The ACADEMY for Radiology & Biomedical Imaging Research

Advancing Innovation in Imaging Science

January 9, 2026

Academy Policy & Legislative Update

Dear Academy Friends,

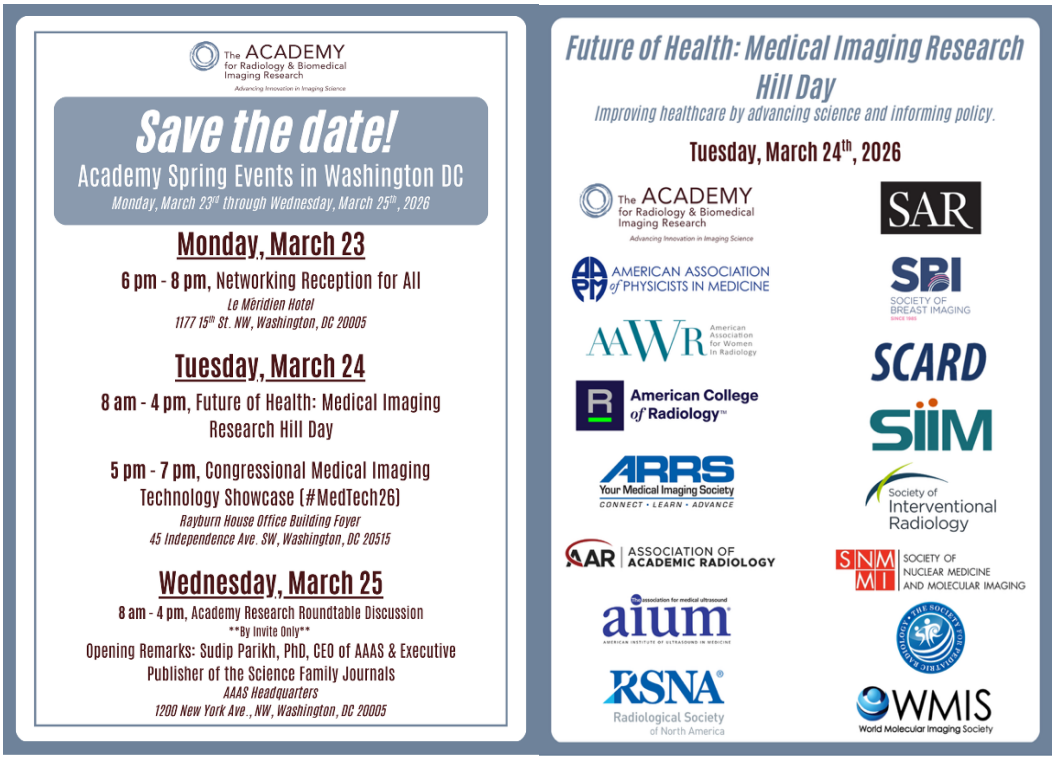
Happy New Year. While 2025 was an unprecedented year for science, it also underscored the importance of continued innovation and collaboration. As we look ahead to 2026, the Academy will continue to monitor and report on developments in Washington and explore what they mean for the imaging research community. Meanwhile planning for our spring events is in full swing and we hope many of you join us!

Read the Academy's End of Year Summary Newsletter! Click here to view.

Upcoming Workshop! ***The Stories Behind the Science: Best Practices for Communicating Medical Imaging Research to Policymakers***

- Led by Elizabeth O'Hare, PhD, Director of Government Relations at the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA).
- This webinar will examine how to best translate advances in biomedical research into compelling, relatable narratives that demonstrate the real-world impact of federal investment in scientific research.
- ***Important Note:*** **This workshop is required for those participating in the Future of Health: Medical Imaging Research Hill Day**. However, it will also be valuable to anyone who is interested in learning strategies for communicating the importance of scientific progress, momentum, and impact. So, we are disseminating this virtual opportunity broadly.
- View an informational flyer here.
- Register for the workshop here.

SAVE THE DATE: The Academy is excited to share that we are leading a collaboration among the following imaging societies for a single, collective day of advocacy in Washington, DC, this spring!



Click here to view the save the date with more event details.

Click here to view the Academy 2026 Spring Events & Meetings website.

> ****If you are participating in these events and wish to access the private webpage with materials like registration links, Zoom links, and planning session summaries, please respond directly to this email and we will send you the link with a password.*

Appropriations Update

- The government is still running under a continuing resolution until January 30.
- The clock is still ticking on a final Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill that funds the NIH. However, appropriators seem very optimistic that a final deal can and will be reached before the 1/30 deadline.

Appeals Court Blocks NIH Cap on Indirect Costs

A federal appeals court is keeping in place the ban on the National Institutes of Health's attempt to cap indirect research cost reimbursement rates for universities and researchers who receive its grant money.

The decision preserves institutions' access to billions of dollars for annual expenses, such as lab costs and patient safety, which are not easily connected to specific projects.

To read more, click here.

After legal deal, NIH to review grant proposals frozen, denied, or withdrawn because of Trump directives.
On Monday, December 22, a deal was reached between the federal government and groups suing the Trump administration over policies that prevented the funding of many NIH grant proposals. These policies were established to terminate grants that were not aligned with the administration's priorities but also inhibited consideration for pending grant applications.

Of 146 "non-competitive renewal" applications, 135 were funded the day the deal was reached, and an estimated 5,000 grants total are included in this deal. Other grants will be decided on in the coming weeks. This means that, despite all the uncertainty, applications for NIH grants will now be evaluated, albeit through an increasingly politicized review process. To read more about the deal that was reached, click here.

On its face, this appears to be a win for research scientists, but complications are expected. Jay Bhattacharya, MD, PhD, Director of the NIH, suggested that the relief offered by this deal may be short-lived, and while restored grants cannot be cut, it is possible that they won't be renewed. He explained that if the grants do not meet NIH priorities, they will not be renewed. However, it is unknown if this includes the grant applications mentioned above. To read more about Dr. Bhattacharya's comments, click here.

Update on H-1B Visa Fee
Just before the holidays, on December 23rd, DC District Judge Beryl Howell upheld the Trump Administration's $100k H-1B visa fee, citing that the establishment of this fee was a power Congress has delegated to the executive branch.

When this fee was announced in the fall, it sparked concern as international talent is essential to the American research enterprise. The fee was established to prevent abuse of the H-1B visa system; however, with such a high price, it is possible that the recruitment of graduate and postdoctoral students will become cost-prohibitive.

To read an article about this ruling, click here.

To read the ruling itself, click here.

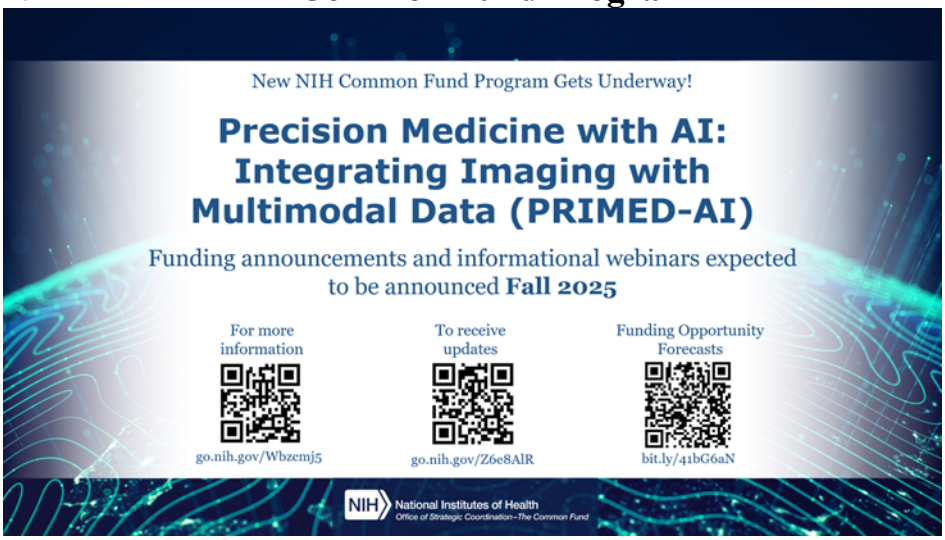
Administration's Actions and RFIs
Health and Human Services (HHS) RFI: **Accelerating the Adoption and Use of Artificial Intelligence as Part of Clinical Care**

HHS seeks to establish a regulatory posture on AI that is well understood, predictable, and proportionate to any risks presented to enable rapid innovation while protecting patients and the confidentiality of their identifiable health information, and maintaining public trust. They seek feedback on how current HHS regulations impact AI adoption and use for clinical care is developed, evaluated, and deployed.

- You may submit comments, identified by "HHS Health Sector AI RFI," by any of the following methods by February 23, 2026:

        - Federal eRulemaking Portal (Formatted with Microsoft Word preferred); Regular, Express, or Overnight Mail; or by Hand Delivery/Courier
    - For further information, contact Steven Posnack, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy (202-690-7151)

NIH PRIMED-AI Common Fund Program



All five NIH PRIMED-AI NOFOs continue to advance steadily toward publication and are now in OER policy review. Once the NOFOs are issued, the Academy will schedule virtual sessions with NIH Co-Chairs and staff to provide additional briefings for the community.

MEDIA

**If you come across an article that you would like for us to include in our weekly policy emails, please send them to us, in case we miss any.*

"Grant Witness Project"

"Man in the Middle: NIH Director Jay Bhattacharya has struggled to convince observers he has the agency's best interests in mind – and is truly in charge"

"Dismantling the American Research Enterprise"

"What the impacts of NIH cuts tell us about the future"

"NIH Lays Groundwork for Advances in Brain Imaging"

"NIH Leadership in Turmoil"

Academy Membership Programming Survey

We've put together a survey to gauge the interests of our membership so we can provide programming opportunities that you want to participate in. Please complete this survey and leave all feedback you may have. Thank you!

Academy "Funding, Facts, and Follow Up" Emails. Monthly updates and funding opportunities: Click here to access an archive of the emails we send out, including our most recent.

Thank you for following these Academy updates! If your department, society, or company isn't yet a supporting Member, now is a great time to join. Your support powers our advocacy efforts and helps advance the interests of our entire community. Discover The Value of the Academy in this short clip and explore our membership [here]. For personalized guidance or questions, connect with Olivia Nelson at onelson@acadrad.org —we'd love to hear from you!