

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – December 17, 2018

Editor's Note: Anticipating that both the House and Senate will be in recess for the rest of the year, the Ad Hoc Round Up will take a two week hiatus beginning December 24. Happy New Year!

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:

National Institutes of Health [@NIH](#)

Did you know that the health of your mouth is important to your overall health? [@NIDCR](#) supports a wide range of studies that can help prevent & treat dental, oral, & craniofacial disorders. Learn more: <https://go.usa.gov/xPMB7> [#ThisIsNIH](#)

1. Congressional Democrats Announce Committee Leadership for 116th Congress

Senate Democrats Dec. 11 announced the Senate Democratic ranking members for the next Congress, and all were ratified by the Democratic Caucus. This includes Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) as Ranking Member for the Senate Appropriations Committee.

The House Democrats' Steering and Policy Committee Dec. 10 made its recommendations for committee chairs for the next Congress, to be approved in January. This includes Rep. Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) to serve as Chair of the House Appropriations Committee.

2. Sen. Alexander Announces He Will Not Seek Re-election in 2020

Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) Dec. 17 announced that he will not seek re-election in 2020 at the end of his current Senate term. In a [press statement](#), Sen. Alexander noted, "The people of Tennessee have been very generous, electing me to serve more combined years as Governor and Senator than anyone else from our state. I am deeply grateful, but now it is time for someone else to have that privilege." Sen. Alexander currently serves on the Senate HELP Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee, where he chairs the Energy and Water Development Subcommittee.

3. NIH ACD Meeting Presents Updates on NGRI, Foreign Influences on Research, Sexual Harassment, and More

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD) Dec. 13-14 held a [public meeting](#) covering a range of topics. The [final recommendations](#) from the ACD's [Next Generation Researchers Initiative](#) (NGRI) working group include the establishment of an "at-risk" applicant group to replace the "Early Established Investigator (EEI)" and an increasing gradient of post-doctoral support levels after 5 years. The [working group on Foreign Influences on Research Integrity](#) was formed after NIH identified undisclosed foreign financial contributions, peer review violations, and diversion of intellectual property to foreign bodies as the main issues affecting the integrity and security of research. The working group recommendations were made on how to increase awareness among investigators, mitigate risk, monitor, and take action when needed. The recommendations will next be evaluated by NIH

legal counsel. In addition, NIH Associate Director for Science Policy and Acting Chief of Staff to the NIH Director Carrie Wolinetz, PhD, discussed the charge of the newly formed ACD working group on sexual harassment to present preliminary findings and recommendations no later than June 2019. Referencing the National Academies report, the working group expressed the need for deep cultural change and its intentions to explore the role of NIH in incentivizing this change. All reports and presentations available on the [meeting website](#).

4. House OGR Subcommittees Hold Hearing on Alternatives to Fetal Tissue Research

The House Oversight and Government Reform (OGR) Committee Subcommittees on Healthcare, Benefits, and Administrative Rules and Government Reform Dec. 13 [held a hearing](#) titled “Exploring Alternatives to Fetal Tissue Research.”

Witness Sally Temple, PhD, Scientific Director at the Neural Stem Cell Institute, shared that researchers “embrace alternatives [to fetal tissue] when they are available, but those alternatives are not available for every disease.” Additionally, fetal tissue research “has laid groundwork for Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, HIV/AIDS,” cancer research, and more.

5. NIH Notices FOAs for Alternatives to Fetal Tissue Models in Research

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Dec. 10 [announced](#) its intent to “publish new Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs) to invite applications to develop and/or further refine human tissue models that closely mimic and can be used to faithfully model human embryonic development or other aspects of human biology.” NIH expects to invest up to \$20 million in these new funding opportunities over the next two years, with FOAs being published in the coming months.

6. NIH Director’s Blog: Call for Submissions for HEAL Initiative Funding

NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, Dec. 10 [announced](#) 30 new funding opportunity announcements (FOAs) through the NIH HEAL Initiative. These new FOAs are included in more than \$850 million dedicated to the HEAL Initiative, in working to study a broad spectrum of research from the basic science of pain to addiction prevention and treatment. Dr. Collins noted that through the new FOAs, NIH is “seeking applications from research institutions that understand innovative clinical trial design and a wide range of pain conditions to help us build a clinical trial network that can evaluate the full spectrum of potential strategies for pain management.”

7. NIH: Teen Vaping Use at Record High

The NIH Dec. 17 issued [news release](#) reporting findings from the federally-funded 2018 [Monitoring the Future \(MTF\) survey](#) of 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students across the U.S. The news release highlights a doubling of nicotine vaping among high school seniors from 2017 to 2018, now up to 20.9 percent. NIDA Director Nora D. Volkow, MD, stated, “Teens are clearly attracted to the marketable technology and flavorings seen in vaping devices; however, it is urgent that teens understand the possible effects of vaping on overall health; the development of the teen brain; and the potential for addiction.” Also highlighted in the report are updates on use of tobacco, opioids, marijuana, and alcohol.

8. Open Mike: Call for Comments on Reducing Burden in Animal Research

NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research Mike Lauer, MD, Dec. 7 in an [Open Mike blog post](#) welcomed comments on the [draft report](#) "Reducing Administrative Burden for Researchers: Animal Care and Use in Research." The report is a part of ongoing implementation of the 21st Century Cures Act, submitted by the Act's Sec. 2034(d) Working Group. Dr. Lauer summarizes, "The draft report outlines areas in which we can make oversight more efficient and reduce burden without compromising animal welfare or scientific integrity: these areas include Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Inspections, protocol reviews, and annual progress reporting." Comments are due Feb. 5, 2019.

9. Open Mike: Resources for Rigorous Research

NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research Mike Lauer, MD, Dec. 13 in an [Open Mike blog post](#) describes new resources provided by the NIH to facilitate rigorous research. A revamped [Rigor and Reproducibility webpage](#) includes new policies and new resources, and links to sub-webpages on four topics: guidance on rigor and reproducibility in grant applications; resources for preparing your application; training and other resources; and notices, blog posts, and references. Additionally, past confusion about the meaning of "scientific premise" in grant applications inspired the NIH to replace this term with "rigor of the prior research" under the Significance section of most [research grant](#) and [career development](#) award applications for applications due on and after January 25, 2019.

Upcoming Hill Briefings and Events

10. 'Tis the Season ... to Nominate for the Golden Goose Award!

That's right – this is the best time of the year to nominate your colleagues, collaborators and role models for a Golden Goose Award. *What is the Golden Goose Award?* The [Golden Goose Award](#) honors federally funded research that may be odd, obscure or serendipitous but ends up having a major impact on society. *How do I nominate?* Visit goldengooseaward.org and click on "nominate" in the top right corner. *What do I need to know to nominate?* The form is easy! Tell us who you are nominating, what unexpected impact the research has had, and which U.S. federal agency funded the work. *Is there a deadline?* We accept nominations on a rolling basis throughout the year, but for the best chance to be considered for the 2019 award, submit by January 21, 2019.

Job Postings

PCORI Seeks Associate Director, Public Policy

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute seeks an Association Director, Public Policy. Position responsibilities include: supporting the Director for Public Policy and Government Relations, Chief Engagement and Dissemination Officer, and the PCORI Board of Governors and executives in representing PCORI with Congress, including members, committee staff and legislative staff; support the development and implementation of PCORI's strategic plan related to reauthorization; and more. Please visit the [job posting](#) to apply.

American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) seeks Government Relations Associate

ASCO seeks a high performing, entry-level Government Relations Associate with at least one year of administrative experience to join our Policy and Advocacy department. The selected candidate will provide comprehensive, high-quality program and administrative support to the Advocacy division on activities related to grassroots, Capitol Hill, federal regulatory

agencies, state advocacy, and the Government Relations Committee. Specific tasks would include scheduling meetings on Capitol Hill and in the district, assisting with congressional briefings, receptions, and lobby days, coordinating the division budget, assisting with advocacy and policy website updates, provide support for ASCO's involvement with coalitions, and assist the team with bill tracking and grassroots software. The job posting can be viewed here: [Government Relations Associate](#).

FASEB Seeks Senior Science Policy Analyst

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology seeks a Senior Science Policy Analyst. Primary functions of the role include analyzing science policy issues and independently managing committees, projects, reports, and seminars/workshops pertaining to the training and development of the biological and biomedical workforce and other topics of concern to the sustainability of the research enterprise. Please visit FASEB's [employment opportunities](#) site for [additional information](#) and a [link to apply](#).

ASHG Seeks Policy and Advocacy Assistant

The American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG), the primary professional membership organization for human genetics specialists worldwide, seeks a Policy & Advocacy Assistant. This person will report to the Senior Director, Policy and Advocacy, and will help fulfill the Society's advocacy role by helping to develop advocacy resources for members; supporting the development of policy statements; and coordinating policy and advocacy-related events and other administrative duties. Please visit FASEB's [employment opportunities](#) site for [additional information](#) and a [link to apply](#).

National MS Society Seeks Manager, Government Relations

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society mobilizes people and resources to drive research for a cure and to address the challenges of everyone affected by MS. The Manager, Government Relations, will provide advocacy and policy support across all of the Society's activism. The position will directly lobby Congress, as well as implement advocacy and lobbying strategies and tactics at the federal and state levels. The position will be responsible for public policy and legislative research and analysis to help determine, assess and manage the Society's federal, state and local policy priorities. Additionally, the position will engage with advocacy staff and volunteers across the country. For more information and to apply, click [here](#).

University of Florida Seeks Assistant Director of Federal Relations

The University of Florida Seeks an Assistant Director of Federal Relations for the Washington, D.C. office. Essential job functions include: manage and execute the government relations program for a portfolio of the University's federal interests; anticipate, monitor and analyze federal policy, funding developments, legislation and regulations, and provide regular reporting to internal stakeholders; build and maintain relationships with key legislative branch and executive branch officials, their staff members, and higher education and other policy advocates and associations; and more. More details and application instructions are available on the [job posting site](#).

American Heart Association Seeks Government Relations Manager on Appropriations and Regulatory Affairs Manager

This [Government Relations Manager](#) represents the American Heart Association before Congress and the Executive Branch agencies on legislative and regulatory issues related to biomedical research heart disease and stroke prevention programs. Responsibilities include: developing and executing appropriations requests before the House and Senate Labor

Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriation Subcommittees for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and for heart disease and stroke prevention programs administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This position is also responsible for developing knowledge and expertise (and when applicable, advocacy positions) related to all issues relevant to the research environment, among other roles.

Under the direction of the Vice President of Federal Advocacy, the [Regulatory Affairs Manager](#) would be responsible for monitoring, analyzing, and drafting responses to a prescribed set of federal regulatory and reimbursement-related issues that impact the association's public policy agenda. The primary focus of the AHA's regulatory work is with the Department of Health and Human Services and its key agencies: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Food and Drug Administration, and Health Resources and Services Administration. Major topics would include rules that impact ACA markets and patient protections, Medicare coverage determinations and Medicare payment rules, and FDA initiatives focused on drug/device development and safety.

Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation Seeks Policy and Advocacy Coordinator

The Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation seeks a motivated individual to join a policy team committed to making a difference in the lives of people with paralysis and/or mobility impairments. The [Policy and Advocacy Coordinator role](#) will offer an opportunity to learn more about the issues and initiatives that the Reeve Foundation is working on to address the difficulties faced by people with paralysis and their families and help support and advance that work. The role will also offer an opportunity to oversee the Reeve Foundation's Regional Champions grassroots advocacy education program. To apply, please send resume along with cover letter by email to Felice Fullem at: ffullem@christopherreeve.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.