



An Association of Research Institutions

2020-2022 Biennial Year in Review

As an association of 200 leading research institutions, COGR provides its members with expert analysis, guidance, and resources regarding the financial and regulatory infrastructure associated with federally funding research. We also foster productive relationships between the research community and federal policy makers, advocating for innovation and change that avoid unnecessary regulatory burden.

Each year, as the academic year comes to a close, we'll take a brief look at what COGR has accomplished in some key areas on behalf of its membership. We could not have done this without the commitment and efforts of our Board and Committee members, the many other people at your institutions who are engaged as volunteers, and the support of our member institutions.

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Introduction

In the two years since our last [Year in Review](#), much has happened. At that time, almost all the energies of COGR and our member institutions were focused on dealing with the pandemic. Many campuses had shut down, and some were beginning to slowly and carefully reopen again, and most of us were getting accustomed to working remotely. Since then, we've largely adjusted to working in the midst of a pandemic and research security has once again become one of the most predominant issues on the policy landscape, though there is no shortage of additional issues to occupy our attention.

As the research community has faced these issues, COGR has taken multiple actions in support, as you'll see in the following pages. We engaged in advocacy with funding and regulatory agencies and worked with other associations to inform their engagements with legislators and their staff. We created guidance and other resources to assist our members, including offering webinars on relevant and emerging topics. We've also conducted surveys of members, both in support of our advocacy efforts and also to share useful aggregate information back with members to inform their actions.

In addition to the critical policy work, we have been busy behind the scenes improving the member experience. Just this summer, we launched a members-only portal where members can access members-only materials and connect with others, and primary representatives can manage their institution's membership. We've clarified how participation on Committees works and have created a more consistent means of expressing interest in various volunteer opportunities. And as so many of you have expressed a preference for virtual meetings, our February meeting will be virtual from now on and we will offer more regular webinars.

As a very tangible indicator of the value COGR provides to its members, COGR membership has actually grown since the beginning of the pandemic. We are thrilled to welcome [thirteen new institutions](#) into the COGR family!

The COGR membership includes 200 of the most research-intensive institutions in the country, and makes what we do possible, not only in terms of financial support, but also the time and expertise of the many people who volunteer. We'd specifically like to recognize the [COGR Board, Committees](#), and various workgroup volunteers for their significant contributions in supporting the work of COGR.

Read on for a more complete look back at the past two years.

Research Security

The research community continued to deal with a range of issues related to foreign influences on research and balancing open science with the need to protect certain strategic technologies. The failure of some researchers to disclose significant foreign commitments and resources continued to be of considerable concern both to federal funding agencies and Congress. COGR worked actively and aggressively with funding and security agencies to represent the concerns of institutions. COGR sought to establish and maintain a close and productive working relationship with OSTP, NIH, NSF, and DARPA, as they provided additional guidance regarding disclosures and conflicts of interest and commitment, as well as with the FBI concerning

matters of enforcement. In this regard, an FBI panel at the June 2022 COGR meeting highlighted the Department of Justice's cessation of its "China Initiative," a change in enforcement strategy welcomed by the COGR membership.

In addition to regular coverage in meetings and COGR Updates¹, some of the steps COGR took to help its members included:

- *Research Security Costing Model Survey: Phase I Report*. COGR surveyed twenty-six institutions focusing on the new cost burden associated with implementation of the NSPM-33 disclosure requirements. In addition to providing helpful benchmarking for the COGR membership, the results will also be used in advocacy with federal policymakers. We expect to release the report to the membership in August 2022.
- Met with the National Security Roundtable of the National Academies in June 2022 to discuss promoting and protecting U.S.-sponsored scientific research as a national security asset.
- Participated in a COGR-specific Engagement Hour with OSTP to present issues of critical importance to the membership, including harmonization, controls commensurate with risk, the need to partner with institutions on items such as costs associated with program requirements ([May 2022](#))
- Hosted a complimentary webinar for our membership on an Overview of DARPA's Countering Foreign Influence Program (CFIP) and Senior/Key Personnel Foreign Influence Risk Rubric ([January 19, 2022](#)) (*Log in Required*)
- Hosting a complimentary webinar for our membership on an Overview of the NSPM-33 Guidance: Key Points and Institutional Considerations ([January 11, 2020](#))
- Released a Summary of NSTC Guidance for Implementing NSPM-33's Disclosure Requirements & Other Provisions ([January 2022](#))
- Discussions with DOE resulting in clarification of its new "U.S. Competitiveness" requirements for domestic manufacturing (October 2021)
- Principles for Evaluating Conflict of Commitment Concerns in Academic Research (Updated [September 2021](#))
- Published "Foreign Influence - Practical Considerations in Developing an Institutional Response" ([August 2021](#))
- Released a Report on the "Survey on Institutional Disclosure Practices: Responding to Inappropriate Foreign Influence Amid Evolving Requirements" ([December 2020](#)) (*Log in Required*)
- Released Current and Pending Support Table to assist the membership in meeting NSF disclosure requirements ([September 2020](#))
- Hosted the FBI for a complimentary webinar on Safeguarding Your Research Institution ([September 2020](#)) (*Log in Required*)
- Hosted a Complimentary Discussion Hour on Striking the Balance: Maintaining Research Security in a Collaborative World (August 2020)
- Complimentary Webinar to membership on "Foreign Influence and Research Security: The Challenges Continue" ([August 2020](#))

¹ COGR releases detailed updates to the membership 6-8 times per year. These updates can be found under "Latest News" on COGR's website here: <https://www.cogr.edu/News-Stories>

Research security will continue to remain at the top of compliance concerns for institutions as they await OSTP's release of harmonized disclosure forms and research security program guidance later in 2022, as well as training modules for which NSF has issued an RFP.

COVID-19: Transitioning to a Post-Pandemic World

The COVID-19 pandemic required research institutions to rapidly respond on multiple fronts ranging from transitioning to remote work, continuing critical on-site research activities and clinical trials, and providing healthcare for those who contracted the virus. Institutions were required to quickly pivot and adapt to constantly changing conditions, and COGR assisted with real-time analysis of government guidance regarding the funding and conduct of research projects, and ongoing dialog with funding agencies concerning institutional needs and on-the-ground conditions.

Some of the resources COGR provided to its members included:

- F&A Cost Rates and Reimbursement Pressures Under COVID-19: Maintaining a Fair and Reliable System ([April 2021](#))
- FAQs on the HEERF V 2.0 ([April 2021](#))
- Research Impact Under COVID-19 ([January 2021 Addendum](#))
- COVID Research Impact Study, Pulse 3 and Pulse 4 Including Comparison with Data from Prior Surveys ([December 2020](#))
- Research Impact Under COVID-19: Financial Crisis and the “Pandemic Normal” ([August 2020](#))
- NIH Specific FAQs V 2.0 ([August 2020](#))
- Costing and Financial Compliance FAQs V 4.0 ([August 2020](#))
- Funding Sources for Research Universities ([July 2020](#))
- Survey Report on Pulse 1 & 2 COVID-19 Research Impact Study ([July 7, 2020](#))²
- Research Ramp-Up Road Map: A Guide to Considerations and Resources for Ramping Up On-Campus Laboratory, Animal and Human Subjects Research as COVID-19 Restrictions are Lifted ([June 2020](#))

Although institutions have largely moved from addressing COVID-19 as a public health emergency to more of a chronic and persistent health risk, fall-out from the pandemic, especially with respect to remote work and labor shortages remain. Similarly, lessons learned during the pandemic will assist institutions in preparing for future pandemics and other nationwide emergencies.

NIH Data Management and Sharing Policy Implementation Work Group

On October 29, 2020, NIH issued its [Final Policy on Data Management and Sharing \(DMS\)](#), effective for grant and contract applications submitted and other funding agreements executed on or after January 25, 2023. In addition to the Final Policy, NIH also released several supplemental notices and [FAQs](#). NIH institutes, centers, and offices are expected to release their own policies and guidance on data management plans, use of repositories, etc. COGR, working closely with colleagues from FDP, ARL, AAU, APLU, and others, has

² All three reports, including the Baseline Report released in May 2020 can be found on COGR's website here: <https://www.cogr.edu/cogr-2020-covid-19-research-impact-study>

convened a workgroup (WG) of association and institutional representatives to provide resources to assist institutions in implementing the new requirements. The WG will assess and provide guidance on the policies and their effect on the research community, analyze the cost of compliance to research institutions and faculty, advocate for harmonization where possible, and let NIH know where clearer guidance is needed.

Some of the actions the WG has already taken to help COGR members include:

- Hosted federal, institutional, and association representatives at several COGR membership meetings (*recordings available, log in required*³).
- Wrote [several comment letters](#) to NIH and OSTP in response to RFI's issued on DMS.
- Launched a [NIH Data Management and Sharing Policy Resource page](#) on the COGR website, that summarizes all NIH policies, COGR comment letters, member updates, meeting materials, the Readiness Guide, and additional resources in one easy-to-use location.
- Announced the publication of the COGR Readiness Guide, to be released in chapters, covering critical topics related to DMS. The first two chapters of the Guide have already been released, including a [Senior Level Institutional Briefing Document](#)⁴ (Chapter 1, joint release with the [Association of Research Libraries](#)) and a [Policy Matrix](#) (Chapter 2). All chapters will be updated as necessary, and releases/updates will be announced to the membership.
- Launching a Cost of Compliance Survey to the COGR membership to assess new cost and administrative burden anticipated after the NIH policy is implemented in January 2023. We expect to release the survey in late summer 2022, compile the results in the early fall and share the results with both the COGR membership and leaders at NIH.

Additional Highlights

- In August 2022, COGR released an update to the COGR publication "[Technology Transfer in U.S. Research Universities: Dispelling Common Myths](#)", originally published in March 2000.
- In July 2022, COGR [sent a letter](#) to Secretary's Advisory Committee on Human Research Protections (SACHRP) regarding its efforts to redefine "engagement in research." COGR's letter pointed out the difficulties that the current definition presents, and our letter was included in the materials that SACHRP considered at its July meeting. Subsequently, SACHRP issued recommendations to the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) that would afford greater latitude to IRBs and institutions in determining what persons/entities will be considered to be engaged in research.
- In response to the August 2020 [2 CFR 200 Update](#) (Uniform Guidance), COGR developed a [Readiness Guide](#) to provide guidance on the changes and overarching concepts. Positive changes included an additional 30 days to closeout awards, a "safe harbor" for subrecipient monitoring, a more rational methodology for making changes to the DS-2, and an increase in the small purchase threshold to

³ Slides available here: <https://www.cogr.edu/cogr-meeting-materials-re-nih-dsmp>

⁴ For a customizable version of the Briefing Document, see: <https://cogr.member365.org/sharingnetwork/workspace/view/20> (log in required)

\$50,000. COGR had [long advocated](#) for these changes, and we are pleased to see them [codified here](#)⁵. However, there were also some challenges, including the ability for federal funding agencies to terminate awards for reasons other than poor performance, which had previously been the standard, and some additional research security requirements.⁶

- See end of this Review for a [full list](#) of formal comment letters sent by COGR.

New Members Since March 2020

Over the past two years, as many organizations have struggled to even retain memberships, COGR has been pleased to welcome thirteen new institutions as members, losing only one member due to budget restraints (and we very much hope to welcome them back in the future). Now 200 members strong, new COGR member institutions since March 2020 include:

- Binghamton University
- Broad Institute
- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
- Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
- Kennedy Krieger Institute
- Loma Linda University
- Medical College of Wisconsin
- Oakland University
- Old Dominion University
- Scripps Research
- University at Buffalo
- University of Wyoming
- Van Andel Institute

COGR Membership Portal & Website Updates

In July 2020, COGR launched a [Member Portal](#), an exciting new platform that allows members to update contact information, access members-only documents (including a video library with webinar and meeting session recordings), register for meetings and webinars, access a directory of members, and submit job postings. Primary Representatives and financial billing contacts can view their institution's membership invoice and check on its status. Employees at COGR member institutions are eligible and encouraged to sign up for an account within the portal. ***Beginning August 15, listserv messages will be sent only to those who have signed up in the portal***, so be sure you have created an account to continue to receive messages. If you have any questions, please contact memberservices@cogr.edu.

⁵ See also May 2021 Frequently Asked Questions: https://www.cfo.gov/assets/files/2CFR-FrequentlyAskedQuestions_2021050321.pdf

⁶ For additional information on COGR's advocacy efforts on the Uniform Guidance, see: <https://www.cogr.edu/2-cfr-200-uniform-guidance-resource-page>

In addition to the Member Portal, COGR made significant updates to how information is organized on the COGR website. Under Policy Issues, documents have been cross-indexed in a variety of new ways that better reflect the issues COGR is following on behalf of our membership. In addition, over the next several months, we'll be releasing resource pages⁷ on topics of broad interest (including Research Security) that collate a variety of relevant information in one easy to navigate location.

COGR Committee Selection Considerations & Volunteer Survey Launch

COGR's efforts in advocacy and analysis is heavily supported by the work of standing [COGR committees](#) and ad hoc workgroups made up of individuals with high levels of expertise at member institutions. While we have had a long-established policy addressing the nomination process to become a COGR Board member, there has been less clarity on the process on how to volunteer to serve on a COGR Committee or signal interest in volunteering in another capacity. To address this, in April 2022, COGR released [At-Large Committee Member Selection Considerations & Appointment Information](#), detailing consideration factors for selecting committee members, the selection process, and committee appointment information. In addition, COGR launched a member-wide [volunteer survey](#) to provide a pathway for individuals at the member institutions to indicate their interest in volunteering in a variety of capacities. COGR members are encouraged to complete this survey at any time, but each year in the spring, as Chairs and Directors review their committee rosters, COGR will be sending out a reminder to complete (or update) volunteer forms.

Staff Transitions

So much of COGR's success is due to its "small but mighty" team making up the staff. There have been some changes over the past two years, but the team is as strong as ever.

We first thank Jackie Bendall, who left in March, after serving as the Director for Contracts and Grants Administration (CGA) for more than 7 years, lending her expertise and support to the Committee and the COGR membership. We'd also like to acknowledge Michelle Christy, a former COGR Board member, who served as COGR's interim Director of CGA for several months in 2022 and was instrumental in several of the above initiatives.

In related news, we are pleased to welcome a new Director of CGA, Krystal Toups, who was most recently the Assistant Vice Provost for Sponsored Projects and Research Compliance at Rice University. We also welcomed Mary Deans, our new Administrative Officer, in April 2022, bringing with her 16+ years of office and financial administrative experience. Finally, we congratulate Toni Russo on her promotion in May 2022 to Assistant Director of Member Engagement and Policy, overseeing member engagement initiatives and providing analytical support to the Directors on a number of policy issues.

⁷ For reference, see the recently released "COGR NIH Data Management and Sharing" page under the Resources tab on the COGR website: <https://www.cogr.edu/nih-data-management-and-sharing>

Formal Comment Letters

COGR responds to proposed new regulations and revisions to existing regulations with a focus on reducing administrative burden and providing federal agencies with expert opinions based on the experiences of our members. COGR also proactively advocates for improvements in policy that benefit the research enterprise. Whenever possible, draft letters and responses are shared with our members before the deadline, to assist them in the development of their own responses. In the past two years, COGR has submitted over 50 such comments on behalf of our membership often in partnership with other associations.

July 2022

- Joint Association Letter to HHS Secretary Becerra on Prescription Drug Pricing ([July 27, 2022](#))
- Letter of Support for SACHRP’s Efforts to Redefine “Engaged in Research” ([July 8, 2022](#))

June 2022

- Comment Letter to OMB Regarding 2022 Compliance Supplement ([June 30, 2022](#))
- Comments in Response to NIH Guide Notice NOT-OD-22-131 Regarding Protecting Privacy When Sharing Human Research Participant Data ([June 27, 2022](#))
- Comments to NSF on the Draft PAPPG (23-1) ([June 13, 2022](#))

April 2022

- Comments to USDA on Proposal Rule on Standards for Birds Not Bred for Use in Research under AWA ([April 22, 2022](#))
- Comments to NASA on Terms & Conditions Affecting Procurement ([April 21, 2022](#))
- Comments to NIH on Suggestions on the Draft NIH Chief Scientific Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity Strategic Plan for FY 2022-2026 ([April 3, 2022](#))

March 2022

- Comment Letter to NIH on Draft Supplemental Information to the NIH Policy for Data Management and Sharing on the Responsible Management and Sharing of American Indian/ Alaska Native Participant Data ([March 28, 2022](#))
- COGR Joins over 90 Associations on Free and Open Academic Inquiry Statement ([March 3, 2022](#))

February 2022

- Comments to NIH on RFI on Proposed Updates and Long-Term Considerations for the NIH Genomic Data Sharing ([February 28, 2022](#))
- Comments to OSTP Concerning the January 2022 Guidance for Implementing NSPM-33 ([February 15, 2022](#))

December 2021

- Comments to OSTP on Specific Actions Recommended to Reduce Administrative Burden ([December 21, 2022](#))
- Response to NSF Notice of New System of Records ([December 8, 2021](#))

November 2021

- Response to Department of Education's Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) I, II, & III Data Collection Form ([November 8, 2021](#))

October 2021

- Joint Comment Letter with AAMC and NABR to OLAW on RFI Clarifying the Reporting Requirements for Departures from the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals ([October 26, 2021](#))
- Multi-Association Letter to White House, CDC, on Upcoming Changes to US Travel Policy for International Travelers and Vaccine Requirements ([October 14, 2021](#))

September 2021

- Joint Association Letter with AAU, APLU, and AAMC to OSTP on NSPM-33 Implementation ([September 30, 2021](#))

August 2021

- Comments to OMB on 2 CFR 200 2021 Compliance Supplement ([August 30, 2021](#))
- Joint Comments with AUTM and Bayh – Dole Coalition to Department of Energy Exceptional Circumstances Determination ([August 25, 2021](#))
- Comments Submitted in Response to Agency Information Collection Activities; Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) I, II, III Data Collection Form ([August 12, 2021](#))
- Comments in Response to Notice of Proposed Rulemaking - Handling of Animals; Contingency Plans ([August 6, 2021](#))

July 2021

- Joint Letter with AAU, APLU, AAAS, AAMC on RFI to Improve Federal Scientific Integrity Policies ([July 27, 2021](#))
- Comments to NIH on Request for Information on Flexibilities to Reduce Administrative Burden While Continuing to Apply the PHS Policy to Zebrafish Immediately After Hatching ([July 26, 2021](#))
- Joint Letter with AAU and APLU on Application of DOE Order 142.3B and removal of limited screening exemption for U.S. universities ([July 12, 2021](#))

June 2021

- Coalition Statement in Support of Research Using Human Fetal Tissue ([June 22, 2021](#))

May 2021

- Comments to NSF on OIG Audit Finding: Application of F&A Cost Rates ([May 14, 2021](#))

April 2021

- Comments to NIH on RFI on Suggestions to Advance and Strengthen Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Biomedical Research and Advance Health Disparities and Health Equity Research ([April 14, 2021](#))
- Joint Association Comments with AAU, APLU, ACE, and AAMC on 37 CFR Parts 401 and 404 ([April 5, 2021](#))

March 2021

- Multi-association Letter to DHS in Support of International Students Returning to Campus ([March 18, 2021](#))

February 2021

- Multi-association Letter to HHS on Proposed Fetal Tissue Rule (RIN 0991-AC15) ([February 12, 2021](#))
- Joint Letter with AAU, APLU, ACE, and AAMC to OSTP on the National Security Presidential Memorandum 33 (NSPM-33) and NSTC JCORE “Recommended Practices for Strengthening the Security and Integrity of America’s Science and Technology Research Enterprise” ([February 10, 2021](#))
- Comment Letter to NSF on PAPPG 22-1 ([February 10, 2021](#))

January 2021

- Multi Coalition Letter to President-elect Biden on Human Fetal Tissue Research ([January 7, 2021](#))

December 2020

- Multi-association Letter to Department of Education on the Department’s enforcement authority for failure to adequately report under Section 117 ([December 14, 2020](#))
- Comment Letter to ORI on RFI on Research Integrity (85 FR 66341) ([December 11, 2020](#))

November 2020

- Joint Association Letter with AAU, APLU, ACE, and Educause to DoD Regarding CMMC (DFARS Case 2019-D041) ([November 20, 2020](#))
- Multi Association Letter to Incoming Administration on Regulatory Actions ([November 18, 2020](#))
- Comment Letter to USDA APHIS on Proposed Rule Regarding AWA Research Facility Registration, Updates, Reviews, and Reports ([November 13, 2020](#))
- Joint Association Comment Letter with AAU, APLU, ACE, AAMC Regarding Foundational Technologies ANPRM ([November 5, 2020](#))

October 2020

- Comments to NIH on NOT-OD-20-153 RFI Regarding Grant and Congruency Reviews ([October 30, 2020](#))
- Comment Letter to DEA on RIN 1117-AB53 Implementation of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 ([October 20, 2020](#))
- Comments to NIH on NOT-OD-20-145 RFI Regarding Semiannual Inspections ([October 20, 2020](#))
- Comment Letter to OMB on the 2020 Compliance Supplement ([October 8, 2020](#))
- Multi-Association Letter to White House Opposing EO 13950 "Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping" ([October 8, 2020](#))

September 2020

- Request to Extend / Quickly Reinstate OMB Memorandums M-20-17 / M-20-26 On behalf of the Members of COGR, AAU, APLU, AAMC, ACE, AAAS ([September 28, 2020](#))
- Letter to OMB on 2 CFR 200.216 ([September 24, 2020](#))
- Multi-Association Letter Expressing Concern about DOD and the CMMC Accreditation Body ([September 1, 2020](#))

August 2020

- Coalition Letter to DHHS on the NIH Human Fetal Tissue Ethics Advisory Board ([August 31, 2020](#))
- Comments to NIH in Response to NOT-OD-20-130 RFI on Enhancing Rigor, Transparency, and Translatability to Improve Biomedical Research Involving Animal Models ([August 19, 2020](#))

July 2020

- Coalition Letter to NIH Human Fetal Tissue Ethics Advisory Board ([July 28, 2020](#))

Resources for Members

In addition to the topical resources discussed above, COGR distributes a digest of news relevant to the administration of research three times a week. Our meetings, both virtual and in-person, are open to members only and select invited guests. In addition, we offer webinars on current issues and will continue to do so. Several times per year, COGR provides its membership with updates of current issues and hot topics, with the most recent being our [June 2022 Update](#). Members are always welcome to [contact COGR staff](#) to discuss issues of concern or get the latest information.

If you have any questions about this document or services COGR provides its membership, please contact memberservices@cogr.edu.