



THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up

October 26, 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:

Association of American Universities @AAUniversities – October 22

Research from [@Harvard](#) (and supported by [@NIH](#)) shows lullabies in any language relax babies: <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/10/research-shows-lullabies-in-any-language-relax-babies>

Little Progress on COVID-19 Relief Funding Negotiations

Discussions are expected to resume today on the next comprehensive COVID-19 relief package between House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, according to [BGOV on October 26](#) (subscription required). Negotiators have not spoken since October 21, and reports indicate that disagreements over a coronavirus testing and contact tracing plan, among other issues, still exist. Despite continued talks, lawmakers and the White House appear pessimistic about reaching a deal before Election Day on November 3 following the slow pace of the negotiations.

NIH Notice on Operating Under a Continuing Resolution

The NIH issued an [October 21 notice](#) regarding the current continuing resolution extending until December 11 stating, “The NIH will issue non-competing research grant awards at a level below that indicated on the most recent Notice of Award (generally up to 90% of the previously committed level). Upward adjustments to awarded levels will be considered after FY 2021 appropriations are enacted.”

Landscape Review: The Impacts of COVID-19 on the Research Enterprise

Ithaka S+R on [October 26 published a landscape review](#) of the impacts of COVID-19 on the research enterprise with the broad themes of financial impacts for universities,

impact on scientific research activities, and human impacts. The review highlights the flexibilities granted to research institutions by the federal government in an attempt to maintain non-COVID-19 research, adaptations made by research institutions to ramp up research, and the vast impacts on students, researchers, faculty, and caregivers. The review highlights significant unknowns about the extent and duration of the COVID-19 disruptions to federally funded research.

Scientists Use Gene Therapy and Light-sensing Protein to Restore Vision in Mice

The NIH issued an [October 22 news release](#) highlighting a novel light-sensing protein that restores vision in blind mice when using gene therapy in specific retinal cells. The work was funded in part by the National Eye Institute's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. The novel strategy is less invasive than previous research to reverse disorders of blindness. "If this optogenetic approach using cells spared in degenerated retina can prove to be effective in vision restoration in humans, beyond light perception, it could offer a valuable alternative to the retinal prosthesis approach for people with late-stage retinitis pigmentosa," said PaekGyu Lee, PhD, NEI's program officer for the SBIR program.

NIA Unveils AD/ADRD Research Tracking Tool

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) in September released the new [Clinical Research Operations and Management System \(CROMS\)](#) to "provide NIA-wide capability to track, report, and manage our extramural clinical research data, activities, and portfolio in real time." The initial focus of CROMS is to support Alzheimer's Disease and related dementias (AD/ADRD) clinical trials, particularly to track participant enrollment.

Primer on NIH's Grant Application Alphabet Soup

The National Institute on Aging recently published a [blog post refresher](#) on commonly used acronyms in the NIH grant application process. A more extensive list is available from the [NIH Glossary and Acronym List](#).

Upcoming Events

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 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.

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](#).

NEW SOBC Capstone Conference – February 22-23

This capstone research conference will celebrate ten years of the [NIH Science of Behavior Change \(SOBC\) Common Fund Program](#). The goal of the SOBC program is to advance behavior change research through a focus on mechanisms of change and the integration of basic research with applied/interventional research. The capstone conference will highlight innovative examples of behavior change research consistent with SOBC principles, from use-inspired basic research to mechanisms-focused intervention science. The [capstone conference on February 22-23](#) will be virtual, open to the public, recorded, archived, and proceedings summarized in a publicly accessible report. The agenda, speaker information, and a link to registration will be available on this website in the coming months.

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: 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 or Tannaz Rasouli at trasouli@aamc.org.