

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – March 18, 2019

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:

[United4MedResearch @UMR4NIH](#)

"Learn how [@NIH](#) research funding benefits rural states [#NIHruralreport](#) [#keepNIHstrong](#) [http://www.unitedformedicalresearch.com/advocacy_reports/rural-states/...](http://www.unitedformedicalresearch.com/advocacy_reports/rural-states/)"

1. CQ: Appropriations Leadership Prepares for FY 2020 Negotiations Without Budget Caps Deal

CQ News March 14 [reported](#) that Senate Appropriations Committee leadership has begun discussions on a way to move the FY 2020 appropriations process along in the absence of a budget caps deal (subscription required). The report notes that Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Richard Shelby (R-Ala.) "has hinted he might take" the approach of using the FY 2019 "toplines for defense and nondefense programs as a fallback" if a budget deal is not reached quickly.

2. Ad Hoc Sends FY 2020 Funding Recommendation to Congress

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research, a coalition of more than 300 organizations and institutions across the NIH stakeholder community recommend at least \$41.6 billion for the NIH in FY 2020, a \$2.5 billion increase over the NIH's program level funding in FY 2019. This funding level would allow for meaningful growth above inflation in the base budget that would expand NIH's capacity to support promising science in all disciplines. It also would ensure that funding from the Innovation Account established in the 21st Century Cures Act would supplement the agency's base budget, as intended, through dedicated funding for specific programs. See the full statement and list of endorsers [here](#).

3. HHS Secretary Testifies Before Congress on President's Budget Proposal

Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Alex Azar [testified March 13](#) before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Related Agencies in support of the president's fiscal year (FY) 2020 budget. Both Democrats and Republicans on the Subcommittee expressed concern over the administration's proposal to cut NIH funding by nearly \$5 billion in FY 2020, a move that full Appropriations Chair Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) characterized as "absurd" and that Subcommittee Chair Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) vowed to reject.

Emphasizing the need for "steady, sustained, inflation-plus increases" in NIH funding, Subcommittee Ranking Member Tom Cole (R-Okla.) noted that discretionary spending "makes up only about 8 percent of total outlays" at HHS and that some of the budget's proposed discretionary cuts were "shortsighted" because "you simply cannot balance our national budget by chipping away at 8 percent of total spending."

4. House FY 2020 Public Witness Testimony, Member Submissions

The House Appropriations Labor-HHS Subcommittee will host a Public Witness Hearing on Tuesday, April 9. The deadline to submit requests to testify is Tuesday, Mar. 19, while the deadline to submit written testimony for the record is Monday, April 8. The complete notice and instructions are posted on the subcommittee [website](#).

In addition, the Labor-HHS Subcommittee [has announced](#) a March 28 deadline for Members of Congress to submit their FY 2020 appropriations requests to the Labor-HHS spending bill, in addition to a [Dear Colleague letter](#) from Chair Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) noting that earmarks will not be considered for FY 2020 spending bills.

5. FY 2018 Data Available on NIH Databook

In a March 13 *OpenMike* [blog post](#), NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research Mike Lauer, MD, summarizes NIH's annual report for FY 2018. The data shows that "in FY 2018, NIH's budget increased \$2 billion over the previous year's appropriations. About 83 percent of the NIH budget supports extramural research. In FY2018, NIH issued 47,000 competing and non-competing research project grant (RPG) awards totaling about \$26 billion. Compared to extramural research expenditures in FY 2017, there were increases in number of competing applications, number of awards, success rates, and funding amount for both RPGs and R01-equivalent grants." More information and additional detail can be found in the [NIH Data Book](#).

6. Scientists Call for International Moratorium on Human Germline Editing

In the March 13 issue of *Nature*, NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, and Associate Director for Science Policy Carrie Wolinetz, PhD, co-author a Correspondence to [express support](#) for a proposed moratorium on clinical uses of germline editing. Dr. Collins also comments on NIH's support of the proposed moratorium in the [Director's Blog](#). The NIH comments come in response to a March 13 [commentary](#) in the journal *Nature* by an international group of leading scientists and ethicists which calls for a "global moratorium on all clinical uses of human germline editing." The authors propose the establishment of a suggested five-year limited-term, global ban on clinical germline editing to allow for the development of an international framework that lays out requirements that must be met before any clinical application of the technology is used. The authors emphasize that any ban would permit continued use of genome editing for research purposes and possible clinical use of the technology in non-reproductive cells.

7. NCI Director to Become Acting Commissioner of FDA

The Trump administration March 11 announced that National Cancer Institute (NCI) Director Ned Sharpless, MD, will serve as Acting Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) beginning in April. This follows the March 5 announcement from current FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, MD, of his plans to step down from his role in April. NCI's Deputy Director, Doug Lowy, MD, will become Acting Director of NCI. The Director of NCI is a role appointed by the president which does not require Senate confirmation.

8. NIH FOA: Administrative Supplements for Research on Bioethical Issues

The NIH March 12 published a [Funding Opportunity Announcement](#) (FOA) to fund research on ethical considerations related to biomedical research. The FOA states that "the investment in and the integration of bioethics-related research and policy demonstrates NIH's commitment to safeguarding the integrity of the research that it conducts and supports." The NIH Office of the Director intends to commit at least \$2 million in FY 2019 to fund approximately 10 awards.

Submissions are due May 13, and "all organizations administering an eligible parent award may apply for a supplement under this announcement."

Upcoming Hill Briefings and Other Events

9. AAMC/FASEB Webinar on NAS Integration of Humanities and STEM Report – Mar. 18

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) are hosting the fourth webinar in their 2018 National Academies reports [webinar series](#). Study director Ashley Bear, PhD, of the National Academies, will unpack the key findings of the report "[The Integration of the Humanities and Arts with Sciences, Engineering and Medicine in Higher Education: Branches of the Same Tree](#)," in a Mar. 18 webinar, from 1:00-2:00 PM ET. Free [registration](#) is required.

10. BPS Congressional Briefing on Cryo-EM – Mar. 26

The Biophysical Society is hosting a Congressional Briefing: "The Cryo-EM Revolution Reaping the Benefits of a Nobel Prize-Winning Molecular Imaging Breakthrough and What the Future Holds." The briefing will take place Mar. 26 from 4-6pm in 2060 Rayburn House Office Building. Please see attached flyer for additional details, and RSVP [here](#).

11. American Thoracic Society Briefing on TB – Mar. 27

Please join the American Thoracic Society at a World TB Day Congressional Briefing: "Tuberculosis: New Momentum to Combat the Top Global Infectious Killer." The briefing will take place on Wednesday, Mar. 27, from 12-1:30 pm in 2200 Rayburn House Office Building. See attached for additional information, and RSVP [here](#).

12. The Myositis Association Grants Webinar – April 9

The Myositis Association (TMA) is hosting a [webinar](#) titled, "Position Your Myositis Grant for Success" to outline TMA's grant process, describe a strong grant application, and answer questions. This webinar takes place **Tuesday, April 9 at 12 noon ET**. [Registration](#) in advance is required.

13. NIH Regional Seminar in Baltimore, MD: May 15-17

The NIH is hosting the Spring 2019 NIH Regional Seminar on Program funding and Grants Administration in Baltimore, MD, from Wed. May 15- Fri. May 17. Visit the [website](#) to learn more about the [program](#) and to [register](#).

14. NIH ACD Meeting: June 13-14

In a [Federal Register notice](#), the NIH announced the next Advisory Committee to the Director meeting will be held June 13-14 at the National Institutes of Health, Natcher Building, Conference Room D, 45 Center Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892. Preliminary agenda items include: the NIH Director's Report, ACD Working Group Reports, and Other Business of the Committee.

Job Postings

March of Dimes Seeks Director of Public Policy Research

March of Dimes seeks a Director of Public Policy Research. This individual would be responsible for generating policy analysis and documents, supporting the Advocacy and Government Affairs team by providing data and information, maintaining March of Dimes' profile in the policy research and academic community, and serving as an integral member of cross-departmental work and teams. Additional details and application information can be found [here](#).

AACR Seeks Director, Congressional Relations

The American Association for Cancer Research seeks a [Director of Congressional Relations](#) to: provide specialized expertise and support to AACR leaders, including the Science Policy and Government Affairs Committee, its relevant subcommittees, and broader partners in the community to further the goals of the AACR's Strategic Plan and policy priorities. To apply, please submit your cover letter and resume humanresources@aacr.org.

ASHG Seeks Policy and Advocacy Manager

ASHG also seeks a Policy & Advocacy Manager help fulfill the Society's policy and advocacy functions by tracking, analyzing and drafting material on policy issues; staffing volunteer bodies to develop policy material and advocacy programming; helping to build and then manage advocacy activity of Society's leadership and membership; and strengthening relations with Congress. Please visit FASEB's [employment opportunities](#) site to learn more and to apply.

University of Florida Seeks Assistant Director of Federal Relations

The University of Florida Seeks an Assistant Director of Federal Relations for the Washington, D.C. office. Essential job functions include: manage and execute the government relations program for a portfolio of the University's federal interests; anticipate, monitor and analyze federal policy; and more. Details and application instructions are available on the [job posting site](#).

American Heart Association Seeks Regulatory Affairs Manager

Under the direction of the Vice President of Federal Advocacy, the [Regulatory Affairs Manager](#) would be responsible for monitoring, analyzing, and drafting responses to a prescribed set of federal regulatory and reimbursement-related issues that impact the association's public policy agenda. The primary focus of the AHA's regulatory work is with the Department of Health and Human Services and its key agencies.

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.