Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up
March 15, 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:

Association of American Universities @AAUniversities – March 15
A team of @IUBloomington researchers set out to try to create a breath testing device similar to a Breathalyzer that could detect #COVID19: https://www.aau.edu/research-scholarship/featured-research-topics/breath-test-detect-covid-19-development-iupui

House Appropriations Committee Releases Member Deadlines for FY22 Requests
The House Appropriations Committee has released additional deadlines and guidance for member programmatic, language, and Community Project Funding requests. FY 2022 requests for the Labor-HHS requests are due by 6pm on April 14. Regarding Community Project Funding, the Dear Colleague from Chairwoman DeLauro details accounts that will accept Community Project Funding requests, and the list does not include the NIH.

NIH’s Fauci to Testify on COVID-19 Response

NIAID Awards Grants for Bacteriophage Therapy, Antimicrobial-Resistance Research
The NIH’s National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) has awarded $2.5 million to 12 international grantees to support research into bacteriophage therapy and their potential use against antibiotic-resistant bacteria, stated a March 11 NIH news release. “In recent decades, multidrug-resistant bacteria, particularly those that cause potentially deadly diseases like tuberculosis, have become a serious and growing global public health concern,” said NIAID Director Anthony Fauci, MD. “With these awards, NIAID is supporting research needed to determine if phage therapy might be used in combination with antibiotics—or replace them altogether—in treating evolving antibiotic-resistant bacterial diseases.”

NIH, NIAID Directors’ NPR Interview on Their “Pandemic Year”
NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Director Anthony Fauci, MD, conducted a March 9 interview with NPR to reflect on one year of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NIH leaders expressed “surprise, and disappointment, at the unanticipated challenges they faced in getting public health messages out effectively.” Both leaders discussed the difficulties with disinformation and reviewed the recently released CDC guidelines on safe activities for vaccinated people.

NIH Director on Yahoo Finance Live: Update on COVID-19 Vaccines and Variants
NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, was interviewed March 11 on Yahoo Finance Live for a year in review and look forward in the scope of the COVID-19 pandemic. Collins shared updates on vaccination rates and vaccine hesitancy, and discussed lessons learned in developing various partnerships to combat the virus in generating research studies, therapeutics, and the vaccine.

Open Mike Guest Blog: CSR’s Commitment to Advancing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Peer Review
Noni Byrnes, PhD, director of NIH’s Center for Scientific Review (CSR) authored a guest Open Mike blog post on CSR’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in peer review following NIH Director Francis Collins’ March 1 announcement of the UNITE initiative to end structural racism and racial inequities in biomedical research. Byrnes highlighted several CSR actions including new mechanisms to report concerns about peer review; bias training for review officers; diversifying the pool of reviewers; and decoupling the science from the investigator and institutional environment.

Upcoming Events

NEW World TB Day Congressional Briefings – March 22 and 24, 2021
The TB Roundtable is co-hosting a series of virtual congressional briefings with the House TB Elimination Caucus and Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) to commemorate World Tuberculosis Day. The first briefing, Ending Tuberculosis: How to Save Lives at Home and Abroad, is March 22 from 11:30am – 12:45pm EST. Please see attached for additional information and register to attend. The second briefing, COVID-19: How the
**Pandemic Has Impacted TB Elimination Efforts**, is March 24 from 12:30 – 1:30pm EST. Please [see attached](#) for more information and to [register](#).

**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](#).

**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**

**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

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.

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.

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.

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.