



## THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

### Ad Hoc Group Weekly COVID-19 Follow Up

July 9, 2020

In this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will be publishing an additional weekly update focused on COVID-19 to highlight related NIH actions and guidance as well as activities from the Ad Hoc Group community. As always, please forward any relevant items to Christa Wagner ([chwagner@aamc.org](mailto:chwagner@aamc.org)) for inclusion in the publication!

### Congressional and NIH News

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#### House Labor-HHS Subcommittee Advances FY 2021 Spending Bill

The House Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee on July 7 approved its [draft FY 2021 spending bill](#) by a party line vote. The draft bill appears to provide a total of \$47 billion for NIH in FY 2021, which [the bill summary describes](#) as an increase of \$5.5 billion above the FY 2020 enacted level. Within the total, the bill provides \$42 billion in annual appropriations, an increase of \$500 million above the 2020 enacted level, as well as \$5 billion in emergency appropriations available through FY 2025. The \$5 billion in emergency funding may be used “to offset costs related to reductions in laboratory productivity resulting from interruptions or shutdowns of research activity” in FY 2020, and would be provided to the Office of the Director, with the requirement that at least \$2.5 billion be distributed across NIH proportionate to each institute and center’s FY 2020 funding level.

The Ad Hoc Group [issued a press statement](#) in advance of the July 7 subcommittee markup thanking the subcommittee for continuing to recognize the NIH as a key national priority despite restrictive spending caps, and reiterating the importance of sustained, meaningful growth in the NIH’s base budget as well as the need for separate emergency supplemental relief.

#### House Appropriations Committee to Mark Up FY 2021 Spending Bill

The full House Appropriations Committee is scheduled to mark up the FY 2021 Labor-HHS spending bill on [Monday, July 13, at 1pm](#).

#### House Appropriators Approve FY 2021 Subcommittee Allocations

The House Appropriations Committee approved [FY 2021 topline funding allocations](#) for all 12 subcommittees, or 302(b) allocations, by a vote of 29-21 on July 9. The allocations for all 12 subcommittees total \$1.298 trillion, including \$182.9 billion in budget authority for the FY 2021 Labor-HHS spending bill.

#### NIH Launches Clinical Trials Network for COVID-19 Vaccines

The NIH announced the establishment of the COVID-19 Prevention Trials Network (COVPN) to enroll volunteers in large-scale clinical trials for vaccines and therapies for COVID-19 [in a July 8 press release](#). COVPN is formed from four existing National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) clinical trials networks: the HIV Vaccine Trials Network, the HIV Prevention Trials Network, the Infectious Diseases Clinical Research Consortium, and the AIDS Clinical Trials Group. NIAID Director Anthony Fauci, MD, added, “Centralizing our clinical research efforts into a single trials network will expand the resources and expertise needed to efficiently identify safe and effective vaccines and other prevention strategies against COVID-19.”

**Director’s Blog: Interview with Director of NIH Vaccine Research Center**

NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, on July 9 posted [a recent interview with John Mascola, MD, director of the NIH Vaccine Research Center \(VRC\)](#) in which they discussed progress towards a SARS-CoV-2 vaccine. The VRC is developing a SARS-CoV-2 vaccine in partnership with Moderna, Inc. Drs. Collins and Mascola discussed how vaccines work, the steps involved in the vaccine development process, how the VRC has contributed to a vaccine against the novel coronavirus, an update on its clinical trials, vaccine safety, and more.

## Ad Hoc Member Resources

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**Sign On Opportunity: Maintain US Membership in WHO**

The Entomology Society of America (ESA) and the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH) are circulating [a joint community letter opposing the U.S. withdrawal from the WHO](#). The letter to Congressional leaders urges Congress to “do everything possible to maintain the United States’ membership in and funding for the WHO for the health and security of our nation.” Please email Erin Cadwalader ([ecadwalader@entsoc.org](mailto:ecadwalader@entsoc.org)) to sign on by the deadline of Monday, July 13.

**COVID-19 - Back to Campus: A Course on COVID-19 Safety**

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) has collaborated with member institutions and CITI Program to [launch a complimentary course to train research faculty and team members, research staff, students, and other staff at medical schools and research organizations on COVID-19 safety](#) as they return to campus this fall. The highlights of the course include a discussion of recommendations from NIH, CDC, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, as well as optional modules on specific research areas. Organizations may subscribe to this free course by October 1, and learners will receive a CITI Program completion report as evidence of successful training. [Download a demo and learn more about the course here.](#)

## Upcoming Events

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**Virtual Rally for Medical Research – Sept. 16-17**

The Rally for Medical Research is held every September and includes more than 300 national organizations coming together in support of to call on our nation’s policymakers to make funding for National Institutes of Health (NIH) a national priority and raise awareness about the importance of continued investment in medical research that leads

to more progress, more hope, and more lives saved. This year's event will be held virtually on September 16-17. For more information and to register, please visit <https://rallyformedicalresearch.org>.

## NIH COVID-19 Resources

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[NIH COVID-19 resource for applicants and grantees](#) including guidance for various aspects of research and grant application processes, as well as FAQs and COVID-19 funding opportunities.

[COVID-19 "Updates History" webpage](#) that details relevant updates for applicants and grantees by date.

[FAQ document on COVID-19 flexibilities](#) related to policies and programs affecting the grants process.

[HHS COVID-19 awards tracking website](#) including data on awards made by all HHS awarding agencies with supplemental appropriations provided through the first three COVID-19 supplemental packages (Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020; Families First Coronavirus Response Act; and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security [CARES] Act).

## Job Postings

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### **FASEB Seeks Associate Director for Legislative Affairs**

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) seeks an experienced [Associate Director for Legislative Affairs](#) to serve as principal representative of FASEB to members of Congress and congressional staff and advise FASEB leadership and the Board of Directors on legislative strategies and advocacy initiatives related to increasing federal funding for and awareness of life sciences research. This position is responsible for developing and executing a successful appropriations strategy and legislative advocacy program on behalf of FASEB and FASEB member societies and coordinating with other stakeholders in the biomedical research advocacy community. Please see the [attached PDF job description](#) and [click here](#) to submit a cover letter, resume, and a short writing sample. For more information about FASEB, visit [www.faseb.org](http://www.faseb.org).

**Please Note:** *If you have information of interest to the NIH advocacy community that you would like to share with the Ad Hoc Group, please forward it to Christa Wagner at [chwagner@aamc.org](mailto:chwagner@aamc.org) or Tannaz Rasouli at [trasouli@aamc.org](mailto:trasouli@aamc.org).*