



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.

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. 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,

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