



INSIDE NIMH

Funding News for Current and Future Grant Recipients

Welcome to the Spring 2026 edition of *Inside NIMH: In Brief!* This edition is a shortened version of our traditional *Inside NIMH* newsletter, which we publish in conjunction with the National Advisory Mental Health Council (NAMHC). NAMHC advises the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the Director of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) on all policies and activities relating to the conduct and support of mental health research, research training, and other programs of the institute.

Sincerely,

Andrea Beckel-Mitchener, Ph.D.

Acting Director, National Institute of Mental Health

I. Director's Updates

➤ Updates and Announcements

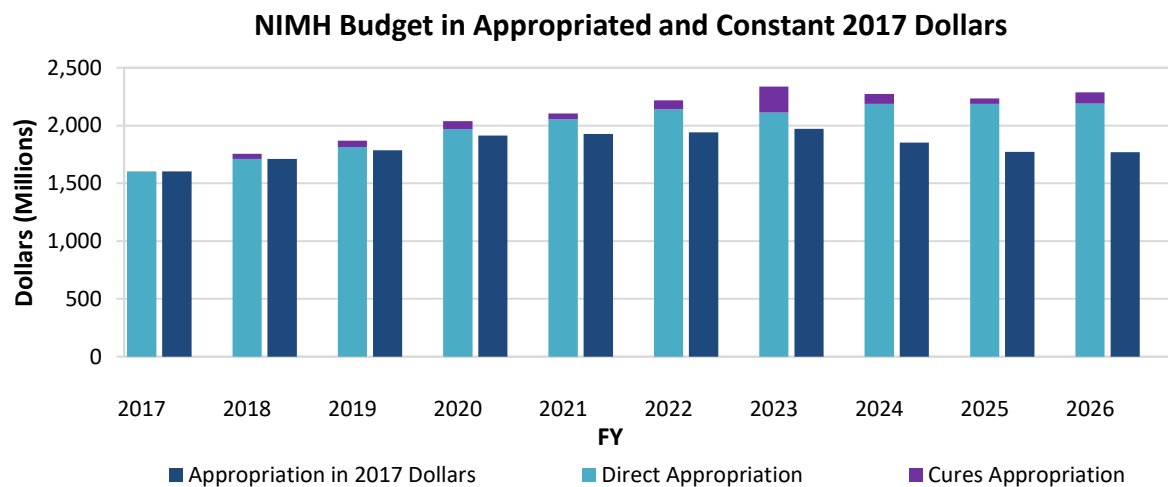
- **New HHS Funding Opportunities to Address Mental Illness, Addiction, and Homelessness:** On June 17, 2026, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced [several new behavioral health funding opportunities](#), including its Safety Through Recovery, Engagement, and Evidence-Based Treatment and Support (STREETS) Program. The STREETS program plans to award \$96 million over four years to develop multisector, state-of-the-art care systems for people who are homeless and have substance use disorders, serious mental illness, or co-occurring disorders. HHS also published several other funding opportunities to improve behavioral health programs, such as the 988 & Suicide Crisis Lifeline, expecting to distribute \$612 million in funding.
- **Office of the Surgeon General Advisory on the Harms of Screen Use:** On May 20, 2026, the Office of the Surgeon General released an [Advisory](#) to call attention to the potential harms of screen use among children and adolescents. The Advisory provides caregivers and communities with tools and strategies to promote healthy screen use among children. The Advisory also includes “calls to action” that provide recommendations for kids and teens, families, schools, healthcare professionals, policymakers, and technology companies, such as stronger parental control tools, school-based phone restrictions, and product design changes.
- **HHS MAHA Action Plan on Prescribing Practices for Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors:** On May 4, 2026, HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. shared details of a [new Make America Healthy Again \(MAHA\) action plan](#), including education and outreach, program and policy actions, and research to practice efforts, to promote appropriate psychiatric prescribing and encourage deprescribing when clinically indicated. As a part of the action plan, HHS agencies are bringing together their collective expertise to evaluate prescription patterns for psychiatric

medications, assess medication benefits and potential harms, and elevate the role of nonmedication treatments and scalable, evidence-based solutions to improve mental health.

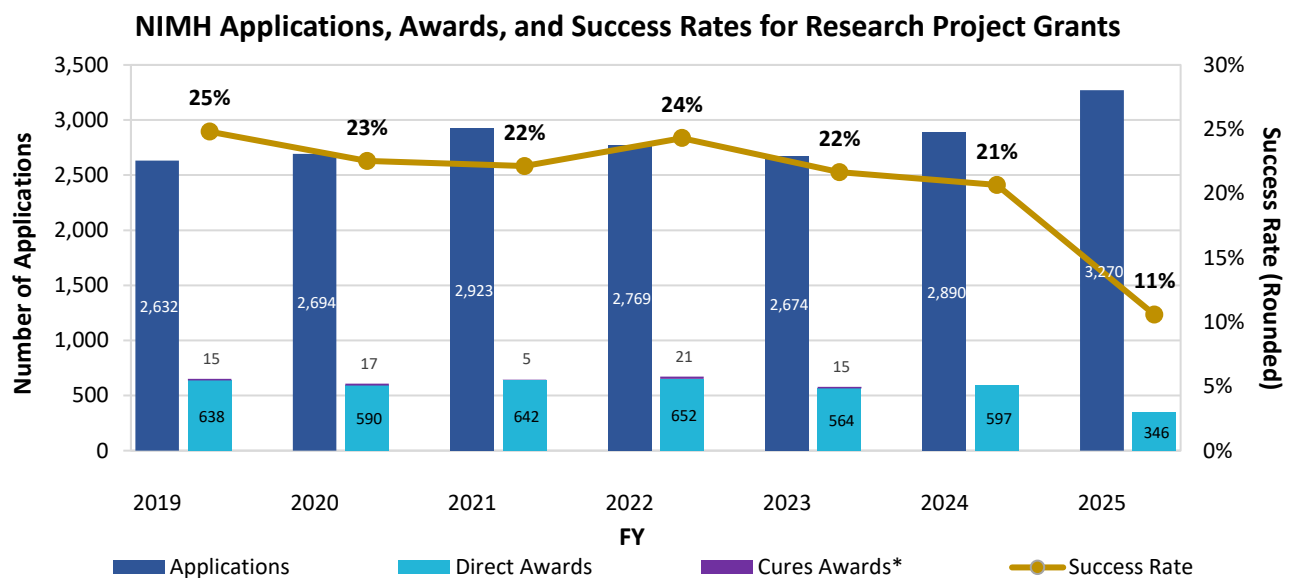
- **ARPA-H EVIDENT Initiative:** On April 21, 2026, the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H), an agency within HHS, [announced](#) the first set of research teams for its Evidence-Based Validation & Innovation for Rapid Therapeutics in Behavioral Health (EVIDENT) initiative. The initiative provides \$139 million in funding to 13 teams across the United States to help spur new, effective therapies for behavioral health. ARPA-H anticipates announcing more awards on a rolling basis.
- **SAMHSA Funding Opportunities for Serious Mental Illness and Suicide Prevention:** On March 6, 2026, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) [announced](#) \$69.1 million in new funding opportunities for three serious mental illness and suicide prevention programs: the Children's Mental Health Initiative, Implementing Zero Suicide in Health Systems, and Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT). SAMHSA anticipates issuing 22 awards through the Children's Mental Health Initiative, 31 awards through the Zero Suicide program, and up to 16 awards through the AOT announcement.
- **NIH Office of Research Innovation, Validation, and Application:** On June 15, 2026, NIH announced the creation of the [Office of Research Innovation, Validation, and Application](#) (ORIVA) to speed the development and use of human-based research technologies. ORIVA will coordinate NIH-wide efforts to develop, validate, and scale New Approach Methodologies, including 3D human tissue models, computational tools, and other emerging technologies to reflect human biology. The office will also serve as a hub for interagency coordination and regulatory translation.
- **NIH Replication and Reproducibility Initiative:** On April 28, 2026, NIH launched a new, agency-wide [initiative](#) to elevate replication and reproducibility studies as foundational to the conduct of gold standard science. This initiative has three pillars: driving effective NIH replication and reproducibility efforts by reinforcing existing data-sharing policies and transparency programs; establishing incentives and awards for integrating replication and reproducibility sciences across the research enterprise; and formalizing replication and reproducibility as a distinct scientific discipline. Learn more about NIH's research priorities on this topic by viewing the related [Highlighted Topic](#) and the [NIH Common Fund Replication Initiative](#).
- **NIH Strategic Plan for Disability Health Research:** On March 26, 2026, NIH released the inaugural [NIH Strategic Plan for Disability Health Research](#). The plan provides a comprehensive roadmap to advance innovative, responsible research that promotes the health and well-being of Americans with disabilities. It also outlines a coordinated, person-centered approach that places individuals, not impairments, at the center of scientific inquiry and emphasizes that disabled Americans have health needs and goals both related and unrelated to their disabilities. The goals, objectives, and crosscutting themes supplement relevant research areas within NIH institutes, centers, and offices and will guide NIH-wide disability health research for the next five years.

➤ Budget Overview

- **Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Budget:** The figure below shows the NIMH budget for FY17 through FY26 in appropriated (current) versus constant (FY17) dollars (excludes 21st Century Cures Act funding). For FY26, NIMH's budget was \$2.3 billion. Compared to FY22 funding, NIMH's FY26 budget was reduced by 9%. Constant dollars are "inflation adjusted" for variations in the purchasing power of the dollar over time. Dollar amounts are adjusted based on the Biomedical Research and Development Price Index (BRDPI). The annual change in BRDPI indicates how much the NIH budget must change to maintain purchasing power similar to FY17. NIMH's FY26 budget is nearly identical to NIMH's enacted FY25 budget except for the planned increase from the 21st Century Cures Act.

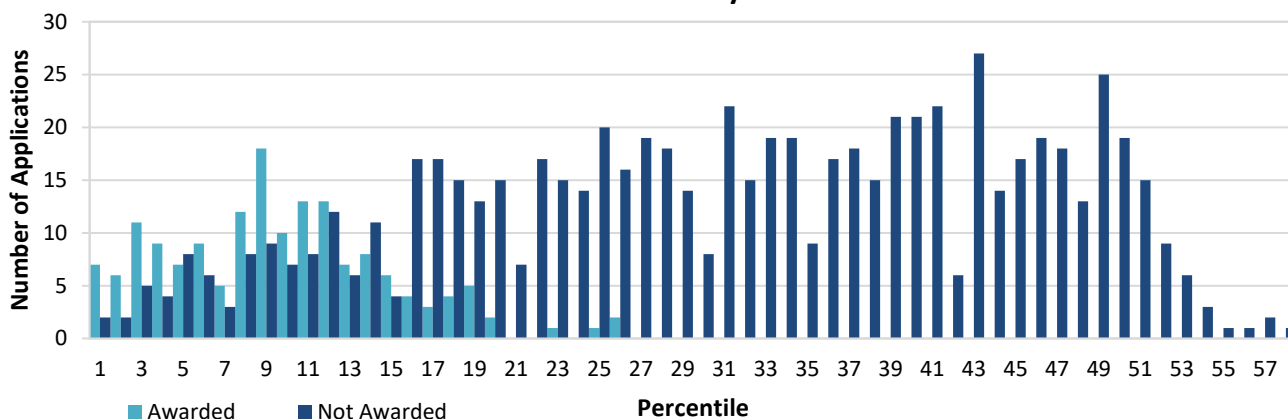


- This figure shows the NIMH applications, awards, and success rates for research project grants from FY19 to FY25. In FY25, NIMH funded nearly 350 new and competing research project grants with a 11% success rate, which is defined as the number of applications funded divided by the number of applications received.



- This figure shows the number of competing R01 and equivalent applications that were awarded or not awarded across the full percentile scoring range in FY25. As shown in the graph, NIMH awarded applications that received low percentile scores, with some applications with mid-range percentile scores still being awarded. In FY25, NIMH awarded approximately half of the applications scoring in the 20th percentile or better.

NIMH FY25 Competing R01 and Equivalent Applications Awarded and Not-Awarded by Percentile Score



- **Outlook for FY27:** On April 3, 2026, the White House released the [President's FY27 Budget](#), which proposes \$41.5 billion for NIH, a reduction of \$5 billion compared to FY26 funding levels. On June 9, the House Appropriations Committee approved the [FY27 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies \(LHHS\) bill](#), providing \$48.8 billion for NIH, and \$2.2 billion for NIMH. From April 16–22, 2026, HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. testified in seven hearings on the FY27 HHS Budget before various Senate and House Committees. On May 21, 2026, NIH Director Jayanta Bhattacharya, M.D., Ph.D., testified before the Senate LHHS Appropriations Subcommittee on the FY27 NIH Budget Request.
- **Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Program Reauthorization:** On April 13, 2026, President Trump signed the [SBIR/STTR Reauthorization Act](#). This law restores authority to the SBIR and STTR programs through September 30, 2031, and includes a provision allowing unused SBIR/STTR funds from this FY to be carried over to the next FY. NIMH SBIR/STTR program staff are committed to working with applicants and awardees to support mental health research and development of innovative technologies by small businesses that may succeed commercially or provide significant societal benefits.

➤ NIMH Staff News

- **Staff Retirements:**
 - **Dianne Rausch, Ph.D.**, Director of the NIMH Division of AIDS Research (DAR), retired in April 2026 after more than 40 years of service at NIH. Dr. Rausch has been a steadfast champion for HIV research, driven by her dedication to ensure that science has a strong public health impact. Her contributions span the full spectrum of biomedical research—from fundamental laboratory discoveries to national policy development, and from individual patient care considerations to global pandemic response. Gregory Greenwood, Ph.D., M.P.H., is serving as DAR's Acting Director.
- **Staff Awards:**
 - **Jane Pearson, Ph.D.**, Special Advisor on Suicide Research to the NIMH Director, received the 2026 Lifetime Research Award by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.
 - **Hiroe Imai Hu, D.O.**, a board-certified psychiatrist and clinical fellow in NIMH's Experimental Therapeutics and Pathophysiology Branch within the Intramural Research Program (IRP), received the 2026 New Investigator Award by the American Society of Clinical Pathology.

- **Arash Afraz, M.D., Ph.D.**, Chief of NIMH IRP's Unit on Neurons, Circuits and Behavior in the Laboratory of Neuropsychology, was awarded tenure at the NIH.
- **Hugo Tejada, Ph.D.**, Chief of NIMH IRP's Unit on Neuromodulation and Synaptic Integration, was awarded tenure at the NIH.
- **Legacy News:**
 - We are sad to share the passing of **Judith Rapoport, M.D.**, on March 7, 2026. As former Chief of the NIMH IRP's Child Psychiatry Program for more than 30 of her 42 years at NIMH, Dr. Rapoport established a world-class clinical research and training program. Her research examined how genetic and environmental factors contribute to brain development during childhood and adolescence, with a particular focus on hyperactive children, those with obsessive compulsive disorder, and those with childhood onset schizophrenia.

➤ Upcoming and Recent Events

- **2026 BRAIN Initiative® Conference:** On August 11–13, 2026, NIH will host the [2026 Brain Research Through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies® \(BRAIN\) Initiative Conference](#) in Rockville, MD to explore the latest advances and priorities in technology-driven neuroscience research. The 2026 BRAIN Initiative® Conference will convene grant recipients, NIH staff, leadership from the BRAIN Initiative's federal and non-federal partners, and members of the public. Conference participants will discuss the latest scientific developments and exciting research priorities for technology-driven innovation in neuroscience. This in-person conference is free and open to anyone interested in neuroscience and BRAIN Initiative-funded research. [Registration](#) is open until July 27, 2026.
- **Outstanding Scholars in Neuroscience Award Program (OSNAP) Awardee Symposium:** On May 28–29, 2026, NIH hosted the Outstanding Scholars in Neuroscience Award Program (OSNAP) Awardee Symposium, where awardees had a chance to share their science and meet with NIH staff. OSNAP recognizes those conducting exceptional neuroscience research across the nation and demonstrating great academic potential in their scientific training. Eight NIH Institutes conducting neuroscience research, including NIMH, take part in the program.
- **16th Annual Julius Axelrod Symposium:** On April 28, 2026, NIMH hosted the 16th Annual Julius Axelrod Symposium on the NIH campus. This event honored the 2025 Society for Neuroscience Julius Axelrod Prize recipient, Gregory Quirk, Ph.D., as well as the 2024 recipients, Robert Edwards, M.D., and Marian Joëls, Ph.D.
- **Foundations and Frontiers in Cognitive Neuroscience Symposium:** On April 7–8, 2026, NIMH hosted a two-day symposium on the NIH Bethesda campus in honor of Alex Martin, Ph.D. After more than 35 years as a Principal Investigator within NIMH IRP, Dr. Martin retired last year. He now has the title of Scientist Emeritus.

II. NIH Policy and Grant Updates

- **Revised NIH Grants Policy Statement:** On March 25, 2026, NIH announced the publication of the revised NIH Grants Policy Statement for FY26 ([NOT-OD-26-057](#)). This statement provides both up-to-date policy guidance that serves as NIH standard terms and conditions of award for all NIH grants and cooperative agreements, and extensive guidance for those interested in pursuing NIH grants. NIH will continue to publish interim grants policy changes and clarifications through the issuance of NIH Guide Notices and Federal Register Notices, as appropriate.
- **Updated Prior Approval Requirement for Changes to Domestic Subawards:** On March 25, 2026, NIH updated its requirements for obtaining prior approval for changes to domestic subawards on all NIH grants and cooperative

agreements ([NOT-OD-26-062](#)). Effective June 1, 2026, all prime recipients are required to obtain NIH prior approval when adding a new domestic subaward to a project post-award when the arrangement was not originally a part of the peer-reviewed and approved application. This will help NIH monitor the prime recipient and ensure compliance with subaward monitoring and reporting requirements.

- **Reminder of NIH Definition of Foreign Components:** On May 27, 2026, NIH published a Notice reminding the research community of NIH's longstanding definition of foreign components ([NOT-OD-26-084](#)). As outlined in the NIH Grants Policy Statement, a foreign component is the performance of any significant scientific element or segment of a project outside of the United States, either by the recipient or by a researcher employed by a foreign organization, whether or not grant funds are expended. The Notice includes examples of activities that would meet this definition.
- **Request for Information on Proposal to Cap the Number of Simultaneous Research Project Grants per Principal Investigator:** On June 8, 2026, NIH issued a Request for Information to gather public input on a proposed policy that would cap the number of Research Project Grants an individual can simultaneously serve on as Principal Investigator or Multi-Principal Investigator ([NOT-OD-26-086](#)). Comments must be submitted to NIH using the [online portal](#) by August 3, 2026.
- **Request for Information on Measuring and Rewarding Scientific Impact:** On June 18, 2026, NIH publish a Request for Information to receive input on specific, measurable indicators and incentives that reflect the collaborative, rigorous, and mission-driven nature of modern biomedical science. NIH is particularly interested in comments that include specific examples and consider feasibility across career stages, disciplines, and institution types. Comments must be submitted to NIH using the [online portal](#) by August 19, 2026.
- **Request for Information on Draft Policy for Sharing Summary Level Study Results:** NIH is in the process of developing a policy to inform how researchers and institutions responsibly return summary level study results to research participants in plain language for all NIH-funded clinical research. Comments must be submitted to NIH using the [online portal](#).
- **Request for Information on Modernization the NIH Data and Safety Monitoring Policy:** NIH is committed to supporting clinical research studies that are scientifically sound and rigorously designed to produce high quality, reliable scientific data that advances the health of all Americans. To enhance efficiency and rigor, NIH intends to [modernize](#) the NIH Data and Safety Monitoring Policy and is seeking public input on factors that NIH should consider during this modernization effort. Comments must be submitted to NIH using the [online portal](#).
- **Continued Emergency Modifications to NIH Peer Review:** To address the large volume of peer review meetings that were missed during the lapse in appropriations, modifications were made to peer review practices for applications submitted for the January 2026 and May 2026 Advisory Councils. Several modifications will remain in place for the October 2026 Advisory Council ([NOT-OD-26-069](#)). NIH remains committed to accomplishing three full rounds of peer review in FY26 and maintaining high quality peer review.
- **HHS SimplerNOFO Initiative:** The [SimplerNOFO Initiative](#) is an HHS-wide modernization effort that aims to make funding opportunities more accessible, understandable, and actionable for applicants. The redesigned SimplerNOFO approach emphasizes clarity, usability, and a more intuitive applicant experience. NIH plans to expand this approach to additional funding opportunities.

For more information on these updates and additional Notices, please see the [Notices of NIH Policy Changes page](#).

➤ New Funding Opportunities

- **Addressing Methodological Challenges with Clinical Trials of Rapid-Acting Psychotropic Interventional Drugs** ([RFA-MH-27-135](#))
- **Advancing Research on Empirically-Supported Interventions for Older Adults Living with Serious Mental Illness** ([RFA-MH-27-180](#))
- **Optimizing Behavioral Sleep Interventions for Adolescents and Young Adults** ([RFA-MH-27-140](#))

➤ Resources to Find Additional NIH Funding Opportunities

- **Grants.gov:** In FY26, [Grants.gov](#) became the single official source for grant and cooperative agreement funding opportunities.
 - **Explore NIH Grant Opportunities Tool:** NIH launched an [Explore NIH Grant Opportunities](#) search tool that preserves the ability to identify potential opportunities of interest using NIH-specific filters such as institute/center/office, funding category, and activity code.
 - **Highlighted Topics Dashboard:** The [Highlighted Topics Dashboard](#) is a centralized resource aimed at easily and quickly informing the research community about particular areas of science that are of interest to NIH. View [NIMH's profile page](#) to discover active [Highlighted Topics](#) that NIMH is either leading or participating in, in addition to a list of NIMH's current research interest areas.
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III. Science Highlights

Explore a selection of recent scientific advances from NIMH:

- [Species-specific chromatin architecture and neurogenesis mediated by a human enhancer](#): A research team led by Debra Silver, Ph.D., at Duke University provided evidence that evolutionary changes in noncoding regulatory DNA contributed to the expansion of the human neocortex. Learning more about these mechanisms may help researchers better understand how genetic risk factors contribute to atypical human brain development, implicated in neurodevelopmental conditions. The work also highlights how organoids and animal models can be combined to study uniquely human developmental biology.
- [Sex effects on gene expression across the human cerebral cortex at cell type resolution](#): Researchers within the NIMH IRP laboratory of Armin Raznahan, M.D., Ph.D., identified sex-biased expression in over 3,000 genes, including 133 genes showing consistent sex differences across all region and cell type combinations. The authors provide an important resource for understanding how gene expression through a cell's transcriptome can impact brain development. In linking genetics differences on both sex chromosomes and non-sex chromosomes to brain architecture, researchers can better understand genetic risks for brain disorders that may be overrepresented in one sex versus the other.