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[NCATS Seeks Input for Strategic Plan](#)

November 24, 2015



National Center
for Advancing
Translational Sciences

NCATS seeks input on the scientific and operational challenges, opportunities and research needs in translational science to help set the Center's strategic priorities and inform the development of a five-year strategic plan. Details about how to provide feedback are outlined in the Request for Information (RFI): Soliciting Input for the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) Strategic Planning Process.

Please send all comments to info@actscience.org by **December 15, 2015**. ACTS will compile one response to NCATS through our CCTS.

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[In This Issue](#)

[News from ACTS](#)

[Translational
Science News](#)

[Grant
Opportunities](#)

[Translational Science 2016 Accepting Awards for Career Achievement and Contributions](#)

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The Translational Science 2016 Awards Committee is pleased to recognize investigators and educators who have made outstanding contributions in the field of translational science through four different awards to be given during Translational Science 2016, April 13-15 in Washington, D.C. Nominations are being accepted for the following awards:

1. Edward H. Ahrens, Jr. Distinguished Investigator Award: This award is named in honor of Edward H. (Pete) Ahrens, Jr., recognizing a senior investigator whose innovative research has had a major impact on clinical practice and health care for the benefit of the public.

2. Clinical and Translational Research Distinguished Educator Award: This award recognizes an investigator who has distinguished him or herself as a researcher, mentor and academic leader. Students and trainees are also invited to submit nominations.

3. AFMR Outstanding Investigator Award: This Award recognizes an investigator's pathway to excellence in achieving an independent research career in biomedical research. The recipient will be required to present his/her research at the AFMR Henry Christian Dinner.

4. Team Science Award: This award recognizes the importance of interdisciplinary teams to the translation of research discoveries into clinical applications and

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The ACTS mission is to advance research and education in clinical and translational science to improve human health. For more information, visit actscience.org

[The Association](#)

The Deadline to submit is December 14, 2015. For a full list of requirements and selection criteria for each award, please click [here](#).

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Nominations Open for ACTS Board Officer Director-at-Large

Do you know an individual that is dedicated to advancing the field of Clinical and Translational Science? The new director will join a group of 16 actively engaged board members to steer ACTS leadership roles in advancing the disciplines of Translational Science.

Eligibility & Expectations:

- Must be a member of ACTS in good standing
- Serve a three year term
- Participate on monthly calls
- Participate on ACTS committees as needed

All nominations are due by **December 14, 2015**.

Please click [here](#) to learn more and to submit a nomination.

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From the Hill: ACTS Advocacy News Dr. Robert Califf Confirmation Hearing & Finalizing FY2016 Budget



Before adjourning for the Thanksgiving recess, the Senate's Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee held a hearing on the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf for the next Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Overall, the Committee spoke highly of Dr. Califf's character and qualifications.

While Congress considers the nomination of Dr. Califf and other pressing issues, including finalizing the FY 2016 budget, the administration is currently working on regulatory and policy activities of interest to the clinical and translational research community. Most notably, there is an ongoing effort to update the

Common Rule and modernize human research protections.

To read comments from Dr. Califf, Chairman Alexander, and Ranking Member Patty Murray and learn more, click [here](#).

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News from ACTS

ACTS Member Highlight: Share Your Exciting News Stories with Us!
Save the Date Now for Translational Science 2016

Translational Science News

An Update on the Precision Medicine Initiative Cohort Program
Group Seeks More Funds for FDA Drug Approvals
IBM Watson to Help Pinpoint Rare Diseases at Boston Children's Hospital
More Money Pledged for NIH But Questions Remain

Grant Opportunities

Precision Medicine Initiative Cohort Program Biobank (U24)

for Clinical and Translational Science

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News from ACTS

ACTS Member Highlight: Share Your Exciting News Stories with Us!

Share Your Exciting News Stories With Us! Does your institution have news you want to share with the *ACTS Connection* readership? Do you have an investigator doing something innovative? Let us know! From innovative projects, star scholars and trainees, to award winning faculty, help us share the news that is important to you by submitting it through our [online form](#).

Your news may be shared on the ACTS website, and other ACTS social media sources!

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Save the Date Now for Translational Science 2016

Mark Your Calendars! Translational Science 2016 will take place April 13-15 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC. Registration for Translational 2016 is expected to open in December 2015.

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Translational Science News

An Update on the Precision Medicine Initiative Cohort Program

Two months after accepting the design framework for the effort, Francis S. Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health, reports on the status of the Precision Medicine Initiative Cohort Program. Collins notes that there are new **funding opportunities**, an expert group of outside advisors is being established, and a nationwide search has been launched for a permanent director of the PMI Cohort Program. Meanwhile, in order to ensure that privacy is at the forefront of the initiative, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy has unveiled the PMI Privacy and Trust Principles. The principles define core values and methods for sustaining public trust while maximizing the benefits of precision medicine.

From "An Update on the Precision Medicine Initiative Cohort Program"
NIH News (11/17/15) Collins, Francis S.

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Group Seeks More Funds for FDA Drug Approvals

As lawmakers look at changes to speed up new drug approvals, Research America, a research advocacy group, is asking Congress for more funds for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). In a letter sent Nov. 11 to the leading members of the relevant appropriations subcommittees in each chamber, the coalition of universities, businesses, and nonprofit groups called for about \$200 million more for FDA in 2016, to at least \$2.8 billion. The letter notes, "A quarter of all consumer spending is on FDA-regulated products. We expect the FDA to assure that these products meet the high standards Americans deserve, and, because lives may hang in the balance, to do so as quickly as possible. The FDA needs adequate resources to meet those expectations."

From "Group Seeks More Funds for FDA Drug Approvals"
The Hill (11/11/15) Sullivan, Peter

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IBM Watson to Help Pinpoint Rare Diseases at Boston Children's Hospital

A collaboration between Boston Children's Hospital and supercomputer IBM Watson could help diagnose rare diseases. Engineers will first conduct proof-of-concept testing on a rare kidney condition, hoping that Watson will learn about the condition from academic literature and pinpoint related genetic mutations. Clinicians at Children's Hospital will then feed de-identified genomic sequencing data into the supercomputer to see if it accurately identifies patients with the condition. If it is successful, IBM will develop a method by which the hospital's physicians can use the

information to more quickly diagnose patients.

From "IBM Watson to Help Pinpoint Rare Diseases at Boston Children's Hospital"
Boston Business Journal (11/10/15) Bartlett, Jessica

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More Money Pledged for NIH But Questions Remain

An agreement reached in Congress to lift the cap for domestic spending by \$40 billion over the next two years has encouraged hopes for increased funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). A multi-year funding commitment may come in the form of the 21st Century Cures Act, which passed the House in July and included \$8.75 billion over five years in new funding for NIH. It is uncertain whether the Senate version of the bill will also include mandatory NIH funding, as some conservative Republicans object to new mandatory spending. Questions about the bill include how to pay for the new spending and the inclusion of accelerated Food and Drug Administration approvals of new treatments.

From "More Money Pledged for NIH But Questions Remain"
The Hill (11/08/15) Sullivan, Peter

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Grant Opportunities

Precision Medicine Initiative Cohort Program Biobank (U24)

The National Institutes of Health (NIH), through the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, has issued a funding opportunity announcement (FOA) as part of the Precision Medicine Initiative Cohort Program. The Precision Medicine Initiative Cohort Program intends to build a research cohort of at least 1 million U.S. volunteers involved in a long-term effort to better understand factors involved in individual health and disease. This FOA will support a biobank for the program, responsible for establishing novel methods and technologies for sample collection, processing, and management. NIH intends to commit \$15 million in fiscal year 2016 to fund one award. Applications are due by Feb. 4, 2016.

From "Precision Medicine Initiative Cohort Program Biobank (U24)"
NIH Grants (11/16/15)

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NHLBI Progenitor Cell Translational Consortium (U01)

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) is accepting applications from researchers and organizations wishing to participate in the NHLBI Progenitor Cell Translational Consortium. The consortium seeks to translate advances in progenitor cell biology to applications for heart, lung, and blood diseases. Under a cooperative agreement, NHLBI intends to fund up to five awards. Total costs for each award will be up to \$924,000 in fiscal year 2016. The next application due date is Feb. 8, 2016.

From "NHLBI Progenitor Cell Translational Consortium (U01)"
NIH Grants (11/10/15)

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NHLBI Progenitor Cell Translational Consortium Coordinating Center (U24)

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) is seeking applicants for a coordinating center to provide administrative infrastructure for the NHLBI Progenitor Cell Translational Consortium. The consortium will include multiple research hubs that use progenitor cells in translational research into heart, lung, and blood diseases. The consortium will consist of the research hubs, funded through a separate funding opportunity announcement (FOA), and the coordinating center funded through this FOA. Under a cooperative agreement, NHLBI intends to fund one award, with total costs of up to \$616,000 in fiscal year 2016. The application due date is Feb. 8, 2016.

From "NHLBI Progenitor Cell Translational Consortium Coordinating Center (U24)"
NIH Grants (11/10/15)

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