



## THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

### Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up

October 19, 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:

#### Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research [@fundNIH](#) – October 13

We've teamed up with [@healthfunding](#) on a virtual briefing series with [@NIH](#) Institute & Center directors to share their past and ongoing work to address [#COVID19](#) and other [#publichealth](#) threats. Check out the first event with [@NIMHD](#): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ri7OM1yhrKs&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ri7OM1yhrKs&feature=emb_logo)

### Pelosi Gives Deadline for COVID-19 Relief Agreement, Senate to Vote Tuesday

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) indicated that she would give the White House until the evening of October 20 to finalize negotiations on the next comprehensive COVID-19 relief package, if a bill is to be finalized before the election, reported [Politico on October 18](#). Separately, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) issued an [October 17 press statement](#) saying that the Senate will vote on approximately \$500 billion in COVID-19 relief on Wednesday, October 21. The new proposal is expected to include funds for testing, contact tracing, and Operation Warp Speed. The October 21 vote will follow a scheduled October 20 vote on additional funds for the Paycheck Protection Program in a separate piece of legislation.

### New NINR Director Sworn In

The new National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) Director Shannon Zenk, PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN, was sworn in on October 14. Dr. Zenk comes to NINR from University of Illinois Chicago College of Nursing, where her research focused on social inequities and health. In Dr. Zenk's [first Director's Message](#), she highlighted the important role that nurses are playing in the COVID-19 response, affirmed the need to continue a research commitment into healthier lives for everyone, and emphasized the need to ensure sufficient numbers of nurse scientists.

### NIH Study Tests Comprehensive Model Intervention to Reduce Opioid Overdose Deaths

The NIH announced parameters for a new study to address gaps in outreach to communities disproportionately impacted by the opioid epidemic as a part of the Helping to End Addiction Long-term (HEAL) Initiative, announced in an [October 19 media advisory](#). Specifically, the HEALing Communities Study will test community-based, data-driven approaches to address opioid use disorder in 67 communities in four states. “The HEALing Communities Study provides a unique opportunity to understand the consequences of the intersection of COVID-19 and opioid epidemic in rural and urban communities,” adds the advisory.

### **NIH Begins Clinical Trial to Test Immune Modulators for COVID-19 Treatment**

The NIH will begin a Phase 3 clinical trial to assess the safety and efficacy of COVID-19 treatments aimed at balancing an overreactive immune system, according to an [October 16 News Release](#). The trial of three immune modulator drugs will be conducted in hospitalized adults with moderate to severe COVID-19 as a part of the ACTIV initiative. “This is the fifth master protocol to be launched under the ACTIV partnership in an unprecedented timeframe, and focuses efforts on therapies that hold the greatest promise for treating COVID-19,” said NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD. “Immune modulators provide another treatment modality in the ACTIV therapeutic toolkit to help manage the complex, multi-system conditions that can be caused by this very serious disease,” Collins added.

### **NHGRI Researchers Work to Improve the Informed Consent Process**

National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) researchers published study results from surveys conducted with patients, parents, and physicians in the sickle cell disease community regarding genome editing and informed consent, according to an [October 13 NIH News Release](#). Results showed that participants did want the informed consent process to include information on CRISPR somatic gene editing side effects, including impacts to quality of life, and that participants had higher genetic literacy than originally estimated. “Participating in any clinical trial is both a matter of faith and good judgment for individuals, and the research community must build models of consent, understanding and trust as crucial pillars that promote safety and success for the patients,” said Vence Bonham, J.D., an associate investigator in the Social and Behavioral Research Branch at NHGRI and senior author on the paper.

### **NIGMS Feedback Loop: Developing a Culture of Safety in Research Training**

National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) leadership summarized strategies for improving lab safety in an [October 15 Feedback Loop blog post](#). Published in *Molecular Biology of the Cell (MBoC)*, the strategies aim to address laboratory safety including sexual harassment, intimidation, and discrimination. The discussion will continue in an [upcoming webinar](#), Developing a Culture of Safety in Biomedical Research Training, on Thursday, November 5, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

## **Upcoming Events**

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**Virtual Briefing: Career Paths 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.

### **NEW** Congressional Briefing on Recent Neuroscience Discoveries – October 26

The Society for Neuroscience and the American Brain Coalition, in cooperation with the Congressional Neuroscience Caucus, invite you to *Exploring Recent Discoveries in Neuroscience Research*. This congressional briefing will host esteemed neuroscientists discussing recent discoveries in neuroscience research. Panelists will review the transitional benefits provided by predictable federal funding of basic neuroscience research, to medical treatments and discoveries. Neuroscience topics to be discussed will include: pain management and addiction, post-traumatic stress disorder and dementia. [Register now](#) and join us at 2:00 pm EST on Monday, October 26 for an exciting discussion on neuroscience!

### **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](mailto: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](#).

### **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](#).

## Requests for Public Comment

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### **NLM Seeks Feedback on 10 Year Strategic Plan – October 19**

The National Library of Medicine (NLM) issued a [request for information \(RFI\)](#) to solicit public comments and assist NLM in its efforts to implement the NLM Strategic Plan 2017-2027. Specifically, NLM seeks feedback “on major opportunities or challenges relevant to the NLM mission that have arisen or become more important in the last five years and that have implications for the future of NLM in its capacity both as an institution conducting and supporting research and as a national library providing biomedical information products, services, training, capacity-building, and other resources to the world.” Comments are due no later than October 19 via [webform](#).

### **OLAW Seeks Feedback on Semiannual Animal Inspections – October 22**

The NIH Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare ([OLAW](#)) is seeking stakeholder input on flexibilities available for conducting semiannual animal facility inspections. Specifically, OLAW seeks input on flexibilities available to Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees for conducting semiannual inspections of their animal facilities. Additional details are provided in the [request for information](#). Comments must be [submitted electronically by October 22](#).

### **NINDS Seeks Feedback on Strategic Planning Process**

The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) published a [July 2019 request for information](#) on the institute’s strategic planning 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.

## NIH COVID-19 Resources

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[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

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### **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: [www.asm.org](http://www.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](mailto:chwagner@aamc.org) or Tannaz Rasouli at [trasouli@aamc.org](mailto:trasouli@aamc.org).*