1. 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: see the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) including its guidance for Institutes of Higher Education
- The World Health Organization (WHO)
- Your local and state public health department
- Travel to/from and quarantine in foreign countries: see the State Department Travel Advisories website
- NIH website: NIH-funded facilities may post guidance for users of their facilities on their websites, and NIH will update this document with pointers to that information as it becomes available.
- NIH Guide Notice: Late Application Policy Due to Public Health Emergency for United States for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- NIH Standard Terms of Award provide the recipient the authority to extend the final budget period of a previously approved project period one time for a period of up to 12 months beyond the original completion date down in the NoA. Any additional project period extension beyond the initial extension of up to 12 months requires NIH prior approval.

Per NIH Grants Policy Statement sections 8.4.1 and 8.6, as well as the terms and conditions outlined in Notice of Award, NIH requires that recipients periodically submit financial and progress reports. NIH understands that some reporting delays due to the impact of coronavirus may be unavoidable. Therefore, if recipients are unable to complete and submit a progress report (Research Performance Progress Reports (RPPR)), Financial reports (Federal Financial Report expenditure data), and/or invention report by the scheduled due date, they should promptly contact the assigned grants management and/or program official. Although NIH will accept these late reports, grant awards will be delayed until the required reports are submitted and accepted by NIH.

2. The NIH Standard Terms of Award provide the recipient the authority to extend the final budget period of a previously approved project period one time for a period of up to 12 months beyond the original completion date down in the NoA. Any additional project period extension beyond the initial extension of up to 12 months requires NIH prior approval.

3. I am involved with a Conference or Travel award for a meeting that is taking place in the coming weeks. Should I continue with plans for the meeting?

NIH recommends first reaching out to the conference organizer or host. They are best equipped to understand the guidance at the location of the event. 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 may wish to consider developing contingency plans.

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

5. I am involved with a Conference or Travel award for a meeting that is taking place in the coming weeks. Should I continue with plans for the meeting?

NIH recommends first reaching out to the conference organizer or host. They are best equipped to understand the guidance at the location of the event. 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 may wish to consider developing contingency plans.

6. I am considering submitting a Conference or Travel proposal to NIH for a future meeting. The site of the meeting has not yet been selected; should I take into account COVID-19 in conference planning and site selection?

Travel logistics, accessibility, and health and safety considerations of the participants should always be a foremost consideration in any Conference proposal. Since the COVID-19 threat is still evolving, it is important to consider flexibility and alternative plans in a proposal to support travel or a conference. For foreign travel, you should consult the State Department Travel Advisories website.

7. My NIH 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. NIH recommends consulting with your organization about its policies and procedures. You may consider approaching the planned researcher exchanges and/or other foreign travel with flexibility, and/or devising alternate plans including virtual participation as appropriate. As noted above, NIH understands 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?

As noted previously, NIH recommends 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 equipped to understand the guidance at the location of the event. 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. I am quarantined for a period of time. There is a NIH proposal deadline during my quarantine period and some essential materials I need are in my office. Can I receive an extension to the deadline?

The NIH will consider accepting applications late, on a case-by-case basis.

Recipients must submit a cover letter with the application, outlining the fact that the institution is closed due to affects of COVID19 so that NIH staff can document the delay.

Recipients do not need to request advance permission to submit late due to a public health emergency-related delay.

10. My university has asked staff to stay home for an undetermined period of time. How would I petition for an extension of an application deadline?

When delays occur because the applicant or recipient organization is officially closed due to a natural disaster or other emergency or because designated PD/PI(s) or other key staff is/are quarantined or involuntarily unable to come to their work locations, the NIH will consider accepting applications late, on a case-by-case basis, under the following circumstances:

- Recipients must submit applications or reports as soon as possible after reopening or end-of-quarantine, not to exceed the number of days the institution was officially closed or the key staff including but not limited to the PD/PI was quarantined.
- Recipients must submit a cover letter with the application, with enough detail about the delay so that NIH staff can make a determination whether circumstances justify accepting the application late.
- Recipients need not request advance permission to submit late due to a disaster/emergency-related delay.

11. I have concerns about traveling to a peer review panel at NIH. What should I do?

Contact the cognizant NIH Scientific Review Officer (SRO) as soon as practicable. NIH will be flexible about accommodating virtual participation.

12. I have already booked my travel and accommodations. Will NIH reimburse me for these costs?

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

Inquiries

Please direct all inquiries to:

Division of Grants Policy
Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration
Office of Extramural Research
Telephone: 301-435-0949
GrantsPolicy@nih.gov
https://grants.nih.gov/grants/natural_disasters.htm

Weekly TOC for this Announcement
NIH Funding Opportunities and Notices