COVID RESOURCES

The COVID-19 public health emergency is impacting the research community in a myriad of known and yet to be known ways. This is intended to be a clearinghouse of Harvard Guidance and Federal Information related to research.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Harvard Guidance and FAQs

Harvard COVID-19 website, including Travel Guidance

OVPR’s COVID and Research Operations

FAQ’s from the Committee on the Use of Human Subjects

OSP’s FAQs for COVID-19

Harvard Travel Service

SEAS and FAS Science Division COVID-19 FAQs

FEDERAL INFORMATION

NIH

NIH Flexibilities Available to Applicants and Recipients of Federal Financial Assistance Affected by COVID-19

NIH General FAQ’s - Proposal Submission and Award Management due to COVID-19

NIH Late Application Policy due to public health emergency (COVID-19)

NIH Guidance on Travel and Meetings

NSF

NSF Implementation of flexibilities authorized by OMB Memo M-20-17 (March 23, 2020)

NSF FAQs About COVID-19 for Proposers and Awardees (March 16, 2020)

NSF FAQ’s for Proposers and Awardees (March 4, 2020)

NSF Guidance for Major Facilities and Contracts Regarding COVID-19 (March 9, 2020)

NSF Interim Guidance for Travel, Merit Review Panels and NSF-sponsored Meetings (March 9, 2020)

NSF’s Dear Colleague Letter NSF 20-052 (March 4, 2020) on Coronavirus-related research

Department of Defense (DOD)

Frequently Asked Questions for DOD Research Proposers and Awardees Impacted by the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

USAMRAA

Department of Energy (DOE)

NON-FEDERAL INFORMATION

Arnold Ventures (incl. Laura and John Arnold Foundation)

Mellon Foundation

Ford Foundation
Harvard Guidance and FAQs

Harvard COVID-19 website, including Travel Guidance
OVPR’s COVID and Research Operations FAQ’s from the Committee on the Use of Human Subjects
OSP’s FAQs for COVID-19
Harvard Travel Service: Travel Cancellation and Reimbursement Guidance Regarding COVID-19
SEAS and FAS Science Division COVID19 FAQs

FEDERAL INFORMATION

NIH
NIH Flexibilities Available to Applicants and Recipients of Federal Financial Assistance Affected by COVID-19 NOT-OD-20-086 (March 12, 2020)
- Extension of Post-Award Financial and Other Reporting
- Prior Approval Requirement Waivers
- Cost Related Flexibilities/Expenditure of Award Funds
- Stipends
- Travel
- Conference Registration Fees
- NIH-Supported Meetings and Conferences
- Extension of Closeout

NIH General FAQ’s - Proposal Submission and Award Management due to COVID-19 NOT-OD-20-083 (March 10, 2020)

NIH Late Application Policy due to public health emergency (COVID-19) NOT-OD-20-082 (March 9, 2020)

NIH Guidance on Travel and Meetings (COVID-19) (March 12, 2020) For meetings at or organized by NIH.
NSF
NSF’s response to COVID-19 can be found on the NSF homepage. PI’s with specific questions should contact their NSF program officer. Sponsored research offices should contact the Division of Grants and Agreements.

NSF Implementation of flexibilities authorized by OMB Memo M-20-17 (March 23, 2020)
NSF FAQs About COVID-19 for Proposers and Awardees (March 16, 2020)
NSF FAQ’s for Proposers and Awardees (March 4, 2020)
NSF Guidance for Major Facilities and Contracts Regarding COVID-19 (March 9, 2020)

- Managing organization and prime contractors should communicate with appropriate NSF staff for consultation, to keep them informed of status, and to ask any questions you may have.
  - For financial assistance agreements, managing organizations should communicate with your program officer (PO) and grants and agreements officer (G/AO). Please copy COVID19_DACS@nsf.gov
  - For prime contractors, contractors should communicate with your contracting officer representative (COR) and contracting officer (CO). Please copy COVID19_DACS@nsf.gov
- Additional costs incurred related to COVID-19 should be documented carefully.

NSF Interim Guidance for Travel, Merit Review Panels and NSF-sponsored Meetings (March 9, 2020)

- Impact on NSF’s acceptance and review of proposals
- Reviewers scheduled to participate in person in upcoming NSF merit review panel, including virtual panel compensation
- Impact on award oversight
- Impact on meetings funded via a grant from NSF

NSF’s Dear Colleague Letter NSF 20-052 (March 4, 2020) on Coronavirus-related research

Department of Defense (DOD)

Frequently Asked Questions for DOD Research Proposers and Awardees Impacted by the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

USAMRAA
This Notice addresses general questions associated with proposal submission and award management that may arise in relation to COVID-19. The United States Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity (USAMRAA) is providing this information as a service to our applicant and recipient communities to address immediate, high-level questions that have been posed to federal research assistance agencies. Please note that given the fact that COVID-19 and associated impacts continue to evolve, applicants and recipients are strongly encouraged to monitor the resources noted below for updates. USAMRAA is
publishing information on flexibilities for organizations funded by USAMRAA to conduct research on COVID-19 along with Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on other administrative flexibilities whose operations have been adversely impacted in the emergency response related to COVID-19. These FAQs will be updated as more information becomes available.

1. What will be done for recipients whose awards support the continued research and services necessary to carry out the emergency response related to COVID-19 during the period formally declared by the Department of Health and Human Services through the 90 Day Public Health Emergency Declaration (Public Health Emergency Period)?

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has identified the following actions to relieve short-term administrative, financial management and audit requirements under the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Part 200 – “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards”- without compromise to accountability requirements (M-20-11). USAMRAA will extend flexibilities to awards that support efforts related to COVID-19 on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the Grants Management Specialist or Grants Officer’s Representative listed in the award document for information concerning individual grants.

2. I have a question related to COVID-19’s potential impact on my research project, project-related travel, or field work. Where are some of the places I can find helpful information?

Your employing organization is an ideal starting point. In many cases, colleges and universities have created websites offering information.

Beyond that, we encourage you to consult the following resources:

- COVID-19 in general:
  - Centers for Disease Control (CDC) including its guidance for Institutes of Higher Education
  - World Health Organization (WHO)
  - Local and state public health department

- Travel to/from and quarantine in foreign countries: See the State Department Travel Advisories website

- The Department of Defense’s Coronavirus Update

3. The DoD Research & Development (R&D) General Terms and Conditions provide the recipient the authority to extend the period of performance one time for up to 12 months beyond the original completion date down stated in the award document. Any additional project period extension beyond the initial extension of up to 12 months requires prior approval from the DoD awarding component.
Part 2, Article V., Section C (Financial and Program Management) of the R&D General Terms and Conditions addresses pre-award costs, carry forward of unobligated balances, and one-time no cost-extensions. Item 3 indicates that one-time no-cost extension provisions are reserved for the discretion of the DoD awarding component. See the agency-specific or award specific section of your award to see whether the awarding agency has already authorized a one-time no-cost extension without the need for prior approval. If it has not done so, once you have assessed how much additional time will be needed to complete performance, contact the POC on the award to request an extension. Grants officials have been advised to be flexible in considering requests related to this public health emergency.

4. I am an investigator on a USAMRAA-funded award that includes travel to a meeting/conference, but the meeting/conference has been canceled. Who do I contact regarding the impact to the USAMRAA award?

You should contact the cognizant USAMRAA grants official named in the award document to alert them to the situation. Also, copy the program official to ensure all appropriate federal staff are aware of the circumstances. In light of the public health threat, you may wish to consider alternate plans, such as providing or using options for virtual participation. Additionally, it may be possible to attend if the meeting/conference is rescheduled within a year. See the question above regarding one-time no-cost extensions.

For meetings that are specified directly in the application or award notice, or that have been required by the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) (e.g. Milestone Meetings, In-Progress Reviews, etc.), we will be open to rescheduling the meeting or setting up a virtual presentation.

5. A conference has been canceled, but I have nonrefundable travel, registration, and/or hotel costs. Can these be charged to a USAMRAA grant?

USAMRAA is currently working within DoD as well as with our federal partners on a number of proposal and award-related issues pertaining to COVID-19. We will communicate with the about these issues through updated FAQs as further information becomes available. In the meantime, please continue to follow your organization’s relevant travel policies and procedures.

6. I am involved with a USAMRAA award with a meeting/conference scheduled to take place in the coming weeks. Should I continue with plans for the meeting?

USAMRAA recommends reaching out to the conference organizer or host. They are best positioned to know the guidance at the event location. They may recommend having contingency plans if the event is ultimately cancelled or re-located, or might be planning to provide options for virtual participation. If you are the organizer, you should consider developing contingency plans.

We also suggest checking the State Department Travel Advisories website if the conference involves foreign travel.

7. My USAMRAA grant involves an exchange of researchers (including students) and/or other foreign travel. Should I continue with plans?

Travel logistics, accessibility, and health and safety considerations of the participants in an active research project should always be a foremost consideration. USAMRAA recommends consulting with your organization about its policies and procedures. You should consider approaching the planned
researcher exchanges and/or other foreign travel with flexibility, and/or devising alternate plans including virtual collaboration as appropriate. As noted above, we understand that plans for active research projects may be disrupted, to the point of needing extensions on the original award durations. For foreign travel, you should consult the State Department Travel Advisories website.

8. I have plans to attend a large scientific gathering. Should I continue?

We recommend first consulting with your organization about its policies and practices. In addition, you may consider reaching out to the organizer or host of the scientific gathering. They are best positioned to know the guidance at the event location. They may have contingency plans if the event is ultimately canceled or re-located, or they might be planning to provide options for virtual participation. We also suggest checking the State Department Travel Advisories website if the gathering involves foreign travel.

9. (a) My organization is open, but I am quarantined for a period of time. There is an application submission deadline during my quarantine period and some essential materials are in my office. I am the PI. Can my organization receive an extension to the deadline? (b) My organization has asked staff to stay home for an undetermined period of time. How would I petition for an extension of an application deadline?

There are currently no plans to modify existing application deadline dates but please continue to monitor Grants.gov for any potential change(s) to an application deadline.

Please contact the CDMRP Help Desk at help@eBRAP.org or 301-682-5507 if you need further assistance.

This response may be updated at a later date depending on whether application review panel meeting dates are revised. Please check this page periodically for possible updates.

10. My position is funded through an USAMRAA award. The university will officially close until further notice as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Can the USAMRAA award be used to pay my employment costs?

The Department of Defense (DoD) will only allow recipients to charge salaries and benefits to currently active awards for work actually performed to meet the project activities, regardless of the location where those duties are performed (i.e., telework eligible). Some allowable activities may include -- e.g., data analysis, preparation of articles and papers based on the analysis of the research findings, monitoring subrecipients, care of research animals, direct charged administrative costs, etc. Additionally, such charges to the award should only be made when the work is performed within the recipient organization’s policies for allowable remote/telework and/or emergency operations.

Applicable indirect costs may be charged to all allowed costs.

11. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the conduct of my DoD-supported human subjects research protocol. What do I need to report to the USAMRDC Human Research Protection Office (HRPO)?

In addition to seeking local guidance from your human research protection program officials and reviewing Institutional Review Board (IRB), notify the HRPO in the following circumstances:

   a) Amendments: Per the terms of your HRPO approval, substantive amendments require HRPO review and approval prior to implementation. The HRPO will not require pre-approval of amendments
intended to minimize risk of COVID-19 exposure for research volunteers or study team members. You must follow your institution’s guidance or requirements for IRB review and approval for amendments and must provide documentation to the HRPO of all such actions in a prompt manner via email to the following address: usarmy.detrick.medcom-usamrmc.mbx.COVID-19@mail.mil.

b) Unanticipated Problems Involving Risks to Subjects or Others (UPIRTSOs): Per the terms of your HRPO approval and the Common Rule, UPIRTSOs must be promptly reported. This includes any UPIRTSOs related to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as inadvertent exposure of research subjects and/or study personnel, missed or delayed safety assessments due to the pandemic, inability to provide study product or conduct key research interventions, etc. UPIRTSOs related to the COVID-19 pandemic must be promptly reported to the reviewing IRB and the following HRPO mailbox: usarmy.detrick.medcom-usamrmc.mbx.COVID-19@mail.mil.

c) Halting research: Promptly report any actions taken to halt the conduct of ongoing human subjects research (e.g. pausing new enrollment, canceling follow-up procedures with previously enrolled subjects, etc.) due to the COVID-19 pandemic to the reviewing IRB and the following HRPO mailbox: usarmy.detrick.medcom-usamrmc.mbx.COVID-19@mail.mil.

d) Note: You must adhere to all other reporting and submission requirements specified in your HRPO approval memorandum.

If notification by electronic mail is not feasible, notifications can be made telephonically to 301-619-2165. If you have questions, you can contact 301-619-2165 or the HRPO mailbox at usarmy.detrick.medcom-usamrmc.mbx.COVID-19@mail.mil.

USAMRAA is currently working internally with DoD as well as with our federal partners on a number of proposal and award-related issues pertaining to COVID-19. USAMRAA will communicate with the community about this issue and will provide guidance as further information becomes available. Please check the USAMRAA website for updates.

Department of Energy (DOE)
Check FOA solicitations and DOE Lab Announcements for news on potential extensions and updates.

As of March 16, 2020:

Applicants preparing a pre-application, letter of intent, or application:
If the lead principal investigator (PI) or the applicant institution are subject to a quarantine or a closure, deadlines for submitting pre-applications, letters of intent, or applications may be extended by no more than fourteen (14) days from the applicable due date. Please contact the Program Manager identified in the FOA or DOE Laboratory Announcement under which the pre-application, letter of intent, or application is being submitted prior to the applicable due date.

Awardees preparing progress reports:
If the lead principal investigator (PI) or the applicant institution are subject to a quarantine or a closure, progress reports for grants, cooperative agreements, and interagency awards may be submitted through
the PAMS website at https://pamspublic.science.energy.gov as soon as practicable. Note that delays in submitting progress reports may cause unavoidable delays in continuation funding.

PIs from DOE National Laboratories should contact their program manager if there will be a delay in submitting progress reports.

**Applicants and awardees preparing revised budgets or public abstracts:**

If the principal investigator (PI) or the applicant institution are subject to a quarantine or a closure, revised budgets and public abstracts may be submitted through the PAMS website at https://pamspublic.science.energy.gov as soon as practicable. Note that delays in submission may cause unavoidable delays in making awards.

**Awardees with changed travel plans:**

The Office of Science will not consider changes to planned travel caused by the cancellation of meetings, quarantines, closures, or other public health measures to be a change in the scope of an award requiring agency prior approval. Rebudgeting funds that does not create a change in scope does not require agency prior approval.

If a meeting has been cancelled, awardees must follow their institutional travel policies to determine whether costs may be charged to an award. If institutional policy permits travelers to purchase nonrefundable items (airfare, lodging, or other) and does not require travelers to reimburse the institution for change or cancellation fees, such fees may be charged to an award. If institutional policy prohibits the purchase of nonrefundable travel or travelers are required to reimburse the institution for change or cancellation fees, such fees may not be charged to an award.

Please review the attached Q&As. You are encouraged to contact the Administrative Contact for the FOA/Laboratory Announcement or your Program Manager with any concerns or questions regarding your circumstances.

**Questions and Answers (Q&As):**

**Q:** The scientific conference my lab group was scheduled to attend has been cancelled. Can our costs be reimbursed?

**A:** Yes, if your institutional travel policy:

a. Permits the purchase of nonrefundable travel, and

b. Does not require reimbursing the institution for change or cancellation fees.

Priority should be on costs incurred by students and postdocs, not by their departments.

**Q:** My institution told all employees to work from home. May I request an extension to a deadline?

**A:** Working from home—while it may introduce some complications—should not make it impossible to complete work or meet deadlines. If closure or remote access orders by your institution has occurred within a week of the deadline, please contact your Program Manager.

**Q:** My Sponsored Research Office has been closed. How do I request a deadline extension?
A: Please contact your Program Manager and include a copy of the closure order or other official notification.

Q: My Vice President for Research, who customarily signs all applications, has been quarantined. What should I do?

A: Please work with your Sponsored Research Office to determine how your institution is handling the situation. If your institution has established delegations of authority or if your Vice President for Research is capable of electronic signatures, there should be no impact on your ability to submit an application. However, if submitting an application is impossible, please contact your Program Manager.

Q: Our postdoc was quarantined after visiting family overseas. Our experiment has fallen behind schedule. Will this delay impact our continuation funding?

A: Please explain the situation—without disclosing protected personally identifiable information—in your progress report. SC may need to modify an award to be a prudent steward of taxpayer funds by delaying access to continuation funds, but SC’s interest is in seeing the research results—even if it takes longer than originally expected.

Q: What information should I include in a request for a deadline extension?

A: Please include official confirmation of the closure, quarantine, or other incident that makes a timely submission impossible. An institutional declaration requiring staff telework, in and of itself, will not warrant a deadline extension. There must be further complications that make the original deadline impossible. Requests to extend a deadline must be made before the deadline. SC does not expect to support every request for an extension.

Q: May I submit a letter of intent, preproposal, proposal, or progress report before its deadline?

A: SC always encourages prompt and timely submissions. Progress reports may not be submitted more than one month before they are due.

NON-FEDERAL INFORMATION

Arnold Ventures (incl. Laura and John Arnold Foundation)

• We understand that many of our grantees are unable to go to their universities or work spaces, attend conferences, or move their work forward as expected. This may mean that some of our grantees may not be able to meet their milestones, or may even find their work jeopardized. Please know that we are aware of the challenges you’re facing and are committed to partnering with you to find solutions.

• You will receive further guidance shortly from your programmatic team lead, but the long and short of it is: If you are experiencing, or anticipate, any difficulties with your work related to COVID-19, please reach out to your project lead and grant manager to discuss if you haven’t already.

• We will update you frequently through emails and our website. If you have any questions or requests
for us, or if you need support managing stakeholder issues or media inquiries related to COVID-19, please contact info@arnoldventures.org.

Mellon Foundation

First, please know the Foundation’s work is continuing uninterrupted. We will be making grant payments and reviewing proposals as usual.

Second, we recognize that efforts to mitigate the rapid spread of COVID-19 may have disrupted your work. If your ability to do grant-related work has been affected, know that we will flexibly work with you to make adjustments as needed.

Third, we know that many of you are experiencing unsettling organizational challenges. We are carefully keeping you in mind as we think through the uncertainties. You will soon hear more from your main contacts in your specific program area, and they will be available to answer questions and offer support in the coming days and weeks.

Finally, while Mellon’s staff will be working remotely at least for the coming week and longer if prudent, we expect to be available to you, as always. If you have questions or concerns, please let us know.

Ford Foundation

Highlights:

- For grantee partners receiving project support, we are open to converting your current project grants to general support, so that you have maximum flexibility to respond to COVID-19.
- We are open to changing the payment schedule for your grant if that would be helpful to you.
- Grant funds will not be rescinded if a program, conference, or other grant activity is canceled or postponed due to COVID-19.

See full statement at: https://www.fordfoundation.org/ideas/equals-change-blog/posts/a-message-of-support-for-our-grantees/