Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up
June 14, 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:

University of South Florida Health @USFHealth – June 4
Dr. Gopal Thinakaran, CEO of the #USFHealth Byrd #Alzheimer’s Center and Research Institute, focuses on understanding genetic risk factors that may offer new targeted treatments to delay the onset of Alzheimer’s disease and protect cognitive function. #ENDALZ

House Democrats Propose Topline Spending Level for FY22; Senate Appropriator Predicts Multiple CRs Possible
House Democrats introduced a proposed $1.5 trillion topline spending level, or 302(a), for FY 2022 spending on June 11, reported CQ Roll Call. The proposal, H.Res. 467, does not delineate the breakdown of funds for defense and nondefense programs. The House may vote of the “deeming” proposal as early as this week, which would allow House Appropriations Committee Chair Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) to establish topline spending for individual spending bills, or 302(b) levels. The House Appropriations subcommittees could then proceed with drafting the FY 2022 spending bills.

In testifying before the Senate Budget Committee on June 8, Office of Management and Budget Director, Shalanda Young, stated that there was no timeline planned yet to finalize a bipartisan deal on spending levels for the upcoming fiscal year. Senate Appropriations Ranking Member Richard Shelby (R-Ala.) told press that without a bipartisan agreement on topline spending, he expects a “long, hard winter” in Congress. Shelby predicted "multiple" continuing resolutions to extend FY 2021 funding beyond the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30.

Senate Appropriations Chair Targets July Markup for FY22 Spending Bills
Senate Appropriations Chair Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) told reporters that he hopes the Senate will begin marking up FY 2022 spending bills in July, shared BGOV on June 14 (subscription required). Leahy noted that “private and informal” talks are underway.
about topline funding for the Senate’s FY 2022 spending bills, and that the discussions have been “very positive.”.

**HHS Secretary Testifies Before Senate Appropriators on FY22 Budget**
Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra, JD, testified on the president’s FY 2022 budget before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) on June 9. In his opening statement, he highlighted the budget’s proposed $9 billion increase for the NIH, with $6.5 billion proposed for the new ARPA-H initiative. “This bold new approach will complement NIH’s existing research portfolio, which is a vital contributor to longer and healthier lives, supports and trains world-class scientists, and drives economic growth. Outside of ARPA-H, the remaining $2.5 billion increase will allow NIH to continue investing in basic research and translating research into clinical practice to address the most urgent challenges, such as HIV/AIDS and ending the opioid crisis,” Becerra said.

Ranking Member Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) reiterated his support for ARPA-H, adding that the initiative is “in the right place at the right time with the right focus. ... And I believe we can make it work in a way we wouldn't have envisioned before the last couple of years and the new things we did to step up to the pandemic.”

**NIH Leaders Detail Commitment to End Structural Racism in Biomedical Science**
Scientists, administrators, staff and leaders from the NIH recently set forth a framework to end structural racism across the biomedical research enterprise, detailed a June 10 NIH news release. In the related commentary in Cell, the authors provided additional detail of the framework for approaching the UNITE initiative, which represents the first time all NIH Institutes and Centers are jointly focused on structural racism in biomedical science. The authors detailed six ongoing or planned activities to address structural racism in biomedical research including increasing grant funding to better understand the health impacts of structural racism, expanding existing diversity and inclusion programs, and enhancing recruitment of underrepresented minority candidates.

**NIH ACD Meeting Covers ARPA-H, COVID-19 and More**
The NIH Advisory Committee to the Director met June 10-11, with a presentation from OSTP Director Eric Lander, PhD, on the proposed ARPA-H initiative, including the opportunity for and mission and goals of the proposed initiative. Other speakers included NIAID Director Tony Fauci, MD, with a COVID-19 update, a presentation of the final report ACD Working Group on Enhancing Rigor, Transparency, and Translatability in Animal Research, an update on NIH’s UNITE initiative, and an update on the NIH Common Fund Bridge to Artificial Intelligence (Bridge2AI). Additional session presentations are available on the ACD meeting website.

**NIH Statement on Enhancing Rigor, Transparency, And Translatability in Animal Research**
NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, issued a statement on June 11 in response to receiving the recommendations from the ACD Working Group on Enhancing Rigor, Transparency, and Translatability in Animal Research. “NIH has taken numerous steps over the past several years to improve the rigor, transparency, and reproducibility of the research we support to ensure that our stewardship of NIH resources is held to the
highest standards. This is especially important for clinical trials in humans, but also applies to biomedical research involving animal models, which often serves as the foundation for human clinical trials," Collins stated, in describing the agency’s efforts to establish the working group. Regarding next steps, Collins added, “Given the complexity of these recommendations and their potential impact on the larger biomedical research ecosystem, my leadership team and I will take these recommendations under advisement to determine the best path forward.”

Upcoming Events

**Senate LHHS FY 2022 Outside Witness Testimony Deadline - June 24**
The Senate Labor-HHS Subcommittee has posted a deadline of June 24 for outside witness testimony for FY 2022. Additional details on the format and submission instructions are on the [subcommittee website](#).

**NEW Novel and Exceptional Technology and Research Advisory Committee (NExTRAC) - June 25**
On June 25, 2021, from 1:00-3:30 PM EDT, NIH will be convening a meeting of the [Novel and Exceptional Technology and Research Advisory Committee (NExTRAC)](#). The purpose of the committee is to provide recommendations to the NIH Director and serve as a public forum for the discussion of the scientific, safety, and ethical issues associated with emerging biotechnologies.

More information about the meeting, including a draft agenda, draft report, and videocast information can be found on the [NIH OSP Website](#). Information about how to provide oral or written comments can also be found in the [Federal Register Notice](#). If you have any questions, please contact [SciencePolicy@od.nih.gov](mailto:SciencePolicy@od.nih.gov).

**Apply for National Eczema Association Research Grants – Deadline August 31**
Applications are being accepted for the 2021 National Eczema Association (NEA) research grant cycle. Grants for junior and senior investigators ranging from $5,000-$150,000 are available. Applications are due August 31. Additional details are on the [NEA website](#).

Requests for Public Comment

**NCI: Seeking Stakeholder Input on Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion in the Cancer Research Workforce – July 15**
The [NIH National Cancer Institute (NCI) issued an RFI](#) “on how to enhance diversity and inclusion in the cancer research workforce, including enhancing the participation of individuals who are underrepresented in cancer research, such as underrepresented minorities (URM).” This RFI is part of NCI’s Equity and Inclusion Program convened to identify opportunities and priorities that will promote equity and social justice in three areas: 1) Enhancing Cancer Health Disparities Research; 2) Diversifying the Cancer Research Workforce; and 3) Ensuring an Inclusive and Diverse Community at NCI. The response deadline is July 15, 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 APA Seeks Senior Directors, Congressional and Federal Relations**

The American Psychological Association (APA) Advocacy Office is recruiting for two Senior Directors of Congressional and Federal Relations. Both positions focus primarily on science government relations: to serve as liaisons for federal science funding agencies, cover science policy issues and represent APA in coalitions and partnerships (portfolios to be determined). One of the positions is Masters degree preferred; the other is doctoral degree preferred. You can apply via the APA Jobs gateway.

**American Thoracic Society Seeks Associate Director, Government Relations**

The American Thoracic Society is accepting applications for following position: Associate Director, Government Relations. The Associate Director is responsible for developing and maintaining an ATS advocacy strategy for assigned issue areas. Reports to Chief, Advocacy & Government Relations. B.S. or B.A. degree in public health, health policy, health administration, biological sciences or related area with a minimum of five years congressional experience as an aide or legislative representative in a voluntary health organization or professional society. Excellent written and oral communication skills required. Additional details and application instructions are here.
ASM Seeks Senior Specialist, Regulatory Affairs
The American Society for Microbiology (ASM) is seeking a Senior Specialist, Regulatory Affairs. The Senior Specialist will play an integral role on ASM’s federal affairs team by monitoring, analyzing and reporting on regulatory activity that has the potential to affect the microbial sciences community in assigned policy areas, with a particular focus on diagnostic regulation, food safety, coding and reimbursement. The specialist will also identify opportunities for ASM federal policy engagement with regulatory agencies such as the FDA and CMS, and help build relationships with agency officials. For more information go here.

IADR/AADR Seek Assistant Director of Government Affairs
The International and American Associations for Dental Research are seeking an Assistant Director of Government Affairs to recommend and implement the Associations’ policy priorities related to dental, oral and craniofacial research; the federal research enterprise, including the scientific workforce; scholarly publishing; international collaboration and more. Additional information and application instructions 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.

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.