Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up
October 25, 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:

UMass Chan – Community & Government Relations @UMassChan – October 19

@UMassChan was pleased to welcome @RepLoriTrahan to campus today to learn more about #NIH funded research and medication-assisted treatment of opioid use disorders #mapoli

Senate Democrats Reveal Labor-HHS Draft Bill with No Agreement on FY22 Topline Funding

Senate Appropriations Committee Democrats released the FY 2022 Labor-HHS draft spending bill on Oct. 18, including a proposed $45.5 billion for existing institutes and centers within the NIH, a $2.6 billion (6%) increase, compared to the House-passed bill which would provide $46.4 billion for the NIH’s base. The Senate draft also includes $2.4 billion in new funding for the president’s proposed Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H), compared to the president’s requested $6.5 billion and the House-passed $3 billion investment. The explanatory statement notes the committee “remains open” to establishing ARPA-H as a free-standing agency outside of the NIH. Combined, the Senate draft includes a proposed $47.9 billion for the NIH in FY 2022.

Senate Appropriations Committee Vice Chair Richard Shelby (R-Ala.) rejected the draft bills, noting that a bipartisan agreement on topline defense and nondefense spending for FY 2022 was needed before subcommittees could negotiate final versions of their spending bills. Shelby told reporters that a two-year budget cap deal could be possible but does not expect serious consideration of appropriations bills before the completion of Congress’s work on infrastructure and reconciliation. Both House and Senate appropriators indicated their subcommittees could finalize their bills quickly once a top line is determined (BGOV, subscription required).

Ad Hoc, Research Groups Urge Swift Completion of FY 2022 Appropriations
The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research joined over 200 organizations in an Oct. 21 letter to House and Senate leadership outlining the detrimental effects of continuing resolutions (CRs) to medical research and urging swift completion of the FY 2022 appropriations process. The current CR is set to expire on Dec. 3. “Whether the measure is the health and wellbeing of Americans and populations across the globe, U.S. economic competitiveness, or our ability to develop solutions to a host of challenges that our nation faces -- from health security to water security to energy security to national security -- our ability to advance is compromised by a budget that stalls crucial science, technology, and engineering advances and is clearly misaligned with current opportunity and need,” the letter stated.

**NIH Notice on Operating Under a Continuing Resolution**

The NIH issued an Oct. 20 announcement in the Federal Register regarding the agency’s operation under the current CR, which extends government funding at FY 2021 spending levels until Dec. 3. According to the notice, “NIH Institutes and/or Centers may, at their discretion, issue non-competing research grant awards at a level below that indicated on the most recent Notice of Award. Upward adjustments to awarded levels will be considered after FY 2022 appropriations are enacted, but NIH expects institutions to monitor their expenditures carefully during this period.”

**Treasury, OMB Release FY 2021 Budget Results**

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, PhD, and Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget Shalanda Young, MHA, issued a joint statement on Oct. 22 containing budget results for FY 2021. The statement noted that the deficit in FY 2021 was $360 billion less than FY 2020 overall, and that outlays for the Department of Health and Human Services were $1.5 trillion, including $38.9 billion for the NIH.

**Open Mike: More Data on Applications Submitted During the Pandemic**

NIH Director of Extramural Research Mike Lauer, MD, summarized data collected on NIH grant applications submitted between April and August in an Oct. 20 blog post. When comparing five years-worth of data from this application timeframe, the total number of R01-equivalent applications decreased by 2% in 2021 compared to 2020. The number of RPG grant applications decreased by 8% in 2021 compared to 2020. Within those totals, both grant types show decreases in male-only applications and increases in applications with multiple investigators with different races identified.

**NIH Statement on Misinformation about SARS-CoV-2 Origins**

NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, issued an Oct. 20 statement on ongoing efforts to identify the origins of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that caused the COVID-19 pandemic. Collins described the normal, lengthy timeline for identifying infectious disease origins, and the interest of the public health community in clearly identifying the origins of SARS-CoV-2. Collins added that without a definitive answer, misinformation has been circulating about the virus’s origins. “NIH wants to set the record straight on NIH-supported research to understand naturally occurring bat coronaviruses. … Analysis of published genomic data and other documents from the grantee demonstrate that the naturally occurring bat coronaviruses studied under the NIH grant are genetically far distant from SARS-CoV-2 and could not possibly have caused the COVID-19 pandemic,” Collins stated.

**Upcoming Events**
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](#).

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](#).

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.

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**Extended Help End the HIV Epidemic: Clinical Fellowship Opportunity – Dec. 13**

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 are now due by Dec. 13.

**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.

**2021 Research!America & Lasker A-Z Report** provides an overview of 60 diseases and conditions impacting people around the globe, emphasizing the myriad ways in which medical science has improved outcomes today and holds the tantalizing potential for further progress in the decades ahead.

UMR’s “Why Invest in NIH?” fact sheet series highlighting why it is essential that the United States maintain a strong National Institutes of Health (NIH).

### Job Postings

**NEW Legislative Assistant, AAMC**
The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) is seeking a Legislative Assistant that will advocate on behalf of AAMC priorities and strengthen strategic alliances in collaboration with the Senior Director and other AAMC government relations and policy staff. With direction from the Senior Director, Government Relations & Legislative Advocacy, this role will supervise, track, and analyze activities of Congress primarily related to Medicaid and safety-net hospital and physician policies and other clinically related advocacy initiatives affecting AAMC member teaching hospitals, physicians, and the patients they serve. Learn more about the Association of American Medical Colleges [here](#). To learn more about the position and apply, please [click here](#).

**Assistant Vice President of Federal Research and Health Policy, CU**
The University of Colorado seeks an [Assistant Vice President of Federal Research and Health Policy](#). The Assistant VP of Federal Research and Health Policy will develop and lead strategy for federal advocacy for CU Anschutz Medical Campus, CU System, and University of Colorado Hospital (UCH) – determine federal priorities; pursue federal agency funding opportunities; maintain effective relationships with Colorado Congressional Delegation and staff, federal executive branch offices, and other health systems and higher education institutions. Along with specific institution focus, the Assistant VP will also serve as the lead on health policy, hospital, physical, and research issues; including the analysis and tracking of all related federal bills and advancement of budgetary, legislative, and policy priorities. For a full position description, please visit the [CU Careers Page](#).

**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.

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**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.