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Science Versus Trump

Proposed cuts to the funding of US scientific agencies will be detrimental to global health – not just the health of Americans.

By Catherine Bollard, President of the International Society for Cellular Therapy, US.

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President Donald Trump's budget request for 2018 caused a huge stir in the scientific community because of its potential impact on research. Funding for a number of

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agencies has been cut, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The NIH's proposed 2018 budget is \$26.9 billion, down from \$34.6 billion in 2017. All eyes will now be on Congress, which ultimately decides what funding agencies receive. It is important to emphasize that although Trump's focus is on the US, his views and policies have a global impact, especially given that a number of US federal agencies support global research. Foreign position scientist programs, involving travel to and from the US, have been incredibly effective in addressing global health issues, such as HIV, malaria and Ebola. When you see budget cuts that could affect these programs, you realize the devastating impact it could have.

Some members of the US public argue that their tax dollars shouldn't be spent on research and trading outside of the US, but it is important to emphasize that global research ultimately helps the US. For example, although the Ebola epidemic mainly affected Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, it also ended up on America's doorstep and caused a huge panic. The epidemic was brought under control with an international collaborative effort funded from multiple sources, including the US. The funding is also being used to develop a vaccine, which is progressing well so far, and will help many people in future breakouts. Another example is Zika, which has begun to affect the US. Tackling Zika requires global collaboration. Zika cannot be studied effectively without bringing foreign doctors to countries like the US to be trained



The July/August issues features a celebration of philanthropy in the pharma industry, showcasing projects at a number of companies including GlaxoSmithKline and Morningside Pharmaceuticals. Upfront investigates Eli Lilly's advances in continuous manufacturing and the perils of a "Bad Brexit", and in In My View, Catherine Bollard argues that scientific funding cuts in the US could be detrimental to global health. In NextGen, Stephanie Corgie gives the story of Zymtronix and its

appropriately – or without sending doctors from the US to Central South America. Yes, American taxpayers' money may be spent on these global initiatives, but ultimately it will still benefit the US. Ebola and Zika are just two examples; there are multiple other diseases that are unlikely to see a cure without global funding.

As an industry, we have made incredible leaps forward in science and medicine. In particular, I believe that cell therapies have come a long way and we are on the verge of a major shift in medical care. Cell therapies, however, do not fit the general pharma business model so the field needs help to reach its full potential. Cell therapies require extensive research and development, and usually involve the manufacturing of a unique product on a per patient basis, which makes it a less attractive therapeutic model for pharma companies. Though some research projects in drug-focused fields may be picked up by the industry if government funding decreases, it isn't likely to happen with cell therapy research given the challenges around commercialization and return on investment.

The US political climate isn't the only one that could impact global health and science – we still don't yet know how Brexit and other changes in UK politics might come into play. I believe that funding global initiatives and collaborative approaches across multiple countries are the way to tackle today's unmet medical needs in areas such as cancer, immune related disorders and neurodegenerative disease. The industry

enzyme immobilization technology; and in Best Practice, Stephen Tindal and Ronak Savla argue why a fresh approach to formulation for each new molecule is the most effective. We also Sit Down With Steve Davis, President and CEO of PATH.

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In My View



Experts share a single strongly-held view or key idea on issues in small molecule or biologic drug development.

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needs to voice its concerns over propositions that could damage scientific progression. The International Society for Cellular Therapy has a presence in the US and internationally, and we are looking for other avenues to affect change. But, for now, uniting the scientific community to educate people about the importance of funding global ventures is highly important.

welcome. Articles should be focused, personal and passionate. They can be up to 600 words in length, and should be written in the first person.

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