



WASHINGTON UPDATE

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Why Social Science? Share Your Stories!

COSSA has launched a new campaign that seeks to collect stories of social science success from social and behavioral scientists across all disciplines. Is your research pushing the frontiers of science or advancing your field? Has your research contributed to an important finding or breakthrough? Are there interesting applications or potential applications to your work? If so, we want to hear it!



You may submit your stories using COSSA's [Why Social Science?](#) webpage. Stories will be shared through social media ([#WhySocialScience](#)) and other COSSA outreach efforts over the next several months.

CONGRESSIONAL NEWS

Senate Committee Seeks Comments on *COMPETES* Revision

On July 8, the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee issued a [press release](#) requesting public input to help guide the Committee's development of *America COMPETES Act* reauthorization legislation. A [follow-up release](#) was issued last week providing additional details on the Committee's plans. *COMPETES* is legislation originally enacted in 2007 that sought to ensure U.S. leadership in science and technology by making targeted investments at U.S. basic science agencies, including the National Science Foundation (NSF).

As COSSA has been [reporting](#), the House introduced and ultimately passed its version of *COMPETES* legislation earlier this year with steep proposed cuts to social science research, despite ardent objection from the broad scientific community. The Senate has chosen a different approach for developing its NSF legislation this year, which according to the press release and discussions with Senate staff will include significant stakeholder involvement. Interested organizations are invited to submit written comment by August 21 addressing [specific questions](#) posed by the Committee.

FY 2016 Process Stalled as Congress Heads for Summer Break

Despite promises from Republican leaders in the House and Senate to pass fiscal year (FY) 2016 appropriations legislation through "regular order" this year, the FY 2016 process has stalled amid issues ranging from a policy rider pertaining to flying of the Confederate flag on federal grounds that killed the bills in the House and calls for the need to broker a larger budget deal. The House and Senate made some progress before the process sputtered out in recent weeks, with both chambers advancing all 12 of their bills through committee and the House managing to pass six of them; however, there were no FY 2016 bills brought to the Senate floor because of a united Democratic strategy to block the bills until a larger budget deal can be struck.

On the agenda upon Congress's return in September will be to pass a continuing resolution (CR) to keep federal agencies operating beyond the start of the new fiscal year on October 1 and to avert a government shutdown. Rumors indicate that an initial CR could run until December. Also upon their return after Labor Day, Congress is expected to begin in earnest negotiations with the White House on a broader budget deal that will seek to provide some relief from sequestration, or the tight budget caps that are tamping down discretionary spending for defense and non-defense accounts, including research. Until these caps are addressed, and hopefully raised or eliminated, the FY 2016 appropriations bills remain in limbo with Senate Democrats expected to continue blocking the bills and President Obama noting his intent to veto any bill that keeps within the caps. All this makes for an expectedly busy fall for Congress.

Senate Agriculture Appropriations Bill Advances through Committee

The Senate Appropriations Committee approved its version of the [FY 2016 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill](#) (S. 1800) on July 16, after the bill's approval by the Agriculture Subcommittee earlier in the week. Among the agencies funded in the bill are the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) principal statistical agencies, the Economic Research Service (ERS) and National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), which houses the Department's main competitive grants program, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). The House Appropriations Committee passed its version of the bill on July 8 (more on the House bill is available [here](#)).

[Read on](#) for more details.

FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION NEWS

NIH Seeks Input on Congressionally-Mandated Agency-Wide Strategic Plan

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) recently issued a time-sensitive Request for Information (RFI) ([NOT-OD-15-118](#)) inviting comments and suggestions on the framework for its congressionally-mandated NIH-wide Strategic Plan. **NIH is requesting feedback of no more than 300 words by August 16, 2015.** The agency also plans to host webinars in early to mid-August to gather additional input.

NIH Deputy Director Larry Tabak presented the agency's first iteration of its draft plan at the June 11 meeting of the NIH Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD) (see Update, [July 14, 2015](#)). At the July 20 meeting of the ACD, Tabak presented a revised draft framework incorporating the feedback it received from Committee members, including recommendations to keep the plan short, approximately 10 pages; make it inspirational and forward looking; integrate cross-cutting themes, and accentuate needed flexibility and nimbleness. The revised framework includes areas of opportunity that apply across biomedicine. Tabak explained that each area of opportunity will include a "succinct description of emergent opportunities" and will highlight specific examples of recent breakthroughs.

[Read on](#) for more details.

NIH Seeks Comments on Proposed Alternative to National Children's Study

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is [inviting comments](#) on its [proposed plan for the Environmental influences on Child Health Outcomes \(ECHO\) program](#) and has issued a time-sensitive Request for Information (RFI). The ECHO program responds to the NIH's decision to discontinue the National Children's Study (NCS) in December 2014, per the recommendations of a working group of the Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD) of NIH (See Update, [December 19, 2014](#)). NIH emphasizes that in keeping with the spirit of the NCS, ECHO aims to address the critical goal of understanding the impact of environmental influences on children's health and development.

[Read on](#) for more details.

PUBLICATIONS & COMMUNITY EVENTS

AAAS Collecting Stories to Highlight the Importance of Scientific Conferences

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) has launched a [campaign](#) to illustrate for policymakers the positive impacts scientific and technical conferences have on research. Over the past several years, federal regulations and policies have made it increasingly

difficult for scientists and researchers employed by the federal government to attend conferences. AAAS is asking for stories that "highlighting the importance of conference participation to a healthy scientific and technical community," particularly stories that involve collaboration with scientists from federal agencies, national labs, or research institutes. Stories may be submitted on the [AAAS website](#).

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- NICHD: Innovative Development/Use of Technology to Increase HIV Testing and Linkage to Care Efforts in Adolescent Populations (R41/R42, R43/R44) ([RFA-HD-16-029](#)) ([RFA-HD-16-030](#))
- NHLBI: Sickle Cell Disease Implementation Consortium (SCDIC): Using Implementation Science to Optimize Care of Adolescents and Adults with Sickle Cell Disease (U01, U24) ([RFA-HL-16-010](#)) ([RFA-HL-16-011](#))
- NIAAA: Alcohol Use Disorders: Behavioral Treatment, Services and Recovery Research (R01, R03) ([PA-15-299](#)) ([PA-15-300](#))

COSSA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

COSSA Welcomes Virginia Tech

COSSA is thrilled to welcome Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University ([Virginia Tech](#)) as its newest university member. Located in Blacksburg, VA, Virginia Tech receives more than \$7 million annually in federal social and behavioral science research awards and is home to the [Institute for Society, Culture and Environment](#).

COSSA's full membership list can be viewed [here](#). Interested in joining COSSA? More information [here](#).

EVENTS CALENDAR

- [Toxic Stress: How Economic Inequality Hurts Early Childhood Development](#), Washington, DC, July 30, 2015
- [American Psychological Association Annual Convention](#), Toronto, Canada, August 6-9, 2015
- [Rural Sociological Society Annual Meeting](#), Madison, WI, August 6-9, 2015
- [American Statistical Association Joint Statistical Meetings](#), Seattle, WA, August 8-13, 2015
- [American Sociological Association Annual Meeting](#), Chicago, IL, August 22-25, 2015
- [National Conference on Health Statistics](#), Bethesda, MD, August 24-26, 2015
- [American Political Science Association Annual Meeting & Exhibition](#), San Francisco, CA, September 3-5, 2015
- [Economic History Association Annual Meeting](#), Nashville, TN, September 11-13, 2015
- [Innovations in Research: Collaborations & Transformations](#), Cleveland, OH, September 16, 2015
- [Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting](#), Denver, CO, October 15-18, 2015

A list of COSSA members' annual meetings and other events can be found on the COSSA [webpage](#).

COSSA members who have an upcoming event they would like to see listed in the Events Calendar and on our website should send an email to jmilton@coffa.org.

Consortium of Social Science Associations Members

Governing Members

American Anthropological Association
American Association for Public Opinion Research
American Economic Association
American Educational Research Association
American Historical Association
American Political Science Association
American Psychological Association
American Society of Criminology
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
Association of American Geographers
Association of American Law Schools
Law and Society Association
Linguistic Society of America
Midwest Political Science Association
National Communication Association
Population Association of America
Society for Personality and Social Psychology
Society for Research in Child Development

Membership Organizations

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences
American Evaluation Association
American Finance Association
American Psychosomatic Society
Association for Asian Studies
Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management
Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations
Association of Research Libraries
Council on Social Work Education
Economic History Association
History of Science Society
Justice Research and Statistics Association
Midwest Sociological Society
National Association of Social Workers
North American Regional Science Council
Rural Sociological Society
Social Science History Association
Society for Research on Adolescence
Society for Social Work and Research
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues
Society of Behavioral Medicine
Southern Political Science Association
Southern Sociological Society
Southwestern Social Science Association

Centers and Institutes

American Academy of Arts and Sciences
American Academy of Political and Social Science
American Council of Learned Societies
American Institutes for Research

Colleges and Universities

Arizona State University
Boston University
Brown University
Carnegie Mellon University
Clark University
Columbia University
Cornell University
Duke University
Fielding Graduate University
George Mason University
Georgetown University
Harvard University
Indiana University
John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY
Johns Hopkins University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Michigan State University
New York University
Northwestern University
Pennsylvania State University
Princeton University
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
Stanford University
Stony Brook University, SUNY
Texas A&M University
The George Washington University
The Ohio State University
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Irvine
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, San Diego
University of California, Santa Barbara
University of Chicago
University of Colorado, Boulder
University of Illinois
University of Iowa
University of Maryland
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
University of Missouri
University of Nebraska, Lincoln
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
University of Oklahoma
University of Pennsylvania
University of South Carolina
University of Texas, Austin
University of Texas, San Antonio
University of Virginia
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Virginia Tech
West Virginia University
Yale University

The Brookings Institution
Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences
Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research
Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan
Institute for Social Science Research,
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Institute for Women's Policy Research
NORC at the University of Chicago
Owens Institute for Behavioral Research, University of Georgia
Population Reference Bureau
RTI International
Social Science Research Council
Vera Institute of Justice

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is a nonprofit advocacy organization working to promote sustainable federal funding for social and behavioral science research and federal policies that positively impact the conduct of research.

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