Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up
July 19, 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:

Research!America @ResearchAmerica – July 7
With 1 out of every 6 Americans over the age of 65, #research is more important than ever in making #healthyaging the new normal. Learn more in our @LaskerFDN factsheet: http://bit.ly/3fEW8zR #ThenNowImagine

House Appropriators Approve FY22 Labor-HHS Bill, $49B Proposed for NIH
The House Appropriations Committee approved its FY2022 Labor-HHS spending bill on July 15 by a vote of 33-25 following consideration of two amendments. This follows the subcommittee passage by voice vote on July 12. The draft bill would provide a total of $49.4 billion for the NIH in FY 2022, representing a $3.5 billion (8.2%) increase in existing NIH institutes and centers, compared to the president’s proposed $2.5 billion increase, as well as $3 billion in new funding available for the president’s proposed ARPA-H initiative. The bill makes ARPA-H funding available through Sept. 30, 2024, as proposed by the president, but provides $3 billion less than the president’s proposed $6.5 billion investment for the new entity. The accompanying report notes that “the Committee believes the ARPA-H must be a distinct Institute within the NIH, with a unique culture and organization that should focus on time-limited projects with goals, benchmarks, and accountability.”

Following Subcommittee passage, the Ad Hoc Group issued a press statement on July 12 enthusiastically commending the proposed funding for the NIH in the draft spending bill and applauding the longstanding leadership of Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole in supporting medical research and the NIH.

House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) issued a Dear Colleague letter on July 15 indicating that a legislative package containing seven FY 2022 spending bills, including Labor-HHS, is expected to be considered on the House floor during the week of July 26.

NIH and OSTP Stakeholder Listening Sessions on ARPA-H
The National Institutes of Health and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy are organizing a series of listening sessions to get feedback from patient advocacy groups, industry, scientific professional organizations, and other stakeholders on the president's proposed ARPA-H initiative. These listening sessions will vary in format from broad, public discussions to smaller, invitation-only meetings to discuss more sensitive information.

The first listening session will be on July 22nd at 2pm EST and will convene stakeholders in the areas of cancer, heart, lung and blood disorders and environmental health.

FY 2023 Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias Bypass Budget Released
National Institute on Aging Director Richard Hodes, MD, presented the NIH FY 2023 Professional Judgment Budget, Transforming Research: To Prevent, Detect, Treat, and Provide Better Care for Dementia at NIA’s July 19 Advisory Council on Alzheimer’s Research, Care, and Services meeting. For FY 2023, additional NIH resources needed for new Alzheimer’s and related dementias research are $226 million, which would bring the total FY 2023 NIH resource needs for these areas of research to $3.4 billion. The report also details the significant progress researchers have made on several fronts, such as developing novel and better biomarkers, identifying new drug candidates, improving quality of care and caregiving, enhancing diversity and reducing health disparities, and investing in centralized data sharing, among others.

STAT: Collins: For Biden’s New Research Agency to Succeed, It Should Prepare for Some Projects to Fail
NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, provided additional insight into how the president’s proposed ARPA-H research agency could be established in a July 15 STAT article. ARPA-H is “aimed to take on [these] really big, bold, hairy, audacious goals that are amenable to a new way of doing science, where you have very bold plans but very specific milestones,” Collins said. The article also highlighted the House Appropriations Committee’s proposed investment in the new agency of $3.5 billion below the president’s request, as well as the importance of a distinct culture from the existing NIH.

Open Mike: Data on Implementing NIH’s Next Generation Researchers Initiative
NIH’s Next Generation Researcher’s Initiative (NGRI) is continuing to address the longstanding challenges faced by researchers trying to begin and sustain independent research careers as well as promote the stability and diversity of the biomedical research workforce, detailed NIH’s Director of Extramural Research Michael Lauer, MD, in a July 12 blog post. To continue addressing these challenges, the NGRI initiative is targeting early-stage investigators (ESIs), researchers who are within 10 years of their terminal degree or completion of clinical training and who have not yet been awarded a substantial NIH grant. Other groups being targeted by this initiative include New Investigators Non-ESI, At-Risk Investigators, and Established Investigators. According to NIH’s data, the funding rate has increased for all of these groups since 2016, especially for ESIs in FY 2020 (after the launch of NGRI) to 27.7 percent, up from 23.6 percent in FY 2016.
Statement on Dr. Michael Gottesman Stepping Down as Deputy Director for Intramural Research

After 28 years as the NIH Deputy Director for Intramural Research (DDIR), Michael Gottesman, MD, is stepping down to focus on his research on mechanisms of chemotherapy resistance in cancer at the National Cancer Institute, said NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, in a July 15 statement. As DDIR over nearly three decades, Michael has coordinated activities and facilitated cooperation among the 24 NIH institutes and centers that participate in the NIH Intramural Research Program to achieve its scientific, training, and public health missions. “With his contagious optimism, problem-solving attitude, and wise policymaking, Michael leaves a strong legacy to guide the future DDIR,” Collins said. Gottesman will remain in the DDIR role until his successor is identified.

NIH: Words Matter: Language Can Reduce Mental Health and Addiction Stigma

Directors of three NIH institutes co-authored a July 19 Comment piece in Neuropsychopharmacology on the importance of word choice in reducing stigma in the substance use disorder community. The perspective, summarized in a July 19 NIH media advisory, discusses how “appropriate language to describe mental illness and addiction can help to reduce stigma and improve how people with these conditions are treated in health care settings and throughout society.” The leaders from that National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institute of Mental Health, and National Institute on Alcohol and Alcoholism argue that using scientifically accurate language is crucial for mobilizing resources toward mental health and addiction services and for addressing prejudices against individuals with those conditions.

Upcoming Events

NIH Symposium on Integrating Bioethics and Biomedical Research – July 20
On July 20, 2021, from 1:00-4:00 PM ET, NIH will be convening a symposium entitled “A Match Made in Science: Integrating Bioethics and Biomedical Research” to highlight the integral role that bioethics plays in advancing science and to discuss strategies for fostering collaboration between bioethicists and biomedical researchers. Participants will discuss concrete examples of how integrating bioethics into biomedical research has strengthened research outcomes and share practical advice for initiating and sustaining successful collaborations.

NEW National Institute of Health (NIH) & White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) Listening Sessions on ARPA-H - July 22
The National Institutes of Health and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy are organizing a series of listening sessions to get feedback from patient advocacy groups, industry, scientific professional organizations, and other stakeholders on the president’s ARPA-H proposal. These listening sessions will vary in format from broad, public discussions to smaller, invitation-only meetings to discuss more sensitive information.
The first three sessions are detailed below:

- **Session 1**: This meeting will convene stakeholders in the areas of cancer, heart, lung and blood disorders and environmental health (July 22nd).
- **Session 2**: This meeting will convene stakeholders in the areas of aging, arthritis, musculoskeletal and skin disorders (July 23rd).
- **Session 3**: This meeting will convene stakeholders in the areas of ophthalmology, deafness and communication disorders, and dental and craniofacial disorders (July 26th).

**NEW Congressional Webinar: Gut Check: What You Need to Know About the Microbiome and Nutrition - July 28**

The American Society for Nutrition and the American Society for Microbiology invite you to join us for “Gut Check: What you need to know about the microbiome and nutrition” on July 28th at 12pm EST. This webinar will cover current state and opportunities in gut microbiome science research, made possible in large part by an investment through the NIH. This includes highlighting the importance of NIH and other federal science agency funding opportunities and research efforts to advance microbiome research. Panelists will discuss what is needed to maintain progress in discovery through basic research and accelerate the translation of these findings into clinical and nutrition applications. Speakers include Dr. Lita Proctor, who served as the Coordinator of the NIH Human Microbiome Project. [Click here for more information and to register.](#)

**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](#).

**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](http://rallyformedicalresearch.org).

**NIH Seeks Input on New Resource for Developing Consent Language for Future Use of Data and Biospecimens – September 29**

The NIH is requesting information from stakeholders on the utility and usability of a resource that includes sample language and points to consider when developing informed consent documents for data and biospecimen sharing ([NOT-OD-21-131](#)). Stakeholder feedback on this resource will be essential in ensuring this resource is maximally useful to the community. NIH emphasizes that any use of the sample informed consent language would be completely voluntary and will not be required.
The comment window is open for 90 days and NIH has established a web portal for responses (https://osp.od.nih.gov/rfi-comment-informed-consent-sharing/). To ensure consideration, comments must be received no later than September 29, 2021. Questions may be sent to SciencePolicy@mail.nih.gov.

Requests for Public Comment

Public Comment on Proposed National Priorities for Health – August 27
PCORI’s work is guided by a set of national priorities and a research agenda that provide a framework for our funding of patient-centered comparative clinical effectiveness research. Beginning in 2020, we embarked on a strategic initiative to identify new priorities to direct our work in the years ahead.

In the latest step in this process, our Board of Governors at its June meeting approved posting for public comment five proposed National Priorities for Health developed in consultation with hundreds of stakeholders, advisors, and experts. We invite your comments on the proposed National Priorities for Health during the public comment period June 28 to August 27 and look forward to sharing an overview of the proposed national priorities on a June 29 webinar.

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 atchwagner@aamc.org or Tannaz Rasouli at trasouli@aamc.org.