NIH Pays $19 Million to Aerosolize Influenza Material for Airborne Transmission While Feds Bankroll Next-Gen Vaccines Against Same Threat

University of Missouri researchers will use genetically engineered pigs, raising national security questions about federally financed biological threats and pharmaceutical countermeasures.

JON FLEETWOOD
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NIH grant P01AI202802 identifies University of Missouri professor Xiu-Feng "Henry" Wan as the leader of a $19 million airborne influenza transmission research program. The federally financed project includes aerosol-generation research, genetically engineered pigs, and studies intended to advance next-generation vaccines. Sources: HigherGov federal grant record and University of Missouri School of Medicine.

A September 1, 2026, National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant, P01AI202802, commits approximately $19 million in planned multiyear funding to University of Missouri scientists investigating airborne transmission of material identified as influenza, including aerosol-generation research, while explicitly seeking to advance next-generation vaccines against the same purported biological threat.

The project is led by Xiu-Feng "Henry" Wan, director of Missouri's NextGen Center for Influenza and Emerging Infectious Diseases, and funded through NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).

Missouri's laboratory recruitment documents identify "aerosol generation and characterization" among the activities of its NIH-funded influenza research programs.

Wan's team has already published experiments mechanically aerosolizing material classified as influenza and deliberately exposing previously uninfected pigs to airborne material from infected animals.

The new award combines transmission research with experiments involving genetically engineered pigs, human participants, and immunity attributed to vaccination.

Its stated objective includes generating evidence to advance next-generation vaccines.

The national security question:

- **Why are the feds financing airborne biological exposure research while simultaneously funding the scientific groundwork for pharmaceutical countermeasures against the same purported threat?**

Especially when that's what happened before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Further questions include:

- Who independently verifies the biological threat?
- Who authorizes aerosol exposures?
- What prevents experimental material from escaping containment?
- What informed-consent protections govern human participants?
- And who stands to profit when federal threat research generates demand for additional pharmaceutical interventions?

The arrangement raises a threat-predication problem: Federal research generates experimental evidence about an airborne biological threat while financing research intended to produce the evidence base for its proposed pharmaceutical solution.

You can contact NIAID here, NIH here, and HHS here to voice opposition to taxpayer-funded research on alleged pandemic pathogens—particularly after Congress, the White House, the Department of Energy, the FBI, the CIA, and Germany's Federal Intelligence Service (BND) all acknowledged that the deadly COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent authoritarian response were "likely" the result of laboratory experiments.

Federal grant P01AI202802, awarded by the NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) to the University of Missouri, funds airborne influenza transmission research intended to advance next-generation vaccines. The project carries approximately $19 million in planned multiyear funding. Source: HigherGov, federal grant record.

University of Missouri announces $19 million NIH grant for airborne influenza transmission research led by Xiu-Feng "Henry" Wan, PhD. The federally funded program includes genetically engineered pigs, aerosol research, and studies intended to advance next-generation vaccines. Source: University of Missouri School of Medicine, November 3, 2026. Photo: Reagan Manis.

Xiu-Feng "Henry" Wan, PhD, University of Missouri professor and principal investigator of the NIH-funded $19 million airborne influenza transmission research program involving aerosol generation, genetically engineered pigs, and next-generation vaccine research. Source: University of Missouri School of Medicine, Faculty Directory.

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NIH's $19 Million Airborne Transmission Program

The NIH award, titled *Immune Mechanisms Shaping Airborne Influenza Transmission*, began September 1, 2026, and runs through July 31, 2031.

The University of Missouri announced approximately **$19 million over the multiyear project**, with an initial federal obligation of **$3,987,706**.

The grant describes studying transmission between infected donors and susceptible recipients through airborne particles.

Its stated scientific hypothesis involves immunity, temperature, and humidity influencing the release and persistence of influenza-classified material.

The researchers explicitly cite:

> "the limited capacity of current vaccines to fully prevent infection and transmission."

This alleged deficiency is one justification for the program.

Under the grant, Project 1 examines how vaccination-related immunity and environmental conditions influence airborne transmission. Project 2 examines immune-cell responses, material shed by infected hosts, and susceptibility among recipients.

A federally funded resource center will maintain and distribute genetically engineered pigs.

The feds are financing investigations into airborne infectivity while directing the resulting evidence toward further vaccine research.

Missouri Confirms Aerosol Generation and Animal Exposure

The University of Missouri's Wan Laboratory recruitment posting expressly connects aerosol biology research with the NIH P01 program and complementary NIH R01 funding.

The position identifies:

> "aerosol generation and characterization"

It also identifies animal infection and exposure studies, aerosol sampling, and research into particles carrying material classified as infectious influenza.

Researchers will examine how these particles are generated, transported, and associated with subsequent infections.

The university's October 27, 2026, announcement identifies the biological resources and participants involved:

- **Genetically engineered pigs** supplied through Missouri's National Swine Resource and Research Center.
- **Controlled animal studies** examining airborne transmission.
- **Human participants** recruited through MU Health Care following influenza diagnoses.
- **Computer models** combining animal experiments, clinical observations, and aerosol measurements.

Wan leads the work alongside university investigators including **John Driver, Kiho Lee, Wenjun Ma, Jane McElroy, Dima Dandachi, Nai-Wei Chen, and Binbin Wang**.

The researchers will investigate material identified as influenza moving through the air under controlled laboratory conditions.

The public-interest question is what biological exposures NIH has authorized, what risks they introduce, and who is responsible for preventing their escape.

University of Missouri's Wan Laboratory confirms aerosol-generation research under NIH-funded influenza transmission programs. The job posting for a senior aerosol biology scientist explicitly identifies "aerosol generation and characterization," infectious material shedding, and controlled animal transmission studies. The position spans the $19 million NIAID P01 program and complementary NIH R01 research. Source: University of Missouri, Wan Lab recruitment posting.

Wan's Team Already Mechanically Aerosolized Influenza Material

A June 15, 2026, *Journal of Virology* study by **Xuan-Dung Nguyen, Bac Tran Le, Jacob Bleich, Constanza Espada, Wei Zhang, and Xiu-Feng Wan** documents the team's previous aerosolization experiments.

Figure 6 states:

> "CA/04-H1N1 virus was aerosolized"

The researchers deliberately dispersed material they classified as influenza into air and measured the resulting airborne particles.

Separate experiments involved deliberately infected donor pigs and previously uninfected recipients exposed through shared air.

The researchers reported recovering material classified as infectious influenza from airborne samples and identifying subsequent infection among recipient animals.

They also reported that environmental conditions affected the persistence and movement of airborne material.

This establishes that Wan's laboratory has already conducted both mechanical aerosolization and deliberate airborne-exposure experiments.

Those experiments preceded the September 2026 award.

The laboratory's current recruitment posting explicitly identifies aerosol-generation research across its new P01 and complementary R01 programs.

The question for NIH:

- Which aerosol-generation and animal-exposure procedures are funded under the $19 million award, and what independent safety determinations authorized them?

July 2026 Journal of Virology study coauthored by University of Missouri researcher Xiu-Feng "Henry" Wan documents deliberate aerosolization of material identified as H1N1 influenza and airborne-transmission experiments involving pigs. Researchers reported that controlled aerosolization produced infectious airborne material capable of traveling farther under certain indoor conditions. Source: Journal of Virology, DOI: 10.1128/jvi.00634-26.

Nguyen Et Al 2026 Environmental Temperature And Relative Humidity Shape Post Emission Aerosol Fate And Airborne
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The Same Grant Targets Next-Generation Vaccines

The NIH grant explicitly connects airborne-transmission research with future vaccine development.

Project 1 examines immunity attributed to previous infection or vaccination and its effects on airborne transmission.

Project 2 examines immune-cell responses associated with that process.

The federally funded program will produce experimental findings, mathematical models, and genetically engineered swine resources.

According to the grant, those resources will:

> "accelerate the development of next-generation vaccines"

The funding structure is straightforward.

The problem: Researchers investigate the airborne movement and reported infectiousness of influenza-classified material.

The proposed solution: Their findings are intended to inform new vaccines designed to block transmission.

The financier: NIH, through NIAID, funds the research and establishes the federal priorities.

The investigators: Wan and his university collaborators conduct the experimental work.

The federal government is therefore doing more than writing a check. NIAID established the research initiative, defined eligible scientific objectives, and finances the resulting work.

Actual experimental execution rests with Missouri's research team.

This is federally directed and financed vaccine-related research, rather than evidence that federal employees are manufacturing a particular vaccine.

The conflict-of-interest question is whether government-funded experimental threat findings will subsequently be used to justify additional vaccine development, purchases, or mandates.

NIH grant P01AI202802 explicitly identifies next-generation vaccine development as an objective of the University of Missouri's airborne influenza transmission research. The federal award abstract states that experimental data, computer models, and genetically engineered swine resources will "accelerate the development of next-generation vaccines." Source: HigherGov, federal grant record.

Threat Predication: The Feds Finance Both Sides

The original NIAID funding announcement, RFA-AI-25-035, established the Influenza Transmission Research Consortium to finance coordinated research into influenza transmission.

The federal announcement expressly permits animal studies and controlled human influenza infection trials, while excluding vaccine clinical trials under this funding opportunity.

Missouri's announced human research involves recruitment of people diagnosed with influenza.

The federal framework therefore supports research involving laboratory exposure, airborne biological material, host immunity, and experimental transmission outcomes.

It also identifies improved vaccine design as an intended application.

That creates three national security and public accountability problems.

1. **Threat generation:** Federal funding supports biological exposure experiments, including aerosol-generation research. Investigators must disclose whether any procedures change the infectiousness, persistence, or transmissibility of experimental materials.
2. **Threat predication:** Laboratory-generated results can become evidence used to define or characterize a biological danger. Independent verification is necessary before those findings are used to justify wider emergency preparedness programs.
3. **Pandemic orchestration:** Federal agencies can fund threat-characterization research and pharmaceutical countermeasure research under coordinated preparedness initiatives before any future pandemic emergency is declared.

The Missouri grant documents the first two research functions within the same program: airborne-transmission investigation and vaccine-related evidence generation.

The question is whether the resulting findings will ultimately become the justification for further taxpayer-funded pharmaceutical intervention.

Biological Safety, Informed Consent, & National Security

The program raises six immediate questions.

1. What exactly will be aerosolized?

Which biological preparations are involved? What original experimental evidence establishes their identity and infectiousness? Will researchers modify any material or conditions to increase measured transmission?

2. Who authorized the exposures?

Which officials approved the aerosol-generation and animal-exposure protocols? Were any experiments evaluated under federal gain-of-function or enhanced potential pandemic pathogen oversight?

3. What prevents accidental release?

Which containment facilities, exposure-monitoring systems, independent inspections, and emergency procedures govern the work? Who bears responsibility for accidental exposures?

4. What are human participants told?

Will participants know their specimens or clinical information may contribute to airborne-transmission research intended to inform future vaccine development? What rights govern secondary use, commercial access, and withdrawal of consent?

5. Who controls the resulting biological knowledge?

Who receives access to research materials, transmission measurements, and laboratory-generated models? Has NIH assessed the national security implications of publishing findings that could be misused?

6. Who benefits financially?

Which institutions, contractors, patent holders, or pharmaceutical manufacturers may ultimately commercialize research products originating from this federal award?

These questions concern the same fundamental issue: **Government-financed experiments can characterize biological threats while generating the evidence used to support proposed pharmaceutical solutions.**

Who Is Responsible?

Xiu-Feng "Henry" Wan, PhD — University of Missouri

Principal research leader and director of the NextGen Center for Influenza and Emerging Infectious Diseases.

Email: wanx@missouri.edu

Phone: 573-882-8943

Request the approved aerosol-generation protocols, animal-exposure procedures, biosafety reviews, informed-consent documents, and commercial licensing arrangements.

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases — NIH

Federal funding agency responsible for award **P01AI202802**.

Official website:

https://www.niaid.nih.gov

Request the complete grant application, approved research plan, individual project budgets, scientific review records, gain-of-function determinations, and biosafety documentation.

University of Missouri — Institutional Media Contact

University of Missouri — institutional media contact

Brian Consiglio, author of the university's project announcement.

Email: consigliob@missouri.edu

Request institutional responses addressing aerosol experiments, participant consent, containment, federal oversight, and research commercialization.

Bottom Line

NIH awarded approximately $19 million in planned multiyear support to University of Missouri researchers investigating airborne influenza transmission, including aerosol-generation research, while explicitly financing work intended to advance next-generation vaccines against the same purported threat.

Wan's laboratory has already published experiments involving mechanically aerosolized influenza material and deliberate airborne exposure of pigs.

Its expanding NIH-funded program involves aerosol science, genetically engineered animals, human participation, and vaccine-related research.

The national security concern is the government's simultaneous financing of experimental biological threat characterization and the scientific groundwork for pharmaceutical countermeasures against that threat.

The federal funding records expose a concrete threat-predication question: Will experimental findings about airborne biological hazards become the justification for additional government-directed pharmaceutical programs?

The feds finance the threat research. The feds finance research toward the proposed solution. The public bears the financial costs and deserves disclosure of the biological risks, oversight decisions, and eventual pharmaceutical beneficiaries.

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