

Program Insights Newsletter

A quick reminder that the due date for two COMPETES Act Challenges to enhance NIH's peer review system is today, **Monday, June 30**. For more details on these Challenges, please see the previous Program Insights Newsletter (<http://commonfund.nih.gov/sites/default/files/Insights11.pdf>).

The NIH Common Fund (<http://commonfund.nih.gov/index>), which supports the Enhancing the Diversity of the NIH-Funded Workforce program, recently commemorated its 10 Year Anniversary. To learn more about the history and impact of the Common Fund, please read the *Science* Commentary, "NIH Roadmap/Common Fund at 10 Years" (<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/early/2014/06/18/science.1255860.full>).

This newsletter includes:

- A new NIH "Rock Talk" blog entry on mentorship
- An update on NIH's efforts to address sex differences in preclinical studies
- Information about NIH's diversity and re-entry administrative supplements

Please note, the activities on sex differences in preclinical studies and administrative supplements described here are not part of the Common Fund's Enhancing the Diversity of the NIH-Funded Workforce program. They are separate NIH activities that may be of interest to our newsletter audience.

New "Rock Talk" blog post on mentorship

On June 6, 2014, NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research Dr. Sally Rockey posted a new "Rock Talk" blog entry on the importance of mentoring. In this post, she discusses how mentorship is necessary to both individual career success as well as the future of the biomedical research enterprise as a whole, and describes the National Research Mentoring Network (NRMN) as one NIH effort to enhance mentorship. Read the blog post, "Mentorship Matters for the Biomedical Workforce," here: <http://nexus.od.nih.gov/all/2014/06/06/mentorship-matters-for-the-biomedical-workforce/>. A link to this blog post is also featured on the Enhancing the Diversity of the NIH-Funded Workforce program website (<http://commonfund.nih.gov/diversity/index>).

NIH Policies to Address Sex Differences in Preclinical Studies

NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins and NIH Office of Research on Women's Health Director Dr. Janine Clayton recently published a policy article (<http://www.nature.com/news/policy-nih-to-balance-sex-in-cell-and-animal-studies-1.15195>) in the journal *Nature* that described new policies to ensure NIH-supported preclinical studies include a balance of male and female cells and animals. These policies, which will be phased in beginning October 2014, are also explained in a recent post by NIH Office of

Extramural Research Director Dr. Sally Rockey in her Rock Talk blog (<http://nexus.od.nih.gov/all/2014/05/16/more-on-addressing-sex-differences-in-pre-clinical-studies/>). These policies aim to address over-reliance on male animals and cells in preclinical research that may obscure key sex differences that could guide clinical studies. Guidance for these new policies will be published over the next year in the NIH Guide (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/>), but in the meantime, please read the *Nature* policy article and Rock Talk blog for more details.

NIH Diversity and Re-Entry Supplements

NIH has available funds for administrative supplements to Program Directors/Principal Investigators (PDs/PIs) holding specific types of NIH research grants to improve the diversity of the research workforce by supporting and recruiting students, postdoctorates, and eligible investigators from groups that have been shown to be underrepresented in health-related research. This supplement opportunity is also available to PDs/PIs of research grants who become disabled and need additional support to accommodate their disability in order to continue to work on the research project. Administrative supplements must support work within the scope of the original project. To learn more about this supplement program, please read “Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research” (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-12-149.html>).

NIH also provides funds for administrative supplements to research grants to support individuals with high potential to re-enter an active research career after an interruption for family responsibilities or other qualifying circumstances. The purpose of these supplements is to encourage such individuals to re-enter research careers within the missions of all the program areas of NIH. This program will provide administrative supplements to existing NIH research grants for the purpose of supporting full-time or part-time research by these individuals to update their existing research skills and knowledge. To learn more about this supplement program, please read “Research Supplements to Promote Re-Entry into Biomedical and Behavioral Research Careers” (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-12-150.html>).

The [*Enhancing the Diversity of the NIH-Funded Workforce*](#) program is funded through the NIH Common Fund, and managed by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities in partnership with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.