



## THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

### Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up

October 13, 2020

Each week, the Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up will feature hashtags and/or tweets (follow us at [@fundNIH](#)) suggested by members of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) advocacy community. We encourage all readers who are active on social media to use these messages, and we welcome suggestions from the community for future issues of the Weekly Round Up. Here is this week's featured tweet:

#### **Research!America @ResearchAmerica – October 12**

Dr. Helen Langevin [@NIH\\_NCCIH](#) is working to apply multimodal approaches to the concept of whole person health. In her [#RAForum #20/3/1](#) she discusses “bidirectional continuum” between health & disease & how multimodal approaches can restore health.

#### **No Votes Expected This Week on COVID-19 Relief Package Negotiations**

House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) issued an [October 12 floor schedule update](#) noting that no votes are expected in the House of Representatives this week as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin continue to negotiate a new COVID-19 relief package. This follows Speaker Pelosi's [October 11 press release](#) noting perceived shortfalls with the Trump administration's proposal in addressing the health and economic impacts of the coronavirus.

#### **NIH to Support 85 New Grants Featuring High-Risk, High-Reward Research**

The NIH on October 6 [announced 85 High-Risk, High-Reward Research Program awards](#) totaling over \$250 million over five years. According to the press release, the program “catalyzes scientific discovery by supporting research proposals that, due to their inherent risk, may struggle in the traditional peer-review process despite their transformative potential.” This year's awards were divided as [10 Pioneer awards](#), [53 New Innovator awards](#), [nine Transformative Research awards](#), and [13 Early Independence awards](#).

#### **NIH Begins Clinical Trial Testing Remdesivir Combination Therapy To treat COVID-19**

A Phase 3 clinical trial studying the antiviral remdesivir in combination with neutralizing SARS-CoV-2 antibodies in hospitalized adults with COVID-19 has begun in the United States and nearly 20 other countries. The Inpatient Treatment with Anti-Coronavirus

Immunoglobulin, or ITAC, trial is co-sponsored by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). According to the [October 8 news release](#), the main goal is to compare the combination therapy to remdesivir-only treatment on day 7. NIAID Director Anthony Fauci, MD, said, “The ITAC trial will examine whether adding anti-coronavirus hIVIG to a remdesivir regimen can give the immune system a needed boost to suppress SARS-CoV-2 early in the course of illness, nipping the infection in the bud.”

## **NIH to Launch the Serological Sciences Network for COVID-19**

The NIH announced the launch of the Serological Sciences Network for COVID-19 ([SeroNet](#)) in an [October 8 news release](#). Through funds provided to the National Cancer Institute (NCI) through the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act ([P.L. 116-139](#)), SeroNet will generate a collaboration of over 25 institutions across the country “to study the immune response to COVID-19 to speed delivery of testing, treatments and vaccine development for combat the pandemic.”

## **NIH Researchers Awarded Service to America Medals**

Several NIH leaders were recognized in the 2020 Sammies award, “the ‘Oscars’ of government service, a highly respected honor with a rigorous selection process.” [NIAID Director Anthony Fauci, MD](#), was named the Federal Employee of the Year, and NCI Distinguished Investigator [Ira Pastan, MD](#), received the Paul A. Volcker Career Achievement Medal. Three additional NIH representatives were Sammies finalists: [Nancy Sullivan, PhD](#), chief of the Biodefense Research Section, Vaccine Research Center, John Tisdale, MD, chief of the Cellular and Molecular Therapeutics Branch of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, and Griffin Rodgers, MD, director of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

## **Ad Hoc Group, Coalition for Health Funding Host Virtual Briefings with IC Directors**

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research has teamed up with the Coalition for Health Funding to host a series of virtual briefings with directors of NIH’s institutes and centers to discuss how research to date and ongoing work can inform our response to the coronavirus, as well as the impact the pandemic is having on existing research across the agency’s broad portfolio. Recordings of the first two briefings with [National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities \(NIMHD\)](#) Director Eliseo Pérez-Stable and [National Institute on Mental Health \(NIMH\)](#) Director Joshua Gordon, MD, PhD are available.

## **Upcoming Events**

---

### **Global Liver Institute's Advanced Advocacy Academy – October 26-30**

The Global Liver Institute’s fourth annual [Advanced Advocacy Academy \(A3\)](#) will take place worldwide on October 26-30. This year’s virtual event will offer liver patients, caregivers, and professionals the opportunity to learn from experts in the fields of drug development, clinical trials, state and federal legislation, media and communications, and liver health and disease. Live discussions with faculty members will enhance individual learning, foster engagement, and promote important conversations. Self-paced lessons

can be customized to fit each attendee's personal learning style and schedule. Anyone impacted by liver disease and passionate about liver advocacy should [apply for A3 2020](#) online by October 1. For more information, see the [attached flyer](#) or contact [a3@globalliver.org](mailto:a3@globalliver.org).

### **Virtual NIH Regional Seminar – October 27-30**

The NIH is hosting a [virtual regional seminar](#) on program funding and grants administration from October 27-30. The event website includes a [detailed agenda](#) with keynote speakers and concurrent sessions. [Registration](#) is free and available on the event website.

### **NExTRAC Meeting – November 9-10**

On November 9-10, 2020, NIH will be hosting a virtual meeting of the Novel and Exceptional Technology and Research Advisory Committee (NExTRAC). The NExTRAC provides recommendations to the NIH Director and serves as a public forum for the discussion of the scientific, safety, and ethical issues associated with emerging biotechnologies. More information about the meeting will be posted, as it becomes available, to the [NExTRAC](#) page of the [OSP Website](#).

### **NEW Apply for HIV Clinical Training Opportunities – January 19, 2021**

The [HIV Medicine Association \(HIVMA\)](#) and the [Infectious Diseases Society of America \(IDSA\) Foundation](#) are accepting applications for the 2021 HIV Clinical Fellowship Program. For the first time, the program is supporting one year of HIV clinical training for full or half-time effort awards to allow greater flexibility for physicians to train in community-based settings. The award supports a stipend of \$33,000 for half-time training or \$65,000 for full-time, plus funding to cover fringe benefits. Physicians whose communities are underrepresented in medicine or who interested in working in the Southeastern United States are strongly encouraged to apply. Program and application requirements are on the [HIVMA website](#), including [recommended competencies](#) for HIVMA Clinical Fellows. The deadline to apply is Jan. 19, 2021. For more information, please [email HIVMA](#).

## Requests for Public Comment

---

### **NLM Seeks Feedback on 10 Year Strategic Plan – October 19**

The National Library of Medicine (NLM) issued a [request for information \(RFI\)](#) to solicit public comments and assist NLM in its efforts to implement the NLM Strategic Plan 2017-2027. Specifically, NLM seeks feedback “on major opportunities or challenges relevant to the NLM mission that have arisen or become more important in the last five years and that have implications for the future of NLM in its capacity both as an institution conducting and supporting research and as a national library providing biomedical information products, services, training, capacity-building, and other resources to the world.” Comments are due no later than October 19 via [webform](#).

### **OLAW Seeks Feedback on Semiannual Animal Inspections – October 22**

The NIH Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare ([OLAW](#)) is seeking stakeholder input on flexibilities available for conducting semiannual animal facility inspections. Specifically, OLAW seeks input on flexibilities available to Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees for conducting semiannual inspections of their animal facilities. Additional details are provided in the [request for information](#). Comments must be [submitted electronically by October 22](#).

## **NINDS Seeks Feedback on Strategic Planning Process**

The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) published a [July 2019 request for information](#) on the institute's strategic planning process. The goal of the process is to tune its practices and policies to its vision and mission, in order to better serve and anticipate the needs of the research and patient communities and the public. The mission of NINDS is to seek fundamental knowledge about the brain and nervous system and to use that knowledge to reduce the burden of neurological disease. Those interested in submitting comments for consideration as NINDS establishes a new strategic plan may still do so through this form.

## **NIH COVID-19 Resources**

---

[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.

[Funding opportunities specific to COVID-19](#) lists active and expired funding opportunities across NIH related to SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 research.

[HHS COVID-19 awards tracking website](#) including data on awards made by all HHS awarding agencies with supplemental appropriations.

## **Job Postings**

---

### **Epilepsy Foundation Seeks to Fill Positions on Its Research Team**

- **Senior Director, Innovation, Research & New Therapies**, whose primary responsibilities include: directing the Epilepsy Foundation's Innovation and Entrepreneurship programs, working with the CMIO in setting the objectives and key results for the Research & New Therapies (R&NT) staff and assists in budget

preparations and quarterly monitoring for the R&NT team and providing supervisory and mentoring support to R&NT staff, as needed. [Click here to see the full job posting and apply.](#)

- **Research Program Manager**, whose primary responsibilities include: Coordinating the development and delivery of the Epilepsy Digital Engagement Navigator (EDEN); developing engagement strategies, and work with our platform partner to ensure data is entered in the platform in an interpretable manner under the direction of the Director of Innovation and the CMIO; working with research clinical coordinator in the Human Epilepsy Project 2 study; assisting with analysis of research data sets by pulling and analyze various query requests from research data sets existing within the Foundation; and maintaining the web informational research tools such as the pipeline tracker. [Click here to see the full job posting and apply.](#)

### **ASM Seeks a Regulatory Affairs Specialist**

The American Society for Microbiology (ASM)'s Policy and Advocacy Department seeks an experienced Regulatory Affairs Specialist to strengthen its presence with federal agencies, specifically CMS and FDA, and proactively identify opportunities for ASM federal policy engagement on clinical and regulatory matters. This person will monitor, analyze, and report on regulatory activity that has the potential to affect the microbial sciences and clinical microbiology community in assigned policy areas, and work with ASM members and staff to develop position statements, testimony, and regulatory comments. View the full job description and [apply here](#). For more information about ASM, go to: [www.asm.org](http://www.asm.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).*