translation) that RSTP is "close to the current U.S. leadership" and

has significant financial resources in the amount of at least \$2.4 billion U.S. dollars. At the same time, the fund is closely connected with the main contractors of the U.S. military department, including Metabiota, which, along with Black and Veatch, is the main supplier of equipment for Pentagon biological laboratories around the world. The scale of the program is impressive. In addition to the military department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the George Soros Foundation and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are directly involved in its implementation. Scientific supervision is carried out by leading research organizations, including the National Laboratory in Los Alamos, which developed nuclear weapons as part of the Manhattan Project. All this activity is carried out under the full control of the Pentagon.

About these comments, Faddis charged, "It's an obvious Russian propaganda attempt to take advantage of this. But it doesn't change the fact that there does seem to be something that needs to be explored here." He told the Daily Mail, "The DOD position is that there's nothing nefarious here, this is pandemic early warning research. We don't know for sure that's all that was going on."



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