Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up
June 21, 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:

**Infectious Diseases Society of America @IDSAInfo – June 15**

In a study published in Clinical Infectious Diseases, @NIH researchers present evidence that suggests #COVID19 was circulating in the US in December 2019. More: https://t.co/vrNZnPu3pK?amp=1

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**House “Deems” FY22 Topline, Senate Timing Uncertain**

The House voted 216-206 on H. Res. 467, a resolution to “deem” an overall discretionary spending limit of $1.506 trillion for its 12 FY 2022 spending bills on June 14. This limit closely matches the $1.523 trillion proposed in President Joe Biden’s FY 2022 budget request. The House discretionary spending limit, or 302(a) allocation, would represent nearly $120 billion in new spending compared to FY 2021, though the House resolution does not specify levels for defense and nondefense discretionary funding within the total allocation. The president’s proposal divided funding requests as $770 billion in nondefense discretionary spending and $753 billion in defense spending, increases over FY 2021 of $106 billion (16%) and $12 billion (1.7%), respectively.

House Appropriations Committee Chair Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) also released the markup schedule for all 12 FY 2022 spending bills on June 15. The first subcommittee markup will take place on June 24; the Labor-HHS-Ed spending bill is expected to be marked up by the subcommittee on July 12, followed by full committee consideration on July 15. Individual Subcommittee allocations are expected to be considered by the full committee at its first markup on June 29.

**Ad Hoc Group Urges Congress to Work Swiftly on Significant Boost to FY22 Labor-HHS-Ed Allocation**

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research sent a June 17 letter to both House and Senate Appropriations leadership urging a significant boost over FY 2021 levels for the FY 2022 Labor-HHS-Ed subcommittee spending limit, or 302(b) allocation, in both chambers to facilitate timely completion of the spending bills and appropriate investment in priorities such as medical research.
“We urge Congress to apply the same bipartisan approach that has been so productive in supporting the NIH specifically to swiftly developing a Labor-HHS-Education subcommittee allocation that will help facilitate timely enactment of an appropriation that advances the pace of medical research, the career trajectories of students and early-career investigators, and hope for patients and their families,” the letter stated. “The global COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated the value of the nation’s long-standing commitment to the NIH, the need to remain vigilant in providing robust support for fundamental research as we do not know when or from where the next threat will come, and the consequences of underfunding key public health priorities,” the letter added.

NCI Launches Equity and Inclusion Webpage
The National Cancer Institute (NCI) announced on June 14 the launch of the [NCI Equity and Inclusion webpage](#). “The events of summer 2020, including violence against people of color and disproportionate infection and deaths from COVID-19 amongst communities of color, prompted many organizations to reexamine how structural racism affects the work environment and scientific community” the webpage states. In addition to the webpage, the NCI established an [Equity Council and five new working groups](#) focused on addressing structural racism within the biomedical community.

Biden Administration to Invest $3 Billion from American Rescue Plan as Part of COVID-19 Antiviral Development Strategy
The Biden Administration unveiled plans for the Antiviral Program for Pandemics on June 17, a $3 billion investment to develop antivirals against COVID-19 as described by a [National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)](#) press statement. “New antivirals that prevent serious COVID-19 illness and death, especially oral drugs that could be taken at home early in the course of disease, would be powerful tools for battling the pandemic and saving lives,” said Anthony Fauci, MD, NIAID director and chief medical adviser to the President. “Through multidisciplinary collaborations among leading scientists in academia and industry, this investment from the American Rescue Plan to create the Antiviral Program for Pandemics will help inspire medical innovation and build on the extraordinary success we have seen in developing the COVID-19 vaccines,” Fauci added.

NIH Makes First Infrastructure Awards to Support Research on Post-COVID Conditions
NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, reported on June 10 that the first infrastructure awards supporting the RECOVER (REsearching COVID to Enhance Recover) Initiative, previously known as the [Post-Acute Sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 infection (PASC) Initiative](#), have been allocated. These and additional awards will “ramp up research efforts and launch clinical trials to improve our understanding of this debilitating condition and identify potential treatments to help the hundreds of thousands of people who are affected,” Collins said. “Building the research support infrastructure is the first step before we can launch research studies including new randomized, placebo-controlled clinical trials, which we expect to make in the weeks and months ahead,” he added.

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.

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.

A Lifestyle Epidemic: Ocular Surface Disease – July 13
In recognition of Dry Eye Awareness Month, Alliance For Eye And Vision Research (AEVR) in conjunction with Tear Film & Ocular Surface Society (TFOS), will be holding a globally streamed congressional briefing on July 13, 2021, from 12:00-1:00 PM EDT. This interview-style discussion led by AEVR Executive Director James Jorkasky and key leaders from TFOS will address the latest in lifestyle and environmental factors that result in dry eye.

To attend on-site/receive Live Stream link, RSVP to: 202-407-8325 or Dinabeau@aol.com. More information about the meeting and other upcoming AEVR events can be found on the AEVR website.

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.

NEW Virtual Rally for Medical Research - September 22-23
The Rally for Medical Research is held every September and includes more than 300 national organizations coming together to call on our nation’s policymakers to make funding for National Institutes of Health (NIH) a national priority and raise awareness about the importance of continued investment in medical research that leads to more progress, more hope, and more lives saved. This year’s event will be held virtually on September 22-23. For more information to register, please visit rallyformedicalresearch.org.

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

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.