

Hurricane Maria - Grants Policies ^[1]

Submitted by [Zulmarie Perez Horta](#) ^[2] on 6 October 2017 - 5:56pm



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Due to the extent of the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria, funding agencies, institutions and professional organizations have issued statements on the different measures they will take to

support the scientific enterprise in Puerto Rico and ensure the continuity of research and education on the island.

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

The NIH is the nation's primary medical research agency and one of the major funding sources for science in Puerto Rico. NIH's [general policy](#) [3] for natural disaster relief extends application deadlines by a number of days. However, due to the catastrophic impact of this storm, on October 3, 2017 the NIH published NOT-OD-18-002, a [notice](#) [4] detailing special policy exceptions for the researchers at institutions in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Below is a brief summary, for detailed information please visit [this page](#) [4].

1. Late application submission: NIH will accept late applications for Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs) with due dates from September 16, 2017 to December 16, 2017, these must be submitted no later than 11:59 pm (local applicant organization time) on December 16, 2017.
2. Post Submission Materials: Institutions may submit post-submission grant application materials to revise information that was submitted in an application for a due date before September 16, 2017, or in an application submitted under this Notice's exception, these will be accepted until fourteen days before the start of the review meeting.
3. Salary Payments: Expenditure of award funds to continue paying salaries and fringe benefits during a period when no work is performed is unallowable. However, such salary expenses may be allowable when emergency funding is available to assist in disaster recovery related to the award, as detailed in the terms and conditions of the award.
4. Post-award Reporting: Researchers should promptly contact the assigned grants management and/or program official if they will be unable to submit Research Performance Progress Reports (RPPR), Financial reports (Federal Financial Report expenditure data), and/or invention report will be accepted by the scheduled due date. Although NIH will accept these late reports, grant awards will be delayed until the required reports are submitted and accepted by NIH.

Further guidance, resources and updated information on the NIH's Hurricane Maria response can be found in [this page](#) [3].

Please direct all inquiries to:

Division of Grants Policy
Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration
Office of Extramural Research
Telephone: 301-435-0949
NIHGHR@nih.gov [5]
https://grants.nih.gov/grants/natural_disasters.htm [3]

Division of Receipt and Referral
Center for Scientific Review
Telephone: 301-435-0715
Email: csrdrr@mail.nih.gov [6]

National Science Foundation (NSF)

The NSF is the federal agency devoted to strengthening the overall health of the science and engineering enterprise. Accounting for around 25% of federal support for all basic research performed at academic institutions, the NSF is another major source of funding for Puerto Rican researchers. The NSF's guidance for natural disasters [7] specifies the agency's flexibility regarding deadlines and outlines the policies and procedures [8] that are in place for these situations. The NSF urges investigators to contact their program officers as soon as it is feasible to discuss the impact on NSF funded projects. Inquiries can be directed at this email naturaldisasters@nsf.gov [9]

The important notice no. 143 [10] was published on September 29, 2017 and was directed at Presidents of Universities and Colleges and Heads of other NSF Grantee Organizations. In this notice the NSF reaffirms its support to the affected people and organizations and ensures that they will provide assistance to current and potential awardees by being flexible, accommodating and coming up with creative solutions.

The NSF will take the following measures for those located in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and other hurricane-impacted islands.

1. Extend the end dates of existing awards that are scheduled to expire on November 1, 2017.
2. Accept research proposals related to Hurricane Maria.
3. Extend the deadline for applicants and reference writers of the Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) until 5:00 p.m., submitter's local time, Friday December 29, 2017. Submitter's local time is determined by the applicant's mailing address.

Updated information will be found on NSF's official website [11], on <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp/> [12], on <https://www.nsf.gov/naturaldisasters/> [7], and on <https://www.nsfgrfp.org> [13].

American Association for Medical Colleges (AAMC)

In a memo published on September 29, 2017 [14] the AAMC expressed support to the four LCME-accredited U.S. medical schools in Puerto Rico: Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine, San Juan Bautista School of Medicine, Universidad Central del Caribe School of Medicine, and University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine.

The AAMC will take the following actions:

1. Serve as a liaison between affected students and their universities by working with the institutions to help support, identify resources and facilitate solutions that will enable students to complete their medical education.
2. Work to establish access to AAMC services including the medical school application service (AMCAS®), residency application service (ERAS®), and visiting student application service (VSAS®).

3. Contact the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) and other members of the graduate medical education community to make them aware of the impact of the hurricane. Specifically, there will likely be delays with student and faculty submission of required application elements.
4. Work with individuals affected by the closure of the MCAT® test centers to reschedule their exams. Frequent updates are available here: www.aamc.org/mcat [15]

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