



## THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

### Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up

June 8, 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:

#### **United for Medical Research @UMR4NIH June 4**

[#COVID—19](#) shines a spotlight on the fact that drug development takes hard work and a long time. In this episode of the Amazing Things Podcast, we look at a technology – tissue chips – that just might speed up this process [#AmazingThings](#) [#keepNIHstrong](#)

#### **House Appropriators to Mark Up FY 2021 Bills Starting July 6**

House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) wrote that House appropriators will begin marking up FY 2021 bills in subcommittees the week of July 6, according to a [June 4 "Dear Colleague" letter](#). Full committee markup of all 12 spending bills is planned for the week of July 13, followed by floor consideration of all bills during the weeks of July 20 and 27. The Senate has not set a timeline for FY 2021 spending bill considerations, but may begin mark up in late June ([CQ](#), subscription required).

#### **NIH Director: The Need for Reliable SARS-CoV-2 Antibody Testing**

NIH Director Francis Collins discussed the importance of developing reliable tests for SARS-CoV-2 antibodies with National Cancer Institute Director Ned Sharpless, MD, in a [June 4 Director's Blog](#). The conversation included a definition of antibodies, what they indicate about a person's previous exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the role of NCI-supported scientists in conducting research on antibodies and test kit candidates, and more.

#### **WaPo: COVID Impact on Rare Disease Research**

A [June 4 Washington Post story](#) covers the impacts of COVID-19 on medical research progress for rare diseases, affecting as many as 30 million Americans. Stories from rare disease patients across the world describe how months to years of lost lab productivity will impact work towards clinical trials, treatments, and cures for the nearly 7,000 rare conditions that don't yet have approved treatments.

#### **Progress Report on NIGMS Strategic Plan**

The National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) recently published a [progress and outcomes report](#) "outlining how the Institute has acted upon each aspect of our 2015-2020 strategic plan," according to NIGMS Director Jon Lorsch, PhD, in a [June 1](#)

[NIGMS Feedback Loop blog post](#). The progress report also describes NIGMS's process for making decisions, setting priorities, and measures results.

### **NLM to Pilot Pubmed Preprints**

A [June 1 National Center for Biotechnology Information \(NCBI\) blog post](#) explains that NIH's National Library of Medicine (NLM) is "preparing to launch a pilot project to test the viability of making preprints resulting from NIH-funded research available via PubMed Central (PMC)." The goal is to "explore approaches to increasing the discoverability of early NIH research results." The pilot will begin June 8 and will run for at least one year.

## **Requests for Public Comment**

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### **NCCIH Seeks Feedback on Strategic Plan – June 30**

NIH's National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) issued an April 27 [request for information](#) on the Center's five-year strategic plan. According to the RFI, "The NCCIH is developing a new strategic plan to guide the Center's research efforts and priority setting for 2021 through 2026. Seeking input into the strategic planning process is critical for identification and consideration of research areas and topics to be included in the new plan. NCCIH is requesting input in any or all of 9 topic areas." [Comments are due](#) by June 30.

### **NIDDK Seeks Feedback on Strategic Plan – July 31**

NIH's National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) issued a March 16 [request for information](#) on the institute's five-year strategic plan. According to the RFI, "The goal of the process is to develop a broad vision for accelerating research into the causes, prevention, and treatment of diseases and conditions within the Institute's mission," and focuses on five broad themes for community input. [Comments are due](#) by July 31.

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

The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) is embarking on an institute-wide strategic planning process, and published a [July 2019 request for information](#) on the 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](#).

## **Upcoming Events**

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### **NIH ACD Meeting – June 11-12**

The NIH Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD) [will meet via teleconference](#) on [June 11](#) and [June 12](#) from 1:00-4:00pm EST. Aside from COVID-19 updates, the ACD will also cover topics of rigor and reproducibility in animal research, sexual harassment in research, and foreign influences on research integrity, among others. Please visit <https://videocast.nih.gov/> to view the meeting on the day of the event.

### **ASM Briefing on Pursuing a SARS-CoV-2 Vaccine – June 18**

The American Society for Microbiology (ASM) is continuing its virtual briefing series to showcase the latest science behind [COVID-19 Diagnostics, Vaccines, and Therapeutics](#). We invite you to join us for the conclusion of the series (Part 3, [flyer attached](#)) **Thursday, June 18 at 2:00 pm Eastern**, “From Remdesivir to Human Convalescent Plasma: Understanding COVID-19 Therapeutic Development.” ASM experts will discuss how scientists are leveraging decades of basic and clinical research to bring innovative and effective therapies to the market for COVID-19, including groundbreaking work into the use of human convalescent plasma, how we can apply knowledge from existing antivirals to the novel disease, and what is needed from Congress and the Administration to ensure safe and effective therapies can get to the patients who need them. [Please register here](#) and contact Mary Lee Watts ([mwatts@asmusa.org](mailto:mwatts@asmusa.org)) with any questions.

### **Research!America Briefing on COVID Impacts to Research Progress – June 18**

Join Research!America and partners on June 18 at 2:00pm EST for a virtual roundtable discussion focusing on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public and private sector-funded medical progress. Panelists, including National Cancer Institute Director Ned Sharpless, MD, will explore the pandemic’s influence on the research NIH conducts and supports, our nation’s R&D infrastructure, the private sector investment climate, technology transfer and other key variables influencing the pace of medical progress, and opportunities to quickly reboot R&D as we move forward. [Visit the event website](#) for more information and to register.

## **NIH COVID-19 Resources**

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[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.

[HHS COVID-19 awards tracking website](#) including data on awards made by all HHS awarding agencies with supplemental appropriations provided through the first three COVID-19 supplemental packages (Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020; Families First Coronavirus Response Act; and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security [CARES] Act).

## **Job Postings**

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### **FASEB Seeks Associate Director for Legislative Affairs**

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) seeks an experienced [Associate Director for Legislative Affairs](#) to serve as principal representative

of FASEB to members of Congress and congressional staff and advise FASEB leadership and the Board of Directors on legislative strategies and advocacy initiatives related to increasing federal funding for and awareness of life sciences research. This position is responsible for developing and executing a successful appropriations strategy and legislative advocacy program on behalf of FASEB and FASEB member societies and coordinating with other stakeholders in the biomedical research advocacy community. Please see the [attached PDF job description](#) and [click here](#) to submit a cover letter, resume, and a short writing sample. For more information about FASEB, visit [www.faseb.org](http://www.faseb.org).

### **AAI Seeks Science Policy Analyst**

The American Association of Immunologists (AAI), a non-profit professional biomedical research association, seeks a motivated and intellectually inquisitive individual to provide scientific expertise to the AAI public affairs program. This position supports the Director of Public Policy and Government Affairs, the members of the AAI Committee on Public Affairs, and other AAI staff in developing scientific and policy positions that convey the views, concerns, and interests of the AAI membership. Qualified candidates should submit a cover letter with resume, including publications, and salary requirements, to FASEB Human Resources at [resumes@faseb.org](mailto:resumes@faseb.org), or visit the [FASEB employment website](#) to apply. [See attached](#) and the [FASEB job site](#) to view a detailed job description.

***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).*