



THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up

July 6, 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:

Rally for Medical Research @RallyForNIH – July 2

It's never been more important to [#FundNIH](#)! Join the 2020 Rally for Medical Research VIRTUAL Hill Day on Sept. 17 by registering here: <https://surveymonkey.com/r/2020RallySignUp>. [#RallyMedRes](#)

Senate Appropriations Hearing on Operation Warp Speed

NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, [testified before the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies \(Labor-HHS\) Appropriations Subcommittee](#) on July 2 to review the coronavirus vaccine development program Operation Warp Speed. [In an exchange with Sen. Jerry Moran \(R-Kan.\)](#), Dr. Collins emphasized the impacts of COVID-19 in slowing the momentum of the research enterprise, NIH's efforts to provide administrative flexibilities to maintain research momentum, and the need for additional emergency supplemental funding for NIH. Subcommittee Chairman Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) questioned witnesses about additional emergency supplemental funding needs for their agencies, to which Dr. Collins reiterated an estimate of \$10 billion to recover lost research capabilities, and an additional \$8.8 billion to support COVID-19 related projects across NIH institutes as well as "shovel-ready" projects.

[The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research previously submitted an April letter](#) with recommendations for NIH emergency supplemental funding to support new COVID-19 research projects, research relief for non-COVID projects, and longer-term investments to support the medical research enterprise.

House Labor-HHS Subcommittee to Mark Up FY 2021 Spending Bill

The House Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee is scheduled to [mark up its FY 2021 spending bill on Tuesday, July 7, at 5pm](#). The markup will be webcast. The full House Appropriations Committee will consider FY 2021 topline 302(b) spending levels for all 12 spending bills on [Thursday, July 9, at 10am](#).

NCATS Director's Blog: COVID-19 Data Sharing

Christopher Austin, MD, director of the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, discussed data sharing during COVID-19 in the [June 30 Director's Corner blog post](#). Dr. Austin reviewed NCATS' work on the OpenData Portal, "a resource for scientists that allows COVID-19-related drug repurposing data and experiments for all approved drugs to be accessible and quickly shared," the CURE ID application in collaboration with FDA to quickly identify drugs that may work as treatments for COVID-19, and the National COVID Cohort Collaborative (N3C) to collect and harmonize electronic health record data.

WSJ: COVID Researchers Compete for Clinical Trials Enrollees

[The Wall Street Journal on July 5](#) reviewed the difficulties in collecting large cohorts of volunteers for COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials as several candidates preparing to begin Phase III trials with approximately 30,000 volunteers each. NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, noted, "We not only have to find the number of volunteers, but they need to be in an area where the virus is currently spreading, otherwise you learn nothing about the effectiveness of the vaccine." According to the report, NIH clinical trial networks previously used for HIV and tuberculosis are being re-engineered for COVID-19 trials, and NIH has established a program to assess availability in the trials network.

Updates to NIH FAQs

All [COVID-19 FAQs](#) have been reviewed and revised to align with NIH's implementation of the Office of Management and Budget's [June 18 memo M-20-26](#) according to [a post by NIH Office of Extramural Research staff on July 2](#). The OMB memo, "Extension of Administrative Relief for Recipients and Applicants of Federal Financial Assistance Directly Impacted by the Novel Coronavirus," extended two of the short-term administrative relief flexibilities from a previous memo.

Requests for Public Comment

Deadline Extended: NCCIH Seeks Feedback on Strategic Plan – July 13

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 July 13.

NIGMS Seeks Feedback on Strategic Plan – July 17

NIH's National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) is [requesting feedback](#) on its [draft strategic plan framework](#). A June 8 Feedback Loop blog post explains that the NIGMS is seeking input on the NIGMS's goals and objectives, additional areas to be included in the framework, performance measures for evaluation, and other suggestions. [Comments are due by July 17](#).

NIH Requests Comments on Improving Biomedical Research Involving Animal Models – July 31

The NIH posted a [request for information](#) (RFI) "aimed at enhancing rigor, transparency, and translatability to improve biomedical and behavioral research involving animal

models,” according to an Open Mike [blog post](#) by NIH deputy director for extramural research Mike Lauer, MD. A [working group](#) of the Advisory Committee to the NIH Director will consider responses to this request as they draft their final report expected in December. Comments should be [submitted online](#) and are due July 31.

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.

***NEW* NIDA Seeks Feedback on Strategic Plan – August 7**

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) [issued a Request for Information \(RFI\)](#) seeking feedback on an outline for the NIDA Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2021-2025. NIDA specifically seeks feedback on: the scientific goals and actions articulated in the framework including additional areas of opportunity that should be included in the plan; drawbacks or challenges to accomplishing these goals and actions; cross-cutting research topics and approaches articulated in the framework; and ways to ensure widespread dissemination and implementation of the plan. You may submit your comments via email to: NIDAstrategicPlan@nida.nih.gov.

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

***TODAY* NIH Leaders Host Conversation on COVID – 2:30pm**

NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID) Director Anthony Fauci, MD, will have a live conversation on NIH’s efforts on COVID-19. The discussion will take place on NIH’s [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) profiles at 2:30pm EST.

***Tomorrow* RIA Webinar with Rep. Tom Cole (R-Okla.) - July 7**

Please join Research!America for an Alliance Member webinar with Congressman Tom Cole (R-Okla.). Rep. Cole serves as the Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, as well as Ranking Member of the Labor- HHS Appropriations Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction over NIH, CDC, AHRQ and other public health and research funding. We have asked the Congressman to share his perspective on priorities for a fifth supplemental spending bill and discuss the state of play on FY21 appropriations. [Register here!](#)

Congressional Briefing: COVID-19 Lifestyle Changes and Vision – July 8

The Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (AEVR) and Tear Film and Ocular Surface Society (TFOS) are co-hosting a Dry Eye Awareness Month Congressional briefing titled, “How Lifestyle Changes During the COVID-19 Pandemic Can Affect Vision.” The briefing will take place Wednesday, July 8, from 12:00-1:15pm EST at 601 New Jersey Ave. NW and via live stream. [Additional information is available on the briefing flyer.](#) [Please RSVP to Dina Beaumont](#) for live stream information.

Briefing on Controlling COVID-19 Surges and Preparing for the Fall – July 8

The Infectious Diseases Society of America, HIV Medicine Association, Society of Healthcare Epidemiology of America and the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society of America invite you to a virtual briefing to learn from infectious diseases experts about what’s needed to strengthen the U.S. response to COVID-19 now and in preparation for flu season in the fall. The virtual briefing will take place on Wednesday, July 8m from 3-4pm EST. [Register here](#) to receive log-in information. Please submit your questions for the panelists when you register. Please email [Lisa Cox](#) or [Jose Rodriguez](#) with questions regarding the briefing.

Virtual Rally for Medical Research – Sept. 16-17

The Rally for Medical Research is held every September and includes more than 300 national organizations coming together in support of 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 16-17. For more information and to register, please visit <https://rallyformedicalresearch.org>.

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.

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

Job Postings

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.

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.*