

(Sent June 25, 10:30pm)

Dear Chancellor Matos-Rodriguez, Provost Cruz, and Vice-Provost Schneider,

We the undersigned write to request a Zoom call with you early next week to discuss the status of re-opening CUNY STEM research facilities and how best to quickly move towards achieving that critical goal in short order. It has been more than two weeks since NY State allowed academic research to re-open as part of phase 1 of the state re-opening plan, and yet our campus labs remain offline for research operations while numerous public and private peer institutions have done so. Meanwhile, progress towards reopening remains unclear to virtually all of us, leading to widespread frustration and concern.

We all agree that the restart process needs to occur with the safety of our students, staff, and faculty as the foremost priority – and many of us signed below have gladly contributed towards developing the plans detailing how to do so at our campuses. We are disappointed to learn that these efforts are still insufficient to get approval for restarting research at this time despite several iterations, and more so that the remaining roadblocks and accompanying timetable for resolving those so remain unclear. While we have patiently waited through over fifteen weeks of downtime and remote work while the COVID crisis kept universities offline, it is clear that sufficient progress has been made that academic STEM research has substantially restarted at all of our local peer institutions.

We are now at a point where frustrations are high, information is limited, and rumors are numerous. In this setting, we can no longer ask our student and postdoctoral researchers in good conscience to simply continue being patient – which they have graciously done despite the ongoing detriments to their research, impacts on their competitiveness for papers / jobs, time burned on their visas, and confusion about why their peers at neighboring labs are back at the bench while they remain sidelined. We too are obviously concerned with respect to our productivity and competitiveness in general, and clearly see many additional demands on our time looming ahead with a hectic fall semester starting in two months.

We agree that the most expeditious and useful step forward at this point is a Zoom meeting between yourselves and interested CUNY faculty to clear the air regarding the issues that remain before restarting research on our campuses and concrete steps to resolving them ASAP. While the bulk of the undersigned are CCNY and ASRC science, engineering, and medicine faculty members, you will also see our colleagues from many other campuses reflecting how widespread these concerns are held among our faculty, postdocs, and students. We hope that you will join us for this much-needed discussion with us and our other interested colleagues represented by us, and look forward to your response to start organizing this promptly –

Best regards,

1. Kevin Gardner, ASRC and CCNY *on behalf of*
2. Rinat Abzalimov, ASRC
3. Alejandra Alonso, CSI
4. Andrea Alu, ASRC and Graduate Center
5. James Aramini, ASRC
6. César Arenas-Mena, CSI
7. Ivica Arsov, York College
8. Probal Banerjee, CSI
9. Sanjoy Banerjee, CCNY
10. Jill Bargonetti, Hunter College
11. Jennifer Basil, Brooklyn College
12. Jeff Beeler, Queens College
13. Elizabeth Biddinger, CCNY
14. Nicholas Biais, Brooklyn College
15. Marom Bikson, CCNY
16. Mark Biscoe, CCNY

17. Diana Bratu, Hunter College
18. Nesha Burghardt, Hunter College
19. Luis Cardoso, CCNY
20. Alessandra Carriero, CCNY
21. Patrizia Casaccia, ASRC and Graduate Center
22. Emmanuel Chang, York College
23. Xi Chen, ASRC and CCNY
24. Haipeng Cheng, Lehman College
25. Zhongqi Cheng, Brooklyn College
26. Junyong Choi, Queens College
27. Maria Contel, Brooklyn College
28. John Dennehy, Queens College
29. Tracy Dennis-Tiwary, Hunter College
30. Amedee des Georges, ASRC and CCNY
31. Terry Dowd, Brooklyn College
32. Jay Edelman, CCNY
33. Shana Elbaum-Garfinkle, ASRC and Graduate Center
34. Mark Emerson, CCNY
35. Lesley Emtage, York College
36. Stephen Fearnley, York College
37. Maria Figueiredo-Pereira, Hunter College
38. Nancy Foldi, Queens College
39. Paul Forlano, Brooklyn College
40. Allyson Friedman, Hunter College
41. Susannah Fritton, CCNY
42. Bingmei Fu, CCNY
43. Jean Gaffney, Baruch College
44. Azriel Genack, Queens College
45. Guillermo Gerona-Navarro, Brooklyn College
46. Ranajeet Ghose, CCNY
47. Brian Giebel, ASRC
48. Mitchell Goldfarb, Hunter College
49. Dixie Goss, Hunter College
50. Nina Gray, ASRC and Graduate Center
51. Nancy Greenbaum, Hunter College
52. Steve Greenbaum, Hunter College
53. Dianne Greenfield, ASRC and Queens College
54. Alexander Greer, Brooklyn College
55. Peter Groffman, ASRC and Brooklyn College
56. Qi He, Brooklyn College
57. William Hersh, Queens College
58. Mandë Holford, Hunter College
59. Karen Hubbard, CCNY
60. Amy Ikui, Brooklyn College
61. Jamal Jalilian-Marian, Baruch College
62. Anu Janakiraman, CCNY
63. Seogjoo Jang, Queens College
64. David Jeruzalmi, CCNY
65. Bruce Johnson, ASRC
66. Laura Juszczak, Brooklyn College
67. Ilias Kavouras, CUNY School of Public Health
68. Akira Kawamura, Hunter College
69. Daniel Keedy, ASRC and CCNY
70. Alex Khanikaev, CCNY
71. Mark Kobrak, Brooklyn College

72. Ron Koder, CCNY
73. Lia Krusin, CCNY
74. Sanjai Kumar, Queens College
75. Tom Kurtzman, Lehman College
76. Myung Lee, CCNY
77. Christine Li, CCNY
78. Hyungsik Lim, Hunter College
79. Peter Lipke, Brooklyn College
80. Ekaterina Likhtik, Hunter College
81. Dina Lipkind, York College
82. Jia Liu, ASRC
83. Gustavo Lopez, Lehman College
84. Kevin Lynch, York College
85. Richard Magliozzo, Brooklyn College
86. Prabodhika Mallikaratchy, Lehman College
87. Itzhak Mano, CUNY School of Medicine
88. Jack Martin, CUNY School of Medicine
89. Donna McGregor, Lehman College
90. Alicia Melendez, Queens College
91. Carmen Melendez-Vasquez, Hunter College
92. Vinod Menon, CCNY
93. Aneta Mieszawska, Brooklyn College
94. Mohammadali Miri, Queens College
95. Pamela Mills, Lehman College
96. Fred Moshary, CCNY
97. Ryan Murelli, Brooklyn College
98. Fred Naider, CSI
99. Maya Nair, ASRC
100. Mim Nakarmi, Brooklyn College
101. Yoko Nomura, Queens College
102. Stephen O'Brien, CCNY
103. Ben Ortiz, Hunter College
104. Timothy Paglione, York College
105. Lucas Parra, CCNY
106. Sebastien Poget, CSI
107. James Popp, York College
108. Carolyn Pytte, Queens College
109. Luis Quadri, Brooklyn College
110. Jayne Raper, Hunter College
111. Tony Ro, Graduate Center
112. Susan Rotenberg, Queens College
113. David Rumschitzki, CCNY
114. Shireen Saleque, CCNY
115. Renuka Sankaran, Lehman College
116. Cathy Savage-Dunn, Queens College
117. Anjana Saxena, Brooklyn College
118. Mitch Schaffler, CCNY
119. Orie Shafer, ASRC and Graduate Center
120. Chang-Hui Shen, CSI
121. Duke Shereen, ASRC
122. Shaneen Singh, Brooklyn College
123. Linda Spatz, CUNY School of Medicine
124. Rebecca Spokony, Baruch College
125. Phillip Staniczenko, Brooklyn College
126. Ruth Stark, CCNY

127. Sophia Suarez, Brooklyn College
128. Maria Tamargo, CCNY
129. Ricardo Toledo-Crow, ASRC
130. Mariana Torrente, Brooklyn College
131. Monica Trujillo, Queensborough Community College
132. Rein Ulijn, ASRC and Hunter College
133. Charles Vörösmarty, ASRC and CCNY
134. Chen Wang, Queens College
135. Hoau-Yan Wang, CUNY School of Medicine
136. Sihong Wang, CCNY
137. Ryan Williams, CCNY
138. Tony Wilson, Brooklyn College
139. Eleanor Wurtzel, Lehman College
140. Yujia Xu, Hunter College
141. Hualin Zhong, Hunter College

Dear Chancellor Matos-Rodriguez, Provost Cruz, and Vice-Provost Schneider,

We, the undersigned postdoctoral researchers and graduate students, write in solidarity with the CUNY faculty to address the re-opening of CUNY STEM research facilities, in order to facilitate our immediate return.

New York State deemed academic research essential and suitable to conduct during phase 1 of the state-wide reopening plan and assessed that it was sufficiently safe for these activities to re-start over two weeks ago. We are prepared to comply with all statewide safety requirements and are able to adhere to and implement these requirements immediately.

As early career researchers, pressures to attract NIH and NSF funding loom large over our careers. We have waited patiently as research was resumed at other institutions that follow the same guidelines and impending deadlines in terms of NIH and NSF funding. By not returning concurrent with our peers, we risk severe penalties regarding our own future funding. This will lead to fewer publications, fewer options for future employment and consequently diminishes the reputation of the institution as a whole. To further add to these time pressures, many of us are also on time-limited visas with no flexibility to extend our time in the US.

While our return to work was deemed unsafe by the state we were happy to stay put without complaint, but now we are extremely frustrated and anxious about not being allowed to perform our responsibilities, as well as with the complete lack of communication regarding why we are not allowed to restart while all others in New York City do.

We agree with the CUNY faculty that the most expeditious and useful step forward at this point is a Zoom meeting between yourselves and interested CUNY faculty. We further request that all graduate students, postdoctoral researchers and staff are informed of the outcome of this meeting, given a timeline for reinstatement and given an explanation as to why we are still unable to return.

Best Regards,

1. Rachel Fisher PhD, Postdoctoral researcher, ASRC
2. Miruna Ghinia-Tegla PhD, Postdoctoral researcher, CCNY
3. Roksana Azad, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biochemistry – GC & ASRC
4. Sruti Patoori, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC and CCNY
5. Erick Subillaga, Graduate Student, MS program in Biotechnology - CCNY
6. Blake Riley PhD, Postdoctoral researcher, ASRC
7. Matthew Cleere, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - ASRC
8. Jaynee Hart PhD, Postdoctoral researcher, ASRC

9. Deborah Sementa PhD, Postdoctoral researcher, ASRC
10. Ankit Jain PhD, Postdoctoral researcher, ASRC
11. Salma Kassem PhD, Postdoctoral researcher, ASRC
12. Danielle Swingle, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biochemistry - GC & ASRC
13. Fahmeed Sheehan, Graduate Student, PhD program in Chemistry - GC & ASRC
14. Sarah Moyon PhD, Postdoctoral researcher, ASRC
15. Xingjian Xu, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biochemistry - ASRC
16. Andrew Levine, Graduate Student, PhD program in Chemistry – GC & ASRC
17. Daniel Valles, Graduate Student, PhD program in Chemistry – GC & ASRC
18. Elizabeth Miller, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC & CCNY
19. Yerzhan Zholdassov, Graduate Student, PhD program in Chemistry – GC & ASRC
20. Devon Lundine, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC & Hunter College
21. Alfredo Vidal Ceballos, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biochemistry - GC & ASRC
22. Charles J McDonald, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biochemistry - GC ASRC
23. Hunter W. Korsmo, Ph.D. Candidate, Ph.D. Program in Biochemistry - Brooklyn College
24. Irving Estevez, Graduate Student, Master in Biology, CCNY
25. Mathilde Pruvost PhD, Postdoctoral researcher, ASRC
26. Jui Chaugule, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biochemistry - GC & Hunter College
27. Santiago Uribe-Cano, Graduate Student, PhD program in Psychology - CCNY
28. Mary Regis Shanley, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology, NS subprogram - Hunter College
29. Xueqing Chen, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC and CCNY
30. Chak-Shing Kwan, Postdoctoral researcher, ASRC
31. Divya Singh PhD, Postdoctoral researcher, CSOM
32. Dustin R. Zuelke, M.Phil., PhD Candidate, CUNY Medical School
33. Sankarsan Biswas, Graduate Student, PhD program in Chemistry – GC & ASRC
34. Budha Chowdhury PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, ASRC
35. Harsh Bansia PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, ASRC
36. Estie Schick, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology, CCNY
37. Meiling Zhang, Postdoctoral Researcher, ASRC
38. Serhat Akin Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC
39. Iv Kraja, PhD Candidate, GC and CCNY
40. Eugene Lempert, PhD in Biology, Hunter and GC
41. Pejman Ghaemimohammadi, PhD Candidate in Chemistry, GC and CCNY
42. Dennis Huang, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC & Hunter College & ASRC
43. Charles Wallace, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biochemistry, GC and hunter College
44. Abhilash Lakshman, Postdoctoral Researcher, ASRC
45. Dhwanit Dave, Ph.D. Student
46. Chelsea Marks, City college
47. Katherine Anderson, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC, CCNY
48. Nicholas Gao, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biochemistry - GC, CCNY

49. Sejal Davla, Research Associate, ASRC Neuroscience
50. Roxana Piotrowska, PhD Candidate, Chemistry - GC & ASRC
51. Devon Semoy, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biochemistry - GC, CCNY
52. Adem Idrizi, Lab Technician, CUNY School of Medicine
53. Preston Williams, PhD, Research Assistant Professor, CUNY School of Medicine, CDI
54. Gisselle Mejia, Graduate Student, Ph.D. in Earth and Environmental Science - GC, ASRC
55. Damien Marechal PhD, Research Associate, ASRC
56. Yaron Marciano, Graduate Student, PhD program in Chemistry- GC, ASRC, Brooklyn College
57. Zhi-Lun Liu, Graduate Student, PhD program in ChemE, CCNY
58. Emily Armbruster PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, ASRC
59. Jeffrey Xu, Graduate Student, PhD in ChemE, CCNY
60. Fernando Bravo, Graduate Student, PhD program in Chemistry – GC & ASRC
61. Forouzan Farahani, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biomedical Engineering, CCNY, CDI
62. Mahima Sharma, PhD, Postdoctoral researcher, CDI, CCNY.
63. Yu (Andy) Huang, PhD, Postdoctoral researcher, CDI, CCNY.
64. Alison Shur, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC, CSI
65. Sitakanta Satapathy, postdoctoral research fellow, physics, CDI, CCNY
66. Duc Nguyen, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biomedical Engineering, Biomedical Engineering - CCNY
67. Maximilian Nentwich, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biomedical Engineering, Biomedical Engineering - CCNY
68. Zeinab Esmailpour, Graduate student, PhD program in Biomedical Engineering, Biomedical Engineering - CCNY, CDI
69. Carolina Henriques, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC, Hunter College
70. Claudia Garcia Jou, Graduate Student, PhD program in Psychology - GC, Hunter College.
71. Albar Chowdhury, Graduate Student, MA program in biology- Queens College
72. Kevin Walsh, graduate student, PhD program in Biomedical Engineering - CCNY
73. Atanas Stankov, graduate student, PhD program in Psychology - CCNY (CDI bldg), GC
74. Jyoti Thapaliya (Pant), Postdoctoral researcher, Hunter College, CUNY.
75. Niklas Janisch, graduate student, PhD program in Biology - Brooklyn College
76. Lukas Hirsch, Graduate student, PhD program in Biomedical Engineering, Biomedical Engineering - CCNY, CDI
77. Vui Yin Seow, graduate student, PhD program in Biology - Brooklyn College
78. Sriram Guddala PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, CCNY
79. Jasmin Philip, graduate student, PhD program in Biochemistry- Brooklyn College
80. Sudharma Banerjee, Graduate Student, Brooklyn College
81. Akshay Sharma, MCD Biology PhD student, Hunter College
82. Mandeep Khatoniar, CDI , PhD program Physics , City College

83. Svetlana Kirushechkina, PhD Program Electrical Engineering, CCNY
84. Anton Vakulenko, PhD Program Electrical Engineering, CCNY.
85. Kelsey Hom, PhD Program in Biology- Brooklyn College
86. Benjamin Murray, Post-Doc (Chemistry) - CCNY
87. Paul Molinaro, CDI, PhD program Physics - CCNY
88. Sara Fresard, PhD MCD Biology - Hunter College
89. Yeojin Jung, graduate student, PhD program in Chemical Engineering - CCNY
90. Bin Liu, postdoctoral research fellow, physics, CDI, CCNY
91. Kunhee Lee, graduate student, MS in Cognitive Neuroscience, Graduate Center / Queens College
92. Filipp Komissarenko, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, CCNY
93. Mingxing Li, postdoctoral research fellow, physics, CDI, CCNY
94. Ipek Selcen, PhD Program in Biochemistry, ASRC
95. Kaitlin Kosinski, Doctoral Candidate, PhD Program in Biology, Graduate Center/Queens College
96. Sarah Pangburn, PhD program in Biology, Graduate Center / CCNY
97. Ami Kulishov, Undergraduate program in Biology, Hunter College
98. Florian Dirnberger, postdoctoral research fellow, physics, CDI, CCNY
99. Yoko Bian, PhD Candidate, Chemistry, Graduate Center
100. Irene Hoxie, PhD Candidate, Biology, EEB, Graduate Center/Queens College
101. Lauren Battle, Research Assistant, Biomedical Engineering, CCNY
102. Thabelo Lekoetje, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC and CCNY
103. Yuma Kawaguchi, PhD Program in Electrical Engineering, CCNY
104. Andrea Corti, Graduate Student, PhD Program in Biomedical Engineering - CCNY
105. Lauren Bejcek, Graduate Student, PhD Program in Chemistry-Brooklyn College
106. Daniel, Schiavone, Graduate Student, PhD Program in Chemistry-Brooklyn College
107. Aleksandr Uvaydov, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biochemistry-CCNY
108. Manal Farhat, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC, Brooklyn College
109. Rebecca Ravenelle, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC/Hunter College
110. Emily Birnbaum, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology, CNC- GC, Hunter College
111. Viktoriya Morozova, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology, GC/CSI
112. Ashif I Bhuiyan, Graduate Student. PhD program in Chemistry, GC - QC
113. Dominique Gutierrez, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biochemistry – GC/ASRC
114. Yi Zhao, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology, GC/Lehman College
115. Jasmine Pathan, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology, GC/CCNY
116. Federico Gnazzo, Masters Program in Behavioral Neuroscience, Queens College
117. Nada Haq-Siddiqi, PhD program in Biomedical Engineering, CCNY
118. Avdar San, PhD Program in Biochemistry, GC / Brooklyn College
119. Antonio Cerullo, PhD Program in Biochemistry / GC, ASRC
120. Victoria Hanson, Graduate Student, MA in Biology, Queens College
121. Neela Zaree, PhD, Postdoctoral research scientist, CUNY School of Medicine, CDI



122. Gabrielle Germain, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC, Brooklyn College
123. Maialen Ugarteburu, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biomedical Engineering, CCNY
124. Asier Muñoz, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biomedical Engineering, CCNY
125. Daniel B. Siegel, Graduate Student, Masters program in Cognitive Neuroscience; Graduate Center / Brooklyn College
126. Tamar Skaist, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biochemistry, GC and ASRC
127. Devry Mourra, Graduate Student, PhD program in Neuroscience, GC and QC
128. Nicolas Maxfield, Graduate Student, PhD program in Earth and Environmental Science, GC and ASRC
129. Sara Rose Krivoshik, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - Baruch College
130. Andrew Guarnaccia, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology, MCD - GC and Baruch College
131. Veeshan Narinesingh, Graduate Student, Phd program in Physics, GC+CCNY
132. Carly Batist, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biological Anthropology, GC and Hunter College
133. Keith Levendosky, Graduate Student, PhD program in Biology - GC, Brooklyn College
134. Hisham Sharif, PhD, Post-Doctoral Fellow, CUNY School of Medicine, CDI