



WASHINGTON UPDATE

February 18, 2020 Volume 39, Issue 4

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In This Issue

FEATURED NEWS

[Administration Plans to Eliminate DOD Social Science Research Program](#)

COSSA IN ACTION

[Administration Releases FY 2021 Budget Request; Read COSSA's Analysis](#)

[COSSA Urges Advocates to Oppose FY 2021 Budget Cuts to Social Science](#)

FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION NEWS

[OBSSR Seeks Input on 2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

[NSF Celebrates 70 Years](#)

[NIH Requesting Comments on Strategic Plan](#)

[NSF Invites Proposal Submissions on 2026 Idea Machine Finalist Themes](#)

[NIMHD to Celebrate 10th Anniversary with Scientific Symposium](#)

[Nomination Opportunities](#)

[Funding Opportunities](#)

[Notices & Requests for Comment](#)

[Fellowships & Professional Development](#)

COMMUNITY NEWS & REPORTS

[Nomination Opportunities](#)

[Funding Opportunities](#)

[Recent Reports](#)

COSSA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

[COSSA Welcomes Wiley](#)

[Nominations Open for 2020 SAGE-CASBS Award](#)

[Nomination Opportunities](#)

EVENTS CALENDAR

FEATURED NEWS

Administration Plans to Eliminate DOD Social Science Research Program

While the majority of the details of the President's fiscal year (FY) 2021 budget request were made public the week of February 10 ([read COSSA's analysis](#)), full details for some agencies and departments-including the [Department of Defense](#) (DoD)-were delayed until the following week.

The DoD budget request reflects over \$5 billion in cuts made as a result of the FY 2021 Defense-Wide Review. The [FY 2021 Defense-Wide Review](#) is a major DoD initiative led by Secretary of Defense Mark Esper "to improve alignment of time, money, and people to [National Defense Strategy] priorities," including finding budget cuts at DoD. The Department of Defense (DoD), the largest contributor to federal research and development expenditures, supports research and development, along with many other programs, through what are known as Defense-Wide accounts. The three branches of the military, the Army, the Air Force, and the Navy, also individually contribute to funding research and development and were not affected by the review.

The cuts identified by the review affected programs across the Department-from warfighting support, to logistics, to personnel and benefits-and did not spare Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation, through which the bulk of research and development funds are administered.

The [FY 2021 DoD budget request](#) directs the Basic Research Office to discontinue funding the Minerva Research Initiative (MRI), a university-based social science research program that seeks to "improve DOD's basic understanding of the social, cultural, behavioral, and political forces that shape regions of the world of strategic importance to the U.S."

The Minerva Research Initiative is not provided with a dedicated appropriation from Congress, but rather receives funds from the Navy, the Air Force, and the Basic Research Office (a Defense-Wide account), totaling about \$13 million each year. In FY 2019 and FY 2020, MRI also received an additional \$2 million in the final DoD appropriations bill to support research on "peer/near-peer competition" and "foreign malign influence," respectively.

MRI includes three primary components: (1) a university-based social science basic research grant program, funded in partnership with Air Force and Navy University Research Initiatives; (2) the Defense Education and Civilian University Research (DECUR) Partnership program for professional military education (PME) institutions; and (3) a collaboration with the United States Institute of Peace to award research support to advanced graduate students and early career scholars working on security and peace. As a result of the Defense-Wide Review, the Department recommends ending the Minerva Research Initiative in FY 2021.

The budget request clarifies that researchers participating in the 2019 award cycle of the first two components will be notified that new awards will not be made and existing awards will be terminated early (note: MRI awards operate on calendar years, not fiscal years). Additionally, the request says that awards will be made in response to the university funding opportunity announcement on the topics of peer/near-peer competition and foreign malign influence, which Congress provided funding for in FY 2019 and FY 2020. However, new awards on these topics will only be made with directly appropriated congressional funds and Service (military branch) contributions - which, together, make up about a third of the MRI budget. No additional awards will be made on any other topics formerly supported by the MRI.

No additional details, including when awards will be terminated, are provided. **Because the Minerva Initiative does not receive a direct Congressional appropriation, the Department has the authority to terminate it unless Congress affirmatively acts to prevent it (unlike the majority of the changes proposed in the President's budget request).** Should Congressional appropriators wish to maintain the MRI, they would need to include specific language in their FY 2021 appropriations bill stipulating that funding for the program continue.

Administration Releases FY 2021 Budget Request; Read COSSA's Analysis

On February 10, the Trump Administration released its fiscal year (FY) 2021 budget request to Congress. In a significant departure from last year's budget rollout, the FY 2021 budget is not delivered on the heels of a major government shutdown, like we saw in early 2019. Given that Congress passed its FY 2020 appropriations bills in December 2019--albeit nearly 3 months late--the President's FY 2021 budget can be compared to FY 2020 enacted levels, providing a clearer look at the potential implications of the Administration's proposals. However, the positive news largely ends there with respect to the Trump Administration's budget for science and education, as well as nondefense discretionary (NDD) spending generally.

As [previously reported](#), a bipartisan budget agreement was passed in August providing much needed relief from tight budget caps on discretionary spending for FY 2020 and FY 2021. The deal allowed Congress to increase funding to federal agencies across the FY 2020 appropriations bills; however, for FY 2021, the deal raises the caps by only 0.4 percent, setting this year up to be a particularly challenging one (though admittedly still better than under the pre-deal spending caps). What's more, while President Trump signed the budget deal into law last summer, his FY 2021 budget request seeks to cut nondefense discretionary spending by 6 percent. In other words, the Administration is proposing a cut of \$37 billion to NDD even though the budget deal negotiated by the White House last year would allow for an *increase* of \$2.5 billion in FY 2021.

[Read on](#) for COSSA's full analysis of the President's proposals as they pertain to social and behavioral science research. You can also read our supplement on the planned elimination of the Minerva Research Initiative at the Department of Defense (see related article).

COSSA Urges Advocates to Oppose FY 2021 Budget Cuts to Social Science

Last week, COSSA released an action alert urging social science advocates to reach out to their Congressional representatives to oppose the steep cuts proposed by the Administration in its FY 2021 budget request (see [COSSA's analysis](#)). COSSA created a menu of letters that stakeholders can send to their Members of Congress to share their priorities for the coming year. COSSA's [TAKE ACTION](#) page allows advocates to quickly send a letter to your Senators and Representative and tell them why they care about supporting the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, the Institute of Education Sciences and International Education, or the federal statistical system.

Share Your Story with COSSA!

COSSA is always looking for tangible examples from the social and behavioral sciences to help make the case that federal investment in these sciences is not only a wise use of taxpayer dollars, but that this research yields results that make the nation and world healthier, safer, and more prosperous. If you have a social science story-- a research success, an example of how social science is being used effectively in your community, an educational experience or teacher who shaped the trajectory of your social science career, or any other experience or activity that showcases the many positive impacts the social and behavioral sciences make to all aspects of life-- share it with COSSA by filling out the [form on our website](#).



OBSSR Seeks Input on 2022-2026 Strategic Plan

The [NIH Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research \(OBSSR\)](#) is seeking broad public input on important new directions for health-related behavioral and social sciences research (BSSR). Specifically, OBSSR requests input on research directions that will support the achievement of the scientific priorities in the OBSSR Strategic Plan 2022-2026 (see the [current strategic plan](#)) and that will advance or transform the broader health impact of BSSR. OBSSR is interested in focusing on research directions that are trans-disease and cross-cutting in nature and address critical gaps in the field.

The role of OBSSR is to coordinate and promote BSSR research across the NIH and assist NIH Institutes and Centers in developing research and training resources to advance the field. OBSSR supports a broad range of BSSR disease, condition, population, and setting specific priorities across the NIH covering the spectrum from basic to implementation science research.

OBSSR would like input on the most important or cutting-edge, trans-disease research directions that would accelerate progress in these three strategic priority areas:

- **Synergy in Basic and Applied BSSR**
- **BSSR Resources, Methods, and Measures**
- **Adoption of Effective BSSR in Practice**

To ensure consideration, **responses must be submitted by March 29, 2020** through [OBSSR's crowdsourcing IdeaScale website](#).

NSF Celebrates 70 Years

On February 6-7, the National Science Foundation (NSF) hosted a symposium celebrating the 70th anniversary of the agency's creation. The first day looked back at NSF's history and featured discussions highlighting some of the greatest scientific breakthroughs over the last seven decades as well as a discussion on the evolution of the agency itself featuring six previous NSF Directors alongside current Director France Córdova. The second day brought the discussion back to the present with a session about NSF's 10 [Big Ideas](#), a panel on "Industries of the Future" featuring representatives from Google, IBM, and others within the private sector, and a presentation from the National Science Board on its [Vision 2030](#) task force, which is working to develop a vision for the agency for the next decade.

NIH Requesting Comments on Strategic Plan

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) released a [request for information](#) (RFI) asking for stakeholder comments on the proposed framework for the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FYs) 2021-2025 slated for a December 2020 release. Rather than focus on specific research opportunities or institute initiatives, NIH releases a strategic plan every five years to highlight the achievements of the agency and set broader priorities.

The proposed framework for the new strategic plan highlights several cross-cutting themes for NIH including increasing diversity, reducing health disparities, optimizing data science, promoting collaborative science, and addressing public health challenges across the lifespan. These themes would support three major objectives for NIH:

- Advancing Biomedical and Behavioral Sciences;
- Developing, Maintaining, and Renewing Scientific Research Capacity; and
- Exemplifying and Promoting the Highest Level of Scientific Integrity, Public Accountability, and Social Responsibility in the Conduct of Science.

Comments will be accepted through March 25, 2020. More information about the NIH-Wide Strategic Plans can be found on the [NIH website](#).

NSF Invites Proposal Submissions on 2026 Idea Machine Finalist Themes

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is requesting [proposals](#) for the NSF 2026 Idea Machine themes and activities for finalist applicants. The NSF 2026 Idea Machine is a prize competition for emerging science, engineering, or learning research challenge. Thirty-three finalists were selected from over 800 applicants. NSF is now seeking project proposals to enrich the activities the Idea Machine finalists will participate in, specifically in conference activities and in Early-Concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) projects testing the ideas and concepts coming from the finalists. EAGER project outlines are due March 1, 2020 and conference proposals are due March 15, 2020. More information can be found on the [NSF website](#).

NIMHD to Celebrate 10th Anniversary with Scientific Symposium

The National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) within the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is hosting a scientific [symposium](#) titled *Innovations to Promote Health Equity* in honor of the institute's 10th anniversary. The symposium will highlight new discoveries in minority health and health disparities research and will feature four panels focused on the following issue areas:

- Integrative Biological and Behavioral Sciences
- Community Health and Population Sciences
- Clinical and Health Services Research
- Multidisciplinary Intramural Research at NIMHD

The symposium will take place at the NIH campus in Bethesda, Maryland on March 3, 2020 and will be [webcast](#) live on the NIH website. [Registration](#) for the event is free and open to the public. More information and a [draft agenda](#) for the symposium is available on the [NIMHD website](#).

Nomination Opportunities

- **NEW:** HUD/PD&R: [2020 Secretary's Awards for Healthy Homes](#) (Closes: March 10, 2020)

Funding Opportunities

- DOD: [Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program Anticipated Funding Opportunities for Fiscal Year 2020 \(FY20\)](#)
- NSF/SBE: [NSF Dynamic Language Infrastructure - NEH Documenting Endangered Languages \(DLI-DEL\)](#) (Closes: September 15, 2020)
- **NEW:** DOJ/BJS: [NICS Act Record Improvement Program](#) (Closes: April 23, 2020)
- **NEW:** DOJ/BJS: [National Prisoner Statistics Program \(NPS\) and National Corrections Reporting Program \(NCRP\), Reference Years \(RY\) 2020-2024](#) (Closes: April 14, 2020)
- **NEW:** NEA: [Research Grants in the Arts](#) (Closes: March 30, 2020)
- **NEW:** NEA: [NEA Research Labs](#) (Closes: March 30, 2020)
- ED: [Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program](#) (Closes: March 24, 2020)
- NIH: Research on biopsychosocial factors of social connectedness and isolation on health, wellbeing, illness, and recovery ([R01 Clinical Trials Not Allowed](#)) ([R01 Basic experimental studies with humans \(BESH\) required](#)) (Closes: March 17, 2020)
- NSF/SBE: [Ethical and Responsible Research \(ER2\)](#) (Closes: February 24, 2020)
- NSF/SBE: [Human Networks and Data Science - Infrastructure \(HNDS-I\)](#) (Closes: February 24, 2020)

Notices & Requests for Comment

- **NEW:** NSF: [Dear Colleague Letter: Exploring the NSF 2026 Idea Machine](#) (EAGER Research

- NEW: NIH: [Open Comment on Exploring the Role of Social Media](#) (NIH/NIMH Research Proposals: April 30, 2020)
- BEA: [Request for Comments on Developing State-Level Statistics for the Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account](#) (Closes: March 31, 2020)
 - **NEW:** NIH: [Stakeholder Input on Opportunities for Increased Collaboration to Advance Prevention Research](#) (Closes: March 29, 2020)
 - **NEW:** NIH/OBSSR: [Scientific Priorities for Behavioral and Social Science Research at NIH](#) (Closes: March 29, 2020)
 - DOJ/BJS: [Reinstatement, With Change, of a Previously Approved Collection for Which Approval Has Expired: Annual Survey of Jails](#) (Closes: March 27, 2020)
 - **NEW:** NIH: [Inviting Comments and Suggestions on a Framework for the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for FYs 2021-2025](#) (Closes: March 25, 2020)
 - HUD/PD&R: [Family Unification Program/Family Self-Sufficiency Demonstration Evaluation](#) (Closes: March 13, 2020)
 - OSTP: [Request for Public Comment on Draft Desirable Characteristics of Repositories for Managing and Sharing Data Resulting From Federally Funded Research](#) (Closes: March 6, 2020)

Fellowships & Professional Development

- DOJ/NIJ: [Graduate Research Fellowship Program](#) (Closes: April 15, 2020)
- NIH/NIMHD: [Health Disparities Research Institute](#) (Closes: March 9, 2020)

COMMUNITY NEWS & REPORTS

Nomination Opportunities

Know your target audience. Who are your most important customers, clients or prospects, and why? Know what is important to them and address their needs in your newsletter each month. Include a photo to make your newsletter even more appealing. Insert a "read on" link at the bottom of your article to drive traffic to your website. Links are tracked, allowing you to see which articles create the most interest for your readers.

Funding Opportunities

- Rita Allen Foundation: [Apply for a Grant: Open Letter of Inquiry Process](#) (Closes: March 6, 2020)
- NASEM: [Healthy Longevity Global Competition](#) (Closes: February 24, 2020)

Recent Reports

- **NEW:** NASEM: [Birth Settings in America](#)

COSSA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

COSSA Welcomes Wiley



COSSA is pleased to welcome [Wiley](#) as its newest affiliate member. Wiley is a leading publisher of scientific, technical, medical, and scholarly journals, books, and other digital content. Wiley has joined under COSSA's new affiliate membership category, which invites users of social science findings and other

stakeholders to join in COSSA's advocacy on behalf of the social and behavioral science

community. COSSA's full membership list is available [here](#). Information on how to join can be found on the [COSSA website](#).

Nominations Open for 2020 SAGE-CASBS Award

The Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (CASBS) at Stanford University and SAGE Publishing now are accepting nominations for the 2020 SAGE-CASBS Award. The Award recognizes accomplishments in the behavioral and social sciences that push the boundaries of our understanding of social issues. In addition to a cash prize, the SAGE-CASBS Award winner will deliver a public lecture to be held at CASBS on November 19, 2020. The deadline for nominations is March 16, 2020. More information about the Award can be found on the [CASBS website](#).

Nomination Opportunities

- [2020 SAGE-CASBS Award](#) (Closes: March 16, 2020)

EVENTS CALENDAR

- [NASEM: The Endless Frontier: The Next 75 Years in Science](#), February 26, 2020, Washington, DC
- [Society for Personality and Social Psychology Annual Convention](#), February 27-29, 2020, New Orleans, LA
- [NIMHD 10th Anniversary Scientific Symposium: Innovations to Promote Health Equity](#), March 3, 2020, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Bethesda, MD
- [American Psychosomatic Society Annual Scientific Meeting](#), March 11-14, 2020, Long Beach, CA
- [COSSA Headlines | March Headlines](#), March 12, 2020, 2:00 pm
- [Society for Research on Adolescence Biennial Meeting](#), March 19-21, 2020, San Diego, CA
- [Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Annual Meeting](#), March 24-28, 2020, San Antonio, TX
- [Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations Annual Meeting](#), March 26-28, 2020, Pullman, WA
- **[COSSA 2020 Social Science Advocacy Day, March 30-31, 2020, Washington, DC](#)**
- [Southern Sociological Society Annual Meeting](#), April 1-4, 2020, Jacksonville, FL
- [Society of Behavioral Medicine Annual Meeting](#), April 1-4, 2020, San Francisco, CA
- [Midwest Sociological Society Annual Meeting](#), April 2-5, 2020, Omaha, NE
- [American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting](#), April 6-10, 2020, Denver, CO
- [COSSA Headlines | April Headlines](#), April 9, 2020, 2:00 pm
- [Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference](#), April 16-19, 2020, Chicago, IL
- [American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting](#), April 17-21, 2020, San Francisco, CA
- [NIH Regional Seminar on Program Funding & Grants Administration](#), April 20-22, 2020, Baltimore, MD
- [Population Association of America Annual Meeting](#), April 22-25, 2020, Washington, DC
- [American Council of Learned Societies Annual Meeting](#), April 30 - May 2, 2020, Baltimore, MD

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.

SAVE THE DATE!

Consortium of Social Science Associations Members

Governing Associations

American Anthropological Association
American Association for Public Opinion Research
American Economic Association
American Educational Research Association
American Political Science Association
American Psychological Association
American Society of Criminology
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
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
African Studies Association
American Association of Geographers
American Council of Learned Societies
American Evaluation Association
American Historical Association
American Psychosomatic Society
Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management
Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations
Association of American Law Schools
Association of Research Libraries
Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences
Council on Social Work Education
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

Colleges and Universities

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Brown University
Carnegie Mellon University
Columbia University
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Duke University
George Mason University
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Indiana University
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Michigan State University
North Carolina State University
Northwestern University
Ohio State University, The
Pennsylvania State University
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Affiliates

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Centers and Institutes

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American Academy of Political and Social Science
Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences
Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research
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Institute for Social Science Research,
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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.

ISSN 0749-4394.

