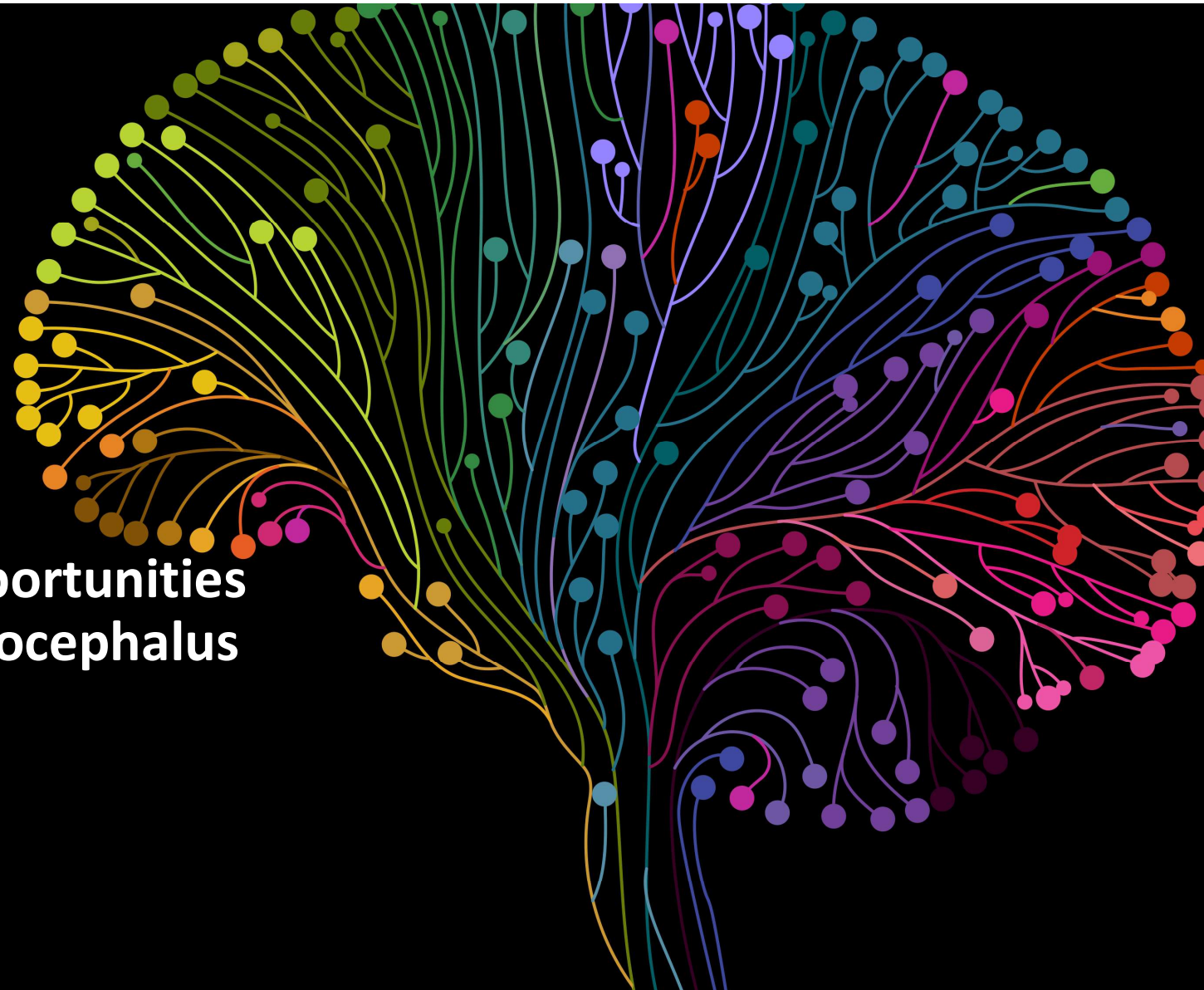




July 22, 2026

NINDS Funding Opportunities for Advancing Hydrocephalus Research

Jill A. Morris, Ph.D.



Agenda



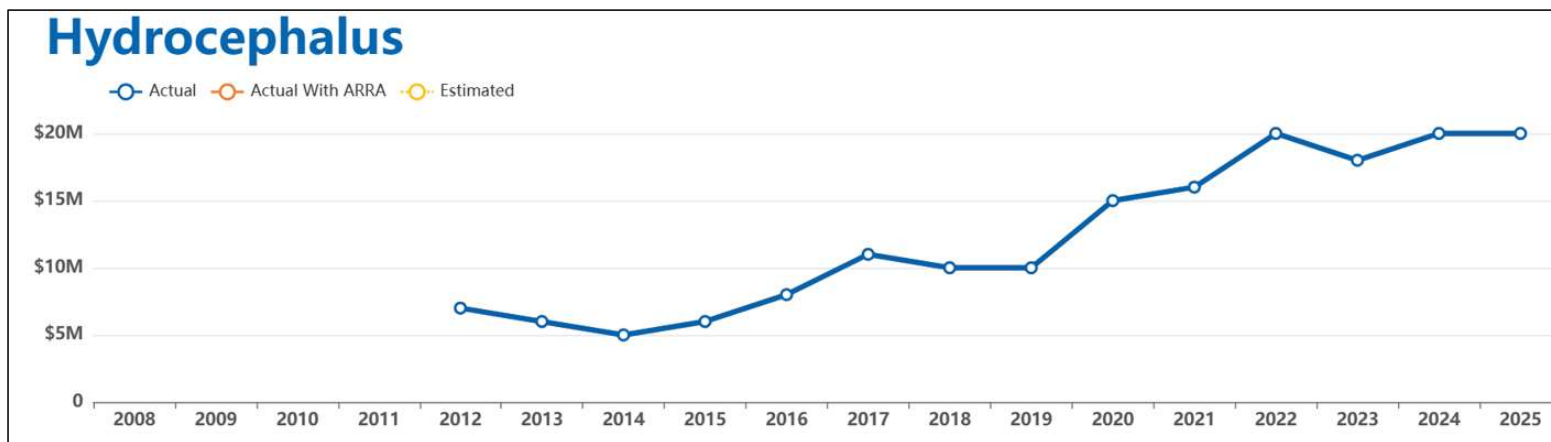
- Current NIH/NINDS investment in hydrocephalus research
- NIH policy changes affecting applicants
- How funding decisions are made
- Funding opportunities
- Q&A

Hydrocephalus Funding



The Research, Condition, and Disease Categorization (RCDC) System

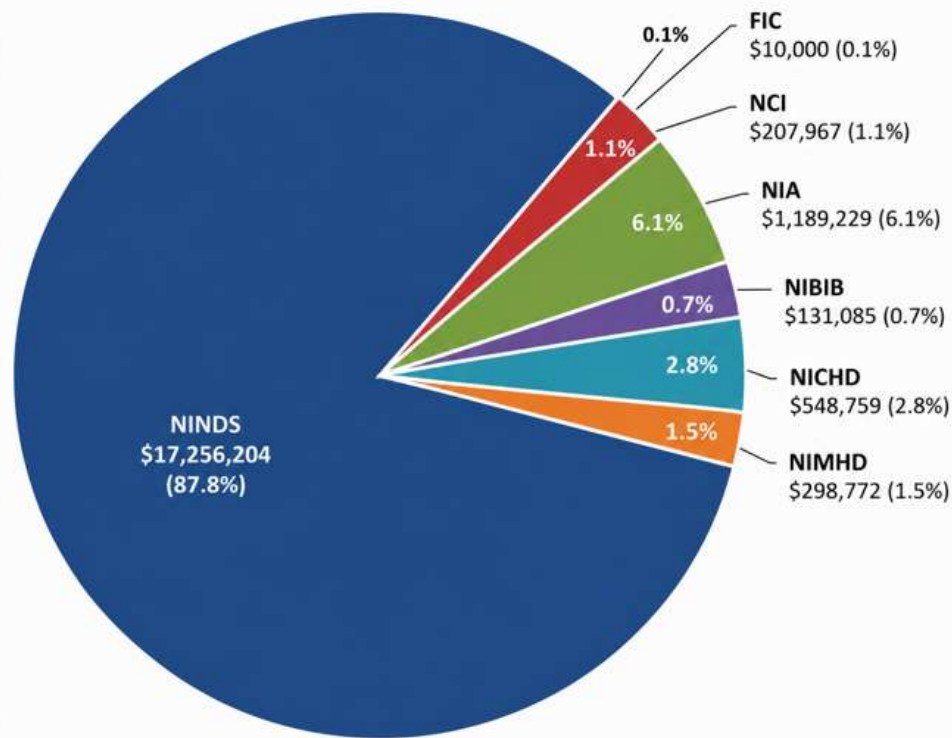
Research/Disease Areas (Dollars in millions and rounded)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Hydrocephalus	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>



Hydrocephalus Funding



NIH Funding by Institute
(Total: \$19,642,016)



NINDS Mission

- The mission of NINDS is to seek fundamental knowledge about the brain and nervous system and to use that knowledge to reduce the burden of neurological disease for all people.

Top 10 NINDS Research Advances of 2025



- U01NS122764 – Dr. Luciano and PENS Team
- A Placebo-Controlled Effectiveness in INPH Shunting (PENS) Trial
- doi: 10.1056/NEJMoa2503109
- <https://www.ninds.nih.gov/news-events/directors-messages/all-directors-messages/reflecting-2025-advancing-neuroscience-and-honoring-75-years-discovery>



New Research Shows Benefit of Surgery for Idiopathic Normal-Pressure Hydrocephalus

Idiopathic normal-pressure hydrocephalus (iNPH) is an often-misdiagnosed condition that causes problems with walking, thinking, and bladder control. Until now, few treatment options have been verified by clinical research. This randomized clinical trial tests the effects of shunt surgery in people with iNPH. In this procedure, a surgeon implants a small tube into the brain to drain extra fluid that is causing symptoms. The study provides important evidence to guide diagnosis and treatment decisions for managing a condition that is often underrecognized.

A Randomized Trial of Shunting for Idiopathic Normal-Pressure Hydrocephalus

Farewell and Thank You to Dr. Walter Koroshetz



Walter J. Koroshetz, M.D.
Former Director

NINDS

Director 2015 – 2026

Acting Director 2014 – 2015

Deputy Director 2007 – 2014

Harvard University

Professor of Neurology, Harvard Medical School

Vice Chair of Neurology, Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH)

Director of Stroke and Neurointensive Care, MGH

Led Neurology Resident Training (MGH) 1990 – 2007

All Staff – Reduction in workforce: 143

-Division of Neuroscience, Communications, Legislative & Policy,
Office of Pain Policy and Planning, Management team,
Acquisitions, Ethics

Changes in NIH Priorities and Policies



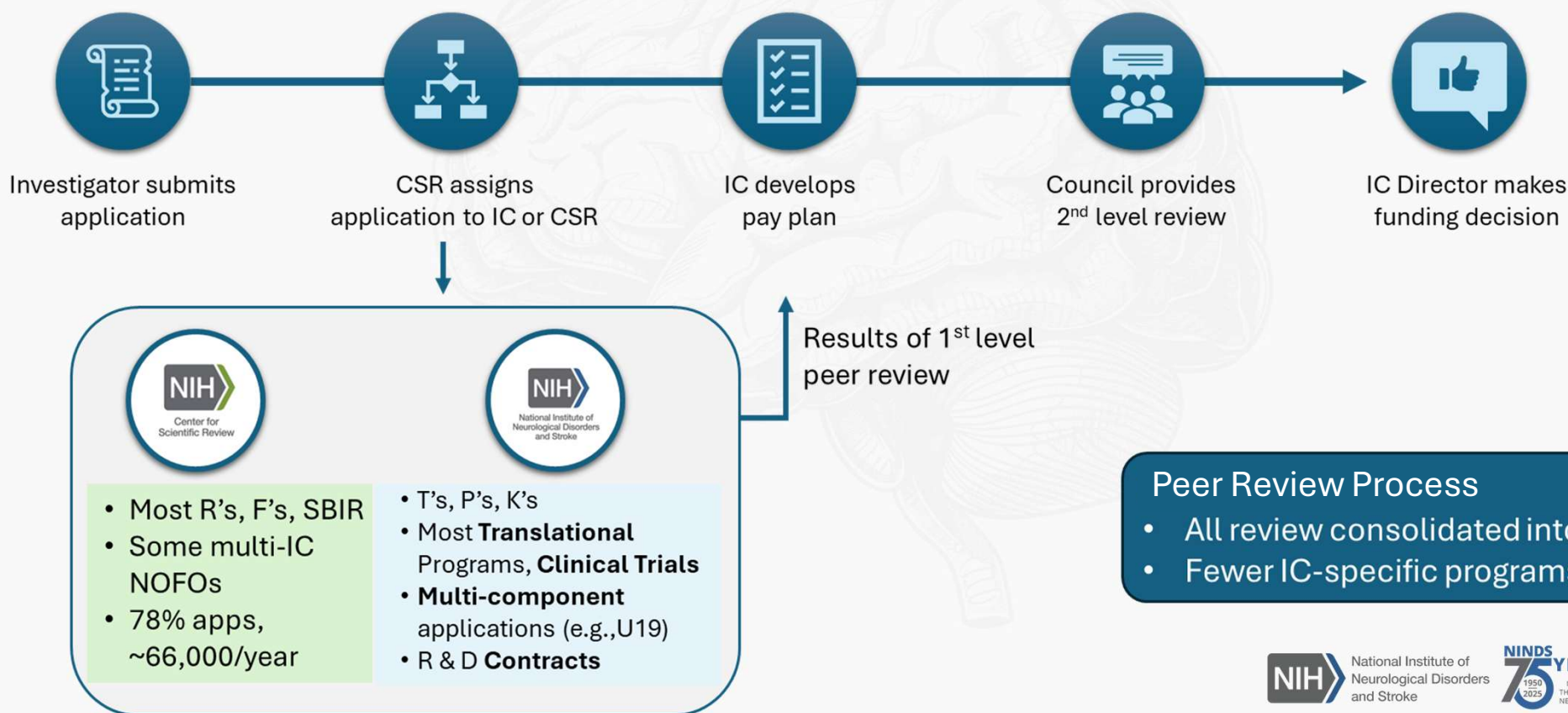
Updated NIH priorities

- Centralization of peer review to the Center for Scientific Review (CSR)
- Reduction in Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs)
- Grants.gov as the Single Official Source for NIH Grant and Cooperative Agreement Funding Opportunities
- Highlighted Topics
- Foreign subaward policy changes
- <https://grants.nih.gov/policy-and-compliance/implementation-of-new-initiatives-and-policies/nih-grants-and-funding-information-status>
- <https://grants.nih.gov/policy-and-compliance/implementation-of-new-initiatives-and-policies/updates-to-finding-nih-funding-opportunities-and-information>

Change in Peer Review

Centralization of Peer Review to the Center for Scientific Review

Current Peer Review Process



NIH's Path to a Simpler Funding Opportunity Landscape



- **NIH is streamlining funding opportunities** by reducing the number of NOFOs and emphasizing broader funding announcements.
- **Fewer NOFOs ≠ fewer awards**—NIH remains committed to funding the best science.
- **Greater flexibility for investigators** to propose innovative, investigator-driven research.
- **Targeted funding opportunities** will still be used to address critical scientific and public health priorities.
- **Broader funding announcements** simplify the application process while supporting a wide range of research.

<https://grants.nih.gov/news-events/nih-extramural-nexus-news/2026/03/nih-path-to-a-simpler-funding-opportunity-landscape>

Updates to NIH Funding Information



Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) Reduction and Consolidation

- ✓ NINDS (January 2025): 84
- ✓ Target (December 2025): 42
- ✓ New parent announcements under development

FY26 NOFOs moved to Grants.gov

- ✓ Forecasts also published here

Central Consolidation of Institute-Specific Funding Information

grants.nih.gov

- ✓ Information on new NIH policies

Highlighted Topics (HTs)

- ✓ New mechanisms to identify research priority areas by institute
- ✓ Elimination of Notices of Special Interest (NOSIs)

<https://grants.nih.gov/policy-and-compliance/implementation-of-new-initiatives-and-policies/updates-to-finding-nih-funding-opportunities-and-information#overall-reduction-in-number-of-nih-nofos%E2%80%8B>

<https://grants.nih.gov/funding/find-a-fit-for-your-research/nih-institutes-centers-offices>

<https://grants.nih.gov/news-events/nih-extramural-nexus-news/2025/08/introducing-highlighted-topics-a-centralized-and-simple-resource-to-learn-about-research-areas-of-interest-to-nih>

Grants.gov

Grants.gov as the Single Official Source for NIH Grant and Cooperative Agreement Funding Opportunities

SIMPLER

HomeSearchAboutCommunitySign in

Search funding opportunities

Tip: Use a minus sign to exclude words or phrases, like "-research"

[Copy this search query](#)

☒ Must include all words (ex. transportation AND safety)
☐ May include any words (ex. transportation OR safety)

1 Opportunity1

[Export results as .csv](#)

Sort byMost relevant (Default)

Close date	Status	Title	Agency	Award min	Award max
Jan 7, 2028	Open	NIH Exploratory/Developmental Research Project Grant (Parent R21 Clinical Trial Not Allowed) Number: PA-25-304	National Institutes of Health Posted date: Dec 18, 2024 Expected awards: --	\$--	\$--

Forecasted Funding Opportunities on Grants.gov



An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#)

Grants.gov SIMPLER

Home Search About ▾ Community ▾ Sign in

Search funding opportunities

[Return to Grants.gov](#)

💡 Tip: Use a minus sign to exclude words or phrases, like "-research"

Search **Filters** [Copy this search query](#) ⓘ

☒ Must include all words (ex. transportation AND safety)
☐ May include any words (ex. transportation OR safety)

Forecasted ✕ **Open** ✕

1,595 Opportunities

[Export results as .csv](#)

1 2 3 4 5 ... 64 [Next](#) >

Sort by **Most relevant (Default)** ▾



NINDS Efficacy and Exploratory Clinical Trials (UG3/UH3 - Clinical Trial Required)



Agency: National Institutes of Health

[Assistance Listings](#): 93.853--Extramural Research Programs in the Neurosciences and Neurological Disorders

Last Updated: May 13, 2026

[View version history on Grants.gov](#)

Description

The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke ([NINDS](#)) intends to publish a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to solicit applications for research on exploratory and efficacy clinical trials that address questions within the mission and research interests of the NINDS and may evaluate drugs, biologics, and devices, as well as surgical, behavioral and rehabilitation therapies. Applications are not being solicited at this time. Notice is being provided to allow potential applicants sufficient time to develop meaningful collaborations and responsive projects. This NOFO will utilize the UG3/UH3 activity code. Investigators with expertise and insights into the mission and research interests of the NINDS, found at the NINDS website (<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/>), are encouraged to begin to consider applying for this new NOFO.

Eligibility

Forecasted

Estimated Post Date:

November 12, 2025

Estimated Application Due Date:

February 10, 2026

Estimated Due Date Description:

Not available

Estimated Award Date:

November 1, 2026

Estimated Project Start Date:

December 1, 2026

Fiscal Year:

2026

Highlighted Topics (HTs)



Highlighted Topics are scientific areas where NIH encourages applications

- Priorities not conveyed by parent announcements
- New or emerging scientific areas
- Scientific areas not readily associated with particular institutes (eg Exposome research)
- More coordination within NIH on cross-cutting topics
- These are not funding opportunities
- May identify areas with targeted funds
- Could potentially assist with consolidating reviews
- Will be reviewed annually, but can be updated by NIH institutes at any time
 - Council approvals not currently required (but NIH leadership approval is)
- Instructions not available yet for how HTs will be identified in the submission process

Updates to NIH Funding Information


[eRA](#) | [Glossary](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Help](#)

- NEW TO NIH
- FUNDING ▼
- GRANTS PROCESS ▼
- POLICY & COMPLIANCE ▼
- NEWS & EVENTS ▼
- ABOUT US ▼

[Home](#) > [Funding](#) > Find a Fit for Your Research

Funding

NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts

Funding Categories

Find a Fit for Your Research

Highlighted Topics

NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices

Explore Who and What NIH Funds

Find a Fit for Your Research

As you begin your search for NIH research funding, It's important to explore topic ideas for your next application and learn about NIH's structure. Determine which parts of NIH are likely to support your project within their scientific mission areas.



Highlighted Topics

Consider NIH's centralized list of highlighted topics for your next investigator-initiated grant application. Each topic represents a selected research priority area within one or more NIH Institutes, Centers, or Offices that may or may not have dedicated funding.



NIH Institute, Center, and Office Profiles

As the largest public funder of biomedical research in the world, NIH supports a variety of research and research-related programs. To get a grant, your project must fit the mission of at least one NIH Institute, Center, or Office (ICO) that participates in your chosen funding opportunity. Each NIH ICO has its own scientific mission, priorities, and budget.

<https://grants.nih.gov/funding/find-a-fit-for-your-research>



NIH International Collaborations: New Foreign Subaward Policy & PF5 Mechanism



- **NIH Foreign Collaboration Policy (Effective May 1, 2025)**
- NIH **no longer permits new foreign subawards** under traditional NIH research grants.
- Existing foreign collaborations must transition to a new NIH award structure.
- Goal is to improve:
 - **Transparency** of NIH funding
 - **Financial accountability**
 - **Oversight and compliance**
 - **National security**
- Foreign consultants and purchases from foreign vendors are **not affected** by this policy.

¹ <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-26-084.html>

New Collaborative International Research Project (PF5)



- **New Collaborative International Research Project (PF5)**
- New **PF5 activity code** for research grants involving NIH-funded international collaborators.
- Uses a **single, multi-component application** that is reviewed as one scientific project.
- If selected for funding:
 - U.S. institution receives the **prime award**
 - Each foreign collaborator receives an **independent NIH award (RF2)** rather than a subaward.
- Required application components include:
 - Overall Component
 - Research Project Component
 - International Project Component(s) (one per foreign institution)

<https://grants.nih.gov/funding/activity-codes/PF5>

Changes in NIH Priorities and Policies



July 17, 2025	Fairness and Originality in NIH Applications	NOT-OD-25-132	Maximum of six NIH grant applications per calendar year and banning applications substantially developed using artificial intelligence.
December 3, 2025	Administrative Burden Reduction	NOT-OD-26-019	Eliminated NIH-wide requirements for Letters of Intent and prior approval for unsolicited applications requesting ≥\$500K direct costs under most parent announcements.
Jan. 21, 2026	eRA Prior Approval Module Required	NOT-OD-26-026	Requires all NIH prior approval requests to be submitted through the eRA Prior Approval Module.
Jan. 22, 2026	NIH Policy on Research Involving Human Fetal Tissue	NOT-OD-26-028	Establishes updated NIH requirements governing research involving human fetal tissue.
Mar. 25, 2026	Domestic Subaward Prior Approval	NOT-OD-26-062	Requires NIH prior approval for certain changes involving domestic subawards.

}

Unified NIH Funding Strategy

All ICO funding policies should:

- Align with the NIH's mission
- Prioritize scientific merit; ICOs should consider peer review information in its entirety
- Integrate a breadth of topics and approaches relevant to the ICO's priorities
- Consider investigator career stage and promote sustainability of the biomedical research workforce
- Promote broad distribution and geographic balance of funding, considering the total amount and type of NIH funding already available to each investigator
- Align with the availability of ICO funds



FY 2026 Funding Strategy:

Protecting the Neuroscience Ecosystem

NINDS

- Reflecting the unified funding strategy, **NINDS will no longer use a strict payline funding strategy**. Funding decisions will continue to be based on scientific merit but may also include portfolio balance, investigators' effort and other support, and rigor.
- NINDS will continue to give **special funding consideration to trainees and scientists launching their careers** (e.g., Early-Stage Investigators)
- To fund as many investigators as possible, NINDS will continue to **employ greater stringency** in funding investigator-initiated grants **to investigators with greater than \$2 million in NIH funds**, as well as for parent R01s with **total costs greater than ~\$750,000 per year**.

<https://grants.nih.gov/policy-and-compliance/policy-topics/nih-fiscal-policies/ico-funding-policies-and-considerations/NINDS>.

RPG (R01, R21, R03, R15) Funding Decision Considerations



Scientific Merit (Peer Review)	Programmatic Merit	Financial Stewardship
Considerations: • Normalized Peer-Review Score • Reviewer Comments • Panel Consensus • Secondary level of Review: NANDS Council	Considerations: Positive: Rigor track record, scientific opportunity, public health need, strategic alignment, PI and Institution's Characteristics Negative: Substantial existing funding, large budget (>\$750K TC), limited PI bandwidth, over-represented area of research with extensive funding with similar hypotheses	Considerations: • Maximize investigators funded • Manage rising costs • Balance large-budget impact • Consider available funding to the PI • Geographical consideration of NIH support (IDeA States)



Special Council Review (SCR) Policy



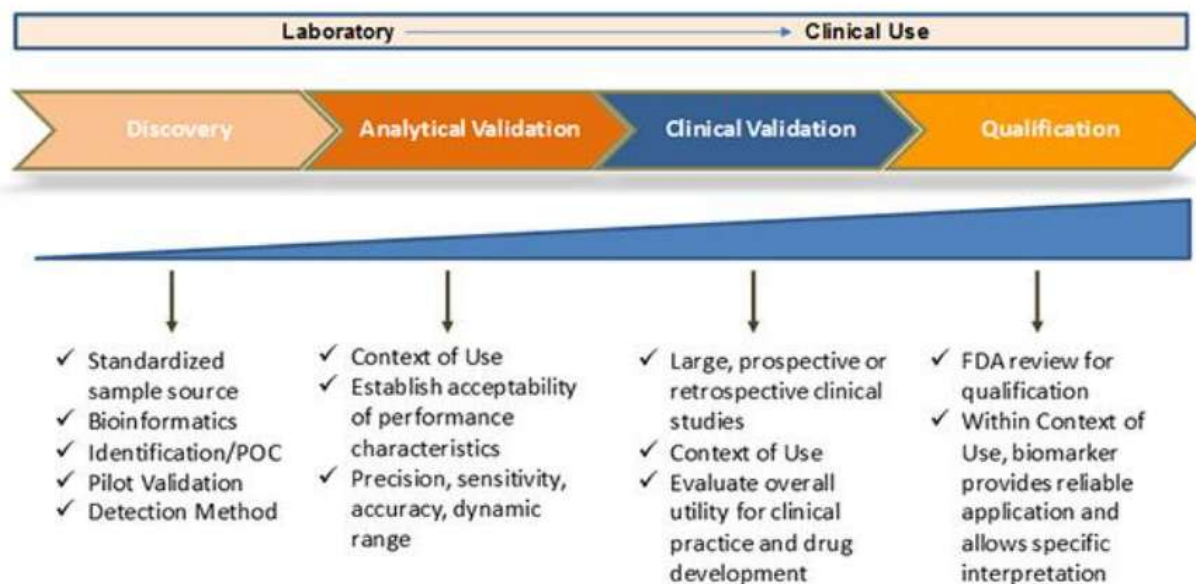
- Special Council Review directs NIH advisory Council members to provide additional consideration for applications from well-supported investigators
 - NINDS policy applies to investigators have **> \$1.5M in total costs per year** in active NIH research awards [\(NOT-NS-24-060\)](#)
- Effective Spring 2026 Council, NINDS will use the NIH-wide SCR policy
 - Additional considerations for investigators with **> \$2M in total costs per year**



NINDS Translational Biomarker Program

Facilitate fit-for-purpose validation of biomarkers ready for use in clinical trials, to accelerate therapeutic development, and improve patient care.

- ✓ Launched in 2018
- ✓ Supports biomarker development for neurological and neuromuscular disorders within NINDS mission
- ✓ Supports context of use (COU) specific validation studies



<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/current-research/focus-tools-topics/focus-biomarkers-research>

INNOVATION GRANTS TO NURTURE INITIAL TRANSLATIONAL EFFORTS (IGNITE)

A Suite Of Early-Stage Translational Funding Opportunities

Overall Goal:

- Encourage the translation of research discoveries into new neurotherapeutics
- Advance projects to meet entry criteria for other NINDS translational programs (ex. BPN)

Entry Criteria

- Strong biological rationale
- Relevance for therapy development

Budget: ≤ \$499,000/Year; ≤ \$750,000 for the 3-year project

The R61/R33 Mechanism

R61: Demonstrate Feasibility and Prepare for R33 (≤ 2 years)

Go/No-Go Milestones

Does this warrant further effort?

≤ 3 years Total



R33: The Main Event (≤ 2 years)

- Clear, quantitative and definitive milestones are essential

Grant Program	Entry Criteria	End Goal
<u>PAR-25-059</u> : Assay Development and Neurotherapeutic Agent Identification (R61/R33 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)	Novelty Strong biological rationale and premise Relevance for therapy development Available test agent(s) or library	Testing funnel to triage candidates, a battery of assays and starting agents that are suitable for BPN and BPN-Biologics
<u>PAR-25-060</u> : Development and Validation of Model Systems to Facilitate Neurotherapeutic Discovery (R61/R33 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)	Translational rationale for the proposed model system or ex vivo system and evidence of value for future drug discovery/development	Translationally relevant animal models, ex vivo systems, testing paradigms, and endpoints
<u>PAR-25-225</u> : Neurotherapeutic Agent Characterization and In vivo Efficacy Studies (R61/R33 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)	Novelty- significant improvement over existing therapies Biological Rationale Relevance for therapy development	Well-characterized early-stage agents that are suitable for BPN and BPN-Biologics

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/current-research/research-funded-ninds/translational-research/innovation-grants-nurture-initial-translational-efforts-ignite-program>



NIH Blueprint for Neuroscience Research

**Twelve NIH Institutes and Centers participate in the NIH Blueprint for Neuroscience Research:
NCCIH, NEI, NIA, NIAAA, NIBIB, NICHD, NIDA, NIDCR, NIEHS, NIMH, NINDS, OBSSR**

The [NIH Blueprint for Neuroscience Research](https://neuroscienceblueprint.nih.gov/) aims to accelerate transformative discoveries in brain function in health, aging, and disease.

Blueprint is a collaborative framework that includes the NIH Office of the Director together with NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices that support research on the nervous system.

By pooling resources and expertise, Blueprint identifies cross-cutting areas of research and confronts challenges too large for any single Institute or Center.

Blueprint Neurotherapeutics, Blueprint Biologics, Blueprint Devices

<https://neuroscienceblueprint.nih.gov/>

A Customized Combination of Infrastructure, Expertise, and Funding

- Cooperative agreement and SBIR Fast-Track award programs support biologics discovery and development
- Access to consultants and contracts that provide discovery, preclinical development, and clinical trial support

Lead Development Team:

Principal Investigator
+ Industry-seasoned consultants
+ NIH staff

PAR-24-293 (UG3/UH3); **PAR-24-294** (SBIR - U44)

Next Receipt Date: **January 27, 2025**

Chris Boshoff, PhD (chris.boshoff@nih.gov)

NIH Grant

Bioactivity/
Efficacy Studies

NIH Contracts

cGMP
Manufacturing

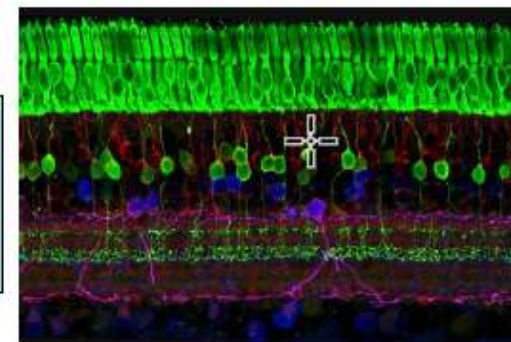
PK/T
St

Trials

Data
Management

Expert
Consultants

<https://neuroscienceblueprint.nih.gov/neurotherapeutics/bpn-biologics>



Thank you!

Jill A. Morris, PhD

Contact: jill.morris@nih.gov