

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

*Office of Research and Project Administration
Sponsored Research Accounting*

To: Principal Investigators on Sponsored Research Projects

From: Elizabeth H. Adams, Director, Office of Research and Project Administration
Glynis L. Sherard, Senior Associate Controller and Director of Sponsored Research Accounting

Subject: Programmatic and Financial Risk Mitigation Guidance for Sponsored Research Projects Impacted by the COVID-19 Crisis

Date: June 5, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Over the last several weeks, the COVID-19 health and societal crisis has presented challenges to some research activities at Princeton. We write to provide guidance and resources on managing sponsored programs, including mitigating programmatic and financial risk on them, as we move into the summer.

As you know, documenting progress on project aims is the responsibility of the principal investigator, and it is particularly important in the current environment that all sponsors be kept apprised regarding progress/partial progress/non-progress on project aims. It is strongly recommended that principal investigators use progress reports as the mechanism for documenting the programmatic and financial impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on their sponsored projects (e.g., the impacts on cost and timeline). Communications with sponsors (e.g., progress reports) on the crisis-related impacts to projects may later serve as appropriate documentation of the need for supplemental funding from sponsors, and in audits.

As you may know, in response to the COVID-19 crisis, the federal government has provided awardees of federal grants [unprecedented programmatic and financial flexibilities](#) to assist in the continued conduct of sponsored programs. In particular:

- Princeton may charge to federal grants active as of March 13, 2020 salaries and benefits of project personnel hindered in their productivity by COVID-19-related interruptions such as limited access to needed on-campus facilities and resources
- Princeton may also charge to federal grants costs related to the cancellation of events, travel or other activities that otherwise would have been necessary and reasonable for the performance of the grant, or the pausing and restarting of grant-funded activities, due to the public health emergency

Princeton is generally taking the above approach to federal contracts as well. A number of our non-federal sponsors have additionally expressed that they are willing to provide flexibilities.

While on-campus research is [re-opened in phases](#), we expect that more sponsored programs will be able to resume fuller activity and progress.

Your understanding and cooperation through this extraordinary and challenging time are truly appreciated. Please reach out to your unit administrators, ORPA/SRA administrators, or us with your questions and concerns, and continue to monitor the [DFR](#) and [ORPA](#) websites for updates on Princeton research operations and the latest guidance from our sponsors.

Best wishes,

Elizabeth Adams, Director, Office of Research and Project Administration

Glynis Sherard, Senior Associate Controller and Director, Sponsored Research Accounting