CFAES Research Questions as related to COVID-19

March 17, 2020

Dr. Morley Stone, OSU Office of Research indicated in his memo of March 15, 2020 the coming days will be filled with a multitude of issues, challenges and questions that will require prompt attention, in many cases adaptation.

The CFAES Office for Research and Graduate Education has prepared the following guidance as you move forward with your research programs. This is an unprecedented time in research administration, and we will be following up with more specific guidance from our sponsors as it becomes available.

Is the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) operating as usual?
The Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) is operating as usual for proposal submissions and award negotiations. OSP staff can work remotely.

Can I still submit proposals?
The CFAES Grant Development Support Unit is fully operational and working with faculty and staff on proposal submission. New referrals can be submitted at: https://grants.cfaes.ohio-state.edu/home Click the Request Services tab to the right of the page. If we become aware of changes in proposal deadlines, information will be posted on the CFAES Researchers listserv.

COVID-19 issues are negatively affecting the progress on my grant. What should I do?
For programmatic issues affecting your study, contact your agency Program Officer or sponsor contact. If any issues should persist, they may need to be reported in future progress reports, or you may need a No Cost Extension (NCE) to complete your study. NCE’s can be requested and processed by your Sponsored Program Officer.

Do sponsors have specific guidance on COVID-19?
Please refer to the following sponsors for current information regarding COVID-19, including sponsor guidance.

- NSF coronavirus FAQ for Proposers and Awardees
- NSF Coronavirus-related Information
- NIH late application policy due to Public Health Emergency for COVID-19
- NIH FAQs for Proposal Submission and Award Management related to COVID-19
- NIH Coronavirus-related Information
- DOE Coronavirus Hub
- USDA Coronavirus Disease (public information, not sponsored funding)

Research Operations
COVID-19 may impact performance of sponsored projects, e.g., cancelled travel, temporary loss of personnel, delays in acquiring equipment and supplies, and interruption of other essential services. It is
important to remain in communication with your sponsor regarding any delays or other challenges you experience. During this period of reduced research operations, it is essential that we continue to proactively manage our sponsored projects.

PI’s and Co-PI’s should continue to work with their sponsored program officers, departmental fiscal officers, and grant personnel for all aspects of post award management.

Areas that should be actively monitored and reviewed should include:

- Personnel appointments for students and staff as well as any planned new hires or those separating from university employment.
- Recurring charges that may occur on a monthly basis under normal operating conditions. (IDB’s, ULAR, American Express, etc.).
- Any current and open purchases of services or equipment should be reviewed for the current status and plan going forward.
- Upcoming travel and conferences. Please review the current University travel restrictions.

I recently received an award and anticipated starting my research during the Spring, what should I do?
First and foremost, the safety and well being of faculty, staff and students should be considered.
Review your project for vital tasks:

- Which unique specimens, research materials, and projects are important and require staff maintenance?
- Does your laboratory need to have duplicate samples of novel compounds, specimens, etc. to continue research?
- Examples:
  - Samples and specimens (live, fresh, frozen, and fixed)
  - Novel compounds and biochemicals
  - Type specimens
  - Cell lines Seeds
  - Plants
  - Animals
  - Specialized reagents and chemicals
- What task modifications may be necessary under pandemic conditions?
- How can the duration of important lab tasks be minimized?
- Which tasks must be performed by a staff skeleton crew to sustain only the most important essential functions?