

From: Kenneth Laslavic
To: UCSF Research Community
Date: June 14, 2017
Re: NIH Next Generation Researchers Initiative and the proposed Grant Support Index (GSI)

Overview

In response to comments received from the research community, the NIH has announced that it will not implement the proposed Grant Support Index (GSI). Instead, the NIH will launch the Next Generation Researchers Initiative in order to address the funding imbalance that impacts early-career researchers.

Background

On May 2, 2017, NIH Director Francis S. Collins announced a plan to limit the total number of grants provided to any individual principal investigator.ⁱ The plan would have implemented a Grant Support Index (GSI) that would have measured grant support by assigning a point value to various grant mechanisms.

On June 5, 2017, NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Funding Michael Lauer published a summary of comments received from the research community in response to NIH Director Collins' May 2nd announcementⁱⁱ. The comments raised serious concerns about the proposed Grant Support Index.

On June 8, 2017, the NIH Advisory Committee to the Director had a meeting where the NIH Director abandoned the proposed GSI and instead announcedⁱⁱⁱ the Next Generation Researchers Initiative.

UCSF's Rapid Response

On June 1, 2017, in response to the proposed GSI, Keith Yamamoto, Vice Chancellor of Science Policy and Strategy sent a message to the UCSF Senate with updates and information about the proposed GSI^{iv}. The UCSF Academic Senate also wrote a memo^v about the proposed GSI and provided feedback directly to the NIH Office of the Director that the proposed scoring system will serve to disincentive use of the Multiple PI system^{vi}.

Next Generation Researchers Initiative

The goal of the Next Generation Researchers Initiative is to support early- and mid-career investigators.

The initiative will include various approaches as outlined on the NIH website^{vii}:

- *“Further extending the payline for early stage investigators*
- *Providing additional support for mid-career investigators with ≤ 10 years as a principal investigator*

- *NIH will also place greater emphasis on current NIH funding programs aimed at early-stage and mid-career investigators, such as:*
 - *NIH Common Fund’s New Innovator Awards*
 - *National Institute of General Medicine Sciences Maximizing Investigators’ Research Award (MIRA)*
 - *National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research Sustaining Outstanding Achievement in Research (SOAR) awards*
 - *National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases Supplements to Advance Research (STAR) from Projects to Programs*
 - *Other special awards from specific institutes”*

Resources

Members of the UCSF research community are encouraged to read the [NIH Director’s Statement](#)^{viii} regarding the Next Generation Researchers Initiative.

Comments for the UCSF Committee on Research can be directed to Kenneth Laslavic (kenneth.laslavic@ucsf.edu).

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ⁱ <https://www.nih.gov/about-nih/who-we-are/nih-director/statements/new-nih-approach-grant-funding-aimed-optimizing-stewardship-taxpayer-dollars>

ⁱⁱ <https://nexus.od.nih.gov/all/2017/06/05/following-up-on-feedback-on-strengthening-biomedical-research-workforce/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://acd.od.nih.gov/documents/presentations/06082017Tabak.pdf>

^{iv} <https://senate.ucsf.edu/sites/default/files/2017-06/Message-from-Vice-Chancellor-Keith-Yamamoto-re-planned-GSI.pdf>

^v <https://senate.ucsf.edu/sites/default/files/2017-06/COR-Announcement-re-proposed-Grant-Support-Index.pdf>

^{vi} <https://senate.ucsf.edu/sites/default/files/2017-06/UCSF-Committee-on-Research-Letter-to-NIH-OD.pdf>

^{vii} <https://grants.nih.gov/ngri.htm>

^{viii} <https://www.nih.gov/about-nih/who-we-are/nih-director/statements/launching-next-generation-researchers-initiative-strengthen-biomedical-research-enterprise>