



~~ Please disseminate this information with those researchers in your department who may find it noteworthy ~~

## AGENCY NEWS

### National Science Foundation (NSF)

**From:** SBE Communications <[sbe-communications@NSF.GOV](mailto:sbe-communications@NSF.GOV)>

**Subject:** NSF SBE updates related to COVID-19

**Date:** March 30, 2020 at 6:05:26 AM PDT

**To:** [SBEPICOMMUNITY@LISTSERV.NSF.GOV](mailto:SBEPICOMMUNITY@LISTSERV.NSF.GOV)

#### **Dear Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Community:**

In these unprecedented times, we in the National Science Foundation (NSF) SBE directorate first and foremost want to express our wish that you, your families and friends are healthy, safe, and well. We know that many of you are navigating the complexities of virtual teaching, research, and service, changing circumstances at home, and learning to navigate a wide range of fast-evolving social phenomena.

We are working to help you navigate this difficult, fluid, and unexpected situation. Here are some of the steps we are taking:

**NSF COVID-19 Webpage:** NSF has established [a digital resource](#) for information about the novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19). This page is updated frequently and includes links to our latest guidance on upcoming program deadlines as well as budget and logistics questions pertaining to existing awards that may be affected in various ways. For the latter, you may find this [document describing additional administrative flexibilities](#) and the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) About the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) for NSF Proposers and Awardees](#) particularly helpful. These temporary flexibilities are designed to support the best possible science under the current difficult circumstances. It also links to a [Dear Colleague Letter \(DCL\)](#) that NSF issued earlier this month inviting research proposals via NSF's Rapid Response Research (RAPID) mechanism on topics of specific relevance to COVID-19.

SBE research is at the forefront of understanding and combatting the COVID-19 pandemic. We encourage you to submit proposals that advance science, are consistent with NSF's mission, and that reflect the urgency of the current situation while keeping in mind important ethical considerations. Please contact your NSF program officer for additional information.

**NSF Program Deadlines:** We are re-assessing program deadlines on an ongoing basis and are actively discussing forthcoming deadlines. You can follow [changes to these deadlines](#) on the NSF website which will be updated frequently. We will offer extensions as we can, while being mindful of our internal timelines for conducting full merit review processes. For researchers who are sending proposals, or who have recently sent proposals, please know that we are committed to conducting comprehensive peer review and returning decisions to you as soon as possible given the circumstances.

**NSF Review Panels:** If you have agreed to serve on an upcoming merit review panel through the month of April, all panels have been converted to all-virtual. The virtual panels have been working very well so



far. We will assess subsequent panels on a regular basis. For review panels in May and later, we will be in contact with participants in the coming weeks. Please contact the cognizant NSF program officer if you have additional questions.

**Other NSF-Funded Meetings:** NSF is encouraging principal investigators of upcoming NSF-funded conferences, and other meetings originally scheduled to take place in the coming weeks, to reschedule these meetings or to move them to all-virtual gatherings.

As with many other workplaces, NSF is now in a maximum telework mode, and the work of the agency continues. To that end, we appreciate your patience and understanding as we adjust to this new way of life. We are grateful for your resilience and perseverance in the virtual review panels, reverse site visits, and many other interactions that help NSF support great research.

Today, more than ever, SBE exploration of human behavior at individual, family, community, and societal levels is vital to individual health, family safety, community strength, national resilience, and ultimately victory, over COVID-19's many challenges. Thank you for your important work and for your dedication to one another at this important time.

With gratitude,

Arthur Lupia, Assistant Director, National Science Foundation  
Kellina Craig-Henderson, Deputy Assistant Director, National Science Foundation  
Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate

### [National Science Foundation \(NSF\)](#)

NSF EHR Announcements

A timely e-listing of news and communication from EHR/OAD

In this edition of the NSF EHR Announcement: *NSF COVID-19 Guidance*

Dear Education and Human Resources (EHR) Community:

In these unprecedented times, we in the National Science Foundation's (NSF) EHR directorate, first and foremost, want to express our wish that you and your families and friends are healthy, safe, and well. We know that many of you are navigating the complexities of workplaces going virtual, students scattering away from schools and campuses, the public staying away from museums, libraries and community centers, busy new responsibilities in your own homes, and potential health issues for yourselves and your families. We also recognize that learning, teaching and research have been disrupted at an unprecedented level throughout the entire nation.

We are taking what steps we can to help you navigate this difficult, fluid, and unexpected situation – and we want to summarize these steps for you below.

**Webpage:** NSF has established a landing page for information about the novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19): [www.nsf.gov/coronavirus](http://www.nsf.gov/coronavirus).

This page is updated frequently and includes links to our latest guidance on upcoming program deadlines, as well as budget and logistics questions pertaining to existing awards that may be affected in various ways. It is a good starting place for help in answering questions about disruptions to your NSF-funded work, which is a concern for many of you. The operation of each university follows local guidance, and NSF will make efforts to facilitate the continuation of research and education activities as much as possible during this challenging time.

**Program Deadlines:** We are assessing program deadlines on an ongoing basis and are particularly discussing deadlines in April, as all of us adjust during this period. The following website will be updated as we know more about particular deadlines: [https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/covid19/covid19\\_deadlines.pdf](https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/covid19/covid19_deadlines.pdf). Our goal is to offer extensions where feasible, such as the 30-day deadline extension for proposal submissions to the S-STEM program, while remaining mindful of our own internal timelines for conducting a full merit review process and spending this fiscal year's funds.

**Review Panels and Site Visits:** If you have agreed to serve on an upcoming merit review panel, please note that these are all virtual at present through May 1, 2020. Reviewers who are scheduled to participate in an in-person review panel after May 1, 2020, should expect notification from NSF staff approximately two weeks in advance of the panel about any changes to the panel. Please contact the cognizant NSF program officer if you have questions about panel logistics.

For those of you taking part in a Reverse Site Visit (RSV), NSF has continued to conduct RSVs virtually. While some proposing teams have chosen to participate in an RSV from a single room (larger than normal for social distancing purposes) with videoconferencing to NSF, at this point we encourage RSVs to be fully virtual via videoconferencing.

**Other NSF-Funded Meetings:** NSF is encouraging principal investigators of upcoming NSF-funded Conferences and other meetings originally scheduled to take place in the coming weeks to either reschedule these meetings or to move them to all-virtual gatherings.

**NSF Operations:** As with many other workplaces, NSF is now in a maximum telework mode, but the work of the agency continues. To that end, we appreciate your patience and understanding as we, ourselves, adjust to this new way of life. We are heartened by the efforts of both our own NSF colleagues and all of you in the community in carrying on nearly seamlessly with virtual review panels, reverse site visits, and other events. As always, our mission is to support the great research and education that you conduct, and this means doing our best to maintain the merit review process and funding timelines in order to facilitate getting the funding out to you, our research and education community, as planned this fiscal year.

**STEM Resources for at-home learning blog:** With schools across the country closing their doors to restrict the spread of the COVID-19 virus, NSF has identified a few activities for learners of all ages that can be practiced at an appropriate physical distance. <https://beta.nsf.gov/science-matters/seven-nsf-supported-stem-resources-are-perfect-home-learning>. We hope to offer selected, additional resources, including resources that do not require internet access, in the weeks ahead.

In summary, we wanted to reach out and reiterate our mission to keep programs, panels, and other efforts on track as much as possible. The unique circumstances we are all experiencing have challenged us, and yet simultaneously they have profoundly demonstrated the immense power and need for our

research. EHR's future-oriented work on education research at all levels, such as best practices for online learning and learning in informal settings, collectively underpins so many elements of the virtual connectivity that is allowing us to stay truly connected in a time of physical distancing. Thank you for your past work, and we look forward to continuing to support future innovations in the months and years to come.

Best,

Karen Marrongelle  
Assistant Director  
Directorate for Education and Human Resources

*The Directorate for Education and Human Resources supports STEM education and education research from early childhood learning to doctoral work and beyond. EHR funds evidence-based innovations in teaching practices, instructional tools and programs that advance STEM education and prepare the next generation of STEM professionals.*