

Covid-19 Impact on Research Activities: Funders Responses and Requirements

National Institute of Health

- Allows payment of Salaries and Benefits;
- Can apply for supplemental salary support, when, and only when the funds are needed;
- NIH Grants Management must be informed via Institutional Representative (RC&I);
- <https://nexus.od.nih.gov/all/2020/03/17/guidance-for-nih-funded-clinical-trials-and-human-subjects-studies-affected-by-covid-19/>

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

NIH has published this here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-20-086.html>

Please note two of the items in the guidance:

Cost Related Flexibilities/Expenditure of Award

Funds Salaries:

NIH understands that many researchers may be unable to work as a result of or related to the effects of COVID-19. If a recipient organization's policy allows for the charging of salaries and benefits during periods when no work is performed due to the effect of COVID-19, regardless of the funding source, including Federal and non-Federal, then such charges to NIH grant awards will be allowable.

Reminder: NIH awarding Institutes/Centers (ICs) may request documentation to confirm the requirements of institutional policies.

Stipends:

Institutions affected by COVID-19 may continue to provide stipend payments to fellows and trainees who may be unable to work as a result of or related to COVID-19. Recipients should notify the assigned grants management official, and provide documentation demonstrating the effect of COVID- 19, and how long the institution will be affected.

Wellcome Trust

- Allows payment of Salaries and Benefits;
- Can apply for supplement support for the costs incurred while worked can't be performed;
- Wellcome Trust's Grants Management must be informed.

Coronavirus (COVID-19): information for grant applicants and grantholders

This page has information for anyone applying for one of our research grants, or who holds a Wellcome grant: <https://wellcome.ac.uk/grant-funding/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-grant-applicants-and-grantholders>

We will keep this page regularly updated. While the Wellcome Trust building has closed, we remain very much open for business.

If you're applying for a Wellcome grant

All our funding schemes and calls remain open for applications.

We have extended the deadlines by one week for any schemes with an application deadline up to the end of April 2020. We won't consider requests to extend these application deadlines further.

All other application, shortlisting, interview and decision dates will not change. If your organisation is closed and unable to approve and submit an application, we can do this on their behalf. But we will need agreement from your organisation to do this. Your organisation should email gtsupport@wellcome.ac.uk to confirm their agreement.

Some of our advisory committee meetings will take place remotely. We will let you know if you are affected.

If you hold a Wellcome grant

To help minimise the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our grantholders, Wellcome will provide the following support.

We will follow the policy of the employing organisation if any staff employed on a grant:

- are unwell
- need to self-isolate
- have caring responsibilities for someone affected.

We will supplement your grant for the costs your employing organisation incurs paying their salary while they're away, less any recoverable statutory pay. See our [sick leave policy](#) for more information.

We will pay the following costs if you're called away to work on the coronavirus response for one month or more (for example carrying out clinical duties):

- Grantholder – the running costs and salaries of anyone employed on your grant.
- Fellow – your salary, running costs and salaries of anyone employed on your grant. We will only pay your salary if it's not provided from elsewhere (for example, the NHS).
- Member of staff employed on a grant – your salary. We will only pay this if it's not provided from elsewhere (for example, the NHS).

We will pay these costs and extend your grant for the period of time you're away.

If you have paid costs for an event or travel which has been cancelled, and these costs cannot be reimbursed or claimed for under insurance, you can claim these against your grant.

We will extend your grant if you don't need additional costs.

For other grants which may be affected (for example, if an organisation closes), we will look to minimise the impact on our funded research activities wherever possible. This might be a supplement to your grant, where it's not covered by insurance.

Updated 23 March 2020.

International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

- Engage with IDRC project officer to discuss the impact on project and the specific areas where difficulties and higher costs may be of concern;
- <https://www.idrc.ca/en/news/message-idrc-its-grantees-regarding-covid-19>

European Commission (Horizon 2020)

- If unable to perform inform the Commission/Agency/Funding Body, which will examine on a case-by-case basis the possible application of the rules on force majeure;
- If force majeure entails extra costs these costs may be eligible. **However, the maximum grant amount cannot be increased:**
- https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/covid-19-research-executive-agency-business-continuity-measures-2020-mar-18_en;
- Guidance on the Management of Clinical Trials during the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic:
https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/files/eudralex/vol-10/guidanceclinicaltrials_covid19_en.pdf

EDCTP

- As the EDCTP programme is supported under Horizon 2020, the European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, EDCTP operates under the rules and regulations of the Horizon 2020 programme;
- <https://www.edctp.org/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-edctp2-projects-2/>

FLAIR Awards - the Royal Society

- The Royal Society will provide no-cost extensions for any award holder whose research is delayed due to the novel coronavirus pandemic;
- The Royal Society will continue paying all fellowships and grants in line with currently agreed payment schedules. The Society expects all salaries and stipends supported through the grant to be passed on accordingly. This will be reviewed as understanding of the current situation evolves;
- FAQ: <https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/coronavirus-covid19-grants-information/faq-award-holders/>

UK Funding Councils (UK MRC, NERC, ESRC)

NOTE from UKRI

We understand the pressures research institutions and individuals are facing, and are sympathetic to the need for further guidance around costed grant extensions. We are keen to hear from the sector to understand the wider issues and priorities you are facing. We are working closely with colleagues in government to provide further clarification on this issue as a matter of urgency. It is likely that we will need to

assess the need to provide additional support on a case by case basis.

My apologies I can't provide any further clarify on costs at the moment but please keep an eye on the UKRI news page which is being updated frequently.

- <https://www.ukri.org/news/coronavirus-impact-on-ukri-supported-research/>
- <https://mrc.ukri.org/news/blog/an-update-for-mrc-funded-researchers-regarding-the-coronavirus-situation/>

BMGF

BMGF has no Foundation-wide policy whether salaries can be claimed while staff are unable to work.

The Discovery and Translational Sciences Program (D&TS) will allow grantees who have already received grants to use those funds to pay staff even though work cannot be done.

No indication yet that the other programs/entities will allow the same. There is no clarity whether supplement funding can be claimed.

To quote:

We are currently in the process of sizing the impact of COVID-19 on our overall budget. The organization is discussing how to manage this and how to respond. I know that management is working on allowing its groups additional flexibility in budgeting for needs such as supplements, but we don't yet know the overall impact, how long people will have to stay home in each geography, etc.

IDRC

Message from IDRC to its grantees regarding COVID-19

March 13, 2020

IDRC is closely monitoring the evolution and impact of the novel COVID- 19.

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) is closely monitoring the evolution and impact of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). We are taking action to support not only our employees, but also our grant recipients who undertake the important work that IDRC supports around the world.

As an IDRC recipient, if the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting your work or your ability to execute on grant agreements, we wish to assure you that we are supporting your efforts. We acknowledge that project activities may be delayed, the responsiveness of the project personnel may be impacted by measures taken at your workplace, the preparation of technical and financial reports may be delayed, and that the organization of meetings, events, and travel plans may be affected.

Specifically, if you must cancel or postpone events organized through IDRC-funded projects, we will consider the costs associated with the changes as allowable project expenses, provided they align with IDRC policies. For future events, we suggest that recipients purchase cancellation insurance or travel, accommodation and venue bookings that are at least partially refundable. Additional costs for planning in this way will also be considered acceptable, provided it allows for reimbursement or credit in case of cancellation.

In addition, travel for participation in events directly sponsored by IDRC has been suspended.

IDRC is committed to supporting its recipients and to the successful completion of the projects it supports. We invite you to reach out to your IDRC project officer to discuss the impact on your project and the specific areas where difficulties and higher costs may be of concern. This will provide the opportunity to develop a plan and solution to work through the current situation together.

Dominique Charron
Vice-president, Programs and Partnerships

Geneviève Leguerrier
Vice-president, Resources and Chief Financial Officer