

NEWS

## Wuhan lab was to get \$1.5M in federal grant money for bat study, emails show

By [Samuel Chamberlain](#)

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Dr. Anthony Fauci claims the Wuhan Institute of Virology received approximately \$600,000 in federal grant money over a five-year span.

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The [Wuhan Institute of Virology](#) was awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars more in federal grant money than chief White House medical adviser [Dr. Anthony Fauci](#) indicated to lawmakers last week, newly released emails show.

The messages, obtained by the conservative [watchdog group Judicial Watch](#), show that the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) allocated \$826,277 to the lab over a six-year period ending in 2019 via the New York City-based non-profit [EcoHealth Alliance](#).

But Fauci, the longtime NIAID director, told a House Appropriations subcommittee on May 25 that the funding commitment “was about \$600,000 over a period of five years, so it was a modest amount.”

US funding of the lab has **come under scrutiny** amid the ongoing controversy over whether the coronavirus leaked from the research hub into the 11 million-strong city of Wuhan, triggering the worst global pandemic in a century.

According to a chart included in one of the emails, the Wuhan Institute of Virology received \$133,595 in fiscal year 2014 and \$139,015 in fiscal year 2015. Over the next three years, the lab received \$159,122 before funding was dialed back to \$76,301 in fiscal year 2019.



All eyes have been on the Wuhan Institute of Virology in Wuhan, China, as the source of coronavirus is investigated.

AFP via Getty Images

An April 13, 2020 email from NIAID official Dr. Emily Erbelding indicates the 2019 funding for the Wuhan lab was the first installment under a new grant to EcoHealth that would have netted the facility approximately \$750,000 over a total of six years in addition to the almost \$750,000 it received between fiscal years 2014 and 2018.

Between fiscal years 2014 and 2019, EcoHealth received approximately \$3.75 million in grant money to carry out its study titled, "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergency."

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While Fauci described the funding of the work at the Wuhan lab as "a modest collaboration with very respectable Chinese scientists who were world experts on coronavirus," an April 15 email from Principal Deputy Director of NIH Lawrence Tabak to Fauci and NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins describes the EcoHealth study as "a large multi-country study with Wuhan being one site."

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In addition to several EcoHealth research sites in China, Tabak's email references sites in "Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Myanmar."

Days after Tabak's email, NIH notified EcoHealth Alliance that it was pulling the plug on the remaining grant money.

House Republicans recently sent EcoHealth Alliance President Peter Daszak a letter **with questions about the federal grant money** that EcoHealth passed on to the Wuhan lab, as well as about what information the nonprofit had about the lab's research on bat viruses and the lab's virus database, according to a report on Friday.

Daszak was given a May 17 deadline to respond but reportedly never did.

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