



Council On Governmental Relations

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[COGR's Web Page on Institutional and Agency Responses to COVID-19 and Additional Resources \(Including COGR's FAQs\)](#)

****Institutional policy links and COVID19 questions can be sent to COVID19@cogr.edu.**

5/1/20: U.S. Probes University of Texas Links to Chinese Lab Scrutinized Over Coronavirus (Wall Street Journal) *The Education Department has asked the University of Texas System to provide documentation of its dealings with the [Chinese laboratory](#) U.S. officials are investigating as a potential source of the [coronavirus pandemic](#). The request for records of gifts or contracts from the Wuhan Institute of Virology and its researcher Shi Zhengli, known for her work on bats, is part of a broader department investigation into possible faulty financial disclosures of foreign money by the Texas group of universities. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-probes-university-of-texas-links-to-chinese-lab-scrutinized-over-coronavirus-11588325401> See DoEd Letter here: https://s.wsj.net/public/resources/documents/UTWuhan.pdf?mod=article_inline*

5/1/20: No, Science Can't Tell Us How to Respond to the Coronavirus (National Review) *The invocation of science as the ultimate authority capable of settling questions of how we should govern ourselves is a persistent feature of modern Western life going back several centuries and has always been a mistake. It is especially so in this crisis, when so much is still unknown about the coronavirus and immensely complicated and consequential public-policy questions are in play.... Science has a limited competency, though. Once you are outside a lab setting and dealing with matters of public policy, questions of values and how to strike a balance between competing priorities come into play, and they simply*

can't be settled by people in white lab coats. <https://www.nationalreview.com/2020/05/coronavirus-response-science-cant-make-policy-decisions/#slide-1>

4/30/20: NIH's axing of bat coronavirus grant a 'horrible precedent' and might break rules, critics say (Science) *The research community is reacting with alarm and anger to the National Institutes of Health's (NIH's) abrupt and unusual termination of a grant supporting research in China on how coronaviruses—such as the one causing the current pandemic—move from bats to humans. The agency axed the grant last week, after conservative U.S. politicians and media repeatedly suggested—without evidence—that the pandemic severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) escaped from a laboratory in Wuhan, China, that employs a Chinese virologist who had been receiving funding from the grant. The termination, which some analysts believe might violate regulations governing NIH, also came 7 days after President Donald Trump, asked about the project at a press conference, said: “We will end that grant very quickly.”* <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/04/nih-s-axing-bat-coronavirus-grant-horrible-precedent-and-might-break-rules-critics-say>

4/30/20: Lawmakers Probe NIH Over Chinese Espionage Targeting U.S. Medical Research (Free Beacon) *Reps. Jim Banks (R., Ind.) and Mike Gallagher (R., Wis.) are petitioning NIH leaders to disclose how researchers with ties to adversarial regimes such as China continue to participate in confidential research projects and receive American grant money, according to a letter sent Thursday to NIH director Francis Collins. The lawmakers express concerns about a lack of oversight at the agency that they say might have allowed foreign spies to gain access to critical research.* <https://freebeacon.com/national-security/lawmakers-probe-nih-over-chinese-espionage-targeting-u-s-medical-research/>

4/30/20: Animal Oversight Changes for Institutions Receiving National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Funding (NIH Extramural) *On April 16, 2020, NIH and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) announced a new agreement to ensure consistent and effective oversight of the welfare of animals used in NASA-funded activities.* <https://nexus.od.nih.gov/all/2020/04/30/animal-oversight-changes-for-institutions-receiving-national-aeronautics-and-space-administration-nasa-funding/>

4/30/20: Stand Up to the Anti-Patent COVID-19 Narrative (IP Watchdog) *It may seem odd, as unprecedented public/private sector R&D alliances work to discover and develop therapies to counter COVID-19, that some are trying to punish the companies trying to get us out of this mess.* <https://www.ipwatchdog.com/2020/04/30/stand-anti-patent-covid-19-narrative/id=121197/>

4/29/20: Georgia Tech researcher pays a high price for mismanaging an NSF grant (Science) *When it comes to her research, Eva Lee sweats the details. The Georgia Institute of Technology engineering professor “is extraordinarily talented” at sifting through massive amounts of health care data and finding “novel insights” into how to save lives, improve care, and reduce costs... In contrast, she’s paid much less attention to the reporting requirements on the grants that have supported her research for more than 2 decades at Georgia Tech. And the 55-year-old applied mathematician is now paying a steep price for that neglect.* <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/04/georgia-tech-researcher-pays-high-price-mismanaging-nsf-grant#>

4/29/20: NIH launches competition to speed COVID-19 diagnostics (Science) *The U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) today announced a \$1.5 billion initiative to speed breakthroughs in diagnostic tests for the virus that causes COVID-19. The program aims to increase the U.S. capacity for SARS-CoV-2 testing up to 100-fold by late summer, in time for the start of the flu season.* <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/04/nih-launches-competition-speed-covid-19-diagnostics>

4/29/20: US Marijuana Research Policy Violated International Law For Decades, DEA Lawsuit Memo Reveals (Marijuana Moment) *Scientists have successfully forced the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to release an internal document that was allegedly used to justify delaying the approval of additional marijuana manufacturers for research purposes. And it reveals that the Justice Department feels that the current licensing structure for cannabis cultivation has been in violation of international treaties for decades.* <https://www.marijuanamoment.net/dea-agrees-to-release-secret-document-allegedly-used-to-justify-marijuana-research-delay/>

4/29/20: Scientists wait months for coronavirus research grants. This economist is trying to fix that. (Washington Post) *Economist Tyler Cowen first sounded the alarm that America is unprepared for a pandemic in 2005, when he wrote [a paper](#) outlining ways the country should respond and, for a few years, ran [a blog](#) focused on the possibility of an avian flu outbreak. Fifteen years later, as a novel [coronavirus](#) brings Cowen's fears into reality, the George Mason University professor is trying to fix what he and others view as a structural problem impeding the scientific response to the crisis: the months-long application and review process scientists must endure to get their research funded.*

https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/scientists-wait-months-for-coronavirus-research-grants-this-economist-is-trying-to-fix-that/2020/04/29/b5c8a3e0-896e-11ea-9dfd-990f9dcc71fc_story.html