Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up

April 12, 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:

**United for Medical Research @UMR4NIH – April 9**

Why fund @NIH research? Despite great progress there is still so much more to do #COVID-19 #endALZ #cancer #keepNIHstrong

https://unitedformedicalresearch.org/annual-economic-report

President’s FY22 Budget Includes Significant Proposed Investments in Research

President Biden released his [FY 2022 discretionary funding request](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2021/04/09/fy-2022-discretionary-budget-request/) on Friday, April 9. The request includes a proposed $51 billion investment in the NIH, including $6.5 billion to establish a new Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H). According to the budget request, ARPA-H will have “an initial focus on cancer and other diseases such as diabetes and Alzheimer’s,” and represents a “major investment in Federal research and development [that] would drive transformational innovation in health research and speed application and implementation of health breakthroughs.” The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research issued a [press statement](https://unitedformedicalresearch.org/press-release/) applauding the proposed investment in the NIH and urging no less than $46.1 billion for the NIH base program level budget in FY 2022.

The preliminary budget overview provides the administration’s proposed topline funding for departments and agencies and includes a proposed $769 billion non-defense
discretionary budget and within this total is a proposed $131.7 billion for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), of which the NIH is a part.

**HHS Secretary to Testify on FY 2022 Budget Request**

HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra is scheduled to appear before the House Labor-HHS Appropriations subcommittee on Thursday, April 15 at 10am to testify on the FY 2022 budget request. The hearing will be webcast here.

**NIH Experts Call for Accelerated Research to Address Concurrent HIV and COVID-19 Pandemics**

NIH’s National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Director Anthony Fauci, co-authored an April 7 article urging a new coordinated and collaborative research and implementation science agenda to address the dual COVID-19 and HIV pandemics. An [April 8 NIH news release](https://www.nih.gov/news-events/press-release/nih-experts-call-accelerated-research-address-concurrent-hiv-and-covid-19-pandemics) summarizes the article and describes the negative impact COVID-19 has had on progress towards reducing the global burden of HIV, the current understanding of how people with HIV may be linked to increased COVID-19 severity, and opportunities to mitigate COVID-19 impacts on those with HIV through research, clinical studies, and increasing access to HIV testing and treatments.

**NIH Begins Study of Allergic Reactions to Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccines**

NIH’s National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) is sponsoring a Phase 2 clinical trial to investigate who may be at risk for severe allergic reactions to COVID-19 vaccines developed by Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech, reported an [April 7 NIH news release](https://www.nih.gov/news-events/press-release/nih-begins-study-allergic-reactions-moderna-pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccines). The study, Systemic Allergic Reactions to SARS-CoV-2 Vaccination, will enroll nearly 3,500 participants with a history of severe allergic reactions or a diagnosis of mast cell disorder, as well as participants with no allergic disease history.

“The information gathered during this trial will help doctors advise people who are highly allergic or have a mast cell disorder about the risks and benefits of receiving these two vaccines. However, for most people, the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination far outweigh the risks,” NIAID Director Anthony Fauci, MD, stated.

**NIH-Funded Research Team Develops Language Test for People with Down Syndrome**

Research funded by the NIH’s Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences led to development of a new test to evaluate expressive language skills of people with Down syndrome, reported an [April 8 NIH media advisory](https://www.nih.gov/news-events/press-release/nihs-fund-research-team-develops-language-test-people-down-syndrome). “Expressive language is the use of words to convey meaning to others. Language delays are
common in people with Down syndrome, and the study authors believe their test provides a more effective way to evaluate prospective language interventions, compared to current evaluation methods," the advisory stated. The research showed the test was suitable for individuals ages 6 to 23.

**Open Mike: Updates and Symposium on NIH’s Sex as a Biological Variable Policy**

NIH’s Associate Director for Research on Women’s Health Janine Clayton, MD, authored an April 7 guest Open Mike blog post sharing updates on NIH’s sex as a biological variable (SABV) policy and an upcoming SABV symposium. The **Fifth Annual Vivian Pinn Symposium: Integrating Sex and Gender into Biomedical Research as a Path for Better Science and Innovation** will be held virtually on May 11-12, 2021. Registration information can be found [here](#) and below. Clayton also summarized two new e-learning courses developed in conjunction with the NIH Office of the Director and the National Institute of General Medical Sciences: a [SABV primer](#), and a [Bench to Bedside course](#).

**Upcoming Events**

**Virtual Briefing on Demographic Insights into COVID-19 – April 23**

The Population Association of America invites you to a virtual congressional briefing, “Living, Working, Dying: Demographic Insights into COVID-19,” on Friday, April 23, 12:00 to 1:00 pm EST. The event will feature presentations by prominent population scientists who will present findings on the disparate impacts of COVID, especially as they relate to mortality, education, food insecurity, and family dynamics, and what additional research and data are needed to understand and address its far-reaching effects. To register, please go to: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#).

**HHS Virtual Small Business Program Conference – April 26-30**

The NIH is sponsoring the 2021 HHS Small Business Program Conference titled, “Diverse Perspectives SEEDing Impactful Innovations," from April 26-30. The free virtual conference will discuss how to apply for seed funding to support early-stage biomedical research and grow small businesses. Please visit the [conference website](#) for additional information and to register. NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research Michael Lauer, MD, discusses the upcoming event in his [March 31 blog post](#).

**Virtual Social Science Advocacy Day – April 27**
Join COSSA (Consortium of Social Science Associations) on April 27, 2021 to be part of the only annual, coordinated advocacy day in support of all of the social and behavioral sciences. Social Science Advocacy Day brings together social scientists and other science advocates from across the country to engage with policymakers. Last year, Advocacy Day went virtual and we will build on that for 2021 to give participants the ability to safely engage with their elected officials from home. Register here for the April 27 advocacy day.

**NASEM to Host Workshop on Strategies for Effective Data Management and Sharing – April 28-29**

On April 28-29, 2021, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) is hosting Changing the Culture of Data Management and Sharing, a virtual public workshop to examine strategies for effective data management and sharing. The workshop will discuss challenges to and potential solutions for data management and sharing across scientific disciplines and ways researchers can integrate data management and sharing practices into their routine research conduct. The workshop aims to inform implementation strategies for the new NIH Policy for Data Management and Sharing. Additional information, including the workshop agenda and registration portal, is available on the workshop website.

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.

**NEW** Symposium on Integrating Sex and Gender into Biomedical Research as a Path for Better Science and Innovation – May 11-12

The NIH Office of Research on Women’s Health (ORWH) is convening the fifth annual Vivian Pinn Symposium (VPS) to communicate broadly about sex and gender influences on health and diseases, to disseminate research on the health of women, and to highlight pressing issues in women’s health. The topic for the 2021 Symposium is “Integrating Sex and Gender into Biomedical Research as a Path for Better Science and Innovation.” Registration information will be here when available for this public, virtual symposium.

Support the 2021 Golden Goose Award – May 31
Last year the Golden Goose Award highlighted scientists working to understand and respond to the pandemic; the virtual ceremony was the most-watched ever, and the stories of those highlighted have continued to receive national attention. The Golden Goose Award plans to recognize 2021 awardees during a virtual ceremony in September. We are reaching out to Ad Hoc Group member organizations to ask for your support of the 2021 Golden Goose Award. There has perhaps never been a more important time to recognize those who have dedicated themselves to scientific research that has become critical to our health and wellbeing. Information on sponsoring the Golden Goose Award can be found on our website. The deadline for pledging support for this year’s award is May 31, 2021.

Requests for Public Comment

Deadline Extended 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 the new deadline of April 23.

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.

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**Job Postings**

**SfN Seeks Advocacy Assistant**

The Society for Neuroscience (SfN) seeks an advocacy assistant to provide support to federal and grassroots advocacy efforts of the SfN Advocacy and Training department, support committee activities, provide administrative support to SfN programming such as correspondence and scheduling, and support communication about advocacy, and policy positions. The full job description and applications details are available here.

**ARVO Foundation for Eye Research Seeks Director of Foundation Operations**

The Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) seeks a Director of Foundation Operations. This position reports to the Executive Director and is responsible for developing, managing, and implementing operating processes and procedures, establishing documentation, and maintaining internal and external stakeholder relationships. More information can be found here.

**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.