

Congressional and Federal Agency Responses and Opportunities Regarding the COVID-19 Outbreak

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Introduction

Today's edition of Lewis-Burke's COVID-19 update includes new federal guidance and opportunities related to the outbreak, including a congressional update on the SBA loan lapses, the White House's plan for "re-opening" states, and multiple new guidelines and funding opportunities from across the federal landscape.

As new information related to the pandemic decreases in volume, Lewis-Burke has transitioned to disseminating this update a few times each week, rather than daily. Also, if you – or your organization – are interested in helping the effort to combat the spread of COVID-19, FEMA has established a website (<https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus/how-to-help>) with more information.

Congressional and Federal Updates

Update: Funding Lapses for Small Business Administration Loan Program as Congressional Negotiations Continue into the Weekend

NEW: On April 16, the Small Business Administration (SBA) officially ran out of money for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), a popular initiative that was created by the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security* (CARES) Act to provide forgivable loans to eligible small businesses and non-profits. There is bipartisan consensus that Congress needs to act to replenish PPP funds, but there has been a prolonged impasse over whether the next support measure should narrowly focus on shoring up PPP, a position backed by Republican leadership, or the Democrats' proposal that SBA funding be complemented by additional funds for hospitals, local governments, and other entities. Congressional leaders are expected to continue to negotiate with the White House on a suitable interim package to supplement CARES Act investments before turning to more future comprehensive stimulus legislation.

As previously reported, Congress' recent struggle to pass legislation by unanimous consent has prompted calls for the consideration of remote methods for Members to vote and conduct day-to-day business. Congressional leadership's opposition to remote voting has softened in recent days with Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) issuing support for a proposal from the House Rules Committee that would allow Members to vote by proxy, giving lawmakers the option to authorize colleagues to vote on their behalf. The House is still in the early stages of mapping out remote activities and there will need to be support from Republican leaders to move forward. Also, unlike the House, the Senate has been slow to consider major changes to voting and if they continue to legislate by unanimous consent, it could be difficult to move large, increasing complex stimulus measures in the weeks ahead.

As Congress remains on recess through May 4 at the earliest, Lewis-Burke will continue to monitor these developments. Read Lewis-Burke's [analysis](#) of the CARES Act for additional information on the most recent stimulus effort.

Update: White House Releases Plan for Restarting U.S. After COVID-19 Shutdowns

NEW: On April 16, President Trump announced the release of [Guidelines for Opening Up America Again](#), the Administration's three-phase plan to reopen the U.S. economy and resume activities. The Trump Administration acknowledged state and local governments will be responsible for implementing

procedures to resume activities, tailored to each jurisdiction's health circumstances. The plan, which assumes reopening activities will not occur until a 14-day downward trajectory of symptoms and COVID-19 cases as well as sufficiently available testing and hospital crisis care, offers a blueprint for phasing in allowable activities and continued health precautions for individuals and employers.

Federal Guidance Related to Research and Higher Education

Update: Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

- On April 10, OMB released Memorandum M-20-21 to provide guidance for federal departments and agencies on how to distribute and rapidly execute supplemental funding and economic relief mechanisms provided in response to COVID-19 through recent legislation. The memo directs agencies to use existing financial transparency and accountability mechanisms, and to consider ways to use data and evidence to achieve program objectives; rapidly issue awards and fund programs to meet critical needs; and provide clear, accurate public reporting on awards.
 - **NEW:** During a webinar on April 16, OMB senior policy analysts emphasized that the Office's goal is to have no additional reporting requirements for recipients of COVID-19 relief funds. "OMB's goal is for USASpending.gov to be the primary and authoritative source for all COVID-19 related reporting," agency officials said, adding that the Administration is committed to minimizing recipient burden, and will leverage existing financial reporting requirements for most awards. Agencies will be expected to incorporate reporting of performance on objectives for COVID-19 relief funding, such as loans, loan guarantees, and other awards, into their existing mission performance plans. The memo directs agencies to consider whether they can meet existing reporting deadlines on awards and financial assistance programs in light of the surge in funding and requests. The full memo can be found at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Implementation-Guidance-for-Supplemental-Funding-Provided-in-Response.pdf>.
- On April 9, OMB released Memorandum M-20-20 to allow federal awarding agencies to repurpose federal assistance awards and grants, in whole or in part, to support COVID-19 response. The exception follows Administration direction that all federal departments and agencies should marshal all legally available resources to combat the crisis. Under the exception, medical equipment, medical devices, and personal protective equipment (PPE) purchased with federal grants as well as resources such as labor, supplies, and contract services funded through federal grants may be donated to hospitals, medical centers, and other local entities serving the public for COVID-19 response. The full memo can be found at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/M-20-20.pdf>.
- On March 19, OMB released guidance to Executive branch agencies to extend flexibilities in federally sponsored research to all grantees impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. These flexibilities include extension of deadlines, no cost-extensions, allowability of salaries, covering costs caused by cancellations, etc. The full memo can be found at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/M-20-17.pdf>.

- On March 9, OMB issued guidance to all Executive branch agencies to grant new flexibilities for research related to emergency COVID-19 response for such things as notices of funding opportunities, no cost-extensions, expenditure of award funds, etc. The use of new flexibilities will be determined by the awarding agencies. The OMB memo is at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/M-20-11.pdf>.

Department of Education (ED)

- House Democrats have been attempting to persuade the Federal Reserve to open up the new Main Street Lending program eligibility to nonprofits and institutions of higher education. The program, which received funding under the CARES Act, will soon be offering four-year loans to small and mid-sized businesses (under 10,000 employees or less than \$2.5 billion in revenue). The Federal Reserve is [accepting](#) public comments on how to implement the program through April 16.
- On April 14, U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos announced that funding for the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund, authorized by the CARES Act, was now available. GEER grants are awarded by formula to Governors and are available to support local educational agencies (LEAs), institutions of higher education (IHEs), and other education related entities with emergency assistance to address the impact that the coronavirus pandemic. More information on the GEER fund is available at <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/education-stabilization-fund/governors-emergency-education-relief-fund/>.
- ED's Institute of Education Sciences (IES) has posted a Frequently Asked Questions website for its grantees related to COVID impacts on on-going research at https://ies.ed.gov/Covid_FAQ.asp.
- Institutions should now be able to upload the "Certificate of Agreement" needed to access the Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students under the CARES Act to www.grants.gov. Using opportunity number ED-GRANTS-041020-003, institutions should list the 50 percent direct-to-student allocation on the certificate. Certificates can be submitted at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=326222>.
- ED announced on April 9 plans for how it would distribute emergency student funding provided in the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund as authorized by the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security* (CARES) Act. The CARES Act provided a funding allocation of \$12.56 billion that was to be distributed to institutions of higher education, with at least 50 percent reserved to provide students with emergency financial aid grants. The April 9 announcement of available grant funding focuses only on the grant portion to be distributed directly to students, with ED noting, "Institutions will receive allocations and guidance for the institutional share of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund in the coming weeks." In a cover letter sent to institutions, ED notes that "each institution may develop its own system and process for determining how to allocate these funds, which may include distributing the funds to all students or only to students who demonstrate significant need." Submission of a certification form will trigger a release of funds in ED's grants management system, G5. ED emphasizes that these funds are only to provide cash to students; institutions are not permitted to use these funds to reimburse themselves for refunds (these include refunds for room and board, purchase of technology, and expenses already incurred). Congress has provided greater flexibility for the institutional portion of CARES Act funding, for which ED will outline the uses and methods by which institutions can use those funds for reimbursement in coming days and weeks. A letter

from ED to institutions, the certification form, additional directions for applying for the funds, institutional allotments, and the methodology for calculating allocations is available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/caresact.html>.

- On April 3, ED released guidance providing additional regulatory flexibilities to institutions in several policy areas including verification, need analysis, and distance education. Previous guidance applied only to students enrolled in terms that ended on or before June 1, 2020; the updated guidance extends many of these flexibilities through June 30. One highlight of the new guidance that will be significant as aid from the CARES Act begins to flow to students relates to need analysis. The guidance states, “Any aid (in the form of grants or low-interest loans) received by victims of an emergency from a federal or state entity for the purpose of providing financial relief is not counted as income for calculating a family’s Expected Family Contribution (EFC) under the Federal Methodology or as estimated financial assistance for packaging purposes.” The updated guidance is available at <https://ifap.ed.gov/electronic-announcements/040320UPDATEDGuidanceInterruptStudyRelCOVID19>.
- On April 1, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) proposed new rules on distance learning for higher education. The rules emerged from negotiated rulemaking that reached consensus in 2019. The proposed rules, “Distance Learning and Innovation,” address a wide range of policies including the definitions of “credit hour,” “distance education,” and clarify the requirements around “regular and substantive interaction,” among other changes. The proposed rules are open for a 30-day comment period, with ED intending to publish a final regulation prior to Nov. 1, 2020. The press release announcing the distance learning rules is available at <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/coronavirus-public-health-emergency-underscores-need-department-educations-proposed-distance-learning-rules>.
- ED’s Student Privacy Policy Office posted a recorded webinar discussion and related slides on FERPA’s implications for distance learning at <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov>.
- The CARES Act provides student loan borrowers with several benefits. This includes suspending borrowers’ obligation to make payments on their federal Direct Loans through September 2020, suspending interest on the payments and counting the suspended payments towards payment requirements for forgiveness provisions. Additionally, CARES suspends the garnishment of wages, Social Security and tax refunds, among other measures, for borrowers in default during this period. ED’s Office of Federal Student Aid’s website with information for students, borrowers, and parents is available at <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/coronavirus>.
- On March 20, ED issued a “COVID-19 FAQs” document to accompany the March 5 guidance offering Title IV flexibility. The FAQ document is downloadable at <http://ifap.ed.gov/sites/default/files/attachments/2020-03/COVID-19FAQs.docx>.
- On March 16, Federal Student Aid (FSA) released guidance on how an institution can request a waiver of the community service expenditure requirements under the FWS Program for the 2020–21 Award Year. <https://ifap.ed.gov/electronic-announcements/031620FWSProgCommWaiverRequest202021>.
- On March 17, ED released additional information for accreditors offering regulatory flexibilities during COVID-19 outbreak, including allowing virtual site visits and extensions on accreditation. The guidance document is at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/20-007covid19accreditorsfromomb317s.pdf>.

- On March 17, the ED released a webinar and a fact sheet for protecting students' civil rights during COVID-19 response. They are both available at <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-webinar-fact-sheet-protecting-students-civil-rights-during-covid-19-response>.
- The Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) has released a video on ensuring web accessibility for students with disabilities for schools using online learning. It is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCMLk4cES6A&feature=youtu.be>.
- On March 12, ED released a FAQ document to assist schools navigating Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and student data privacy requirements as it relates to COVID-19 and possible disclosure of information. Details are available at https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/FERPA%20and%20Coronavirus%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions_0.pdf.
- On March 5, ED posted guidance for institutions of higher education related to interruptions of study, outlining increased flexibility for Title IV aid programs. This includes offering broad approval to move students into distance learning without regular approval and waiving accreditor review requirements. There are some limitations on clock-hour required licensure programs. Guidance is viewable at <https://ifap.ed.gov/electronic-announcements/030520Guidance4interruptionsrelated2CoronavirusCOVID19>.
- The White House Office of Science and Technology launched an online learning resource, [TechforLearners.org](https://www.techforlearners.org), which will serve as a searchable online database of education technology tools that facilitate online classrooms and teaching.
- ED has a COVID-19 website of resources at <https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus>.

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

- NIH has created a central site for its current guidance at https://grants.nih.gov/grants/natural_disasters/corona-virus.htm.
 - NIH has provided a central site to review the update history of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 website listed above at <https://grants.nih.gov/policy/natural-disasters/corona-virus/history-update.htm>.
- Highlighted guidance from NIH:
 - **NIH FAQs: COVID-19 Flexibilities for Applicants and Recipients:** <https://grants.nih.gov/faqs#/covid-19.htm>
 - **NIH Late Application Policy:** <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-20-091.html>
 - **Guidance for NIH-funded Clinical Trials and Human Subjects Studies Affected by COVID-19:** <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-20-087.html>
 - **COVID-19 Pandemic Contingency Planning for Animal Care and Use Programs:** <https://olaw.nih.gov/covid-19.htm>
- NIH announced on March 20 that all non-mission-critical operations in its intramural research laboratories would be shifted to a maintenance phase. Mission-critical functions that will continue to be supported include “care of research participants in NIH clinical protocols that are non-elective, research directly on COVID-19, urgent public health research recommended by NIH scientific leadership, work involving significant research investments that could be lost if not continued, and protection of life, property and resources, including the care of research

animals.” The announcement from NIH is available at <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/nih-shifts-non-mission-critical-laboratory-operations-minimal-maintenance-phase>.

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

- HHS has started distributing an initial \$30 billion in relief funding to hospitals and healthcare providers to help mitigate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including lost revenue from cancelled elective procedures. Funding will be automatically disbursed to all healthcare facilities and providers that received Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) reimbursements in 2019; no application or request for funding is required. Healthcare providers receiving funding must agree not to collect out-of-pocket payments for services provided to COVID-19 patients that would be greater than the cost to in-network patients (i.e. surprise medical bills). Additional information is available at <https://www.hhs.gov/provider-relief/index.html>.
 - Within 30 days of receiving the payment, providers must sign an attestation agreeing to HHS’ terms and conditions, available at <https://covid19.linkhealth.com/>.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

- CMS increased the payment amount to \$100 for certain COVID-19 lab tests using high-throughput technologies for rapid diagnosis: <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/cms-increases-medicare-payment-high-production-coronavirus-lab-tests-0>.
- CMS updated recommendations on delay of adult elective surgeries, non-essential surgeries, and non-essential medical and dental procedures: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/31820-cms-adult-elective-surgery-and-procedures-recommendations.pdf>.
- CMS has released an updated summary of blanket waivers and flexibilities for healthcare providers: <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/summary-covid-19-emergency-declaration-waivers.pdf>.
- CMS has released an updated video FAQ on coverage and payment for telehealth services: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdb9NKtybzo&feature=youtu.be>. A list of covered services is linked here: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-General-Information/Telehealth/Telehealth-Codes>. Clinicians can bill for dates of service beginning on March 6, 2020.
- CMS released updated regulations and guidance based on additional authority granted by the CURES Act. Announcement of the new regulations and guidance is available at <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/trump-administration-makes-sweeping-regulatory-changes-help-us-healthcare-system-address-covid-19>, and additional information and background is available at <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/additional-backgroundsweeping-regulatory-changes-help-us-healthcare-system-address-covid-19-patient>.
- CMS has expanded its Accelerated and Advance Payments Program for reimbursing Medicare payments, in order to increase the cash flow to providers impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Most providers can request up to 100 percent of the Medicare payment amount for a three-month period. The majority of hospitals will have one year to repay any surplus balance from the advance payment after subtracting the following three months’ Medicare claims. Additional information is available at <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/Accelerated-and-Advanced-Payments-Fact-Sheet.pdf>.

- CMS sent a letter on behalf of Vice President Mike Pence to the nation's hospitals to request the reporting of certain data. The letter is available here:
<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/32920-hospital-letter-vice-president-pence.pdf>.
- CMS has released a series of FAQs on flexibilities, exemptions, waivers, and other changes regarding availability and use of [telehealth services](#), coverage of [prescription drugs](#), the [Federal Medical Assistance Percentage \(FMAP\) increase](#), Medicare [Provider Enrollment](#), and enforcing [Open Payments deadlines](#).
- CMS announced it will grant exceptions from reporting requirements and extensions for providers participating in the Medicare Quality Payment Program who are impacted by COVID-19. Additional details are available at <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/cms-announces-relief-clinicians-providers-hospitals-and-facilities-participating-quality-reporting>.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

- The FDA issued emergency authorization around the sterilization of N95 respirators in hospital settings: <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-issues-second-emergency-use-authorization-decontaminate-n95>. FDA previously issued guidance clarifying approved uses of face masks, N95 respirators, surgical masks, and related products: <https://www.fda.gov/media/136449/download>.
- The FDA issued guidance offering flexibilities to grantees on salaries, travel, conference registration fees, FDA-supported meetings, post-award financial reporting, and closeout that may have been impacted by COVID-19. Specific details on the flexibilities offered are available at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-FD-20-019.html>.
- The FDA issued guidance aimed at expanding the availability of ventilators, anesthesia gas machines, and other respiratory devices by increasing flexibility for manufacturers and healthcare facilities. Additional information, including examples where this guidance would apply, is available at <https://www.fda.gov/media/136318/download>.
- The FDA released guidance on clinical trials and flexibility to modify certain protocols regarding COVID-19 testing. The guidance is available at <https://www.fda.gov/media/136238/download>.
- The FDA released guidance for industry, investigators, and institutional review boards on the conduct of clinical trials of medical products during the COVID-19 pandemic:
<https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/fda-guidance-conduct-clinical-trials-medical-products-during-covid-19-pandemic>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- CDC has posted interim guidance for administrators of US Institutions of Higher Education at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-ihe-response.html>.
- CDC has posted resources for institutions of higher education at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/index.html>.
- CDC has posted interim guidance for mass gatherings and large community events at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/mass-gatherings-ready-for-covid-19.html>.
 - The CDC recommends organizers cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 50 people or more for the next 8 weeks.

- CDC has posted guidance related to international travel and study abroad at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/student-foreign-travel.html>.
- CDC has posted Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease in Healthcare Settings at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/control-recommendations.html>.
- CDC has posted guidance on mental health and coping during COVID-19 at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/coping.html>.
- CDC has posted interim guidance for community-and faith-based organizations at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/guidance-community-faith-organizations.html>.

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

- AHRQ has issued a notice to inform grantees of the agency's intention to provide short-term administrative flexibilities for management of AHRQ grants. Like other federal agencies, AHRQ is adopting the administrative relief provisions outlined by OMB in memorandum M-20-17. These include extension of deadlines, no cost extensions, and allowability of salaries, among others. Full details are available at https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-HS-20-010.html?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter.

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

- HRSA has announced it will implement all 13 administrative flexibilities for grant recipients outlined in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) [memo](#) from March 19. The flexibilities are further explained in an FAQ released by the agency, available at <https://www.hrsa.gov/grants/manage-your-grant/COVID-19-frequently-asked-questions>.

Update: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

- **NEW:** SAMHSA released an FAQ for current grantees on award management flexibilities during the COVID-19 epidemic, including reporting flexibilities, no cost extensions, budget modifications, and more: <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/covid-19-faqs-samhsa-discretionary-grant-recipients.pdf>.

Update: Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)

- **NEW:** PCORI released an FAQ detailing flexibilities and policies regarding applications and award management during the COVID-19 epidemic: <https://www.pcori.org/funding-opportunities/applicant-and-awardee-faqs-related-covid-19>.

Administration for Children and Families

- The Office of Head Start (OHS) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released guidance: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/im/acf-im-hs-19-01> on additional flexibilities that can be applied to Head Start programs impacted by COVID-19. The guidance encourages grantees near "impacted areas" to assess how services and resources can be shared to assist others affected by an emergency or disaster. The guidance also states that OHS will "rely on the judgement of governing bodies and program administrators at the community level to determine the most

expeditious steps necessary to resume services.” Grantees are encouraged to reach out to their Regional Office, especially if program operations are being impacted by COVID-19. More information on programmatic changes can also be found on OHS’ new Coronavirus Prevention and Response website: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/physical-health/article/coronavirus-prevention-response>.

National Science Foundation (NSF)

- On April 9, the Division of Earth Sciences (EAR) within the Directorate for Geosciences (GEO) will offer virtual office hours “to share information about NSF’s current operations and provide guidance to the earth sciences community. This will also allow the community to ask questions, share concerns, or offer suggestions on how EAR can do more to address the impact of COVID-19 on the research community.” Office hours were held April 8 and will be offered April 9 from 11 AM to Noon (ET). More information is available at https://www.nsf.gov/events/event_summ.jsp?cntn_id=300338&WT.mc_id=USNSF_13&WT.mc_ev=click.
- On March 27, NSF released an updated list of programs with extended deadlines due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The list can be found at https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/covid19/covid19_deadlines.pdf.
- On March 25, the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO) announced a series of virtual office hours to discuss “how BIO and NSF can mitigate the longer-term harm of COVID-19 on U.S. research and training.” The office hours will enable the BIO community the opportunity to share concerns, ask questions, or suggest additional things NSF can do to address the coronavirus emergency. Details on the BIO-wide office hours are available at https://www.nsf.gov/events/event_summ.jsp?cntn_id=300246&WT.mc_id=USNSF_13&WT.mc_ev=click.
- On March 23, NSF Director France Córdoba released a letter to the NSF community regarding COVID-19 stating that NSF is “committed to providing the greatest available flexibilities to support your health and safety as well as your work.” The letter is available at https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/issuances/in146.jsp?WT.mc_id=USNSF_80.
- On March 23, NSF announced additional guidance responding to the March 19 OMB memo for researchers, available at https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/covid19/covid19_nsfombimplementation.pdf.
- NSF is regularly updating their coronavirus website with FAQs. It is available at https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/coronavirus/.

Department of Energy (DOE)

- ARPA-E offered additional guidance for awardees to continue ongoing projects as well as provide administrative/financial relief for award recipients. The guidance recognizes the need for flexibility for researchers given limited access to facilities, and disrupted supply chains as a result of the COVID crisis. ARPA-E specifically details:
 - Flexibility with SAM registration;
 - Flexibility with application deadlines;
 - No-cost extensions;
 - Continuation requests;

- Allowability of salaries and other project activities;
 - Allowability of costs not normally chargeable to awards;
 - Exemption from certain procurement requirements;
 - Extension of financial, performance, and other reporting;
 - Extension of closeout reports; and
 - Extension of single audit submissions.
- DOE continues to extend certain deadlines for funding opportunities open to research universities. Most recently, the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) extended the deadline for the Bio-Optimized Technologies to Keep Thermoplastics out of Landfills and the Environment (BOTTLE) solicitation. Concept papers are now due **April 29, 2020 at 5:00 PM ET**. Full applications will be due **July 2, 2020 at 5:00 PM ET**. For more information, DOE recommends referencing the full FOA at <https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/FileContent.aspx?FileID=9365680f-656d-4e74-ba72-c9f5a7fdd290>. In general, DOE extensions are still on a case by case basis, and we recommend that researchers contact the lead program manager assigned to the funding opportunity for up to date information on due dates.
 - On March 31, the Advanced Research Projects Agency – Energy (ARPA-E) issued deadline extensions to funding opportunities and requests for information (RFI), including:
 - Seeding Critical Advances for Leading Energy technologies with Untapped Potential (SCALEUP): the preliminary application deadline for Replies to Reviewer Comments is now **March 30**.
 - RFI for Next Generation Ammonia System Integration Project: the response deadline is now **April 6**.
 - Galvanizing Advances in Market-aligned Fusion for an Overabundance of Watts (GAMOW): the concept paper deadline is now **April 10**.
 - Flexible Carbon Capture and Storage (FLECCS): the full application deadline is now **April 14**.
 - Range Extenders for Electric Aviation with Low Carbon Emission and High Efficiency (REEACH): the full application deadline is now **May 22**.
 - Aviation-class Synergistically Cooled Electric-motors with iNtegrated Drives (ASCEND): the full application deadline is now **May 22**.
 - For all other relevant deadlines, ARPA-E encourages checking the Funding Opportunity Exchange at <https://arpa-e-foa.energy.gov/>.
 - DOE plans to release new guidance for grantees that directly addresses guidance in OMB Memo M-20-11, "Administrative Relief for Recipients and Applicants of Federal Financial Assistance Directly Impacted by the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)." The updated guidance should address all issues related to DOE's financial assistance awards, including allowable costs for supporting graduate students and postdocs.
 - DOE's current guidance for grantees and grant applicants is available at <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2020/03/f72/doe-sc-accommodating-interruptions-to-applicants-awardees-due-to-covid-19.pdf>.
 - DOE's COVID-19 website is at <https://www.energy.gov/coronavirus-hub>.
 - A podcast interview with Office of Science Director Chris Fall on the national lab's response to COVID-19 is available at <https://www.energy.gov/podcasts/direct-current-energygov-podcast/national-labs-respond-covid-19#podcast-item-transcript>.

- Information on DOE's resources supporting coronavirus research is available at <https://science.osti.gov/DOE-Resources-Supporting-Coronavirus-Research>.

Update: Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

- **NEW:** DHS's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) recently released an expanded list of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers During the COVID-19 Response. The list is advisory and highlights areas where CISA believes employees should go into work despite stay-at-home orders. The guidance has been expanded from a March 28 edition and "clarifies and expands critical infrastructure workers in several categories and provides additional information as considerations for both government and business." Among the changes from previous iterations, the new guidance clarifies "worker categories related to health care, public and environmental health, emergency medical services, and aligning related job functions." Several states have fully adopted previous iterations of the CISA guidance. The updated list can be found at <https://www.cisa.gov/news/2020/04/17/cisa-releases-version-30-guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workers-during>.
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) maintains information about their response to COVID-19 on their website at <https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/uscis-response-coronavirus-2019-covid-19>. Notable announcements include:
 - USCIS affirms it has flexibility to excuse a nonimmigrant's failure to file an extension of stay (EOS) or change of status (COS) application if the delay was due to the extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, as noted on their special situations page, <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/special-situations>. Nonetheless, USCIS encourages all nonimmigrants to file timely EOS and COS applications and petitions to mitigate the immigration consequences of COVID-19, which they continue to accept and process.
 - Petitioners should expect a delay in data entry and receipt notice generation for fiscal year (FY) 2021 H-1B cap-subject petitions until at least May 1, 2020 due to the impacts of COVID-19. Nonetheless, the specified filing window on registration selection notices will not change. For more information, see <https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/temporary-workers/h-1b-specialty-occupations-and-fashion-models/h-1b-electronic-registration-process>.
 - USCIS announced measures to assist applicants and petitioners who are responding to certain Requests for Evidence (RFE), Notices of Intent to Deny (NOID), Notices of Intent to Revoke (NOIR), and Notices of Intent to Terminate (NOIT). For an RFE, NOID, NOIR, or NOIT with an issuance date listed on the request, notice or decision between March 1, 2020 and May 1, 2020, USCIS will consider any response received within 60 calendar days of the response due date before any action is taken.
 - USCIS has suspended in-person appointments due to COVID-19. Appointments at USCIS domestic field offices will automatically be rescheduled once normal operations resume. Individuals with appointments with a Field Office must reschedule through the [USCIS Contact Center](#).
- The DHS Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) recently announced efforts to develop a COVID-19 Master Question List (MQL) with information on the status of current news and relevant research related to the COVID-19 outbreak, including critical gaps in knowledge of importance to first

responders. These efforts are being led by S&T's new Probabilistic Analysis of National Threats, Hazards and Risks (PANTHR) Program and Hazard Awareness & Characterization Technology Center. In addition to identifying gaps in knowledge, these teams will also look to develop research solutions in some cases. Although a majority of this research will likely be conducted internally at DHS and through existing partners, there is a good chance MQL topics could be included in future DHS S&T funding opportunities. More information can be found at: <https://www.dhs.gov/science-and-technology/blog/2020/03/18/st-mobilizes-key-data-inform-covid-19-response>

- Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) has an updated FAQ on the impact of COVID-19 on SEVP-certified schools and F and M students. That FAQ is available at <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2020/COVID-19FAQ.pdf>. Regularly updated guidance is available at <https://www.ice.gov/covid19>.
- International students on F or M visas technically have restrictions on the number of courses they can take remotely/via distance education. DHS, through Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), issued flexibility guidance on March 9 for how to handle procedural adaptations for F and M nonimmigrant students. Schools must provide SEVP notice of the operational and procedural changes within 10 business days of the date of the decision. The guidance note is at <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/bcm2003-01.pdf>.

Department of Defense (DOD)

- On April 13, the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness released a supplemental memo on protecting personnel in DOD workplaces during COVID-19 response. The guidance, which shares updated CDC guidance, is available at: <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Apr/13/2002280147/-1/-1/1/FORCE-HEALTH-PROTECTION-GUIDANCE-SUPPLEMENT-8.PDF?source=GovDelivery>.
- The Defense Pricing and Contracting office issued a memo on April 9 describing procedures to reimburse defense contractors for providing paid leave to employees who can't work during the pandemic mitigation period because they are unable to telework or access their government work sites. This memo is the 17th instruction issued by the DOD office related to COVID-19 and the Pentagon said it is working with industry groups to identify cost, schedule, and performance impacts outside contractors' control. The memo implements Section 3610 of the CARES Act to allow agencies to reimburse contractors for paid leave and sick leave provided to employees or subcontractors to maintain a "ready state" during the national emergency. The memo is available at https://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/policy/policyvault/Implementation_Guidance_CARES_3610_DPC.pdf.
- The Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) issued a memorandum on April 3 providing guidance to the Intelligence Community (IC) on how to leverage flexibilities in the CARES Act to help their contractor employees continue to work and be compensated even if they are unable to access their government work sites. Intended to help contractors stay financially viable, maintain long-term health of the industrial base, and retain skilled and cleared contractors, the ODNI guidance implements provisions in Section 3610 of the CARES Act that authorize agencies to modify contracts when contract employees are restricted from work due to COVID-19-related health and safety concerns and encourages them to enable the maximum number of contractor personnel to convert to staying home in a "ready state" during the national emergency. ODNI said in the memo that it supports intelligence agency decisions to

slip acquisition and development milestones, even if already required by approved documentation, if it is intended to limit staffing during the critical period for pandemic mitigation of March 27 through September 30, 2020. The memorandum can be found on the Lewis-Burke Associates website at https://www.lewis-burke.com/sites/default/files/odni_section_3610_guidance_memo.pdf.

- Secretary of Defense Mark Esper issued guidance April 5 requiring, to the extent practical, the use of [cloth face coverings](#) for military Service members, DOD civilian employees, their family members, DOD contractors, and all other individuals on DOD property, installations, and facilities to reduce further risks of spread and safeguard national security capabilities. The memorandum encourages adherence to CDC guidelines that cloth face coverings are to be worn in public settings where social distancing practices are difficult to maintain. This guidance is to take effect immediately as critical medical personal protective equipment (PPE), such as N95 respirators, are to be reserved for appropriate personnel. Local commanders and supervisors may issue exceptions to the guidance. The latest DOD policies in combating COVID-19 can be found [here](#).
- The Air Force Office of Scientific Research ([AFOSR](#)) and the Office of Naval Research ([ONR](#)) have now released additional guidance beyond the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) memo for prospective and current researchers regarding impacts to research from the COVID-19 pandemic. Both offices have allowed for no-cost extensions for existing grants active as of March 31, 2020. Both research labs still recommend faculty contact their program officers regarding COVID-19 impacts to their research.
- Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Will Roper [announced](#) the formation of a new acquisition task force to support the Air Force's industrial base during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Air Force is determined to ensure that the Department of the Air Force and its industrial base stay resilient and that acquisition programs are still able to move forward during and after the crisis. The Air Force will focus on leveraging small businesses and startups to provide COVID-19 response, and released a new solicitation aimed at harnessing small businesses' capabilities March 30. This will include four lines of effort:
 - **Relief:** The task force will explore what contracting actions can be taken to move funding and support small businesses that need assistance.
 - **Resilience:** How can the Air Force support small businesses and contractors under duress to ensure the health of the defense industrial base?
 - **Recovery:** What actions does the Air Force need to take after the crisis, to ensure programs keep on track and that the Air Force continues critical operations?
 - **Being Rapid for Small Businesses:** Led by AFVentures, this effort will ensure that the Air Force spends all its funds allocated to support small business contractors.
- The Assistant Secretary of the Army Acquisition Logistics and Technology (ASA(ALT)) Bruce Jette released a memo on March 24 to the defense industrial base stating that the Army will continue to work with DOD and other stakeholders to ensure clear guidance and that contractors have been encouraged to assess and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the defense industrial base. The full memo can be found at https://beta.sam.gov/opp/d4b8fa584e65444cb9b6d43c6e65c09e/view?keywords=covid&sort=-modifiedDate&index=opp&is_active=true&page=1&organization_id=100000000.
- The Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition (ASN RDA) James (Hondo) Geurts released a memo on March 24 on engaging the research and

development industrial base during COVID-19, urging Navy commands to leverage academia, small innovative research companies, large and small businesses, public-private venture companies, and startup companies engaged in research and development (R&D) and science and technology (S&T) to provide “immediate support” for COVID-19. The memo also includes additional actions for the Navy to consider sustaining national R&D during COVID-19 response, including:

- Seeking approval for advance payments for Navy projects to ensure sufficient funding to continue research activities
- Initiating a Special Notice under the existing long-range Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) seeking submission of concept and proof of prototype proposals up to \$294,000
- Considering a Special Funding Opportunity Announcement for development of Online K-12 STEM products aimed at small/medium and for/non-profit entities
- Issuing an out-of-cycle solicitation for the SBIR/STTR programs for critical Navy needs including COVID-19 response activities
- Issuing flexibilities for University Affiliated Research Centers (UARC) and Federally-Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDC)
- Funding of Navy basic research grants in 12-month increments
- Approving and expanding advance payments on research grants for salaries and benefits

The full memo can be found on Lewis-Burke’s website at https://www.lewis-burke.com/sites/default/files/asn-rda_rd_engagement_24mar20.pdf.

- DOD Office of Basic Research released a FAQ resource for DOD research proposers and awardees in response to OMB’s March 19 memo M-20-17. The FAQ states that DOD will allow grantees to “delay submission of financial, performance and other reports on currently-active award accounts up to three months beyond the normal due date.” Questions regarding other deliverables should be directed to the grants manager or program officer for an award. Additional information on travel expenses, salaries and benefits, no-cost extensions, and upcoming deadlines can be found in the FAQ at <https://basicresearch.defense.gov/COVID-19/Frequently-Asked-Questions/>.
- DOD’s Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) released a FAQ resource for grant applicants and recipients. The FAQ states that there are currently no plans to modify existing application deadlines but encourages grant applicants to monitor grants.gov for any changes in due dates. The FAQ can be found at <https://cdmrp.army.mil/about/covid-19/default>.
- Shortly following the announcement of the death of a DOD contractor in northern Virginia Saturday of complications from COVID-19, Defense Secretary Mark Esper announced March 23 the Pentagon was raising its status to Health Protection Condition C, which limits the number of access points to the Pentagon and increases the amount of personnel who will telework, and that the Department would evaluate ways to make additional medical facilities and resources available for COVID-19 treatment. Secretary Esper’s press briefing can be viewed at <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/2122022/esper-briefs-reporters-on-dods-covid-19-response/>.
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Director of Contracting released a memo to prospective contractors on March 20 providing guidance on doing business with USACE in COVID-19 response, including small business and subcontracting opportunities. The memo can be found at https://beta.sam.gov/opp/ff5f7b4834a546a3b18717882caed068/view?keywords=covid&sort=-modifiedDate&index=opp&is_active=true&page=1&organization_id=100000000.

- The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) released on March 19 a FAQ resource for DARPA performers about COVID-19. The FAQ document confirms that DARPA will continue to evaluate proposals (whether already submitted or not yet submitted) at this time. The DARPA FAQ page can be found at <https://www.darpa.mil/news-events/2020-03-19>.
 - DARPA’s FAQs encourages performers with research project ideas related to COVID-19 to respond to the Office-wide broad agency announcements (BAAs) for both the Defense Sciences Office (DSO) and Biological Technology Office (BTO), which both have open BAAs that can receive submissions at any time. The DSO and BTO Office-wide BAAs can be found at <https://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/office-wide-broad-agency-announcements>.
- The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (OUSD(A&S)) released a memo that encourages contracting officers to engage with government program managers to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on the welfare and safety of the defense workforce and on contract performance. The memo also includes a link to DOD’s Emergency Preparedness Guidance that can be found at <https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/OD/EmergencyPreparedness>. The memo can be found at [here](#) or on beta.sam.gov under Notice ID “COVID-19-LRE.”
- Ellen Lord, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)), announced on March 17 that the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA), Aerospace Industries Association, Professional Services Council, the National Association of Manufacturers and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders will form a daily panel to discuss COVID-19 issues with DOD. The goal of the daily panel is "to ensure the security, reliability and resilience of our defense industrial base and our collective effort to execute the National Defense Strategy." The press release on the newly formed panel can be found at <https://www.ndia.org/about/media/press-releases/2020/3/17/panel>.
- The Office of Naval Research (ONR) has clarified its policy for administrative relief on ONR awards as a result of university or non-profit actions taken in response to COVID-19. At this time, ONR is utilizing OMB M-20-11 guidance for assistance awards (i.e. grants) directly supporting continued research or services necessary to carry out the emergency response related to COVID-19. Additionally, ONR is using a “limited statement” from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, Basic Research Office for grantees whose work does not fit the parameters of M-20-11, which is only applicable to awards that support the continued research and services necessary to carry out the emergency response related to COVID-19 during the period formally declared public health emergency. For grants outside those parameters, ONR will continue following current protocols for modifying awards as requested and warranted and will apply the following guidance:
 - “Expenditure of award funds for salaries: DoD may only allow grantees to charge salaries and benefits to currently active awards for any work that is performed to meet the project activities, regardless of location where those duties are performed (i.e. telework eligible). Some approved activities may include data analysis, preparation of articles and papers based on the analysis of the research findings, monitoring sub-recipients, direct charged administrative costs. Applicable indirect costs may be charged to all allowed costs.
 - Travel - Grantees will follow their organization's travel policy regarding any restrictions for approved travel. Further, DOD offices are encouraged to use alternative ways, such as VTC, to allow participation in any mandatory meetings sponsored by the DoD. “

- The DOD coronavirus response website is available at <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/Spotlight/Coronavirus/>.

Update: Department of Labor (DOL)

- **NEW:** DOL Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has posted new interim guidance for employers on good faith efforts to ensure health standards during the pandemic at <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/osha/osha20200416-0>. OSHA also issued new guidance for manufacturing industry workforce at <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA4002.pdf>
- DOL has posted a new webinar on implementation of paid leave requirements in the Wage and Hour division COVID-19 resource website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic>.
- DOL posted a temporary rule for employers related to implementation of the new emergency sick and family leave provisions, which went into effect April 1. Details at <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/whd/whd20200401>.
- The DOL OSHA has released guidance and resources for employers related to workplace safety and COVID-19 prevention at <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>.
- The DOL Wage and Hour Division (WHD) has announced additional guidance for employers on the implementation of the new COVID-19 paid leave requirements at <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/whd/whd20200326>.
- The WHD of DOL has published guidance, fact sheets, and a Q&A document for employers and employees on implementation of the new COVID-19 paid leave requirements at <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/whd/whd20200324>.
- DOL, along with Department of Treasury, posted an initial notice on the implementation of the payroll tax credit related to new COVID-19 paid leave, as included in the recently passed, *Families First Coronavirus Response Act*. Details at <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/osec/osec20200320>.
- On March 12, DOL announced flexibility for states to allow unemployment insurance (UI) benefits to be used in cases “where: (1) An employer temporarily ceases operations due to COVID-19, preventing employees from coming to work; (2) An individual is quarantined with the expectation of returning to work after the quarantine is over; and (3) An individual leaves employment due to a risk of exposure or infection or to care for a family member. In addition, federal law does not require an employee to quit in order to receive benefits due to the impact of COVID-19.” Details are available at <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/eta/eta20200312-0>.

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

- The VA made publicly available its COVID-19 Response Plan, which had previously been designated as “For Official Use Only,” meaning it had only been available to personnel within the VA system. In a press release, the VA notes that it has “shifted some outpatient care to telehealth and some elective and non-emergent procedures have been postponed. It also notes that “VA will begin to implement two zones within all inpatient units: one for dedicated staff and space to care for COVID-19 patients; the second will be a zone for all other care. These overall changes are aimed at minimizing the risk of infection as VA’s medical professionals make

decisions based on what's appropriate for the given environment and situation." The full plan is available here: https://www.va.gov/opa/docs/VHA_COVID_19_03232020_vF_1.pdf

- With the Senate and House passage of [S. 3503](#), legislation to ensure the continuation of GI Bill benefits use as institutions convert veterans to fully online programming, the VA has announced to School Certifying Officials the agency will continue to make benefit payments with online conversions and students will continue to receive the same monthly housing allowance payments through January 2021 or until the school resumes normal in-person operations. The VA will be hosting upcoming webinars and posting additional information at <https://www.va.gov/school-administrators/>

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

- On March 31, NASA published two documents with additional information on the Science Mission Directorate's response to the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic:
 - "SMD FAQ on Grants and Research during the COVID-19 Epidemic" - link: <https://science.nasa.gov/science-red/s3fs-public/atoms/files/NASACOVIDFAQ033120.pdf>.
 - "COVID-19 and Federal Financial Assistance" - link: <https://science.nasa.gov/science-red/s3fs-public/atoms/files/COVID-19%20and%20Federal%20Financial%20Assistance.pdf>
- Updates to SMD guidance or additional information will be announced at <https://science.nasa.gov/researchers/sara/library-and-useful-links>.
- NASA's Earth Science Division (ESD) is alerting "Earth Science research, applications, and data systems communities" of the Research Opportunities in Space and Earth Sciences (ROSES) 2020 [Program Element A.28 "Rapid Response and Novel Research in Earth Science" \(RRNES\)](#) as an opportunity for "making innovative use of NASA satellite data to address regional-to-global environmental, economic, and/or societal impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic." NASA ESD anticipates reviewing proposals within 10 days of submission.

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)

- The NEH Office of Digital Humanities is offering virtual outreach to university instructors to assist in the switch to online learning. Details are available at <https://www.neh.gov/blog/odh-covid-response-virtual-visits>.
- NEH has provided an FAQ "Funding for NEH Applicants and Grantees Impacted by the Coronavirus," which addresses questions related to the CARES Act. The FAQ notes, "NEH plans to announce funding opportunities for eligible organizations seeking support for at-risk humanities positions and projects at cultural nonprofits that have been impacted by the coronavirus. More information will be announced on our website and through social media by April 30, 2020." The FAQ is available at https://www.neh.gov/COVID19_FAQs.
- NEH's guidance in response to COVID-19 is at <https://www.neh.gov/news/information-neh-and-covid-19>.

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

- NEA has posted the agency's CARES Act funded grant competition to help arts organizations endure financial impacts from COVID-19. NEA received \$75 million in the CARES Act. Applicants must be previous NEA awardees from the past four years. Applications are due April 22 via www.grants.gov and also submitted to the Endowment's application portal between April 27 - May 4. Details at <https://www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/CARES/grant-program-description>.
- NEA has announced that its "Challenge America" grant application deadline has been cancelled to allow the "Endowment to prepare for distribution of funding from CARES Act." NEA states that "Challenge America applicants should apply for Grants for Arts Projects with a deadline of July 9, 2020. For more information contact challengeamerica@arts.gov."
- NEA's FAQ's in response to COVID-19, which has been updated with additional information for grantees, is at <https://www.arts.gov/COVID-19-FAQs>.

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)

- IMLS released a FAQ resource in response to COVID-19 for grant applicants and awardees. The IMLS FAQ page can be found at <https://www.ims.gov/coronavirus-covid-19-updates#grantees>. To date, IMLS has changed the application deadlines for five open library services grant programs; the new deadlines can be found in the FAQ or at <https://www.ims.gov/news/new-application-deadlines-ims-library-services-grants>

Department of State (DOS)

- The level 4 travel advisory remains in effect. The guidance advises all U.S. citizens to avoid international travel and instructs all Americans abroad to either return to the United States or prepare to shelter in place since many countries have closed borders and/or cancelled or restricted international travel. More information is available <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/ea/travel-advisory-alert-global-level-4-health-advisory-issue.html>.
 - American overseas with COVID-19 related emergencies may call DOS personnel for assistance. In addition, the DOS has compiled country-specific information regarding travel restrictions and evacuation plans. For details visit: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/ea/covid-19-information.html>.
 - International travelers should register in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to get up-to-date safety and security information and assist U.S. State Department personnel to contact citizens during emergencies at <https://step.state.gov/>.
- U.S. consulates have suspended most routine visa services until further notice. The latest information, by country, is available at <https://www.usembassy.gov/>.
- The State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) will temporarily pause all ECA-funded programs. Details at <https://www.state.gov/temporary-pause-of-international-exchange-programs-due-to-covid-19/>.

Department of Justice (DOJ)

- The DOJ Office of Justice Programs (OJP), which includes several extramural funding offices, including the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), and the Office

of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has announced a two-week extension on submission deadlines scheduled before April 1. OJP also offered guidance for solicitations that require “executed agreements,” or signed notices from decision-making authorities with research entities that certify their support for data collection as part of a research activity. These agreements are especially important to NIJ grants. Under the new guidance, OJP strongly encourages signed agreements where they can be obtained but note that they will not be required in forthcoming applications. Applicants selected for awards will have to obtain signed agreements by January 1, 2021 and funds will be withheld until such agreements can be submitted. Additional information is available at <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/funding/current>.

Small Business Administration (SBA)

- SBA is providing low-interest disaster recovery loans for businesses and organizations directly impacted by COVID-19. SBA’s Economic Injury Disaster Loans offer up to \$2 million in assistance for a small business with long-term repayment plans. States are required to request assistance from SBA for businesses to be eligible for these loans. On March 17, SBA Administrator Jovita Carranza released revised guidance that greatly streamlines this process and allows loan designation for entire states instead of targeted areas. This information is important to universities that provide consultation to local startups and other small businesses. Some non-profits and private universities are also eligible for some disaster loan programs. The press release on new SBA guidance for Economic Injury Disaster Loans is at <https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba-newsroom/press-releases-media-advisories/sba-updates-criteria-states-requesting-disaster-assistance-loans-small-businesses-impacted>. Additional information on the loan programs impacted by COVID-19 can be found at <https://www.sba.gov/disaster-assistance/coronavirus-covid-19>.

US Census Bureau

- US Census Bureau guidance on counting college students is available at <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2020/modifying-2020-operations-for-counting-college-students.html>.

Update: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

- **NEW:** On April 16, the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Dr. Scott Angle, and members of his staff held a webinar on FAQs relating to COVID-19. Presenters stressed that NIFA is routinely updating guidance, extending deadlines, and accepting proposals for COVID-19 research. Topics covered in the webinar included no cost-extensions; information on salaries and project activities; allowability of costs due to COVID-19 impact on research; and procurement requirements, among others. Slides from the webinar can be found here: <https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/COVID-19-FAQs-Webinar.pdf>.
- On April 13, USDA released the “COVID-19 Federal Rural Resource Guide.” This document serves as a menu of programs to provide rural stakeholders, including universities, with technical, training, and management assistance; financial assistance; and state and local assistance. The Resource Guide can be found at https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/USDA_COVID-19_Fed_Rural_Resource_Guide.pdf.

- NIFA released updated guidance for the implementation of the Office of Management and Budget’s March 19 Memo: "Administrative Relief for Recipients and Applicants of Federal Financial Assistance Directly Impacted by the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) due to Loss of Operations." The guidance can be found at <https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-20-006-implementation-omb-memo-m-20-17#>
- The Director of NIFA, Dr. Scott Angle will host a webinar on April 16 from 2-3 PM EST to address COVID-19 efforts. Registration is at: https://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_TfPIX6X9Q2SHTnRQrCO6TA?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=. Any questions can be submitted to Dr. Angle’s Chief of Staff, Bill Hoffman at whoffman4@usda.gov.
- NIFA released an updated FAQ document providing information beyond the OMB guidance for administrative relief. The updated FAQ document is available at <https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/NIFA-20-005-NIFA-Coronavirus-FAQs-04082020.pdf>
- NIFA has released its guidance responding directly to the OMB memo on research relief, including specifics on extensions and salaries and other costs, which can be found here: <https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-20-006-implementation-omb-memo-m-20-17>.
- USDA has released the following updates on its ongoing operations:
 - “Agricultural Research Service (ARS) continues its mission critical work without interruption. We are continuing to support our stakeholders, including action and regulatory agencies. We will begin planning for new research on the impact of CoVID-19 on food safety and animals.
 - National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is making every effort to produce and deliver official federal agriculture statistics on schedule. We will evaluate data collection and agency operations for the production of each NASS report as COVID-19 conditions change. If we are able to collect enough data and conditions are such that estimates can be established and released, we will publish reports. If there are changes in the publication schedule, notification will be made by a notice distributed to the news media and posted at nass.usda.gov. We ask farmers and ranchers who have received a survey to please respond online. It’s now more important than ever to respond promptly online so that we can deliver the statistics that agriculture counts on, without having to follow up. The URL is on every questionnaire, agcounts.usda.gov. To start, use the survey code on the questionnaire.
 - The Economic Research Service (ERS) is fully prepared to deliver on our regular mission activities and to support Departmental needs for analysis. Nearly 100 percent of staff are telework ready and ERS is operating in a 100 percent cloud computing environment, which facilitates full functionality with remote access.”
- USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) announced that is extending deadlines for its Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) program (<https://nifa.usda.gov/program/agriculture-and-food-research-initiative-afri>). AFRI issued additional guidance that while other deadlines have not been extended, proposers whose applications would be delayed due to “valid extenuating circumstances” should contact the point of contact listed in the Request for Applications. Deadlines are extended as follows and a full list of deadlines can be found at <https://nifa.usda.gov/afri-deadlines>:
 - Proposals due April 9 will be due April 16

- NIFA released guidance for individuals who may experience delays in the distribution of funds. The guidance is available at <https://nifa.usda.gov/grants>.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

- NOAA has released a guidance for administrative relief for recipients and applicants of federal funding who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. NOAA's Grants Management Division and Program Offices are advised to use the following guidelines from NOAA's Acquisition and Grants Office:
 - NOAA will allow recipients to continue to charge benefits and salaries to active awards and will not require prior approval requests to be submitted.
 - Awards scheduled to end between March 31, 2020 and December 31, 2020 are eligible for extension for up to 12 months. Recipients should submit extension requests at least 30 days prior to the scheduled award end date.
 - NOAA will permit delayed submission of financial, performance, and other records for up to three months with no requirement of notifying the agency.
 - Recipients who have not yet submitted audits with the Federal Audit Clearinghouse that have fiscal year end dates through June 30, 2020 may delay submission by six months.
 - Recipients may continue to use currently approved indirect cost rates for an additional year without submission of an indirect cost proposal.
 - NOAA will allow the use of funds to cover the costs of canceled events, travel, or other reasonable activities, but will not guarantee that funds will remain available should the event be rescheduled.
 - For applicants, NOAA may provide flexibility for grant application submissions on a case by case basis. Specifics are not given as to how applicants should proceed if they need an extension, though Program Offices do have the ability to move deadlines.
 - At the discretion of the Program office, NOAA will allow abbreviated non-competitive continuation requests. Those scheduled between April 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020 may be submitted in the form of a brief statement explaining the capacity to continue the project. NOAA will post additional information regarding this on the website as the situation evolves.
 - Emergency Notices of Funding Opportunities may be published for less than 30 days, allowing for quick turnaround and reviews.
 - Questions pertaining to this guidance should be directed to Arlene Simpson Porter, Director, Grants Management Division, at Arlene.S.Porter@noaa.gov, or by telephone at (301) 628-1314.

Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

- The IRS announced it will extend the tax filing deadline until July 15, 2020 for all taxpayers, including individuals, trusts, estates, corporations and other non-corporate tax filers, with the current payment deadline falling on or after April 1, 2020, and before July 15, 2020. The notice expands this deadline for additional returns, tax payments, and other actions. Details are at <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-extends-more-tax-deadlines-to-cover-individuals-trusts-estates-corporations-and-others>.

- The IRS also announced new guidance on net operating losses as revised under the CARES Act. Details are at <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-provides-guidance-under-the-cares-act-to-taxpayers-with-net-operating-losses>.

The White House

- The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has released a fact sheet and FAQs about current HR flexibilities available to federal agencies to assist federal employees on issues related to the pandemic. That fact sheet is available here <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/covid-19/fact-sheet-additional-guidance-in-connection-with-the-covid-19-emergency/>.

Research and Funding Opportunities

Update: National Institutes of Health (NIH)

The following table tracks all COVID-19 research related Notices of Special Interest (NOSIs) and other funding opportunities released by NIH Institutes and Centers. This table will be continually updated as additional NOSIs and other funding opportunities are released. Opportunities are for supplemental funding to existing grants (administrative supplements or competitive revisions) unless otherwise noted.

Institute or Center	Release Date	Topic	Link to Notice
NEW: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)	4/16/2020	Research is needed to understand the potentially complex relationships between alcohol consumption and COVID-19 related-outcomes to enhance the nation’s response to the current pandemic. The outcomes include overt pathophysiology and the impact of social and policy measures on COVID-19 outcomes.	NOT-AA-20-011
NEW: National Library of Medicine (NLM)	4/16/2020	Seeking research methods for mining clinical data that can be used to identify or predict presence of COVID-19 in biomedical phenotype data and public health surveillance methods that mine genomic, viromic, health data, environmental data, and other pertinent sources.	NOT-LM-20-010
NEW: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS)	4/14/2020	Research to understand the “prevalence and symptomatology, of SARS-CoV-2 neurologic involvement.”	NOT-NS-20-046

Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research (OBSSR)	4/13/2020	Seeking research with “existing longitudinal studies that address key social and behavioral questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.”	NOT-OD-20-097
National Cancer Institute (NCI)	4/10/2020	Research to understand “the basic mechanisms of interaction between SARS-CoV-2 and cancer cells, co-morbidities of cancer and SARS-CoV-2 infection (especially in disparately affected patient populations), and the impacts on treatment and clinical outcomes of SARS-CoV-2 infected persons in the context of cancer.”	NOT-CA-20-042
National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH), National Institute on Aging (NIA), National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)	4/10/2020	Projects on “stress management strategies, including mind and body approaches, that individuals may engage in remotely to address stressors related to social distancing, as well as to address recovery and recurrence of symptoms during and after COVID-19 infections.”	NOT-AT-20-011
National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB)	4/10/2020	Supplements and new Research Project Grants and Small Business grants addressing the “urgent need for accelerating the development, translation, and commercialization of technologies to address Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The NIBIB is seeking applications to develop life-saving technologies that can be ready for commercialization within one to two years.”	Revisions and supplements: NOT-EB-20-008 New R01, R21, R03 grants: NOT-EB-20-007 New SBIR/STTR grants: NOT-EB-20-006
National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS)	4/10/2020	“Applications for Competitive Revisions to active U24 awards for eligible organizations to rapidly provide pilot or supplementary funds to researchers studying the development of predictive models for the spread of SARS-CoV-2 and outcomes of possible COVID-19 public health intervention measures in order to accelerate such research.”	NOT-GM-20-027
National Institute on Minority Health and	4/9/2020	Research on “how state and local policies and initiatives mitigate or exacerbate disparities in health services use and	NOT-MD-20-019

Health Disparities (NIMHD)		health outcomes; the role that community-level protective and resilience factors and interventions have in mitigating the effects of the sector disruptions that the COVID-19 outbreak causes; and how behavioral and/or biological mechanisms may contribute to COVID-19 manifestations.”	
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)	4/9/2020	Research that provides evidence for how a disrupted workforce may adequately respond, adapt, and maintain services or provide additional care for new or increasing mental health needs.	NOT-MH-20-047
National Cancer Institute (NCI)	4/9/2020	Applications from small businesses with active SBIR/STTR awards for projects related to adapting and/or repurposing the use of cancer diagnostics, vaccines, and therapeutics as tools for COVID-19 in cancer patients, cancer survivors, and the general population.	NOT-CA-20-043
National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS)	4/9/2020	Research that uses microphysiological systems or tissue chips for collecting and examining data on the risks and outcomes of COVID-19 infection, in order to advance the translation of research findings into diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines.	NOT-TR-20-016
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)	4/9/2020	Research to understand the potential contributions of exposure to environmental agents that might exacerbate COVID-19 susceptibility, severity, and progression, as well as environmental health disparities.	NOT-ES-20-020
National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK)	4/9/2020	Projects that examine how coinfection with SARS-CoV-2, the causative agent for COVID-19, might affect HIV-associated comorbidities, coinfections, and complications within its mission, as well as COVID-19 outcomes in people with HIV.	NOT-DK-20-020
NIDDK	4/9/2020	Projects focused on the action of the virus on kidney, gastrointestinal tract function, the endocrine/metabolic system, and the collection of biosamples that will inform the understanding of viral infection in those listed areas.	NOT-DK-20-018

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD)	4/9/2020	Applications highlight urgent need for research on SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 in relation to NIDCD’s scientific mission areas of hearing, balance, taste, smell, voice, speech, and language.	NOT-DC-20-004
NIA, NIMH	4/2/2020	Projects on “mission critical areas of research for NIA as they relate to the COVID-19 pandemic.”	NOT-AG-20-022
National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI)	3/31/2020	“Genomic research on SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 disease; genomic studies utilizing generalized approaches that take advantage of human research or model systems to study the consequences of SARS-CoV-2 infection.”	NOT-HG-20-030
NCATS	3/27/2020	“Projects that repurpose existing drugs or biologics (existing therapeutics) that have already begun or completed a Phase I clinical trial.”	NOT-TR-20-012
NIEHS	3/27/2020	“Provide support for the conduct of worker-based training to prevent and reduce exposure of hospital employees, emergency first responders, and other workers who are at risk of exposure to Coronavirus through their work duties” through the NIEHS Superfund Worker Training Program (WTP).	NOT-ES-20-017
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)	3/25/2020	“Projects focusing on viral natural history, pathogenicity, transmission, as well as projects developing medical countermeasures and suitable animal models for pre-clinical testing of vaccines and therapeutics against SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19.”	NOT-AI-20-034
NIGMS	3/25/2020	Research that incorporates “data related to SARS-CoV-2 into ongoing research efforts to develop predictive models for the spread of SARS-CoV-2 and other related infectious agents.”	NOT-GM-20-025
NCATS	3/24/2020	“Projects focusing on the use of informatics solutions to diagnose cases and the use of CTSA-supported core resources (e.g., advanced scientific instruments, highly-specialized facilities, and regulatory expertise) to facilitate research on COVID-19 and advance the	NOT-TR-20-011

		translation of research findings into diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines.”	
National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)	3/19/2020	“Research collecting and examining data on the risks and outcomes for COVID-19 infection in individuals suffering from substance use disorders.”	NOT-DA-20-047
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI)	3/17/2020	Research on “host response, associations with heart, lung, and blood (HLB) diseases, potential impacts on transfusion safety, and clinical outcomes of infected individuals.”	NOT-HL-20-757 FAQs on NOT-HL-20-757 (4/8/2020)

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

- AHRQ has released two Notices of Intent for upcoming funding opportunities designed to support studies evaluating health system and healthcare professional responsiveness to COVID-19. The agency plans to publish notices calling for both urgent revision supplements to existing AHRQ grants, and for novel high-impact studies to be funded through the R01 mechanism.
 - Competitive revision supplements for existing AHRQ projects should “capitalize on the expertise of grant personnel and the institutional environment to expand the specific aims of the on-going research to develop high-impact new knowledge concerning COVID-19.” AHRQ expects to make at least \$2.5 million available for these supplements and will announce the full details of award size and eligibility available with the Funding Opportunity Announcement is released in April 2020. The Notice of Intent for these supplements can be found at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-HS-20-007.html>.
 - For new studies related to COVID-19, AHRQ is interested in “critical research focused on evaluating topics such as innovations and challenges encountered in the rapid expansion of telemedicine in response to COVID-19, effects on quality, safety, and value of health system response to COVID-19, and the role of primary care practices and professionals during the COVID-19 epidemic. AHRQ is particularly interested in understanding how digital health innovations contributed to health system and healthcare professional innovation and challenges and solutions to meeting the needs of vulnerable populations including older adults, people living with multiple chronic conditions, rural communities, and uninsured and underinsured populations.” AHRQ expects to dedicate \$5 million to this program. The agency plans to release the Funding Opportunity Announcement for these grants in early May 2020, with an expected deadline in June 2020. The Notice of Intent for this initiative can be found at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-HS-20-008.html>.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- CDC will award approximately \$560 million to states, localities, territories, and tribes using “existing networks to reach out to state and local jurisdictions to access this initial funding.” A

breakdown of funds funneled to states and jurisdictions can be viewed here:

<https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2020/03/11/cdc-funding-information.html>.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Infectious Diseases Rapid Response Fund received \$300 million in the COVID-19 emergency supplemental package. This fund was created in FY 2019 and had roughly \$100 million in reserve funding prior to the emergency supplemental. This funding can be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to an infectious disease emergency, domestic or international. Money from this fund has previously been used to respond to an Ebola outbreak in the Congo.

Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR)

- ASPR released a notice of funding opportunity for the Hospital Preparedness Program. Under this funding opportunity, ASPR will award a total of \$50 million to state hospital associations, which will then distribute funding directly to hospitals and other health care entities for preparedness and response activities. Congress provided \$250 million for this program through the *CARES Act*, and we expect additional notices will be released to disburse the remaining \$200 million in this account. Additional information on this notice can be found at: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=325751>.

Update: Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)

- **NEW:** PCORI announced three funding opportunities related to COVID-19 research, engagement, and dissemination and implementation. Under these solicitations, current PCORI grantees can apply for funding enhancements to existing awards for work addressing both the original topic and a current important issue related to COVID-19. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. Additional information is available at: <https://www.pcori.org/content/pcori-funding-opportunities-covid-19-related-enhancements-existing-pcori-funded-projects>.

National Science Foundation (NSF)

- NSF has started announcing the Coronavirus RAPID Awards: <https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/simpleSearchResult?queryText=COVID+AND+RAPID&ActiveAwards=true>.
- On April 3, NSF released a Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) that combines two of previous DCLs. The new DCL invites proposals “to conduct non-medical, non-clinical-care research that can be used immediately to explore how to model and understand the spread of COVID-19, to inform and educate about the science of virus transmission and prevention, and to encourage the development of processes and actions to address this global challenge.” The solicitation invites researchers to submit proposals **through existing funding mechanisms as well as the Rapid Response Research (RAPID) funding mechanism**. The DCL also invites proposals that “request the use of NSF-funded advanced computing resources.” NSF directs researchers to contact the NSF Office of Advanced Cyberinfrastructure (OAC) before submitting a proposal. The DCL is available at <https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2020/nsf20052/nsf20052.pdf>.
- On March 25, NSF released a Dear Colleague Letter: Request for SBIR/STTR Phase I Proposals Addressing COVID-19. NSF invites U.S.-based businesses to submit Phase I SBIR/STTR proposals focused on “the development and deployment of new technologies, products, processes, and services” that have the potential to help respond to COVID-19. The DCL highlights the following

areas of research: artificial intelligence, digital health, diagnostics, distributed ledger, environmental technologies, medical devices, pharmaceutical technologies, disinfection and sterilization, and filtration and separations. The DCL is available at https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2020/nsf20065/nsf20065.jsp?WT.mc_id=USNSF_25&WT.mc_ev=click.

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)/Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA)

- Federal agency partners in the Public Health Emergency Medical Countermeasure Enterprise (PHEMCE) are leveraging the existing Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) TechWatch program to engage with industry, academia, and other stakeholders to accelerate technologies related to the novel coronavirus. Traditionally, TechWatch is a virtual meeting with BARDA scientific, technical, and contracting staff, as well as representatives from other interested federal agencies. For CoronaWatch, representatives from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Department of Agriculture, among others, will be contacted to participate as relevant and needed. There are specific submission options for therapeutics, vaccines, diagnostics, and other products through CoronaWatch. Additional information on CoronaWatch, as well as submission instructions, are available at: <https://www.medicalcountermeasures.gov/request-barda-techwatch-meeting/>.
- The Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released an Easy Broad Agency Announcement (EZ-BAA) on February 5 seeking proposals for the development of novel COVID-19 diagnostics. The solicitation notes that “the diagnostics must utilize platforms already cleared by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, with a viable plan to meet requirements for the FDA to consider Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) within 12 weeks of an award.” The solicitation is available at <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2020/02/05/hhs-seeks-abstract-submissions-for-2019-ncov-diagnostics-development.html> and the most recent version of the BAA, updated on March 9, is available at <https://beta.sam.gov/opp/1b46a4169fcb4902b9c4fcb5bf981f7/view>.

Update: Department of Defense (DOD)

- **NEW:** The U.S. Army’s Medical Technology Enterprise Consortium (MTEC) released a Request for Project Proposals (RPP) on April 17 to rapidly develop and deploy the National Emergency Telecritical Care Network (NETCCN), a cloud-based, low-resource, stand-alone health information management system for the creation and coordination of flexible and extendable “virtual critical care wards.” The program is focused on preparation for COVID-19-related critical care capability shortages. The RPP focuses on enhanced development of integrated technologies and clinical workflows to establish and rapidly scale virtual wards and extend intensive care to traditional, non-traditional, and temporary healthcare facilities, specifically leveraging existing technologies that can be adapted from other use cases to establish NETCCN. The following existing technologies should be included in the RPP:
 - “Mobile communications capabilities including synchronous audio/video, asynchronous messaging, and access to continuous monitoring

- Clinician-facing web portal and/or mobile-based application (goal is availability on every device)
- Capability for basic documentation in real-time as well as data collection and reporting
- Cloud-based information storage including ability for later offloading via PDF or HL7”

DOD anticipates making up to six awards. The Department has a total of \$7 million available in fiscal year 2020 funds for the first three tasks outlined in the RPP scope of work. Funding for the other tasks is subject to availability. A Proposers Conference will take place on Monday, April 20 at 3:00pm ET. Registration is available at:

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/811606013843567631>. White papers are due on

April 27, 2020 by 12:00pm ET. The RPP can be found at

<https://beta.sam.gov/opp/f3012b9082ca4d109c171ad4349f7306/view#attachments-links>.

MTEC membership is not required for the submission, but membership will be required for applicants recommended for awards. More information on joining MTEC can be found at

<http://mtec-sc.org/how-to-join/>.

- **NEW:** The Department of the Navy’s Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program released a broad agency announcement (BAA) intended to engage the Defense Industrial Base. The BAA opens on **April 27, 2020** and is seeking proposals that “demonstrate development and commercialization of dual-use technologies” in four specific topic areas:
 - Naval Depot Modernization and Sustainment
 - Digital Logistics
 - Deployable Systems Manufacturability
 - Rapid Reconstitution of Communications and Compact Hardware Solutions

Proposals are due by **May 28, 2020 at 12:00 pm ET.** The SBIR program is a three-phase program, and phase I awards for this BAA will be \$150,000 each for a performance period of five months. Phase II awards are expected to be \$1.7 million. Awards are expected to be processed within 45 days after the BAA closes. The BAA and four topics can be found at

https://navysbir.com/topics20_4.htm.

- **NEW:** The DOD COVID-19 Joint Acquisition Task Force (JATF) recently announced its Vulcan Build-a-Vent manufacturing challenge. The Build-a-Vent manufacturing challenge is seeking partners who can “rapidly manufacture specific parts, components, or systems for the scaled production of Ventilator Prototypes.” Submissions will build on five existing prototypes designed by previous teams from the Vulcan Hack-a-Vent Innovation challenge held in March. White paper submissions are due no later than **April 23, 2020 at 11:59pm ET.** The submission portal and request access page can be found at <https://vulcan-sof.com/login/ng2/submission?collectionUuid=3111b615-7eb6-4b85-a724-64fb63df4a59>.
- The Department of the Air Force Acquisition COVID-19 Task Force (DAF ACT) announced on April 15 its first area of interest: **Rapid Agile Manufacturing Platform (RAMP).** As previously reported by Lewis-Burke, the DAF ACT established a Commercial Solution Opening (CSO) seeking innovative solutions for commercial technologies that can support the DAF ACT's mission to “provide relief, resilience, recovery, and stability to the nation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.” The CSO, a vehicle for solicitations, is open to defense contractors, large and small businesses, and research institutions with a focus on non-traditional organizations that do not typically work with the government.

For the newly released **RAMP** area of interest, the Air Force requests solutions for the design, engineering, testing, manufacturing, distribution, and associated digital planning tools required to deliver a variety of medically-related supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE). Relevant solutions should consider the suite of advanced manufacturing technologies and need not be specific to additive manufacturing, aka, 3D printing. Equipment needs will be focused on, though not exclusive to, environments suited for emergency response and security personnel in non-clinical environments. This effort intends to leverage progress made through the America Makes National Manufacturing Institute, which has partnered with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Health and Human Services to approve open source designs for Community Use and Clinical Use equipment. These designs are accessible through the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Exchange (<https://3dprint.nih.gov/collections/covid-19-response>).” Responses to the CSO may be submitted until **September 30, 2020 at 5:00 PM CT**. The full solicitation can be found on www.beta.sam.gov under solicitation number “FA3002-20-S-0002.” More information on the DAF ACT Areas of Interest and the submission process can be found below.

As previously reported by Lewis-Burke, DAF ACT Areas of Interest are expected to include the following COVID-19-related mission focus areas:

- Combating the Spread (predictive analytics, next hotspot, threat to current activities, decision support, etc.)
- Welfare of citizens (effects to transportation, movement of people and goods, education and development, physical training, regular HR functions, job transition, etc.)
- Readiness (continuing operations through the outbreak, coordinating with allies and partners, continuing long term projects, etc.)
- Logistics (security and protection, supply chain protection and assessment, etc.)
- Industrial base impacts (small businesses, payments, contracts, large system programs, protection and expansion of critical assets, etc.)
- Medical (telehealth, medical capacity and sustainment, medical supplies and equipment, etc.)
- Other solutions that support the national response to COVID-19

Multiple briefs may be submitted, but each brief can only address one DAF ACT Area of Interest. The CSO proposal process is comprised of three spirals: 1) Solution Briefs; 2) Oral Presentation (Optional); and 3) Submission of a full proposal through an invitation-only Request of Commercial Solution Proposal (CSP). The CSO may result in the award of prototype projects, which include not only commercially available technologies, but also concept demonstrations, pilots, and agile development activities. The period of performance is expected to be one year, but with the possibility of prototype and follow-on production. Information will also be posted to the Air Force COVID-19 Response Team website run by AFWERX at <https://www.afwerx.af.mil/coronavirus.html>. The Air Force also announced that its effort, known as “Unite and Fight,” has expanded to include all of DOD under forthcoming efforts and solicitations, so that all of the Service Branches, DOD components, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) can evaluate and potentially fund proposals.

- DOD’s Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) released specific funding opportunities for its fiscal year (FY) 2020 Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP) topic area: **Emerging Viral Diseases and Respiratory Health**. As with other CDMRP funding opportunities, proposals should highlight the relevance to military health, and applications will undergo the standard two-tier peer and programmatic review process:
 - **Investigator-Initiated Research Award:** This award is “designed to support research with the potential to yield highly impactful data that could lead to critical discoveries or major advancements” in Emerging Viral Diseases and/or Respiratory Health. Research projects should focus on basic laboratory research through translational research. CDMRP anticipates a total of \$12 million available in funding for four awards. Pre-applications are due by **May 28, 2020 at 5:00pm ET** and applications are due by **June 12, 2020 at 11:59pm ET**. The full solicitation can be found at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=326174>.
 - **Technology/Therapeutic Development Award:** This product-driven award supports the translation of preclinical findings into products for clinical applications for Emerging Viral Diseases and/or Respiratory Health. Products should be tangible items, such as a pharmacologic agent or device or a knowledge-based product. CDMRP anticipates a total of \$25 million available in funding for four awards. Pre-applications are due by **May 28, 2020 at 5:00pm ET** and applications are due by **June 12, 2020 at 11:59pm ET**. The full solicitation can be found at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=326175>.
 - **Clinical Trial Award:** This award supports the “rapid implementation” of clinical trials for Emerging Viral Diseases and/or Respiratory Health. Clinical trials may be designed to evaluate “new products, pharmacologic agents (drugs or biologics), devices, clinical guidance, and/or emerging approaches and technologies.” Projects may range from small proof-of-concept trials to large-scale trials. CDMRP anticipates a total of \$30 million available in funding for five awards. Pre-applications are due by **June 8, 2020 at 5:00pm ET** and applications are due by **June 22, 2020 by 11:59pm ET**. The full solicitation can be found at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=326173>.
- The Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Troop Support Medical Directorate issued a Request for Information (RFI) on April 8 to identify near-term specific products, potential sources, and availability and/or challenges to meeting Medical Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements to protect against COVID-19. DLA also welcomes industry to identify alternatives or additional PPE items necessary to protect against viral contamination of COVID-19. Items of interest include:
 - Medical Examination Gloves
 - Medical Aprons
 - Medical Face Masks (N95 Respirator)
 - Medical Face Shields
 - Hand Sanitizer
 - Surgical Masks
 - Swab Viral Transport Kit
 - Viral Transport Swabs
 - SWAB Nasopharyngeal

- Medical Thermometers

Initial responses are due **April 15, 2020 at 6:00 PM CDT** but DLA urges companies that can provide the above items to respond even after this due date. Respondents are asked to provide either a technical data package for the item(s) or website links with detailed information on the product. For any questions, please contact Brian Schott at brian.schott@dla.mil. The full RFI can be found on www.beta.sam.gov under solicitation number "SPE2DS-20-R-COVID19."

- The Army [xTechSearch](#) competition announced a new COVID-19 Ventilator Challenge seeking "low-cost, readily manufacturable emergency ventilator[s]" to expand ventilator capacity in support of military readiness and support the FEMA-led COVID-19 response. Sponsored by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (ASA(ALT)), xTechSearch is a nationwide competition for small businesses and startups, including university-based spin-offs, to develop new technologies to "uncover novel dual-use science and technology solutions." According to the COVID-19 Ventilator Challenge Request for Information (RFI), the Army seeks ventilator technology solutions with a small footprint, designed for mass production, and capable of short-term, rugged field operations. The Ventilator Challenge will be conducted through a two-part application process. Registration started on April 5, 2020, and applications will be reviewed upon receipt. Selected participants will be awarded \$5,000 and invited to deliver a virtual pitch starting **April 13, 2020**. "Applicants should be prepared to deliver a virtual pitch of their concept within one week of submitting the application," according to the RFI. Technology pitches selected to meet the requirements of this challenge will receive a prize of \$100,000 and will be invited to develop a concept prototype with the potential for follow-on work. The total prize pool for the Ventilator Challenge is \$1 million. The RFI can be found at https://usg.valideval.com/teams/xTech_covid Vent/signup. Registration is available at <https://www.xtechsearch.army.mil/>.
- The Basic Research Office within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering announced a one-time Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) on April 3 for the "Newton Award for Transformative Ideas during the COVID-19 Pandemic." The Newton Award will be presented to individuals or teams of two investigators to develop a "transformative idea" to resolve challenges, advance frontiers, and set new paradigms in areas of immense potential benefit to the DOD and the nation. Proposed research does not have to be related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Proposals should aim to produce novel conceptual frameworks or theory-based approaches, and DOD requires that all supporting data be generated without the use of laboratory-based experimentation or instrumentation. DOD anticipates that a total of \$500,000 will be available for up to 10 awards. Individual awards will be funded at up to \$50,000 for a single investigator and \$100,000 for a two-person team. Proposals are due by **May 15, 2020 at 4:00 PM ET**, and the six-month period of performance is expected to start on June 30, 2020. More information is available at www.grants.gov under "BRO-20-NEWTON" or at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=326034>.
- The Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) announced on April 4 that it is seeking white papers for an Other Transaction Authority (OTA) to support COVID-19 prototypes in two areas:
 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Re-Use and Decontamination
 - Prototype PPE: N95 Equivalent MasksDLA seeks to address the shortage created by reliance on overseas production and limited domestic production. Respondents should offer prototype solutions that will allow healthcare providers and warfighters to safely decontaminate and re-use N95 masks and other PPE, as well

as N95-equivalent mask prototypes that can be rapidly produced using alternate materials or methods. FDA/NIOSH approval is not required to submit a white paper. DLA anticipates funding of \$1 million for multiple prototypes. White papers should be submitted to accelerate@dla.mil by **May 4, 2020 at 1:00 PM ET** and will be reviewed as they are received due to critical need for this equipment. More information about DLA's Technology Accelerator OTA Program Solicitation and Program Procedures is available at <https://www.dla.mil/HQ/InformationOperations/Accelerate/>.

- The Department of Defense's (DOD) Joint Acquisition Task Force (JATF), in partnership with the Air Force, now has a live [web portal](#) for academia, industry, and other non-government partners to submit solutions to support DOD's coronavirus response. JATF, which was established by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)), seeks to unify and build capacity in identified weak areas of the industrial base, use DOD's authorities to expand acquisition flexibility in order to procure critical supplies, and ensure continuity of operations for defense contractors to respond to the virus.
- The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) is soliciting proposals for a rapid and cost-effective synthetic DNA manufacturing capability, for synthetic biology and biomedical applications, under its Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. DARPA notes that this capability is relevant to a number of programs being run by its Biological Technologies Office (BTO). DARPA anticipates awarding up to \$1.75 million, including \$1 million for a two-year base period, with additional options to extend the project. Full proposals must be submitted no later than **April 20, 2020 at 2:00 PM ET**. The solicitation can be found at <https://beta.sam.gov> under solicitation number "HR001120S0019-02."
- The Air Force Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program released an out-of-cycle Direct-to-Phase-2 Commercial Solutions Opening (CSO) calling for small businesses with the ability to conduct research and development (R&D) related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Focus areas include:
 - Decision Support to Combat the Virus (including big data and predictive analytics)
 - Technologies to address personnel needs such as tele-health, tele-ministry, and tele-counseling
 - Technologies to enable telework at scale
 - Deployment of AI to enable forecasting and situational awareness to address shortfalls and needs for critical medical supplies
 - New Medical technologies including antiviral surface coatings, field deployable COVID-19 tests, and dual-patient ventilators
 - "Blue-Sky" solutions to the COVID-19 outbreak not addressed in the areas aboveThe solicitation can be found at <https://beta.sam.gov> under solicitation number "AF20R-DCS01."
- The Army Futures Command's (AFC) Army Applications Laboratory (AAL) has expressed significant interest in new technologies to support the Army's COVID-19 response including innovative medical equipment, therapeutics, diagnostics, and vaccines. AAL has set up a webpage at <https://calendly.com/cv-aal> for organizations to schedule a brief phone call to discuss their ideas for technologies that support diagnosis, care, and the protection of healthcare providers, active duty service members, their families, and communities from COVID-19. AAL is a new organization, stood up under Army Futures Command headquarters in Austin,

that seeks to work with industry and outside partners to find technology solutions to further the Army's modernization priorities. More information can be found at <https://aal.army/>.

- The U.S. Army's Medical Technology Enterprise Consortium (MTEC) released a pre-announcement March 30 for a forthcoming Request for Project Proposals (RPP) to rapidly develop and deploy the National Emergency Telecritical Care Network (NETCCN), a cloud-based, low-resource, stand-alone health information management system for the creation and coordination of flexible and extendable "virtual critical care wards." The program is focused on preparation for COVID-19-related critical care capability shortages. The RPP will focus on enhanced development of integrated technologies and clinical workflows to establish and rapidly scale virtual wards and extend intensive care to traditional and non-traditional and temporary healthcare facilities, specifically leveraging existing technologies that can be adapted from other use cases to establish NETCCN. DOD anticipates total funding of \$30 million to \$37 million in FY 2020 and anticipates up to six awards under the program. The pre-announcement can be found at https://beta.sam.gov/opp/245ccb8f39a4423ab26468225e5e788c/view?keywords=covid&sort=-modifiedDate&index=opp&is_active=true&page=1&organization_id=100000000. MTEC membership is not required for the submission, but membership will be required for applicants recommended for awards. More information on joining MTEC can be found at <http://mtec-sc.org/how-to-join/>.
- The U.S. Army's Medical Technology Enterprise Consortium (MTEC) released a Request for Project Proposals (RPP) focused on developing prototypes for therapeutics that can treat COVID-19. Specifically, MTEC is seeking "treatments with potential application to the prevention of COVID-19 infection" and "therapeutics that can be administered in a non-hospital environment." MTEC anticipates eight-month projects starting at the proof-of-concept or laboratory validation stage (Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 3 or 4) and ending with prototype demonstration (TRL 6). DOD anticipates a total of \$20 million for 5 awards, with potential for follow-on funding for the manufacturing and clinical testing of therapeutics. White papers are due by **April 8, 2020 at 12:00 pm ET**. The therapeutics RPP can be found at https://beta.sam.gov/opp/b21210aa68fe488f920f4ef3871b4826/view?keywords=covid&sort=-modifiedDate&index=opp&is_active=true&page=1&organization_id=100000000. MTEC membership is not required for the submission, but membership will be required for applicants recommended for awards. More information on joining MTEC can be found at <http://mtec-sc.org/how-to-join/>.

Lewis-Burke anticipates additional RPPs to be released related to topics described in MTEC's pre-announcement, including:

- **Point-of-care diagnostic** that provides rapid and accurate determination on exposure to COVID-19.
- **Prophylactic(s)/Therapeutic(s) that can prevent and/or treat in a rapid manner (few hours to 2 days) potentially in a non-hospital environment.** Repurposing FDA-approved drugs/biologics for prevention/treatment of COVID-19 or testing of drugs/biologics that have already demonstrated safety in humans for the prevention/treatment of COVID-19 are preferred.
- **Disease predictive modeling** that provides early warning through data capture from several different streams of data to include **social media and artificial intelligence (AI)**

parameter decision tools that would provide actionable information to medical service providers and command structures.

- **Patient monitoring, tracking, and management system** for in-home or non-hospital environment patient tele-health services to include interface into the Cerner electronic health record.”

MTEC’s preannouncement can be found at

<https://beta.sam.gov/opp/53badf9fb02349e78839a541495efc6a/view#general>.

- The Air Force released a Request for Industry Information for COVID-19. The Request for Industry Information page “acts as the entry point for anyone wishing to provide information on ways to help.” COVID-19 solution focus areas include but are not limited to combating the spread, welfare of citizens, readiness, logistics, industrial base impacts, and medical. This page can be accessed at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1SM8W-QiqOgZgWdCg036hgom7M9PhKlI0R1FGgwCG-aY/viewform?edit_requested=true. Additionally, the Air Force is hosting multiple webinars to provide more information. Webinars can be accessed at <https://zoom.us/s/462017807> or US: +1 669 900 6833 Webinar ID: 462 017 807 and will be held Thursday April 9 at 1PM ET.
- The Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Troop Support Clothing and Textiles Directorate released a request for information (RFI) on March 20 to “determine industry capabilities for providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) against viral contamination, specifically COVID-19.” DLA’s RFI aims to identify potential sources and/or products that can be ready in the near term and protect against viral contamination, including but not limited to protective coveralls, aprons/gowns, hoods, masks, booties, gloves, boots. Responses were due March 24, 2020 by 5:00pm ET; however, “**DLA will accept any and all responses received after this date and time for any ongoing requirements.**” The RFI can be found [here](#) or on beta.sam.gov under Notice ID “SPE1C1-20-R-COVID19.”
- Lewis-Burke has learned that In-Q-Tel is interested in innovative technology ideas for COVID-19. In-Q-Tel is a not-for-profit investment entity that supports the Central Intelligence Agency and other agencies across the defense and intelligence communities in accelerating the development of cutting edge “ready-soon” technologies. Specific technologies sought in support of COVID-19 include:
 - Point of care diagnostics
 - Swabs for sample collection
 - Serological diagnostics
 - Digital self-triage capabilities for telehealth

Lewis-Burke can help facilitate connections with In-Q-Tel to discuss COVID-19 related technology innovations. More information on In-Q-Tel is available <https://www.iqt.org/>.

- DARPA encourages performers with research project ideas related to COVID-19 to respond to the Office-wide broad agency announcements (BAAs) for both the Defense Sciences Office (DSO) and Biological Technology Office (BTO), which both have open BAAs that can receive submissions at any time. The DSO and BTO Office-wide BAAs can be found at <https://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/office-wide-broad-agency-announcements>.

Department of Energy (DOE)

- DOE is participating in the COVID-19 High Performance Computing Consortium. Currently, the six leading DOE National Labs with high performance computing capabilities are involved in the

Consortium—Argonne, Lawrence Berkeley, Lawrence Livermore, Los Alamos, Oak Ridge, and Sandia National Laboratories. The purpose is to leverage the country's leading supercomputing capabilities to perform complex simulations employing machine learning and artificial intelligence to help address COVID-19. Researchers should submit COVID-19 related research proposals to the Consortium via an online portal (<https://www.xsede.org/covid19-hpc-consortium>), which will then be reviewed for matching with computing resources from one of the participating national laboratories.

- DOE is taking steps to address COVID-19 and is soliciting ideas about how the Department and the National Laboratories might contribute resources for science and technology efforts and collaborations. The Department is encouraging the scientific community and others to consider research questions that underpin COVID-19 response and is requesting input on strategic, priority research directions that may be undertaken using DOE user facilities, computational resources, and enabling infrastructure. More information is available in a Dear Colleague Letter on the DOE website at <https://science.osti.gov/-/media/sc-1/pdf/COVID-19-letter.pdf?la=en&hash=2A142317F56F185FC3E2CEF0AEAD6CACB3E70C7F>.

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

- USAID Administrator Mark Green announced that the U.S. Government will commit \$62 million from the Emergency Reserve Fund for Contagious Infectious-Disease Outbreaks (ERF) to address the COVID-19 pandemic. This is additional to the \$37 million announced in February to help developing countries affect by, or at high-risk for, the pandemic. Activities supported by this funding will include heightened risk-communications and engagement with local communities; the prevention and control of infection in health facilities, including through the provision of personal protective equipment and other critical commodities; increasing laboratory, disease-surveillance, and rapid-response capacity; the management of COVID-19 cases; screening at points of entry; and global and regional coordination. As these funds are from the ERF, we do not anticipate any direct extramural funding opportunities. The statement is available at <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/mar-18-2020-statement-administrator-green-second-funding-tranche-62>.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

- FEMA released an opportunity for organizations to sell medical supplies or equipment to the federal government. FEMA requests specific items in the following categories: Diagnostics and Testing; Diagnostics and Testing: RNA Extraction Kits; Disinfection Consumables/Biohazardous Waste Management; Medical Equipment; and Personal Protective Equipment. All items must be approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and all prevailing Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) standards. Offerors are to submit a price quote for consideration by the agency by September 25, 2020. The full solicitation can be found at: <https://beta.sam.gov/opp/3e05e664e606486ca34d1a41b47ff0ff/view>.

The White House

- **COVID-19 HPC Consortium** - On Sunday, March 22, President Trump announced the creation of the COVID-19 HPC Consortium, a new partnership between universities, national labs, and

companies. The consortium will enable researchers access to the most powerful and advanced computers in the world to accelerate understanding of the COVID-19 virus and the development of treatments and vaccines. Access to computing resources in the COVID-19 HPC Consortium will be managed by the Extreme Science and Engineering Discovery Environment (XSEDE). XSEDE is led by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and is funded by the National Science foundation (NSF). Details on how to submit a request are available at https://www.xsede.org/covid19-hpc-consortium?mod=article_inline. The formal White House announcement is available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/white-house-announces-new-partnership-unleash-u-s-supercomputing-resources-fight-covid-19/>.

- White House Calls on Tech Community to create new Machine Readable COVID-19 Dataset: On March 16, the Allen Institute for AI, Chan Zuckerberg Initiative (CZI), Georgetown University’s Center for Security and Emerging Technology (CSET), Microsoft, and the National Library of Medicine (NLM) at the National Institutes of Health released the *COVID-19 Open Research Dataset (CORD-19)* of scholarly literature about COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2, and the Coronavirus group. Requested by The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, the dataset represents the most extensive machine-readable Coronavirus literature collection available for data and text mining to date. The COVID-19 resources is available on the Allen Institute’s website: <https://pages.semanticscholar.org/coronavirus-research>. The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy also issued a call to action to artificial intelligence experts to develop new text and data mining techniques that can help the science community answer high-priority scientific questions related to COVID-19. Researchers should submit the text and data mining tools and insights they develop in response to this call to action via the [Kaggle platform](#). Through Kaggle, a machine learning and data science community owned by Google Cloud, these tools will be openly available for researchers. The OSTP call to action is available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/call-action-tech-community-new-machine-readable-covid-19-dataset/>.

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)

- The IMLS announced on April 13 that it plans to award \$30 million in emergency relief grants through State Library Administrative Agencies (SLAAs) throughout all U.S. states and territories. Awards will be used to “expand digital network access, purchase internet accessible devices, and provide technical support services to citizens to address digital inclusion efforts and related technical support, using the following types of data to prioritize efforts:
 - Poverty/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
 - Unemployment; and
 - Broadband availability.”

Additional information on the anticipated grants is expected to be posted in the coming weeks. According to the announcement, “the agency also plans to announce additional measures to aid museums and libraries, both through its current funding and that received through the CARES Act.” The announcement can be found at <https://www.ims.gov/news/ims-announces-new-stimulus-funding-communities-across-america>.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

- On April 15, USDA's Office of Rural Development (RD) released a solicitation for its Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Loans and Grants. This \$50 million solicitation includes the \$25 million in funds appropriated by the CARES act to support DLT awards. DLT awards support the use of "telecommunications-enabled information, audio and video equipment, and related advanced technologies by students, teachers, medical professionals, and rural residents." These grants are intended to "increase rural access to education, training, and health care resources." Non-profits and state and local government units, including universities and Cooperative Extension services, are eligible for these awards. Awards require a 15 percent cost-match. While not required, applicants are "encouraged to identify specific ways in which their application addresses COVID-19." Applications should be submitted electronically no later than 11:59 pm ET on July 13, 2020. More information on this opportunity can be found at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=326343>.

Other Sources

- On March 26, a new public-private research consortium, the C3.ai Digital Transformation Institute (C3.ai DTI) was announced. Managed by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) and the University of California, Berkeley, the consortium also involves C3.ai, Microsoft Corporation, Princeton University, the University of Chicago, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Carnegie Mellon University, and the National Center for Supercomputing Applications at UIUC. C3.ai DTI aims to use artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced computing to research solutions for COVID-19. The Institute has announced an initial call for proposals titled, "AI Techniques to Mitigate Pandemic," which brings together Health and AI research: "Up to \$5.8 million in awards will be funded from this first call, ranging from \$100,000 to \$500,000 each." Proposals are due May 1, 2020 and more information is available at <https://c3dti.ai/>

International News

UN-Water

- UN-Water, the mechanism that coordinates efforts at the United Nations and international organizations working on water and sanitation issues, has compiled water and sanitation-related resources related to stopping the transmission of COVID-19. The resources provided by several UN-Water Members and Partners identify the ways water and sanitation are key to stopping the virus. With over 10,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Africa, this resource is enabling message campaigns and interventions by international organizations and bilateral aid agencies designed to improve access to handwashing and to measure how improved sanitation can slow the spread of new COVID-19 infections. More information is available at <https://www.unwater.org/coronavirus-global-health-emergency/>.

Update: World Bank Group (WBG)

- NEW:** The WBG has begun implementing proposals in 64 developing countries through its emergency support effort to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and expects to be operating in 100 countries by the end of April. The WBG Board approved deployment of up to \$160 billion over the next 15 months to help countries protect the poor and vulnerable, support businesses,

and bolster economic recovery. The regional development banks have made an additional \$80 billion available to be deployed over the same period. More information about the WBG effort is available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2020/04/02/the-world-bank-group-moves-quickly-to-help-countries-respond-to-covid-19>.

- For information about active and planned investments in the World Bank pipeline, visit: <https://maps.worldbank.org/>.

Update: World Health Organization (WHO)

- **NEW:** The WHO has created several platforms for data sharing of international scientific findings and knowledge of COVID-19. Resources include: a database of COVID-19 related peer reviewed literature; an international registry of COVID-19 clinical trials; data sharing platforms that include data from ongoing COVID-19 clinical investigations; and an application with “landscape analysis” of 133+ experimental therapeutics for COVID-19. See: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/global-research-on-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>
- **NEW:** The WHO has other additional resources available, several of which may also be useful to the research community:
 - COVID-19 Daily Reports. See: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports/>;
 - **NEW:** The updated Strategic Preparedness Response Plan for COVID-19. See: <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/covid-19-strategy-update-13-april-2020>.
 - Technical Guidelines, many of which were developed in consultation with U.S. technical experts. See: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance>;
 - Target Product Profiles for COVID-19 Vaccines. See: https://www.who.int/blueprint/priority-diseases/key-action/WHO_Target_Product_Profiles_for_COVID-19_web.pdf.