



WASHINGTON UPDATE

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FEATURED NEWS

FY 2016 Funding Debate Labors On

Congress was forced to pass another funding extension last week in order to avoid a government shutdown on December 11. Policy makers have given themselves until December 16 at midnight to complete work on the fiscal year (FY) 2016 appropriations bills, allowing for a few more days to work through the many policy riders (dealing with Syrian refugees, Planned Parenthood, and about 40 others) that have slowed progress on the \$1.1 trillion package over the last several weeks. As of the time of this writing, text of a final FY 2016 spending package (also known as an omnibus) has not been released. It has become common practice in recent years to hold off on releasing the text of large bills until the very last minute-- usually a couple of days before it receives a final vote-- in order to minimize any additional roadblocks to final passage. This coupled with the secretive nature of the ongoing negotiations sets up a certain last minute scramble for advocates to digest the bill, develop a position, and activate their stakeholders once it is released. COSSA may release a special issue of *Update* outlining the details of the FY 2016 spending package if the bill text is released before the end of the year.

FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION NEWS

NSF Defends Research Targeted in GOP Waste Reports

Two reports released in recent weeks by Republican policy makers point to hundreds of federally-funded activities they deem to be wasteful and unworthy of taxpayer support. Included in the reports are peer-reviewed research projects supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and National Institutes of Health (NIH). Sen. James Lankford's (R-OK) [Federal Fumbles](#) claims to identify "100 ways the government dropped the ball," poking fun at six NSF grants and two NIH grants, among dozens of other projects. A second report was released just last week by Senator Jeff Flake (R-AZ), [Wastebook: The Farce Awakens](#). Flake's report is said to be a continuation of retired Sen. Tom Coburn's (R-OK) longtime efforts to bring public attention to wasteful federal spending. This report also identifies 100 projects, 16 funded by NSF and a handful from NIH.

NSF recently [commented](#) on the *Federal Fumbles* report, stating, "Each proposal submitted to NSF-- including those deemed 'wasteful' and 'out-of-touch' in the 'Federal Fumbles' report-- is reviewed by science and engineering experts well-versed in their particular discipline or field of expertise." The NSF response goes on to explain the merit of each project called out in Lankford's report, and cautions against using grant titles as the primary basis for understanding the merit of a project.

While not new, these efforts serve to misrepresent sound scientific research and belittle the work of respected scientists. COSSA and partners across the scientific community continue to object to this type of political interference into decision making around federal support for scientific research.

NIH Strategic Plan, PMI Cohort, HIV/AIDS, and Big Data Discussed at NIH Advisory Committee Meeting

The December 10-11 meeting of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD) included an update on the progress of several high-profile initiatives NIH is developing, including the Congressionally-mandated [NIH-Wide Strategic Plan](#), the President's proposed [Precision Medicine Cohort Program](#), assessment of the [NIH HIV/AIDS Research Priorities](#), and the [NIH Big Data to Knowledge \(BD2k\)](#) program. [Read on](#) for full details.

NIH Launches Next Phase of ECHO/Children's Study Follow-On

On December 7, National Institutes of Health (NIH) director Francis Collins announced the next funding phase of the agency's Environmental Influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) program, which includes seven new funding opportunity announcements (FOAs). ECHO is designed to comport with the goals of the National Children's Study (NCS) (see Update, [November 3, 2015](#)) and is being implemented via a series of funding opportunity announcements (FOAs). It is expected that the ECHO program will be supported by and build on [recent awards](#) NIH made in September (see Update, [September 4, 2015](#)). A [nationwide search](#) is underway for an ECHO program manager. In the interim, NIH Deputy Director Lawrence Tabak will continue to lead the program.

ECHO program funding opportunities:

1. Clinical Sites for the IDeA States Pediatric Clinical Trials Network (UG1) [RFA-OD-16-001](#)
2. Data Coordinating and Operations Center for the IDeA States Pediatric Clinical Trials Network (U24) [RFA-OD-16-002](#)
3. Environmental Influences on Child Health Outcomes: Patient Reported Outcomes Research Resource Center Core (ECHO PRO Core) (U24) [RFA-OD-16-003](#)
4. Environmental influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) Pediatric Cohorts (UG3/UH3) [RFA-OD-16-004](#)

5. Environmental Influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) Data Analysis Center (U24) [RFA-OD-16-005](#)
6. Environmental Influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) Coordinating Center (U2C) [RFA-OD-16-006](#)
7. Limited Competition: Exposure Analysis Services for the Environmental Influences on Children's Health Outcomes (ECHO) Program (Admin Supplement) [PA-16-046](#)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- NIFA: Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative ([USDA-NIFA-ICGP-005517](#))
- AHRQ: Increasing Access to Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) in Rural Primary Care Practices (R18) ([RFA-HS-16-001](#))
- NIJ: Research on Measurement of Teen Dating Violence ([NIJ-2016-9001](#))
- HRSA: [Bridging the Word Gap Challenge](#)
- NIH: Click [here](#) for a list of recent opportunities.

COSSA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

SPSSI Seeks Applicants for James Marshall Public Policy Fellowship

The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), a COSSA member, is accepting applications for its [James Marshall Public Policy Fellowship](#), which begins September 1, 2016. The Fellowship is designed to "train early career scientists to (1) contribute to the effective use of scientific knowledge about social issues in the formation of public policy at the federal level; (2) educate the scientific community about how research can contribute to the development of public policy; and (3) establish a more effective liaison between social scientists and various policy-making mechanisms."

The fellowship is a one-year full-time post-doctoral level appointment in a Congressional office in Washington DC. Fellows are expected to "use social-psychological research to inform public policy and participate "in a range of activities involving the application of psychological research to analyze specific social policies and develop science-informed policy."

The deadline to apply is February 1, 2016. See the [program description](#) for full details.

EVENTS CALENDAR

- [American Economic Association Annual Meeting](#), San Francisco, CA, January 3-5, 2016
- [Association of American Law Schools Annual Meeting](#), New York, NY, January 6-9, 2016
- [American Historical Association Annual Meeting](#), Atlanta, GA, January 7-10, 2016
- [Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting](#), Washington, DC, January 7-10, 2016
- [Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting](#), San Juan, PR, January 7-9, 2016
- [Society for Social Work and Research Annual Conference](#), Washington, DC, January 13-17, 2016
- [Society for Personality and Social Psychology Annual Convention](#), San Diego, CA, January 28-30, 2016

- [American Psychosomatic Society Annual Scientific Meeting](#), Denver, CO, March 9-12, 2016
- [COSSA Annual Meeting & Social and Behavioral Science Advocacy Day](#), Washington, DC, March 15-16, 2016
- [Southwestern Social Science Association Annual Meeting](#), Las Vegas, NV, March 22-27, 2016
- [Midwest Sociological Society Annual Meeting](#), Chicago, IL, March 23-26, 2016
- [Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting](#), San Francisco, CA, March 28-April 2, 2016
- [Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Annual Meeting](#), Denver, CO, March 29-April 2, 2016
- [Society of Behavioral Medicine Annual Meeting](#), Washington, DC, March 20-April 2, 2016
- [Population Association of America Annual Meeting](#), Washington, DC, March 31-April 2, 2016
- [Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference](#), Seattle, WA, March 31-April 3, 2016
- [Society for Research on Adolescence Biennial Meeting](#), Baltimore, MD, March 31-April 2, 2016

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.

EDITOR'S NOTE

This will be the last regular issue of *Update* for 2015, although we may release a special edition if and when Congress passes a final funding package for FY 2016. As always, check the [COSSA website](#) for the latest updates. We will return to our regular biweekly schedule on Tuesday, January 12, 2016.

Happy holidays to all our readers from the COSSA staff!

Save the date!
COSSA's 2016 Annual Meeting will take place on March 15 & 16.

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Society for Research in Child Development

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Council on Social Work Education
Economic History Association
History of Science Society
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

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American Institutes for Research
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Population Reference Bureau
RTI International
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COSSA

Executive Director: Wendy A. Naus

Deputy Director: Angela L. Sharpe

Assistant Director for Public Affairs: Julia Milton

Address all inquiries to COSSA at newsletter@cozza.org. Telephone: (202) 842-3525

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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