After talks on legislation raising the federal debt ceiling between Congressional leadership on both sides of the aisle and President Biden stalled earlier this week, a smaller number of representatives for the White House and Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) began meeting to work on a compromise. Republicans and Democrats have signaled that they are still far away from reaching consensus on a deal that could be passed through both chambers and signed into law. However, both sides have stated that defaulting on the national debt is not an option and remain optimistic that a deal will be reached before June 1. Negotiations will continue throughout the rest of the month and President Biden is cutting short his international trip that began on Wednesday due to the issue’s importance. In addition, while the Senate is scheduled to be in recess next week, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) noted that Senators should be ready to travel back to Washington next week if they need to vote on agreed upon debt ceiling legislation.

The University of Minnesota Washington Update provides intelligence and analysis on recent federal activities. Contact Jackson Clark, Lewis-Burke Associates LLC, at jackson@lewis-burke.com with any questions or comments related to the Update’s content.

Policy Updates and Funding Opportunities

Policy Update: Biden Administration Announces End of COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

On May 11, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) officially terminated the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE), which has been in effect since January 21, 2020. The PHE has allowed the federal government to waive or modify certain requirements across a range of areas, including policies in Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the delivery of telehealth services, health professions workforce flexibilities, and expanded data collection. Since February 11, when HHS announced that the PHE would be coming to end, HHS and other federal agencies have released guidance in addition to proposed and finalized rules extending certain PHE flexibilities and continued access to COVID-19 vaccinations and treatments. While not connected to the COVID-19 PHE, in February 2020, Secretary Becerra initiated a declaration to facilitate the use of emergency use authorization (EUA) for medical countermeasures. Although the COVID-19 PHE has been terminated, the current EUAs issued for COVID-19 will remain in effect as will
access to vaccines and treatments. Other federal agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), also issued pandemic-era flexibilities on student exchange programs which have now ended.

An overview of COVID-19 PHE policies impacting the health care, academic medicine, and higher education community can be found here.

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**Funding Opportunity: EDA Releases Phase 1 Solicitation for the Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program**

The U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for Phase 1 of the highly anticipated Regional Technology and Innovation Hub program (Tech Hubs). Tech Hubs were authorized through the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 (CHIPS+) at $10 billion through 2027 and were funded at $500 million in the fiscal year (FY) 2023 appropriations bill. Through this program, EDA intends to make place-based investments in geographically diverse regions that have strong resources, capacity, and potential to become globally competitive in key technology areas within the next decade and ensure all outputs, including industries and job growth, remain in the United States.

Applying for a Tech Hub will be a two-phase process. The first phase, supported by this NOFO, solicits applications for eligible consortia to pursue **Tech Hub Designation** – which is formal recognition by EDA that a consortium within a region has the potential to be a global leader in a technology area and a prerequisite to Phase 2 funding – and/or **Strategy Development grants**, which provide additional funds for planning and coalition development. Both programs under this NOFO have considerations for underserved regions and communities, including rural areas and EPSCoR states. This fall, EDA will announce Designations and release the NOFO for Phase 2 Implementation awards. Implementation awards will provide initial funding of $50-75 million to approximately five to ten consortia. Consortia must receive formal Designation in Phase 1 to compete for Phase 2 funding.

EDA anticipates making $15 million available for Phase 1 Strategy grants under this NOFO. Strategy grants will range from $400,000 to $500,000 for 18 to 36 months, depending on the level of local match. Designation is not funded unless paired with a Strategy grant. Applications for Phase 1, including Strategy grants and Designation, are due **August 15, 2023**. The solicitation for Phase 2 Implementation grants is anticipated to be released in the fall of 2023 for proposals that received Designation status in Phase 1.

A full summary and analysis of the NOFO can be found here.

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**Funding Opportunity: NIH Releases Notice of Intent to Publish a Funding Opportunity for the Advancing Cancer Control Equity Research Through Transformative Solutions (ACCERT) Initiative**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) recently announced its intent to publish a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the **Advancing Cancer Control Equity Research Through Transformative Solutions (ACCERT) Initiative** (U19) in partnership with the National Cancer Institute (NCI) which aims to address the impact of social determinants of health (SDOH) on adverse cancer control outcomes. NIH will fund up to four Research Centers and one Coordination Center as part of the ACCERT Consortium. The official NOFO is expected to be published in Summer 2023 with an expected application due date of early Fall 2023.

UMN Washington Update
Prepared by Lewis-Burke Associates LLC
May 18, 2023
Each ACCERT Research Center is required to address the adverse impacts that SDOH have on cancer outcomes, develop and evaluate community engagement strategies, and build capacity for diverse researchers and community partners to carry out the intervention studies. Research teams within each ACCERT Center may be composed of investigators located at one institution or in collaboration with researchers at different institutions. Each ACCERT Center team must also collaborate with community partners that have a demonstrated collaborative history of activities that showcase outcomes relevant to the ACCERT Center core components.

A webinar is expected to be held immediately after the NOFO is published. Interested applicants are encouraged to view the presentation of this initiative to the Joint Virtual Meeting of the NCI Board of Scientific Advisors (BSA) and the National Cancer Advisory Board (NCAB). Accompanying presentation slides are available to view here.

**Award Information:** NIH intends to commit $6.5 million to fund three to four Research Centers in fiscal year (FY) 2024.

**Eligibility:** Any domestic public or private entity is eligible to apply.

**Funding Opportunity: ARPA-H Releases Novel Innovations for Tissue Regeneration in Osteoarthritis (NITRO) Program BAA**

The Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) released a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) soliciting proposals for its newly launched Novel Innovations for Tissue Regeneration in Osteoarthritis (NITRO) program. The NITRO program is the first announced ARPA-H program, and its BAA is separate from the first ARPA-H Open BAA that was released this March. Additional programs and BAAs are expected to be released in the coming months as ARPA-H continues the hiring and onboarding processes of additional program managers, who will each control a budget of $50-100 million and play a crucial role in the design of research programs and project selection among submitted proposals. The NITRO program manager is Ross Uhrich, DMD, MBA, whose bio can be found here.

The NITRO program is soliciting proposals that develop innovative forms of regenerative and reconstructive medicine to create minimally or non-invasive therapeutics that fully regenerate intra-articular cartilage and the subchondral bone in osteoarthritis patients. To accomplish this, proposals should focus on one or multiple technical areas, found below, with additional information on each of them available in the full BAA.

- **Technical Area 1 - Needle-Based and/or Non-Invasive Subchondral Bone Regeneration** – Proposals must also include Technical Area 2
- **Technical Area 2 - Needle-Based and/or Non-Invasive Cartilage Regeneration** – Proposals must also include Technical Area 1
- **Technical Area 3 - Allogeneic and Autogenous Non-Immunogenic, Load-Bearing and Osteochondroinductive Total Replacement Joints** – Proposals may be submitted alone or include Technical Areas 1 and 2

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ARPA-H anticipates funding multiple awards utilizing cooperative agreements or other transaction agreements (OTA). The BAA does not dictate a minimum or maximum award amount, and funding is subject to the availability of funds and the discretion of the program manager within the parameters of their budget.

ARPA-H is holding a proposers’ day for interested applicants on June 15, 2023, from 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM EST. Interested applicants need to register here by June 8, 2023. Registrants for the proposers’ day will also be posted to the NITRO teaming page, where potential proposers can share their profiles and learn more about other interested parties. ARPA-H anticipates that teaming, while not required, will be necessary to achieve the goals of the program and encourages the formation of teams with varied technical expertise to submit a proposal to the BAA.

Proposers to the BAA must submit an abstract detailing the proposed research concept; innovation and impact; proposed work; team organization and capabilities; and rough order of magnitude estimate of timeline and federal funds requested by June 23, 2023. Full proposals are due by July 28, 2023. Additional information, including submission instructions, can be found in the full BAA.

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**Funding Opportunity: NSF Issues DCLs to Support Clean Energy Research**

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has released two new Dear Colleague Letters (DCLs) to support Clean Energy research. Both opportunities include all NSF Directorates and will support: Conference Proposals on Clean Energy Topics; and Clean Energy Technology RAISE or EAGER Proposals. The DCLs are closely aligned with the Biden Administration’s efforts to address climate change and NSF’s new “Build a Resilient Planet” theme that includes a whole-of-NSF approach to address challenges associated with the impacts of a changing climate. Both DCLs support efforts to increase the “use of clean energy sources to benefit all sectors of the economy, to ensure social justice, and to contribute to the public good.”

The DCLs identify specific topic areas that align closely with Clean Energy priorities at the Department of Energy (DOE). However, proposals must fall within the scope of NSF-supported research and education which prioritizes fundamental and use-inspired projects. Proposals also must align with at least one NSF core program. Applicants should be guided by results from “recent NSF workshops, National Academies studies, workshop reports by U.S. Department of Energy, and similar sources.” While the DCLs encourage new collaborations between academia and Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs), including DOE National Laboratories, NSF research funding to FFRDC collaborators is not permitted. Specific topics that will be given preference highlighted in the DCLs include:

a. Hydrogen, fusion, and/or geothermal technologies  
b. Industrial heat and/or energy efficiency technologies  
c. Offshore wind and/or wave energy technologies  
d. Critical materials for clean energy technologies  
e. Net-zero fuels and/or bioenergy  
f. Needs for education and workforce training

Proposals are encouraged to include research related to computational, simulation, and data-science tools that can lead to “new insights in clean energy technology development.”
DCL: Conference Proposals on Clean Energy Topics

The DCL calling for Conference Proposals on Clean Energy Topics will support workshops that create new collaborations in clean energy topics within academia or between academia and FFRDCs. Proposers are encouraged to include a focus on convergent research, engagement with a diverse range of institutions, and innovative approaches to broadening participation.

The submission of conference proposals will be by invitation only following the submission on a four-page concept outline due to NSF by June 30, 2023. Full conference proposals will be due by August 16, 2023. Individuals may only serve as PI or Co-PI on no more than two conference proposals. Conferences must be help in the U.S. during the fall and winter of 2023/24, and proposals must not exceed $100,000.

DCL: Clean Energy Technology RAISE or EAGER Proposals

The DCL calling for Clean Energy Technology RAISE or EAGER Proposals invites interdisciplinary proposals to develop “potentially transformative, convergent, fundamental research proposals in the area of clean energy technologies.” For this DCL, NSF defines clean energy technologies as energy generated from biomass, geothermal, wind, hydropower, tidal power, and solar sources. The DCL will support Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering (RAISE) and Early-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) proposals. EAGER proposals support high-risk, high-reward research through “exploratory work in its early stages on untested, but potentially transformative, research ideas or approaches.” RAISE proposals support bold, interdisciplinary projects that cut across programs and/or disciplines and could lead to transformational advances.

The submission of RAISE or EAGER proposals will be by invitation only following the submission on a four-page concept outline. Both EAGER and RAISE concept outlines must refer to one of the clean energy topics (a-f) highlighted above plus at least one relevant NSF core program. The concept outlines should describe the research idea and explain why the research is “innovative, potentially transformative, or otherwise potentially impactful.” Collaborations with researchers at FFRDCs and/or industry are welcome.

EAGER concept outlines are due to NSF by June 14, 2023, with full proposals due by August 2, 2023. EAGER proposals are typically supported at up to $300,000. Individuals may only be included in one concept outline and subsequent EAGER proposal.

RAISE concept outlines are due to NSF by July 12, 2023, with full proposals due by September 28, 2023. In addition to indicating which clean energy technology area and which NSF program the RAISE proposal is aligned with, concept outlines should explain why the project is suitable for RAISE funding. RAISE proposals may be supported at up to $1 million for up to five years.

Sources and Additional Information:

- The DCL calling for Clean Energy Technology RAISE or EAGER Proposals is available at https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2023/nsf23109/nsf23109.jsp.
- Information on the Build a Resilient planet theme as included in the NSF budget request for FY 2024 is available at https://nsf.gov/resources.nsf.gov/2023-03/26_fy2024_0.pdf?VersionId=NYUILXRv86SGPeCgb0Lq4rjPx8h4psR8.
• Information on EAGER proposals is available at https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg22_1/pappg_2.jsp#IIE3.

Funding Opportunity: CDC Center for Forecasting and Outbreak Analytics Releases Solicitation for Centers for Outbreak Analytics and Disease Modeling

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Center for Forecasting and Outbreak Analytics (CFA) released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to establish a network of Centers for Outbreak Analytics and Disease Modeling (OADM). The goal of this program is to “develop a network of innovators to design, prototype, test, refine, evaluate, and implement new and enhanced capabilities to improve disease modeling and analytics that enhance decision support during outbreaks of infectious diseases” through partnership and collaboration between academia, public health organizations, and the private sector. The CFA aims for the network of OADMs to bolster the capabilities of U.S. infectious disease response by enabling a pipeline of research and development for innovative data, modeling, and analytical tools and enhancing communication between public and private stakeholders and federal public health agencies.

The CFA was launched in April 2022 with $200 million in funding from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and has already made nearly $21 million in funding awards to universities and invested $5 million to support partnerships with the National Science Foundation (NSF) and Department of Energy (DOE) to further advance federal infectious disease modeling capabilities. Its goal is to enable timely, effective decision-making to improve outbreak response using data, models, and analytics – aiming to be the equivalent of the National Weather Service for infectious diseases.

The NOFO for the OADMs is made up of five components. Applicants are required to respond to the first component and one of components 2-4. Applicants may also choose to respond to component 5, for a maximum total of three components per application. The individual components, with additional information on each available in the full NOFO, are as follows:

• **Mandatory Component 1 - Outbreak Analytics and Disease Modeling Public Health Response**: Focus on “foundational activities such as preparing data use agreements as needed to access relevant data, memoranda of understanding and institutional review board (IRB) protocols where required to allow rapid scale-up of efforts across the network.”

• **Optional Component 2 - Centers for Innovation in Outbreak Analytics and Disease Modeling**: “Develop new (or enhance existing) analytic tools and platforms by applying new technologies; Produce innovative analytic products and output by using novel data or synthesizing diverse data; Train and develop pipeline of infectious disease modelers.”

• **Optional Component 3 - Centers for Integration of Outbreak Analytics and Disease Modeling into Practice**: “Pilot test innovations in real world settings”
• **Optional Component 4 - Centers for Implementation of Outbreak Analytics and Disease Modeling:**
  “Bring proven/tested approaches to scale across organizations and jurisdictions; Outbreak analytics and disease modeling up-skilling and continuing education.”

• **Optional Component 5 - Coordinator of the Outbreak Analytics and Disease Modeling Network:**
  “Develop a network of innovators in disease modeling and forecasting in active collaboration with practitioners.”

The focus of each component in the network of OADMs supported by this NOFO will be innovation and translation to identify, develop, test, evaluate, and implement new technology, analytic, and decision support approaches that improve the effectiveness of U.S. public health responses. The NOFO will only support non-research activities, and if research is proposed, the application will not be considered.

**Eligibility:** Eligible applicants include institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, local and state governments, and the private sector.

**Award Information:** CDC anticipates funding up to 13 awards, with a total period of performance funding of $262,500,000 across all awards. The period of performance length is five years, with an average one-year award amount of $5,500,000. The range of one-year award amounts is dependent on the optional components applied for, and the range could be from $3,500,000 to $6,500,000. Information on award amounts for each of the optional components can be found in the full NOFO.

**Deadlines:** Applications are due July 14, 2023. Letters of intent are required, must include which components the applicant will be applying to, and are due June 13, 2023.

**Sources and Additional Information:**

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