

RESEARCH TOWN HALL

Caroline Genco, PhD
Vice Provost for Research
December 11, 2020



Office of the
Vice Provost for Research

Overview

- **Research Continuity - Phase 2**
- **Face-to-Face Human Subjects Research**
- **Integrative Safety Committee / International Human Subject Research**
- **OVPR Action Plan to Promote Racial Diversity**
- **COVID-19 Updates**
- **Postdoctoral Mentoring**
- **University Winter Break**



Welcome! William (Bill) Shaw, Senior Director of Technology Transfer and Industry Collaboration

- Massachusetts General Hospital
- Founder and Board member
 - Eikonizo Therapeutics
 - 149 Medical Inc.
 - BlinkAI Technologies
- Expertise in international collaboration with a focus on China and Japan
- Member of Commonwealth of Massachusetts Bar
- Registered patent attorney at the USPTO

RESEARCH CONTINUITY – PHASE 2

Caroline Genco

COVID-19- Massachusetts

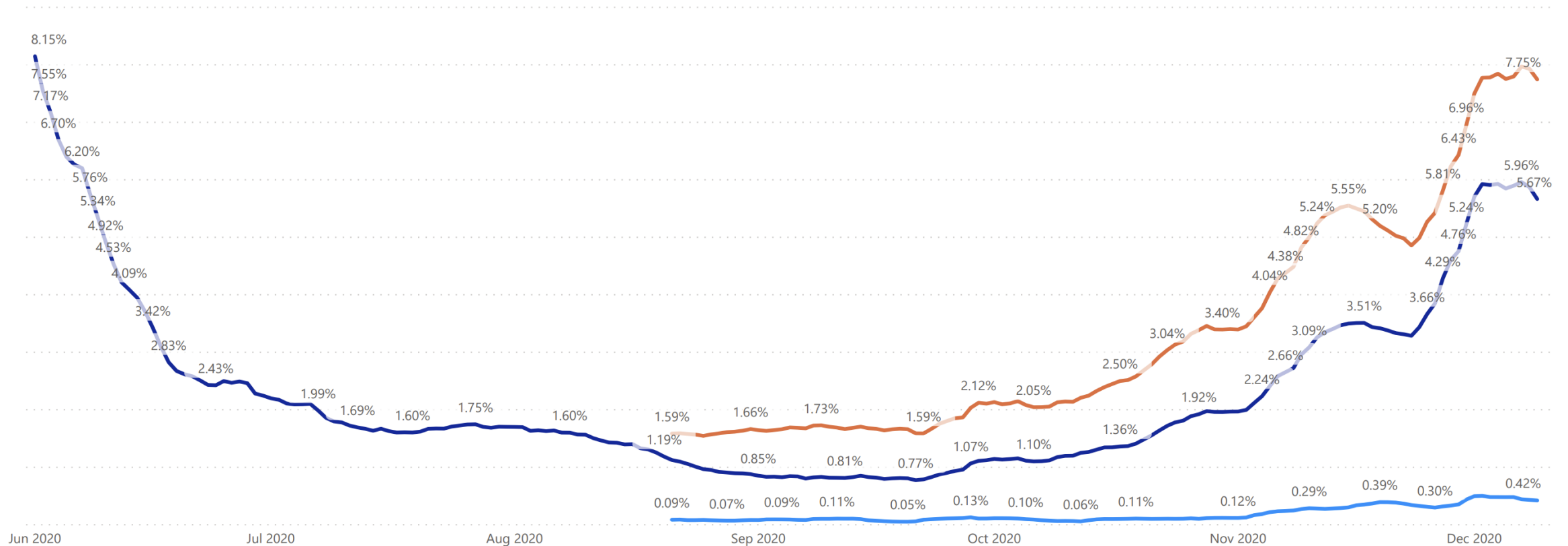


Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard- Thursday, December 10, 2020

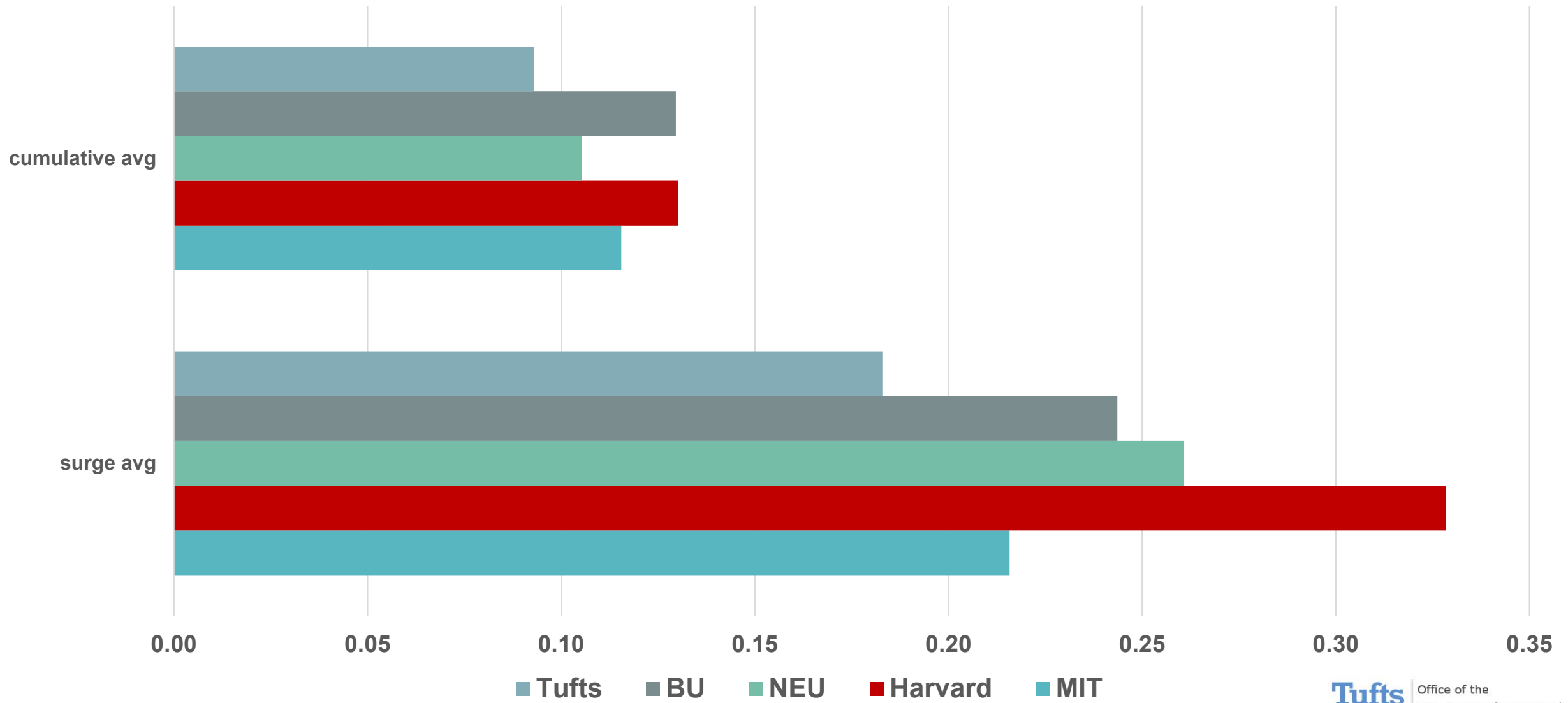
Testing by Date - Molecular (Percent Positive)

7-Day Weighted Average of Percent of Tests By Molecular Method that are Positive by Test Date

● MA Statewide (metric on p.2) ● MA Higher Education Only ● MA with Higher Education Tests Removed



Boston- Area Universities' Cumulative and Surge (11/08-12/09) Test Positivity (%)

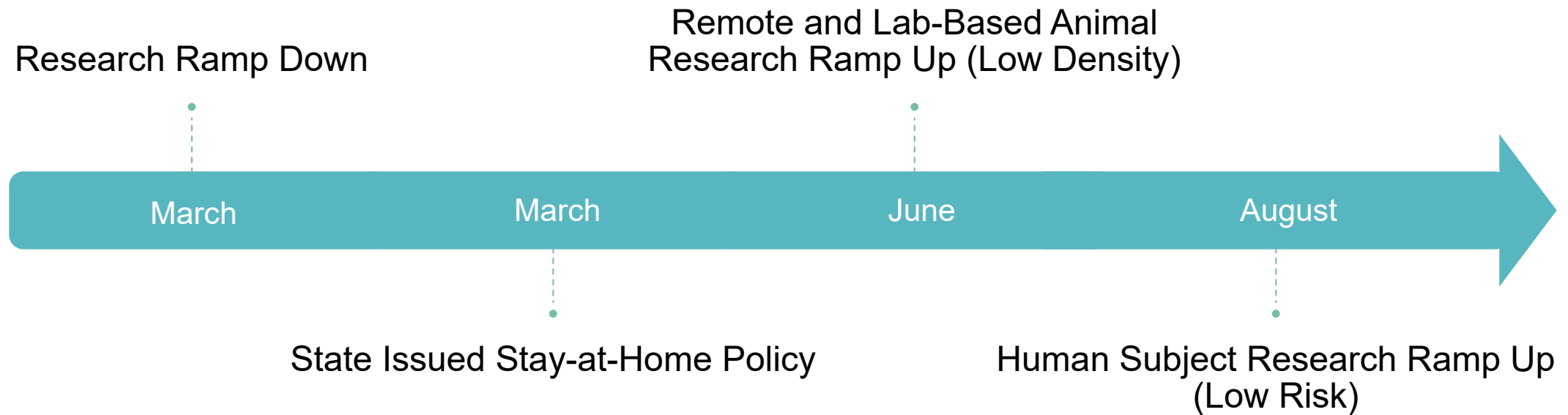


FACE-TO-FACE HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

CURRENT STATUS: **LOW RISK**

Heather Gipson-Cosier

Current Status of Face-to-Face Human Subject Research: Low Risk



Factors Determining Status of Human Subjects Research

- COVID-19 Status of Participant
- Risk Level of Target Population
- Research Location
- Duration and Type of Face-to-Face Contact
- Frequency of Contact and Number of People
- Research Setting
- Research Equipment
- Research Activities

Public Health Regulations vs Research Restrictions

Face-to-Face Human Subject Research

- HSR ramp up precautions are not directly related research, but to public health guidance and university requirements.
- OVPR will announce decisions about when face-to-face human subjects research can resume.
- PIs will not be required to obtain re-approval from IRB to resume research activities other than modifications to minimize risks of COVID-19 exposure to participants or study staff.
- Approval from the IRB does not indicate approval to ramp-up face-to-face human subjects research.
- PIs are responsible for obtaining required approval of study-specific ramp up plans from their School and the OVPR's ISC.

Face-to-face Health Sciences and Social-Behavioral Human Subjects Research Policy and Planning Resources

1. OVPR Policies

2. General Guidelines – “living” guidelines linked to other Tufts offices

3. Planning Guidelines in Context:

- International Research
- Clinical-Research Interface
- On-campus Research
- Community-based Research

OVPR's Research Recovery Toolkit

Tufts Learning Center Mini-Course:
[Ramping Up Face-to-Face Human Subjects Research at Tufts University](#)

All ramp-up related documents are located on the OVPR [website](#)

INTEGRATIVE SAFETY COMMITTEE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH

Phil Hinds

Integrative Safety Committee (ISC)

- Charge - Provides safety recommendations to the Vice Provost for Research
- Reviews - Research ramp down exceptions and close-proximity work, school research ramp up plans, COVID-19 research projects, HSR ramp up and international hiring
- Members are Regulatory Committee members (IACUC, IBC, etc.) and OVPR research compliance and safety directors or managers
- Synthesizes policies and procedures from each regulatory area and integrates them with infection control considerations
- When evaluating requests for exceptions to Tufts' COVID-19 policies and procedures, works co-operatively with the existing regulatory structure at the Institution

ISC New Members

- Gillian Beamer, TCSVM (infectious disease; vice-chair, IACUC)
- Dyan Mazurana, Fletcher/Friedman (international studies; IRB member)
- Britta Magnuson, TUSDM (dental research; vice chair, HS IRB)

<https://viceprovost.tufts.edu/about-isc>

International Human Subject Research

- International HSR ramp up requests are reviewed by the ISC following approval by the PI's research dean.
- Requests should be on the HSR ramp up request form (<https://tufts.app.box.com/s/ml47jtt8vvvisj4i4w0bmawd3or1udsp>) and Dean's approval indicated by signature on the last page.

UPDATES ON OVPR ACTION PLAN TO PROMOTE RACIAL DIVERSITY

Caroline Genco & Zoya Davis-Hamilton

OVPR Funding Efforts To Promote Racial Diversity in the Research Workforce

- Working with Lewis-Burke Associates to identify federal funding
 - Identify funding targeted to increase diversity of faculty, post-docs, and students
- Partnering with the Research Council to develop an action plan to promote diversity in research workforce
 - Coordinated, cross-institutional planning
- Direct OVPR support
 - Funds for administrative supplements to existing internal programs for racial diversity in the research workforce
 - Support for proposal development focused on Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity
- Other ideas: ovpr@tufts.edu

Diversity, Inclusion, & Racial Equity Funding

- NIH Faculty Institutional Recruitment for Sustainable Transformation ([FIRST](#)) Program funding opportunity released on December 8th
 - Promotes diversity and inclusion in the biomedical research workforce
 - Hiring of at least 10 tenure-track research faculty
 - Tufts can submit one application. Given eligibility criteria, Health Science campus must lead
- [Kellogg Foundation Racial Equity 2030](#)
 - Solutions must center on lived experience and include communities most affected by racial inequity
 - Program supports projects at the scaling-up stage
 - Solutions that impact inequality on a global scale are encouraged
- OVPR is coordinating limited submission process
- Contact limitedsubmissions@tufts.edu for additional information

COVID-19 UPDATES

Zoya Davis-Hamilton & Augusta Rohrbach

COVID-19 Federal Funding Updates

- Congress is working to pass FY2021 appropriations and a COVID-19 relief package
- Current government funding is under continuing resolution - expires on December 11
 - Congress may pass an extension to avoid a government shutdown
- Allowability of charging idle salaries to federal awards due to COVID (OMB memo M-20-17) expired September 30, 2020
 - Notify your local research administrator who will work with Pre-Award to request sponsor prior approval if necessary

Four Things Experts Have Learned From the Pandemic

Germs, disinformation, and inequities are easily spread, say COVID-19 researchers



<https://now.tufts.edu/articles/four-things-experts-have-learned-pandemic>

Tufts Medical Center / Tufts University COVID-19 Seed Funding Program - Phase 2 Awards

Goal

- To support critical, high-impact transdisciplinary research on both immediate and long-term effects and implications of the pandemic on overall human health and well-being

Priority

- Projects that make equity and/or social impact a central focus of the inquiry and/or outcome
- Teams that leverage the diverse expertise and research capacity of TMC and TU, and faculty and staff, and researchers from the Wellforce partner hospitals

Key Dates

- Applications due: January 15, 2021
- Award announcement: February 2021
- Anticipated start date: February/March 2021

Program guidelines and RFA: <https://viceprovost.tufts.edu/covid-19-rapid-response-seed-funding-program-phase-2-awards> - Questions? Email: covid19research@tufts.edu

POSTDOCTORAL MENTORING

Andrew Bohm

UNIVERSITY WINTER BREAK

Caroline Genco

Winter Break Research Activities for Faculty, Students, and Staff

- Encouraging minimal onsite presence
- Limit work to research continuity
- Testing for on-campus:
 - Limited hours
 - Updates on Healthy@tufts.edu
- OVPR services will be limited to emergencies with the exception of CMS
- CMS will be in operation

Regulatory Deadlines for January Meetings

- IACUC
 - Pre-review due: 12/16
 - Final due: 12/23
- IBC: 1/4/21
- SBIR IRB: Continue to report new information per standard operating procedure

University Winter Break - OVPR Emergency Contacts

Biosafety: Biosafety Manager at 617-201-2479

Chemical Safety: University Police at 617-627-6911 (Boston/Medford/Somerville campuses) or 508-839-5303 (Grafton campus)

Environmental Health & Safety (EHS): University Police at 617-627-6911 (Boston/Medford/Somerville campuses) or 508-839-5303 (Grafton campus)

Radiation & Laser Safety: Radiation Safety Officer at 617-308-3781

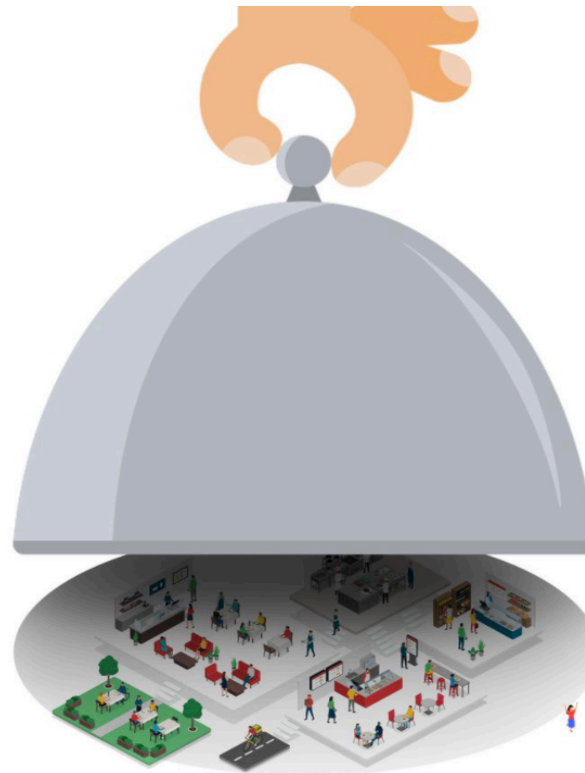
Once the situation is under control, complete the [Accident/Incident Reporting Form](#) and email it to Debopom.Mitra@tufts.edu. More information on accident/incident reporting and emergency response can be found [here](#).

OPINION

A total lockdown isn't necessary — but we need to do more now to weather the latest COVID-19 storm

A partial rollback and pausing of business and social activities that are known to be high-risk could reduce financial pain while reducing new infections, hospitalizations, and deaths.

By **Shan Soe-Lin and Robert Hecht** Updated December 10, 2020, 3:00 a.m.



Questions?