Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up
October 12, 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:

**Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research @fundNIH – Oct. 6**

Congratulations to David W.C. MacMillan & Benjamin List, the winners of the #NobelPrize in Chemistry. NIH’s @NIGMS has supported @dmac68’s research since 2000, more evidence of the important role that #NIH plays in supporting basic science to move medical research forward.  
[Link](https://twitter.com/NobelPrize/status/1445687884158160904?s=20)

**NIH Director to Step Down by Year’s End**

The NIH [announced on Oct. 5](https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-numberstory/2021/10/05/francis-collins-to-step-down-as-nih-director) that Francis Collins, MD, PhD, will step down from his position as director by the end of the year. With over 12 years in the role, Collins is the longest serving presidentially appointed director of the NIH. He will continue to lead his research laboratory within NIH’s National Human Genome Research Institute after relinquishing his responsibilities as director.

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research issued an Oct. 5 statement honoring Collins’ legacy of NIH leadership noting, “Both as a result of Dr. Collins’ own research over the course of his career and his visionary leadership at the helm of the NIH, the promise of better health for hundreds of millions of people is a reality.” The statement added, “In addition to his unimpeachable scientific credentials, Dr. Collins’ tenure as NIH director will be celebrated for his tireless commitment to support the next generation of scientists, promote a diverse and inclusive workforce, and inspire bright minds to pursue careers in medical research.”

**Politico: ARPA-H Removed from Senate Reconciliation Package**

Funding for President Biden’s ARPA-H proposal will not be included in the Senate reconciliation package, or Build Back Better Act, reported [Politico on Oct. 8](https://www.politico.com/news/2021/10/08/arpa-h-not-in-senate-reconciliation-package-430490). “Sources on and off Capitol Hill say it will be cut from the Senate’s version of the reconciliation bill because it requires regulatory authorities outside the scope of the chamber’s strict rules for passing bills with a simple majority,” the story noted. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee Chairwoman Patty Murray (D-Wash.) added that the
initiative would have to be authorized before it could be funded. Murray also chairs the Senate Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee. Reps. Diana DeGette (D-Colo.) and Fred Upton (R-Mich.) previously sought stakeholder feedback on ARPA-H in developing authorizing language for the initiative through their Cures 2.0 legislation, which they hope to release in the coming weeks.

**NIH Grantees Receive Nobel Prizes in Chemistry, Economics**

David MacMillan, PhD, shared the 2021 Nobel Prize for Chemistry for the development of a precise new tool for molecular construction: organocatalysis. This work, awarded on Oct. 6, was in part funded by NIH’s National Institute for General Medical Sciences (NIGMS). On Oct. 11, David Card, PhD, and Joshua D. Angrist, PhD, shared the 2021 Nobel Prize for Economics for using natural experiments to draw conclusions about society, specifically about the labor market. Their work was funded in part by NIH’s National Institute on Aging (NIA) and Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). According to the NIH, to date, 168 NIH supported researchers have been sole or shared recipients of 99 Nobel Prizes.

**NIH News: More Than 140,000 U.S. Children Lost a Caregiver Due to COVID-19**

A modeling study partly funded by NIH’s National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) estimated that from April 2020 through June 2021, more than 140,000 American children lost a primary or secondary caregiver to COVID-19, reported an NIH News Release on Oct. 7. “The death of a parental figure is an enormous loss that can reshape a child’s life. We must work to ensure that all children have access to evidence-based prevention interventions that can help them navigate this trauma, to support their future mental health and wellbeing,” said NIDA Director Nora D. Volkow, MD. The release outlined evidence-based interventions to support these children including maintaining a family structure including necessary financial supports and utilizing methods developed for children with mindfulness towards racial disparities and inequalities.

**NIH News: NIH Supports 106 Grants Featuring High-risk, High-reward Research**

The NIH announced 106 grant awards for its High-Risk, High-Reward Research program, which “catalyzes scientific discovery by supporting highly innovative research proposals that, due to their inherent risk, may struggle in the traditional peer-review process despite their transformative potential,” stated an Oct. 5 NIH News release. NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, added, “The science put forward by this cohort is exceptionally novel and creative and is sure to push at the boundaries of what is known.” This year’s awards specifically had a special focus on ALS and COVID-19 research.

**Upcoming Events**

NEW AACR Cancer Progress Report Briefing – Oct. 13
Please join the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) for a Virtual Congressional Briefing on October 13 at 1pm EST to release the AACR Cancer Progress Report 2021. The report is the cornerstone of the AACR’s efforts to educate the public about cancer and the importance of biomedical research, as well as to advocate for increased federal funding for agencies including the NIH and NCI. AACR President David A. Tuveson will provide the keynote address for the briefing, and NCI Director Norman E. “Ned” Sharpless will be a special guest participant. Please register here.

**NEW** Register for Maryland Virtual Community Convening on Research and Health – Oct. 13

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) is undertaking a strategic initiative to identify new National Priorities for Health to guide its mission-driven work and outline a research agenda that encompasses specific topic areas. As part of an effort to offer stakeholders opportunities to provide input and avenues to engage with PCORI during this important time in its evolution, PCORI is hosting a series of Virtual Community Convenings on Research and Health. Join PCORI on Wednesday, October 13, at 12:30pm EST for its Maryland Virtual Community Convening on Research and Health to gather perspectives and hear from community members and leaders on important topics, such as supporting learning health systems and achieving equitable access to high quality health care as part of its work to refresh PCORI's Strategic Plan and gather input. This webinar is open to the public and registration is required.

**NEW** Congressional Briefing - Diversity, Access and Eye Care: Concepts and Clinical Realities – Oct. 14

Please join VISION 2020 USA for their World Sight Day Congressional Briefing on October 14 at 11am EST. The briefing is titled Diversity, Access and Eye Care: Concepts and Clinical Realities. Speakers include Joy Harewood, OD, FAAO, Dipl ABO – Director for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging & Associate Clinical Professor at SUNY College of Optometry and Kevin Frick, PhD – Professor in Economics and Health at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the Johns Hopkins Carey Business School. Please view the flyer for additional information.

**RFP Extended: Microgrants Available for Student Policy Groups – Oct. 19**

Research!America recently launched their [2021-2022 Civic Engagement Microgrant Program](#) which provides funding for student- and postdoc-led civic engagement projects. The funding is intended for early career researchers who want to design and execute nonpartisan civic engagement activities and elevate the importance of scientific research, technological innovation and public health. Programs the students design should encourage dialogue between young scientists and local community and/or government leaders about the roles science and research play in issues important to their communities. Groups are also encouraged, but not required. Participation in this program affords early career researchers the opportunity to build transferable skills and gain relevant experience for careers in and outside of academia. The application deadline is October 19, 2021.
OSTP and NIH ARPA-H Listening and Feedback Session - Oct. 20
The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and NIH are co-hosting an ARPA-H Listening and Feedback Session for interested stakeholders. The session will take place on October 20 from 2:30-4pm EST. Additional details are on the NIH's ARPA-H events website. Please register here.

Congressional Briefing: Myopia: A Public Health Crisis – Oct. 20
Myopia, or nearsightedness, is one of several refractive errors that occur when the eye cannot clearly focus images from the outside world. Myopia affects 30% of the United States population and 28% of the world’s population and is expected to reach 50% by year 2050. Studies estimate that the global impact of uncorrected myopia results in a $244 billion annual loss of productivity. The Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (AEVR) is co-sponsoring a briefing on October 20 at 12 - 1pm EST in which speakers will address myopia clinical care and research. View the briefing flyer for additional information and register here.

The Jackson Laboratory Healthcare Forum – Oct. 27-28
The Jackson Laboratory will hold the 2021 JAX Healthcare Forum to discuss the “post COVID world” and the current landscape of the biomedical research community on Oct. 27-28. This includes discussions on preparing for the next pandemic, what we learned from COVID-19, and how the biomedical research industry played a vital role in the production and implementation of life-saving vaccines and treatments. The forum will include experts and leaders in research, business, government, and academia. Registration is free. More information and an invitation to register can be found here.

NIH Virtual Seminar on Program Funding and Grants Administration – Nov. 1-4
The NIH is hosting a virtual regional seminar on program funding and grants administration from November 1-4. The event website includes a detailed agenda with keynote speakers and concurrent sessions. Registration is free and available on the event website. Additional background information is available on the Sept. 24 Open Mike blog post.

NEW NABR Webinar on the Harm-Benefit Analysis for Animal Research – Nov. 2
Join the National Association for Biomedical Research on Tuesday, Nov. 2 at 12:30 p.m. EST when Jerrold Tannenbaum leads a webinar titled “Follow the Science! Why the Pursuit of Knowledge – and not ‘Harm-Benefit Analysis’ – is the Key to Scientifically and Ethically Sound Animal Research.” In recent years there has been much discussion in the research community about Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees (IACUC) adopting the Harm Benefit Analysis (HBA) in the review and evaluation of the proposed use of animals in biomedical research, which will be discussed in the webinar. Register here.

Help End the HIV Epidemic: Clinical Fellowship Opportunity – November 8
The HIV Medicine Association and IDSA Foundation are accepting applications for the 2022–2023 training year. The fellowship program supports up to two physicians who are not trained in infectious diseases to pursue one year of HIV clinical training under the mentorship of an HIVMA member at clinical sites serving medically underserved populations.

The award includes a stipend set according to the PGY-4 salary level at the training institution, funds to cover the fringe benefits provided by the sponsoring organization and an additional $5,000 to support educational opportunities or offset administrative costs. Physicians whose communities are underrepresented in medicine or who are interested in working in the Southeastern United States are strongly encouraged to apply. Program and application requirements are on the HIVMA website, including recommended competencies for HIV clinical fellows. Email HIVMA staff with questions or for more information. Applications due by Nov. 8.

Congressional Briefing: Speaking with Keratoconus Patients About Research and Treatments - Nov. 10
The Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (AEVR) is joining with the National Keratoconus Foundation (NKCF) to recognize World Keratoconus Day 2021. Keratoconus (KC) is an eye condition in which the normally round, dome-shaped cornea—the transparent front of the eye—becomes weak and irregular, resulting in vision distortion, double or blurry vision, and light sensitivity. Researchers believe that certain individuals have a genetic predisposition to develop it, and a 2021 study from Australia suggests prevalence of 1.2% of the population, meaning it affects the lives of more than 3 million Americans. Speakers Christopher Rapuano, MD (Wills Eye Hospital) and Christine Sindt, OD, FAAO (University of Iowa) will address how they speak with newly diagnosed KC patients about research and treatment options. The briefing will take place on Nov. 10 from 12-1pm EST. View the briefing flyer for additional information and RSVP to Dina Beaumont at dinabeau@aol.com

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

Academic Public Health Leadership Positions
The Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH) has posted three senior level job announcements: Chief External Relations And Advocacy Officer; Director, Advocacy and Federal Affairs; and Chief Academic Officer. The Chief External Relations and Advocacy Officer will lead the integration and advancement of the ASPPH’s advocacy, strategic communications, and fundraising and development efforts. The Chief also will lead the ASPPH’s efforts to promote the use of research and science to advance public policy. The Director, Advocacy and Federal Affairs, will lead the ASPPH’s efforts to affect regulatory, legislative, and other public policy issues. The individual also is charged with keeping the leaders of ASPPH member schools and programs informed on the status of policy deliberations and legislative and regulatory actions. The Chief Academic Officer will lead programs, initiatives, and activities that support education, accreditation, practice, professional development, workforce development, and data. All three positions are based in ASPPH’s Washington, DC office. Applications will be accepted through October 15, 2021.

Science Policy Analyst, American Physiological Society
The American Physiological Society (APS) is seeking a Science Policy Analyst that will report to the Director of Science Policy and Government Relations to help fulfill APS’s advocacy role by tracking legislative and regulatory issues related to federal funding for biomedical research, the use of animals in biomedical research, biomedical research workforce, and other science policy issues, helping develop and implement advocacy strategies in support of Society positions on research funding, animal research, and other science policy issues, supporting the American Physiological Society’s Science Policy (SP) and Animal Care and Experimentation (ACE) Committees, representing APS in meetings with external scientific and advocacy organizations and coalitions, and represent the department in internal APS activities and projects, writing about science policy for the Society’s website, news magazine and social media and contribute to other communications efforts. To learn more about APS, please visit their website. Please e-mail your cover letter and resume to apply for the position.

The Director, Government Affairs and Policy, The ALS Association
The Director, Government Affairs reports to the Vice President, Public Policy and works as part of a team with the Associate Director of Grassroots Advocacy and the Public Policy Manager. The Director, Government Affairs designs and directs all aspects of government affairs including identifying legislative and regulatory opportunities,
securing appropriations, and advancing legislation and policies through nonpartisan advocacy with members of Congress, congressional committees, and relevant federal agencies. The Director, Government Affairs is also responsible for collaborating with the Associate Director of Grassroots Advocacy to mobilize Association chapters and volunteers to achieve results and represents the association in national coalitions focused on the needs of people living with ALS. Bachelor’s degree with 4-8 years of work experience in healthcare government affairs and advocacy or the equivalent combination of education and work experience. Click here to apply.

**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.](#)

---

**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).