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EVENTS CALENDAR

FEATURED NEWS

USDA Announces Plans to Move NIFA and ERS out of DC, Realign ERS with Chief Economist

In August, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) [announced](#) that it plans to move two science agencies, the Economic Research Service (ERS) (one of USDA's two principal statistical agencies) and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) (USDA's main extramural research agency), out of the Washington, D.C. region. USDA cited high attrition rates at these agencies as justification for moving them out of the region, although no data was provided. The Department also plans to administratively realign ERS from its current place within the Research, Education, and Economics (REE) mission area to the Office of the Chief Economist, citing their "similar missions," although ERS is an official statistical agency bound by a set of directives and standards, while the Office of the Chief Economist primarily serves a policy-focused role. ERS' longtime administrator, Mary Bohman, was reassigned ahead of this announcement.

The announcement has raised concerns for many in the science community. The move outside the D.C. area would almost certainly lead to a loss of highly specialized, expert staff at both agencies, and many are skeptical of the Department's argument that retention is a problem for these agencies (both of which had been operating under a long-term hiring freeze). In addition, moving ERS from the research and data arm of USDA (which also includes ERS's sister statistical agency, the National Agricultural Statistics Service) to a policy-focused area of the Department raises concerns about the agency's ability to safeguard the independence of its data and findings.

USDA plans to proceed with these moves without Congressional or stakeholder approval. A [Federal Register notice](#) asking jurisdictions to volunteer to host one or both agencies (the deadline is September 14), but no other public feedback was requested. The Department expects the move to be completed by the end of 2019. COSSA has joined two letters (available [here](#) and [here](#)) asking Congress to intervene to stop USDA from moving ERS (a letter focused on NIFA is forthcoming).

COSSA IN ACTION

New from "Why Social Science?": Misinformation and "Ban-the-Box" Policies



Recent *Why Social Science?* guests posts have addressed how social science can identify strategies to stop the spread of misinformation and how social science research has challenged the conventional wisdom surrounding "ban-the-box" policies. Read the post on misinformation from Melanie C. Green, Associate Professor of Communication at the University at Buffalo [here](#), and the post on "ban-the-box" from Olugbenga Ajilore, Associate Professor of

Economics at the University of Toledo [here](#).

Letters & Statements

- 8/28/2018: FASA Letter on Protecting the Economic Research Service, [Appropriators/Authorizers](#)
- 8/28/2018: [AAEA Letter on Protecting the Economic Research Service](#)
- 8/20/2018: [Letter in Support of the Nomination of Dr. Kelvin Droegemeier as Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy](#)
- 8/13/2018: [Comment on Including Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Measures on NSF's National STEM Workforce Surveys](#)

State of Play: FY 2019 Appropriations for Social Science Research

Both chambers of Congress are back in Washington after the Labor Day holiday and have only a few weeks to make progress on the fiscal year (FY) 2019 appropriations bills before adjourning again for the November midterm elections. At the time of this writing, 6 bills have been passed by the full House of Representatives and 9 by the Senate. None have been sent to the President for his signature. FY 2019 begins on October 1, 2018.

Upon returning to work in September, Congress faces a full plate of must-pass spending legislation, not to mention a Supreme Court nomination and several federal agency nominations. Among the countless unknowns surrounding a possible endgame strategy for appropriations is one certainty- the need to pass a stopgap funding measure, known as a continuing resolution (CR), to avoid a partial government shutdown come October 1. The length of a likely CR, though, is still up for debate. With the leadership of the House and possibly the Senate up for grabs in the November elections, we could see a CR as short as a few weeks or a few months or stretching into next calendar year in the event either chamber changes partisan control.

COSSA has been reporting on the status of the FY 2019 appropriations bills over the last several months. [Read on](#) for a recap of where FY 2019 funding proposals currently stand for federal agencies important to the social science research community.

Senate Committee Considers Droegemeier Confirmation

On August 23, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation held a hearing to consider the [nomination of Kelvin Droegemeier](#) to lead the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Both Senators from Droegemeier's home state of Oklahoma took the opportunity to introduce the nominee, highlighting his public and community service, as well as his dedication to separating politics and science.

Senators from both parties, including Committee Chair Sen. John Thune (R-SD) and Ranking Member Bill Nelson (D-FL), praised Droegemeier's qualifications and reputation for impartiality in science. Senators questioned Droegemeier on research and development competition from China, sexual harassment in science and academia, and climate change. Dr. Droegemeier took opportunities to highlight the importance of social and behavioral science in responding to questions about natural disasters and advancements in social media and technology, reminding Senators that it is important to consider and research the human and social elements of these issues.

The committee is expected to vote on Dr. Droegemeier's confirmation on September 5. Following committee approval, the nomination must be approved by the full U.S. Senate. A recording of the hearing is available on the [committee's website](#).

Senate HELP Committee Hears Update on NIH Cures Implementation

On August 23, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee held an oversight hearing featuring leadership from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The hearing, [Prioritizing Cures: Science and Stewardship at the National Institutes of Health](#), was chaired by HELP Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and included testimony from NIH Director Francis Collins. Dr. Collins was joined by Diana Bianchi, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD); Anthony Fauci, National Institute of

Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID); Richard Hodes, National Institute on Aging (NIA); and Norman Sharpless, National Cancer Institute (NCI). A [similar hearing](#) was held in the House in July.

[Read on](#) for more details.

FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION NEWS

NIH Releases RFI, Delays Enforcement of New Clinical Trials Policy

On July 20, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) issued a Guide Notice ([NOT-OD-18-212](#)) outlining its plans to delay enforcement of key clinical trials reporting requirements for projects traditionally considered basic research.

The Notice, [Delayed Enforcement and Short-Term Flexibilities for Some Requirements Affecting Prospective Basic Science Studies Involving Human Participants](#), follows months of feedback and pressure on NIH from the external research community, including COSSA and several COSSA members, to rescind or at least delay implementation of NIH's clinical trials policy announced in 2016. As [previously reported](#), in an effort to enhance its stewardship of and increase transparency over the clinical trials it funds, NIH established a new definition of "clinical trials," which now captures some basic behavioral and social sciences research and comes with new reporting requirements (see COSSA's [Hot Topic](#) piece for details).

NIH has now released a Request for Information (RFI) ([NOT-OD-18-217](#)) seeking input on the standards NIH should use in registration and results reporting for prospective basic science studies involving human participants. A [blog post](#) from the NIH Office of Extramural Research outlines the following specific topics for which the RFI is seeking comments:

- "Examples of prospective basic science studies involving human participants that pose the greatest challenges in meeting the registration and results information submission requirements at ClinicalTrials.gov, including specific reasons for these challenges (e.g., specific data elements);
- Strengths and weaknesses of potential alternative platforms that might function as conduits for timely registration and reporting of prospective basic science studies involving human participants;
- Additional data elements or modification to existing data elements that could be applied to ClinicalTrials.gov to better meet the needs of the public and of researchers in assuring timely registration and results information submission of prospective basic science studies involving human participants;
- Other existing reporting standards for prospective basic science studies involving human participants and how such standards would fulfill the aims described in the NIH Policy on the Dissemination of NIH-Funded Clinical Trial Information; and
- Any other point the respondent feels is relevant for NIH to consider in implementing this policy for timely registration and reporting of prospective basic science studies involving human participants."

Responses to the RFI must be submitted by November 12, 2018.

White House Seeks Input on New Government Effectiveness Research Center

The White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recently issued a [request for information](#) (RFI) to inform the establishment of a new [Government Effectiveness and Advanced Research \(GEAR\) Center](#). The GEAR Center was proposed in the White House's plan to reorganize the federal government, [Delivering Government Solutions in the 21st Century](#),

released in June (see [COSSA's analysis](#) for details). The Center was described as a public-private partnership that would "engage researchers, academics, non-profits, and private industry from disciplines ranging from behavioral economics, to computer science, to design thinking to use creative, data-driven, and interdisciplinary approaches to re-imagine and realize new possibilities in how citizens and Government interact."

The RFI is seeking recommendations and models to emulate related to the mission, structure, funding, and early focus areas for the new center, as well as information on how existing federal data resources can be used to support its work. A full list of questions is available [here](#). Responses are requested by September 15, 2018.

NSF Launches 2026 Idea Machine

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has launched the [NSF 2026 Idea Machine](#). As [COSSA has reported](#), the Idea Machine is a competition to help set the agenda for fundamental research in U.S. science and engineering for the next decade, including the next set of [Big Ideas](#). According to the agency, the NSF 2026 Idea Machine is an opportunity to contribute to NSF's mission, spur research that will cross traditional scientific boundaries, and address significant societal and scientific questions. Details about [eligibility](#), [timeline](#), and the [judging process](#) are available on the [NSF website](#). Submissions of "Big Ideas" for the 2026 Idea Machine are due by October 26, 2018.

White House to Appoint J. Scott Angle to Lead NIFA

On August 31, the White House [announced](#) that it intends to appoint Dr. J. Scott Angle to be Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), the Department of Agriculture's main extramural research agency. Dr. Angle is a soil microbiologist who most recently was the President and CEO of the International Fertilizer Development Center and has held administrative positions at the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at the University of Georgia and University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Dr. Angle would serve a six-year term, succeeding Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy, whose term ended in May. As NIFA Director, Dr. Angle would be tasked with overseeing the agency's move away from the National Capitol Region, which stakeholders are concerned could threaten the agency's ability to operate effectively (see lead article).

NSF Taps Karen Marrongelle to Lead Education and Human Resources Directorate

The National Science Foundation (NSF) announced on August 21 that it has chosen Dr. Karen Marrongelle to lead the Education and Human Resources (EHR) Directorate. Dr. Marrongelle has served as a professor of mathematics and statistics at Portland State University since 2001 and as the dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Science since 2014. Dr. Marrongelle holds a bachelor's degree in mathematics and philosophy, a master's degree in mathematics, and a doctorate in mathematics education.

Dr. Marrongelle will arrive at EHR with experience in the directorate, having worked as program director in the Division on Research and Learning from 2007 to 2009. EHR supports fundamental research in learning and teaching, and broad efforts to achieve excellence in U.S. science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education. Dr. Marrongelle will begin her appointment on October 1. The full press release can be read on the [NSF website](#).

OHRP Releases Information on Clinical Trial Consent Form Posting, GDPR Guidance

As part of the revisions to the Common Rule (the set of regulations that govern research involving human participants) going into full effect in January 2019 (see [COSSA's coverage](#) for

more details), clinical trials covered by these regulations must publicly post copies of the consent forms used to enroll participants. The Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) has announced that these consent forms must be posted either on [clinicaltrials.gov](https://www.clinicaltrials.gov) or to a docket folder on [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) (docket ID: HHS-OPHS-2018-0021).

OHRP has also made available guidance related to the European General Data Protection Directive (GDPR) to assist stakeholders conducting human subjects research in the E.U. The compilation is available on the [OHRP website](#).

Nomination Opportunities

- Census: [Census Scientific Advisory Committee](#) (Closes: September 25, 2018)

Funding Opportunities

- NIH: [Predoctoral Training in Advanced Data Analytics for Behavioral and Social Sciences Research \(BSSR\) Institutional Research Training Program \[T32\]](#) (Opens: October 16, 2018)
- NEW: NEA: [Research: Art Works](#) (Closes: October 9, 2018)
- NIH: [Obesity Policy Evaluation Research \(R01\)](#) (Closes: October 5, 2018)
- NIFA: [AFRI Foundational and Applied Science Program](#) (Closes: September 30, 2018)
- NIH: [Research Site for the HEALing Communities Study: Developing and Testing an Integrated Approach to Address the Opioid Crisis \(UM1\)](#) (Opens: September 17, 2018)
- NIH: [Data Coordinating Center for the HEALing Communities Study: Developing and Testing an Integrated Approach to Address the Opioid Crisis \(UM1\)](#) (Opens: September 17, 2018)

Notices & Requests for Comment

- NEW: NIH: [Request for Information To Solicit Feedback on the Brain Research Through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies \(BRAIN\) Initiative](#) (Closes: November 15, 2018)
- NEW: NIH: [Request for Information \(RFI\): Registration and Results Reporting Standards for Prospective Basic Science Studies Involving Human Participants](#) (Closes: November 12, 2018)
- Census: [Soliciting Feedback From Users on 2020 Census Data Products](#) (Closes: September 17, 2018)
- NEW: OMB: [Establishing a Government Effectiveness Advanced Research \(GEAR\) Center](#) (Closes: September 14, 2018)

Open Positions

- NEW: NSF: [Deputy Division Director, National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, SBE](#) (Closes: October 17, 2018)

COMMUNITY NEWS & REPORTS

Fellowships & Professional Development

- NASEM: [Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellowship Program](#) (Closes: September 7, 2018)

EVENTS CALENDAR

- [Golden Goose Award Ceremony and Reception](#), September 13, 2018, Washington, DC

- [SSRC: To Secure Knowledge Task Force Report Release](#), September 17, 2018, New York, NY
- [The Lab @ DC: EITC Expansion, Earnings Growth, and Inequality: Evidence from Washington, DC](#), September 26, 2018, Washington, DC
- [The Lab @ DC: Expanding Participation in Municipal Elections: Evaluating the Impact of Seattle's Democracy Voucher Program](#), October 3, 2018, Washington, DC
- [Southwestern Social Science Association Annual Meeting](#), October 10-13, 2018, Orlando, FL
- [Evaluation 2018](#) (American Evaluation Association), October 29-November 3, 2018, Cleveland, OH
- [History of Science Society Annual Meeting](#), November 1-4, 2018, Seattle, WA
- [North American Regional Science Council Annual Meeting](#), November 7-10, 2018, San Antonio, TX
- [National Council on Family Relations Annual Conference](#), November 7-10, 2018, San Diego, CA
- [Social Science History Association Annual Meeting](#), November 8-11, 2018, Phoenix, AZ
- [National Communication Association Annual Convention](#), November 8-11, 2018, Salt Lake City, UT
- [Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Fall Research Conference](#), November 8-10, 2018, Washington, DC
- [Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting](#), November 8-11, 2018, Orlando, FL
- [American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting](#), November 14-17, 2018, Atlanta, GA
- [Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences Annual Meeting](#), November 14-17, 2018, Chicago, IL
- [American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting](#), November 14-18, 2018, San Jose, CA
- [Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Annual Convention](#), November 15-18, 2018, Washington, DC
- [African Studies Association Annual Meeting](#), November 29-December 1, 2018, Atlanta, GA

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

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Economic History Association
History of Science Society
Midwest Sociological Society
National Association of Social Workers
National Council on Family Relations
North American Regional Science Council
Rural Sociological Society
Social Science History Association
Society for Prevention Research
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

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is a nonprofit advocacy organization working to promote sustainable federal funding for and widespread use of social and behavioral science research and federal policies that positively impact the conduct of research. COSSA serves as a united voice for a broad, diverse network of organizations, institutions, communities, and stakeholders who care about a successful and vibrant social science research enterprise. The COSSA membership includes professional and disciplinary associations, scientific societies, research centers and institutes, and U.S. colleges and universities.

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