

NIH Reinstates Grant for Controversial Coronavirus Research to EcoHealth Alliance



The U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) has reinstated a grant to a controversial organization [accused](#) of conducting research on bat coronaviruses with the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) in China that led to the COVID-19 pandemic – and the coverup of its origins.

The 4-year, \$2.9 million grant given to EcoHealth Alliance allows the organization to resume its research, which was halted in 2020 when the pandemic began, although the NIH provided a list of restrictions.

According to [Nature](#), EcoHealth is prohibited from performing in-country research in China, including with the WIV, and cannot collect any new samples from vertebrates, including bats. The revised grant also requires greater scrutiny of EcoHealth's finances and accounting practices, driven in part

by a report released in January, showing that EcoHealth misreported around \$90,000 in expenses.

In addition, EcoHealth will be prohibited from engaging in any work deemed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to have the “potential to enhance the virulence or transmission of a virus” through gain of function (GOF) research.

Former U.S. President Donald Trump in 2020 said the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID originated in the WIV laboratory through NIH-funded research. The agency then terminated EcoHealth’s grant that involved studying how coronaviruses like SARS-CoV-2 jump from bats to humans. Months later, the agency reinstated the grant but immediately suspended it until EcoHealth could meet certain conditions – which the organization said it could not do at the time.

The NIH “routinely considers processes and measures for strengthening [its] oversight over federal funds” and has been working with EcoHealth to strengthen its “administrative processes to meet NIH’s expectations,” said NIH spokesperson Amanda Fine.

House Energy and Commerce Committee Republican Leader Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), Subcommittee on Health Republican Leader Brett Guthrie (R-KY), and Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations Republican Leader Morgan Griffith (R-VA) [sent a letter](#) to NIH director Lawrence Tabak on April 25, 2022, [demanding the agency](#) investigate EcoHealth president Peter Daszak and the organization for a “coverup and possible fraud related to research at the Wuhan lab.”

“Our review of EcoHealth Alliance’s reports about its humanized mice experiments at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) using funds from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) shows pervasive discrepancies, inconsistencies, and omissions in its progress reports and renewal application that raise

serious questions about scientific and ethical misconduct, violations of NIH policies and regulations, and possible false statements and fraud,” the letter stated.

“Accordingly, we request the NIH investigate Dr. Peter Daszak, the Principal Investigator of R01AI110964, and other EcoHealth officials to determine whether certain data related to mice deaths and other material information were intentionally withheld during the peer review process for EcoHealth’s grant renewal application.”

The NIH in 2021 claimed, “no NIAID [National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Diseases] funding was approved for Gain of Function research at the WIV.”

The NIH [later confirmed](#) to the House Oversight Committee in October 2021 that EcoHealth and the WIV conducted GOF research on bat coronaviruses with U.S. tax dollars, and Daszak, with EcoHealth, hid it from the U.S. government.

Information obtained shows Dr. Anthony Fauci may have concealed the origins of COVID-19 from government officials and indicates Fauci and former Collins may have conspired with other scientists to de-emphasize the lab leak theory.

Internal [emails show](#) Fauci knew NIAID had funded EcoHealth Alliance and subgrantee WIV, and EcoHealth was not compliant with its grant reporting. Specifically, the NIAID knew the grant had GOF potential on novel bat coronaviruses.

Fauci, Collins, and at least eleven other scientists held a call to discuss COVID-19 where Drs. Fauci and Collins [were first warned](#) COVID-19 “may have leaked from the WIV and may have been intentionally genetically manipulated.”

After the conference call, Fauci, Collins, and four participants abandoned their belief the virus originated from a Wuhan lab and authored “The Proximal Origin of SARS-CoV-2.” Before publication in Nature Medicine, the paper was sent to

and edited by Fauci.

More than two months after the original conference call on April 16, 2020, Collins emailed Fauci expressing dismay that the Nature Medicine article did not kill the lab leak theory and asked if the NIH could do more to “put down” the lab leak hypothesis.

The next day, Fauci cited the Nature Medicine paper during a White House press conference to further suppress the suspicion COVID-19 leaked from the Wuhan lab.

Recently, Judicial Watch [obtained 552 pages of records](#) showing Fauci and EcoHealth were creating “mutant” coronaviruses at the WIV.

According to [Judicial Watch](#), EcoHealth planned to sequence the spike protein from coronaviruses obtained from bats to “create mutants to identify how significantly each would need to evolve to use ACE2,” which is explained as “the receptor to gain entry to human cells.”