



COSSA

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CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES & NEWS

FY 2015 Appropriations Bills Begin Moving in the House

On April 30, the House Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations Subcommittee marked up and reported out the fiscal year (FY) 2015 [CJS appropriations bill](#). The bill, which advanced through subcommittee without amendment, proposes increased funding in FY 2015 for agencies important to social and behavioral science. Below is a snapshot of the funding levels proposed for the National Science Foundation, National Institute of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, and Census Bureau.

	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 Request	FY 2015 House	House vs. FY 2014	House vs. Request
National Science Foundation	7171.9	7255.0	7409.6	3.31%	2.13%
Bureau of Justice Statistics	45.0	55.4	47.3	5.11%	-14.62%
National Institute of Justice	40.0	47.5	42.0	5.00%	-11.58%
Census Bureau	945.0	1211.4	1117.5	18.25%	-7.75%

(figures reported in millions of dollars)

[Read on](#) for additional details.

Senate Appropriations Committee Examines Federal Investment in Innovation

On April 29, the Senate Appropriations Committee held a hearing to examine the impact of federal research investments, entitled *Driving Innovation through Federal Investments*. Witnesses included John P. Holdren, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP); Ernest Moniz, Department of Energy (DOE); Francis S. Collins, National Institutes of Health (NIH); France A. Córdoba, National Science Foundation (NSF); and Arati Prabhakar, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). Outside organizations were invited to submit written testimony prior to the hearing to be included as part of the hearing record. [COSSA](#) and more than 130 other organizations submitted statements ahead of the hearing, which are available on the Committee's [website](#).

[Read on](#) for full details from the hearing.

Secretary of Education Testifies on FY 2015 Education Budget

On April 29 and 30, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan testified before the [House Education and](#)

[the Workforce Committee](#) and the [Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee](#) on the Administration's fiscal year (FY) 2015 budget request for the Department of Education. In both hearings, Secretary Duncan highlighted the differences between the President's budget and House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan's (R-WI) recently released budget, which features large cuts to many programs in the Department of Education. The overarching goal of the President's budget request in education, Duncan said, is to widen equity to all students from preschool to higher education.

Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), in his last appropriations hearing before his retirement, lauded the new *First in the World* fund, an [Investing in Innovation](#) program that would provide \$175 million in competitive grants to institutions of higher education for innovative strategies. During the hearing Duncan reiterated his call for approving the Administration's ambitious preschool program, a cause for which Harkin has frequently stated his approval. Through both hearings, two questions were asked regarding international education and foreign language funding. Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ) asked about the continued lack of support for foreign language learning at the K-12 level, and about the minimal funding provided for Title VI and Fulbright-Hayes in the President's request, to which Duncan provided a noncommittal response. Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA) also emphasized the importance of Title VI in preparing students to work in an increasingly internationalized economy.

Of additional interest, Rep. Marcia Fudge (D-OH) mentioned that she is working on a bill to expand Pell Grant eligibility to dual-enrolled early college students (students taking college courses while in high school, for example). Regarding education data, Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC) urged the Administration to increase transparency and make more of its data available to the public. Finally, Rep. John Tierney (D-MA) urged the Administration to continue to focus on student loan programs while pointing out that Ryan's budget would eliminate \$9 billion from the Pell Grant program.

FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITIES & NEWS

NSF Seeks Recommendations for Advisory Committee Membership

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has issued its annual call for recommendations for membership to the federal advisory committees that advise its various directorates and offices, including the Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) and Directorate for Education and Human Resources (EHR). NSF advisory committees meet at least twice a year and provide guidance on program planning and management. Additional information can be found in the [Federal Register](#) notice.

NSF Education and Human Resources Advisory Committee Meets

On April 30 and May 1, the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Education and Human Resources (EHR) [Advisory Committee](#) held its biannual meeting to discuss new business, the budget, and ongoing projects. Representatives from a number of COSSA member institutions sit on the advisory committee, including Mary Ann Rankin, University of Maryland; William Schmidt, Michigan State University; Evelyn Hammonds, Harvard; Roland Fryer, Harvard; Paul Kim, Stanford; Roy Pea, Stanford; Karen Klomparens, Michigan State University; and Suzanne Ortega, University of North Carolina.

Joan Ferrini-Mundy, EHR Assistant Director, discussed new developments and the EHR's proposed budget for fiscal year (FY) 2015. She noted that EHR's primary focus has been and will continue to be transparency and accountability through clearer abstracts, post-panel reviews, portfolio analyses, and other methods. Additionally-and this was an overarching theme of the meeting-EHR provides research, development, and model building for STEM learning. EHR will seek to make investments and solicitations for research that informs these areas. Newly appointed NSF Director France Cordova emphasized these objectives during her address to the committee and also said that EHR should continue its efforts in broadening participation, particularly in the STEM fields.

New in FY 2015, EHR will introduce a core research component to its budget. The core research program will merge with the existing research on education and learning section. Also new in FY 2015 is the Improving Undergraduate Stem Education program, funded at \$118.5 million. This program will support working towards a common system in measuring the impact of the undergraduate STEM education system. EHR will release two new solicitations for STEM-related research. Spearheaded by EHR, NSF will partner with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in a new graduate fellowship that would send researchers to underdeveloped countries.

HHS Issues 2014 Update to the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease

On April 29, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released the 2014 update to the *National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease*. The Plan is the product of the *National Alzheimer's Project Act* (NAPA), which requires the Secretary of HHS to develop a national plan to address Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) to be updated annually to reflect progress made and shifting priorities. The Plan was developed with input from a public-private Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care and Services, also established by NAPA. The Council makes recommendations to HHS for priority actions designed to expand, coordinate, and condense programs in order to improve the health outcomes of people with ADRD and reduce the financial burden of these conditions on those with the diseases, their families, and society. The Advisory Council's most recent meeting occurred on April 29.

[Read on](#) for details of the plan and the most recent advisory council meeting.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS & COMMUNITY EVENTS

AAAS Holds Annual Forum on Science and Technology Policy

On May 1-2, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) held its annual "Forum on Science and Technology Policy" in Washington, DC. The event featured federal officials from across the government speaking on issues such as the federal R&D budget and federal policies and regulations impacting science and technology. A prevailing theme throughout the two-day event was the importance of scientists engaging in the federal policy process to education Congress and other federal officials about the value of R&D supported by the U.S. government and ways in which the scientific community can better articulate this value.

[Read on](#) for a full summary of the event.

C-FARE Holds Briefing on Public Data and Big Data

The Council on Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics (C-FARE) hosted a congressional briefing on April 29 that explored the topic, "Increasing U.S. Agriculture's Competitive Edge: How Do Public Data and Big Data Fit?" The briefing was the inaugural Jon Brandt Policy Forum, an event series that will share economic research with private and public sector decision makers on issues important to agriculture, food, rural, environmental, and related societal issues. J.B. Penn, Chief Economist for Deere and Company, delivered a keynote address, and a panel discussion provided a variety of perspectives on the relationship between big data and public data. Senator Thad Cochran (R-MS) also stopped in to thank the speakers and express his enthusiasm for the topics being discussed.

[Read on](#) for more details on the forum.

Reminder: CNSF Capitol Hill Exhibition & Reception is May 7

On May 7, members of the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) will participate in the 20th Annual [CNSF Exhibition and Reception](#) on Capitol Hill, entitled *Investments in STEM Research and Education: Fueling American Innovation*. [Exhibitors](#) will include several COSSA members who will showcase important social and behavioral science research funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), including the American Economic Association, Population Association of America, American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, American Statistical Association, National Communication Association, Society for Research in Child Development, as well as several COSSA university members. The event, which often attracts Members of Congress, Congressional staff, and federal agency officials, is free and open to the public. Attendees are asked to RSVP to tspady@aspb.org or 301-296-0934. COSSA is a sponsor of the event.

IHDP to Close; Future Earth Takes its Place

The International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP) has announced its closure as its activities are being folded into the [Future Earth](#) initiative. The closure will be effective June 30, 2014. IHDP was established in 1994 to address critical gaps and provide leadership in international social science research related to global environmental change. A joint project of the International Council for Science (ICSU), the International Social Science Council (ISSC), and the United Nations University (UNU), the program funded research, provided education, and acted as bridge between science and policy.

Three other global change research programs-DIVERSITAS, the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme, and the World Climate Research Programme-will also be folded into Future Earth. Future Earth will be in international hub coordinating new interdisciplinary research on three themes: (1) Dynamic Planet, (2) Global Development, and (3) Transformations toward Sustainability. It is sponsored by the Science and Technology Alliance for Global Sustainability, comprised of ICSU, ISSC, the Belmont Forum of funding agencies, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Environment Programme, UNU, and the World Meteorological Organization as an observer.

In a [statement](#), IHDP's Executive Director Anantha Kumar Duraiappah called his tenure both exciting and challenging as well as frustrating: "Exciting and challenging because of the complexity

of humans and our endeavours towards understanding why and how they behave and react to changes; frustrating because of the lack of time and resources available to mobilize the core social science disciplines not present in a critical mass within the existing networks addressing the problems of global environmental change and sustainability."

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

ERS: Center for Behavioral Economics and Healthy Food Choice Research

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Economic Research Service (ERS), in collaboration with the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, has issued a request for applications to establish a USDA Center for Behavioral Economics and Healthy Food Choice Research. The goal of the new Center will be to "facilitate new and innovative research on the application of behavioral economics theory to healthy food choice behaviors that would contribute to enhancing the nutrition, food security, and health of American consumers." Research related to all food choice behavioral factors would be within the scope of the new Center (excepting work duplicative of the USDA-funded Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs); however, a substantial portion of the Center's efforts must focus on federal nutrition assistance programs-- the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). The Center will be expected to:

- (1) "Establish an innovative research program on behavioral economics and healthy food choice that addresses questions of public policy interest and importance;
- (2) Broaden the network of social scientists who participate in research that applies principles and theories of behavioral economics to the study of healthy food choice behaviors that will lead to improvement of nutrition, food security, and health outcomes; and
- (3) Disseminate information obtained via its research program to a diverse stakeholder audience, including other researchers, policy and program officials, and the general public."

An anticipated \$1.9 million will be available in fiscal year 2014 to support activities over the next three years. The deadline for applications is June 30, 2014. Click [here](#) to download the full request.

NIH: Predoctoral Training in Biomedical Big Data Science

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) recently issued a funding opportunity announcement (FOA) entitled *Predoctoral Training in Biomedical Big Data Science* (RFA-HG-14-004) soliciting applications for graduate training programs designed to train the next generation of scientists.

The long-term goal of the NIH Big Data to Knowledge Initiative (BD2K) is to support the advances in data science, other quantitative sciences, policy, and training that are needed for the effective use of Big Data in biomedical research. This predoctoral training initiative is different from most currently funded NIH training programs. It will require that trainees work effectively at the intersection of the scientific areas of computer science/informatics, statistics/mathematics, and biomedical science. It expects active participation of training faculty from all of the scientific disciplines noted above to work collaboratively across disciplines as co-mentors of trainees in Big Data Science. The initiative is also designed to develop the skills required to participate in a team approach to solving data-intensive biomedical problems, while nurturing the skills necessary to be

an independent investigator in Big Data Science. The agency strongly encourages institutions with expertise in the scientific areas discussed who have not previously received training grants from NIH to apply.

Participating institutes and centers include: Human Genome Research (NHGRI); Cancer (NCI); Eye (NEI); Heart, Lung and Blood (NHLBI); Aging; Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA); Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID); Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS); Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB); Child Health and Human (NICHD); Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD); Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR); Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK); Drug Abuse (NIDA); Environmental Science (NIEHS); Mental Health (NIMH); Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS); Nursing (NINR); Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD); Library of Medicine (NLM); Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM); the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR); and the Office of Strategic Coordination (Common Fund). For additional information see the [FOA](#).

There are also two companion FOAs: Revisions to Add Biomedical Big Data Training to Active Institutional Training Grants ([RFA-HG-14-005](#)), and Institutional Training Grants ([RFA-HG-006](#)).

NIGMS: Innovative Programs to Enhance Research Training

The National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) has issued a funding opportunity announcement (FOA), *Innovative Programs to Enhance Research Training (IPERT)* (PAR-14-170), seeking applications that propose creative and innovative educational activities to complement and/or enhance training of a workforce to meet the nation's biomedical, behavioral, and clinical research needs.

The goals for IPERT also include enhancing the diversity of the biomedical, behavioral, and clinical research workforce, assisting in recruiting individuals with specific specialty or disciplinary backgrounds to research careers, and fostering a better understanding of biomedical, behavioral, and clinical research and its implications.

The FOA encourages activities with a primary focus on courses for skills development, structured mentoring activities, and outreach programs. The proposed activities must address the goals of creating a highly skilled and diverse biomedical workforce.

Applications are due after May 9, 2014. Additional information is available [here](#).

NIH: Healthy Habits: Timing for Developing Sustainable Healthy Behaviors in Children and Adolescents

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) and the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) are seeking applications for a funding opportunity announcement (FOA), *Healthy Habits: Timing for Developing Sustainable Healthy Behaviors in Children and Adolescents* (PA-14-1777), designed to employ innovative research to identify mechanisms of influence and/or promote positive sustainable health behavior (s) in children and youth (birth to age 21).

Positive behaviors may include: developing effective self-regulation strategies, practicing proper dental hygiene, developing healthy sleep patterns, employing effective decision-making in risk

situations, engaging in age-appropriate physical activity and/or participating in healthy relationships, and eating a balanced and nutritious diet. Applications should target social and cultural factors, including, but not limited to schools, families, communities, population, food industry, age-appropriate learning tools and games, social media, social networking, technology and mass media. Applications from multidisciplinary teams are strongly encouraged.

For additional information see the [FOA](#).

AHRQ: Disseminating and Implementing Evidence from PCOR in Clinical Practice Using Mobile Health Technology

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is soliciting grant applications for projects that use mobile health technology (mHealth) to facilitate dissemination and implementation of findings produced by Patient-Centered Outcomes Research (PCOR) into clinical practice. The funding opportunity aims to evaluate the effectiveness of novel approaches that use mHealth tools to enable the timely incorporation and appropriate use of PCOR evidence in clinical practice. Applications are due August 5, 2014. The full solicitation is available [here](#).

COSSA MEMBER ACTIVITIES

SRCD Briefing Discusses High Quality Preschool Expansion

On April 29, the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), a COSSA Governing Member, along with the Foundation for Child Development sponsored a congressional briefing on research related to high quality preschool expansion. In her opening remarks, Martha Zaslow of SRCD noted the President's call for substantial funding for programs like Head Start and the universal preschool initiative, and the importance for policymakers to understand what the research says about high-quality preschool in large-scale settings. [Read on](#) for additional details of the event.

COSSA ACTION & OUTREACH

COSSA Participates in DBASSE Advisory Committee Meeting

On April 29-30, the National Research Council's (NRC) [Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education](#) (DBASSE) [Advisory Committee](#) met in Washington, DC to discuss current DBASSE activities and future directions. COSSA Executive Director Wendy Naus was invited to provide the committee with an update on the policy landscape impacting the social and behavioral sciences. Also presenting was Paula Skedsvold, consultant to the American Educational Research Association (AERA), a COSSA Governing Member, and the Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences (FABBS). Naus and Skedsvold provided an update on current Congressional activities, including the status of the fiscal year (FY) 2015 appropriations bills for agencies and programs important to social and behavioral science, and the *Frontiers in Innovation, Research, Science and Technology Act* (H.R. 4186), or FIRST Act.

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is an advocacy organization promoting attention to and federal support for the social and behavioral sciences.

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