

Trump Administration Lays Out Demands to Harvard to Keep Federal Funding

The White House list includes changes to governance, leadership and classroom teachings; government also freezes money for Brown University

By [Douglas Belkin](#), [Natalie Andrews](#) and [Liz Essley Whyte](#)

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The Brown University campus in Providence, R.I. Photo: Scott Eisen/Getty Images

The Trump administration escalated its campaign [against American universities](#) by preparing to pull \$510 million in federal grants from Brown University, while also laying out demands Harvard must meet to avoid losing billions in government dollars.

The administration is freezing National Institutes of Health grants to Brown while it investigates the Ivy League school's handling of antisemitism and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policies, according to two people familiar with the matter.

Additionally, new developments emerged regarding Harvard University after the government opened a review of nearly \$9 billion in federal grants and contracts earlier this week.

Three members of a newly formed Trump administration task force on antisemitism wrote Harvard President Alan Garber on Thursday, asking for the school to take nine actions that "we regard as necessary for Harvard University's continued financial relationship with the United States government."

Most of the demands concern how the university operates. The government is asking for a comprehensive mask ban as well as changes to governance, leadership and admissions and an end to DEI programs.

But notably, the government is also seeking to reach into the classroom, demanding "necessary changes" be made "to address bias, improve viewpoint diversity, and end ideological capture," which fuel antisemitic harassment, the letter said.

A Harvard spokesperson said Thursday night that the school received the letter and the recommended measures from the task force.

On Monday night, Garber said if the federal government removes its funding, it would halt lifesaving research. The money is spread among Harvard and its affiliates, which include Boston-area hospitals. "We fully embrace the important goal of combating antisemitism, one of the most insidious forms of bigotry," he wrote.

Brown became the fifth Ivy League institution to face a potential loss of federal funding. Brown said the freeze was a rumor they couldn't confirm. "We are closely monitoring notifications related to grants, but have nothing more we can share as of now," said Provost Frank Doyle.

Trump has vowed to crack down on campuses that his team views as liberal hotbeds that suppress conservative views. Some faculty and critics have described the administration's actions as authoritarian overreach.

The White House push to change higher education started in March with Columbia University, where the government canceled \$400 million in grants and contracts over what it said are antisemitism concerns related to the school's handling of the pro-Palestinian protests that disrupted campuses nationwide last year. Columbia agreed to meet a series of demands as a precondition to negotiate for the return of the money. On Friday, Columbia's interim president [stepped down](#) after making [comments in private meetings](#) with faculty that played down changes the school agreed to with the Trump administration.

On Tuesday, following Harvard, Princeton University said the Trump administration was suspending [“several dozen” research grants](#). Chris Eisgruber, Princeton's president, said in an email to students and staffers that “the full rationale for this action is not yet clear.”

In a recent [Atlantic magazine essay](#), Eisgruber described the Trump administration's “attack on Columbia University” as “the greatest threat to American universities since the Red Scare of the 1950s.”

A White House official called the Princeton measure a proactive pause in funding pending an investigation into alleged antisemitism. The administration has also paused about [\\$175 million in federal funding](#) to the University of Pennsylvania for allowing a transgender athlete to compete on the women's swimming team.

Schools nationwide have [watched Trump's fast-moving attack](#) with alarm; many fear a demand for similar concessions. They have expressed concern that without freedom to follow their intellectual curiosity, the discoveries and innovations that fuel the U.S.'s economy will decline.

Almost all schools—public and private—depend on the U.S. government for access to federal student loans and grants for low-income students. Research universities rely on the government for billions of dollars in contracts and grants.

With federal funding uncertain, schools have started to pause hiring; some have rescinded graduate-student admission offers.