Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up
March 8, 2021

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:

**UsAgainstAlzheimer's @UsAgainstAlz – March 8**

Happy #InternationalWomensDay! With women disparately impacted by #Alzheimers, UsA2 is proud of the work that we do focusing on women in the Alzheimer’s community. This #IWD, we’ll be highlighting our efforts to eliminate the disparities women face as both patients & caregivers.

**Senate Labor-HHS Ranking Member Blunt Won’t Seek Reelection in 2022**

Sen. Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), ranking member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-HHS, will not seek reelection in 2022 he announced on March 8. “After 14 General Election victories -- three to county office, seven to the United States House of Representatives, and four statewide elections -- I won’t be a candidate for reelection to the United States Senate next year,” he said in a video message. Sen. Blunt is a member of the Senate Republican leadership, serving as the Republican Policy Committee Chairman.

**House Democratic Appropriators Support Young for OMB Director**

House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) was joined by the Democrats on committee in a letter of support for Shalanda Young to be the next Office of Management and Budget (OMB) director. In the March 4 letter to President Biden, the lawmakers noted Young’s previous role as committee clerk and staff director, and her knowledge of the federal budgeting process. Her leadership in addressing the sometimes-competing needs of all federal agencies, actual and potential government shutdowns, the need for bipartisan budget agreements and accommodations, general disaster emergency supplemental federal responses, and Congress’s COVID19-related relief and economic stimulus packages uniquely positions her to lead in national budgetary matters over the next four years," the Appropriators wrote.

**House Budget Committee Republicans Call for Release of President’s FY22 Budget**

Republican Members of the House Budget Committee sent a March 4 letter to President Biden urging swift release of the FY 2022 president’s budget request. The lawmakers
noted that with the impending passage of a nearly $2 trillion COVID-19 rescue package, “it is of vital importance that you release the [FY] 2022 President’s budget request as expeditiously as possible. As members of the House Committee on the Budget, we ask that you, at the very least, tell the American people when they can expect to see a budget from your Administration.”

NIH: New Investments in Next Iteration of Public-Private Partnership to Advance Alzheimer’s Disease Research

The Accelerating Medicines Partnership (AMP) Alzheimer’s disease (AD) program is beginning its second phase of public-private partnerships to accelerate discoveries in AD, reported a March 2 NIH news release. “AMP AD 2.0 aims to add greater precision to the molecular maps developed in the first iteration of this program. This will identify biological targets and biomarkers to inform new therapeutic interventions for specific disease subtypes,” NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, stated. The first phase, AMP AD, made progress in developing new treatment targets. “By expanding the molecular characterization of Alzheimer’s disease to be more inclusive of diverse populations and by renewing the commitment to open science practices for sharing data, methods and results, we will enable researchers across the globe to better understand the complex nature of the disease and take a precision medicine approach to the development of effective treatments,” said National Institute on Aging Director Richard Hodes, MD.

NIH: Law Enforcement Seizures of Methamphetamine, Marijuana Rose During Pandemic

A National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)-funded study reported that law enforcement confiscated more methamphetamine and marijuana during the coronavirus pandemic than in prior years, summarized a March 2 NIH news release. The study also reported that while seizures of other drugs including heroin, cocaine, and fentanyl did not increase, drug-related deaths did increase in the first half of 2020 compared to 2019. Nora Volkow, MD, NIDA director, said, “Drug seizure data like these give us additional insight into the changing drug use landscape during COVID-19 and may inform our understanding of rising rates of methamphetamine- and opioid-involved overdose deaths during the pandemic.” Lead author Joseph Palamar, PhD, MPH, associate professor at the New York University Grossman School of Medicine, said, “Our understanding of how the COVID-19 pandemic affects drug use is evolving, but we do know that social isolation, even for short periods, can cause psychological distress that may drive some people to seek out psychoactive substance. It is critical for us to obtain a clearer picture of how the pandemic has influenced drug supply and demand, so that we may better mitigate potential harmful effects of changing drug use patterns.”

Sign-on to Support $50 Million for Gun Violence Research at CDC and NIH

The American Academy of Pediatrics is circulating a sign-on letter to Congress requesting an appropriation of $50 million in FY 2022 for the CDC and NIH to conduct research on firearm injury and mortality prevention. Firearm injuries are a critical public health issue, and federal research is an important component of a public health approach to the issue. Congress provided $25 million for this research in FY20 after two decades of no funding, and now we hope to build on this initial investment by doubling the funding to $50 million. Continued and expanded funding for gun violence prevention research can fund additional research projects and advance our knowledge of how to keep communities safe. To sign on, please fill out this brief form by COB on March 12.
Upcoming Events

**World Glaucoma Day Virtual Briefing – March 11**
The Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (AEVR) is co-hosting a virtual Congressional briefing in recognition of World Glaucoma Day on March 11 at 12:00pm EST titled, “Glaucoma: Clinical Practice and Research to Optimize Patient Outcomes.” Please see attached for additional information, and RSVP to Dina Beaumont @ 202-407-8325 or dinabeau@aol.com.

**21st Century Cures Act: Update on Implementation - March 11**
The NIH Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) is co-hosting a webinar with the United States Department of Agriculture and Food and Drug Administration to provide updates on the agencies’ progress in implementing measures of the 21st Century Cures Act related to laboratory animals. The webinar will be posted here on March 11.

**NEW NIH Showcase of Alzheimers.gov – March 16**
Alzheimers.gov is a new educational resource and portal to federal information on Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias for people living with dementia, caregivers, health care providers, community and public health professionals, and researchers. In this webinar, the National Institute on Aging will share the process behind developing Alzheimers.gov and provide a tour of the new website. To join the showcase, simply join here on March 16th at 2PM EST.

**NEW The All of Us Research Hub: Data Access and Protections Webinar – March 16**
The All of Us Research Program is hosting a webinar on the Research Hub on Tuesday, March 16th from 3:00 – 4:00 pm EST. The All of Us Research Hub contains health data from a diverse group of participants from across the U.S, and approved researchers can access All of Us data and tools to conduct studies to help improve our understanding of health. This webinar will explore: the Research Hub, important program policies on the protection and use of participant data, and engagement efforts focused on ensuring a diverse community of researchers are ready to leverage the All of Us resource. Please register here.

**NEW Virtual Congressional Neuroscience Caucus Briefing on Neurodevelopmental Disorders – March 17**
The American Brain Coalition, Autism Speaks, American Academy of Neurology, Cerebral Palsy Research Network, and the Society for Neuroscience are joining with the Congressional Neuroscience Caucus to host a virtual briefing, “Neurodevelopmental Disorders: The Challenges and the Opportunities.” The briefing will take place on Wednesday, March 17, from 2-3pm EST. Please register here.

**NEW Diversity in Research: Benefits for All – March 24**
The Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation is hosting a conversation led by Junelle Speller, Vice President, PFF Registry, about the importance of including people from a wide range of
backgrounds in medical research, and the impact it has on developing treatments and achieving better health outcomes for all patients. Anna María Nápoles, PhD, MPH, scientific director at NIH’s National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. The event will take place on March 24 at 1pm EST. Please register here.

**NEW** Apply for the Childhood Eczema Challenge Grant – Deadline May 4

Applications for the 2021 National Eczema Association/Pediatric Dermatology Research Alliance Childhood Eczema Grant in the amount of $50,000 are due May 4. Additional details and a link to apply are on the NEA website.

**Requests for Public Comment**

**NEW** NIH Seeks Comments on Efforts to Strengthen Equity in Biomedical Research – April 9

As a part of the UNITE initiative, the NIH issued a Request for Information (RFI) seeking public input on approaches to improve and strengthen racial equity, diversity, and inclusion across all facets of the biomedical research workforce, both within NIH and the external community. The RFI also seeks feedback on ways to expand research to eliminate or lessen health disparities and inequities. The NIH invites stakeholders throughout the scientific research, advocacy, clinical practice, and non-scientific communities, including the general public, to provide feedback by April 9, 2021.

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.

**NIH COVID-19 Research Website** provides a central location for trusted, up-to-date, accurate information about NIH research and our strategic role in COVID-19 research.

**HHS COVID-19 awards tracking website** including data on awards made by all HHS awarding agencies with supplemental appropriations.

**Combat COVID website** including information for those who have never had COVID-19, have been infected, have recovered, and for health care providers.
Job Postings

**NEW** ACT for NIH Seeks Vice President, Advocacy & Operations Manager

ACT for NIH, a non-profit dedicated to increasing Federal biomedical research funding to help save lives, currently seeks to fill two positions. The ideal candidate for Vice President is a proven leader with Hill and/or advocacy expertise and knowledgeable about NIH to work closely with the ACT for NIH President to design and implement our advocacy strategy. The Vice President will have a portfolio of advocacy initiatives and will also work with the biomedical research community, helping build broad support for increased NIH funding.

The Advocacy & Operations Manager will assist with advocacy, communications, and Hill events, and help the team keep day-to-day activities on-track. The Manager also leads finance and operations and manages campaign outreach. Additional details and application instructions are available on the website at: [https://www.actfornih.org/careers/](https://www.actfornih.org/careers/).

**NHLBI Seeks Science Policy Analyst**

NIH’s National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) seeks a Science Policy Analyst to assist in the institute’s engagement with Congress. The analyst’s role will include reviewing proposed legislation, responding to Congressional inquiries, preparing public outreach materials, and more. Additional information and instructions for applying can be found [here](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/).  

**AAI Seeks Science Policy Analyst**

The American Association of Immunologists (AAI) seeks a Science Policy Analyst to research, analyze, and respond to relevant issues involving biomedical research, NIH, and other federal agencies, and to assist with AAI science policy programs and advocacy activities. For further information or to apply, click [here](https://www.aai.org/).  

**AACR Seeks Associate Director, Science and Health Policy**

The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) seeks an Associate Director, Science and Health Policy. The Associate Director, Science and Health Policy, will work to strengthen the dialogue between policymakers, scientists, and advocates, as well as support policies to advance cancer research and improve patient care and public health. This individual will provide specialized expertise on science and health policy issues that are important to AACR leadership, with a primary focus on tobacco control policy and a secondary science or health policy focus to be determined, depending on the candidate’s experience. More information on the opening can be found [here](https://www.aacr.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 or Tannaz Rasouli at trasouli@aamc.org.*