



THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

Ad Hoc Group Weekly COVID-19 Follow Up

October 15, 2020

In this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will be publishing an additional weekly update focused on COVID-19 to highlight related NIH actions and guidance as well as activities from the Ad Hoc Group community and general updates. As always, please forward any relevant items to Christa Wagner (chwagner@aamc.org) for inclusion in the publication!

Congressional and NIH News

Updates on COVID-19 Relief Funding Negotiations

Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) announced that the Senate will vote on a scaled down COVID-19 relief package when the full Senate returns the week of October 19, as reported [October 13 in Roll Call](#). Meanwhile, House Speaker Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin continue to negotiate on the next comprehensive relief package, and Speaker Pelosi sent an [October 13 Dear Colleague](#) to House Democrats summarizing the current state of the negotiations. [The Washington Post on October 14](#) reported Mnuchin's comments that a new relief bill is unlikely before the election, stated at The Milken Institute's Global Conference.

New NIDCR Director Sworn In

Rena D'Souza, DDS, MS, PhD, was officially sworn in as the new director of the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) on October 13. According to her [biosketch](#), Dr. D'Souza previously served as the assistant vice president for academic affairs and education for health sciences at the University of Utah where her research focused on craniofacial development, genetics, and regenerative medicine. Dr. D'Souza [recorded an introductory message](#) for the NIDCR community.

NIH Study Aims to Identify Promising COVID-19 Treatments for Larger Trials

[The NIH on October 13 announced](#) the ACTIV-5 Big Effect Trial (BET), a Phase 2 clinical trial to determine if certain approved or investigational therapies against COVID-19 merit use in larger clinical trials in hospitalized patients. Part of the Accelerating COVID-19 Therapeutic Innovations and Vaccines (ACTIV) program, ACTIV-5/BET will be conducted in up to 40 sites across the U.S. "The goal here is to identify as quickly as possible the experimental therapeutics that demonstrate the most clinical promise as COVID-19 treatments and move them into larger-scale testing," said NIAID Director Anthony Fauci, MD. "This study design is both an efficient way of finding those promising treatments and eliminating those that are not," he said.

Open Mike: Welcome the New RePORT and RePORTER Tools

NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research Michael Lauer, MD, authored an [October 13 Open Mike blog post](#) announcing that the NIH has released a [new and modernized RePORT](#) (Research Portfolio Online Reporting Tools) website and a [faster and easier-to-use RePORTER site](#). The blog post discusses new RePORTER features including quick search, filterable results, new data visualizations, single-page project details, advanced project search, and the ability to write computational procedures to retrieve grants data.

Upcoming Events

NEW Virtual Briefing on Career Pathways for Underrepresented Groups - October 23

Increasing the role of underrepresented minorities (URM) in microbiology as well as other scientific disciplines leads to better scientific outcomes and in turn increases URM interest in the sciences. Please join the American Society for Microbiology as they host a virtual congressional briefing “Strengthening Career Pathways in Science for Underrepresented Groups” on Friday, October 23, from 1:00 - 2:00 pm ET. Please [see attached flyer](#) for details and click [here](#) to register.

Global Liver Institute's Advanced Advocacy Academy – October 26-30

The Global Liver Institute’s fourth annual [Advanced Advocacy Academy \(A3\)](#) will take place worldwide on October 26-30. This year’s virtual event will offer liver patients, caregivers, and professionals the opportunity to learn from experts in the fields of drug development, clinical trials, state and federal legislation, media and communications, and liver health and disease. Live discussions with faculty members will enhance individual learning, foster engagement, and promote important conversations. Self-paced lessons can be customized to fit each attendee’s personal learning style and schedule. Anyone impacted by liver disease and passionate about liver advocacy should [apply for A3 2020 online](#) by October 1. For more information, see the attached flyer or contact a3@globalliver.org.

Virtual NIH Regional Seminar – October 27-30

The NIH is hosting a [virtual regional seminar](#) on program funding and grants administration from October 27-30. The event website includes a [detailed agenda](#) with keynote speakers and concurrent sessions. [Registration](#) is free and available on the event website.

NExTRAC Meeting – November 9-10

On November 9-10, 2020, NIH will be hosting a virtual meeting of the Novel and Exceptional Technology and Research Advisory Committee ([NExTRAC](#)). The NExTRAC provides recommendations to the NIH Director and serves as a public forum for the discussion of the scientific, safety, and ethical issues associated with emerging biotechnologies. More information about the meeting will be posted, as it becomes available, to the [NExTRAC page](#) of the [OSP Website](#).

NEW Apply for HIV Clinical Training Opportunities – January 19, 2021

[The HIV Medicine Association \(HIVMA\)](#) and the [Infectious Diseases Society of America \(IDSA\) Foundation](#) are accepting applications for the [2021 HIV Clinical Fellowship Program](#). For the first time, the program is supporting one year of HIV clinical training for full or half-time effort awards to allow greater flexibility for physicians to train in community-based settings. The award supports a stipend of \$33,000 for half-time training or \$65,000 for full-time, plus funding to cover fringe benefits. Physicians whose communities are underrepresented in medicine or who 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 HIVMA Clinical Fellows. The deadline to apply is Jan. 19, 2021. For more information, please [email HIVMA](#).

Ad Hoc Group Member Resources

United for Medical Research: Unprecedented Impact Fact Sheets

United for Medical Research (UMR) recently released Part 4 in a series of fact sheets to examine the unprecedented impact that COVID-19 is having on biomedical research. From a laser-like focus by researchers, medical professionals and life sciences and biopharmaceutical companies worldwide to understand, mitigate, treat and eradicate the pandemic, to massive disruptions to ongoing research in all fields that is jeopardizing important work, stalling life-saving clinical trials and upending the career paths of many graduate students and early career scientists, COVID-19 is touching all aspects of our biomedical research enterprise. [Part 4 in the series](#) focuses on NIH as a driving force in the global effort to understand, treat, and eradicate COVID-19.

Ad Hoc Group, Coalition for Health Funding Host Virtual Briefings with IC Directors

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research has teamed up with the Coalition for Health Funding to host a series of virtual briefings with directors of NIH's institutes and centers to discuss how research to date and ongoing work can inform our response to the coronavirus, as well as the impact the pandemic is having on existing research across the agency's broad portfolio. Recordings of the first two briefings with [National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities \(NIMHD\)](#) Director Eliseo Pérez-Stable and [National Institute on Mental Health \(NIMH\)](#) Director Joshua Gordon, MD, PhD are available.

Friends of NIMH Coalition to Launch

A [Friends of NIMH](#) coalition is forming for the first time. Interested Ad Hoc Group members are invited to join using the [form](#). Questions? Contact [Pat Kobor](#) of American Psychological Association (APA) or [Juliane Baron](#) of Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences (FABBS).

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.

[HHS COVID-19 awards tracking website](#) including data on awards made by all HHS awarding agencies with supplemental appropriations.

Job Postings

Epilepsy Foundation Seeks Research Program Manager

The primary responsibilities of the Research Program Manager include: Coordinating the development and delivery of the Epilepsy Digital Engagement Navigator (EDEN); developing engagement strategies, and work with our platform partner to ensure data is entered in the platform in an interpretable manner under the direction of the Director of Innovation and the CMIO; working with research clinical coordinator in the Human Epilepsy Project 2 study; assisting with analysis of research data sets by pulling and analyze various query requests from research data sets existing within the Foundation; and maintaining the web informational research tools such as the pipeline tracker. [Click here to see the full job posting and apply.](#)

ASM Seeks a Regulatory Affairs Specialist

The American Society for Microbiology (ASM)'s Policy and Advocacy Department seeks an experienced Regulatory Affairs Specialist to strengthen its presence with federal agencies, specifically CMS and FDA, and proactively identify opportunities for ASM federal policy engagement on clinical and regulatory matters. This person will monitor, analyze, and report on regulatory activity that has the potential to affect the microbial sciences and clinical microbiology community in assigned policy areas, and work with ASM members and staff to develop position statements, testimony, and regulatory comments. View the full job description and [apply here](#). For more information about ASM, go to: asm.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.*