



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on May 26, 2021

Fauci Admits NIH Funding of Wuhan Lab, Denies “Gain of Function” Research

Dr. Anthony Fauci, who has headed the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) — a division of the National Institute of Health (NIH) — since 1984, [told](#) lawmakers on Tuesday that the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) received money from the NIH. The statement comes amid rising concerns over the “lab leak” theory of the coronavirus origin.

According to Fauci, \$600,000 was earmarked for the WIV over a period of five years to study zoonotic viruses and whether bat coronaviruses could jump to humans.



AP Images

On Tuesday, Fauci appeared before the House Appropriations Committee and admitted that the funds were being sent to the lab in China through the non-profit EcoHealth Alliance.

Fauci told lawmakers that it was “a modest collaboration with very respectable Chinese scientists who were world experts on coronavirus.” At the same time, Fauci unequivocally denied that the money went toward so-called gain of function (GoF) research, which he described as “taking a virus that could infect humans and making it either more transmissible and/or pathogenic for humans.”

“That categorically was not done,” he insisted.

Fauci traced the NIH’s interest in bat coronaviruses to the SARS outbreak from nearly two decades ago.

“We had a big scare with SARS-CoV-1 [SARS] back in 2002, 2003 where that particular virus unquestionably went from a bat to an intermediate host to start an epidemic and a pandemic that resulted in 8,000 cases and close to 800 deaths,” he said. “It would have been almost a dereliction of our duty if we didn’t study this, and the only way you can study these things is you’ve got to go where the action is.”

Fauci added that the outsourcing of potentially dangerous research was done to protect Americans: “You don’t want to study bats in Fairfax County, Virginia, to find out what the animal-human interface is that might lead to a jumping of species.”

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According to the CDC [website](#), Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) is a viral respiratory illness caused by a coronavirus called SARS-associated coronavirus (SARS-CoV). It was first reported in Asia in February 2003. The illness spread to more than two dozen countries in North America, South America, Europe, and Asia before the SARS global outbreak of 2003 was contained. Since 2004, there have not been any known cases of SARS reported anywhere in the world.

Nonetheless, the funding to the Wuhan lab continued till last April, and was cut off at the height of the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, [according](#) to the *Wall Street Journal*.



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The funding for the lab has come under increasing scrutiny after a *WSJ* report came out last weekend alleging that three staffers at the institute became ill and had to be hospitalized in November 2019, weeks before China shared news of the virus spreading across the city.

Fauci [admitted](#) last week that he was “not convinced” that the virus developed naturally and called for a more thorough investigation.

Earlier this month, Fauci [clashed](#) with Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) during a Senate committee hearing about U.S. funding to the Wuhan lab.

Paul insisted that the money was being used for the GoF research, which Fauci said was “entirely and completely incorrect.”

Commenting on the exchange, Paul [said](#) to Real America’s Voice’s *The Water Cooler* show that Fauci lied to the American people. “There was gain of function research going on with Dr. Shi Zhengli at the Wuhan Institute,” Paul stated.

He mentioned a [research paper](#) titled “SARS-Like WIV1-CoV Poised for Human Emergence,” which was submitted to Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) in 2015 and subsequently published in 2016. In this paper, the authors state:

Overall, the results of these studies [by the University of North Carolina] highlight the utility of a platform that leverages metagenomics findings and reverse genetics to identify prepandemic threats.

For SARS-like WIV1-CoV, the data can inform surveillance programs, improve diagnostic reagents, and facilitate effective treatments to mitigate future emergence events. However, building new and chimeric reagents must be carefully weighed against potential gain-of-function (GoF) concerns.

At the end of the paper, the authors explicitly thank Dr. Zhengli-Li Shi [aka [Bat Lady](#)] of the WIV “for access to bat CoV sequences and plasmid of WIV1-CoV spike protein.” The paper states that research was supported by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease and the National Institute of Aging of the NIH under Awards U19AI109761 and U19AI107810 (to R.S.B.), AI1085524 (to W.A.M.), and F32AI102561 and K99AG049092 (to V.D.M.).

Paul explained: “Well it took a SARS virus, which is a coronavirus, that’s 15 times more deadly than COVID, and it added to it S protein, which is something in the surface of it, to make it more easily infectious to epithelial cells for the respiratory tract. That to me is gain of function,” he said.

Paul went on to highlight two scientists, one from Rutgers University and another from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who confirmed the paper studies gain of function.

As [reported](#) by investigative journalist Ben Swann, the NIH/NIAID has funded GoF research to the tune of at least \$41.7 million, far from the “modest” numbers that Fauci confirmed. In 2014, the U.S. government issued a moratorium on federal gain-of-function research funding due to safety, ethical, and moral concerns raised within the scientific community. It was at this point that funding for GoF research started being funneled through the EcoHealth Alliance to the WIV.

It’s beginning to look more and more as if the NIH/NIAID are partially responsible for the creation of the SARS-CoV-2 that caused the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks, Dr. Fauci.



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