The ACADEMY for Radiology & Biomedical Imaging Research

Advancing Innovation in Imaging Science

February 27, 2026

Academy Policy & Legislative Update

Dear Academy Friends,

REMINDER: The Academy Research Roundtable Discussion
Wednesday, March 25, 2026, AAAS Headquarters, DC.
The Academy roundtable will convene representatives from academia, industry, societies, investigators, & over 20 representatives from the following agencies: NIH, NIBIB, NCI, NHLBI, NIST, FDA, CMS, HHS, and ARPA-H. View the agenda here. More information about the Academy Roundtable is available here, and a link to register can be found here. ***THE HOTEL BLOCK IS SOLD OUT.*** Here is a list of alternative hotels compiled by the Academy for you.

Thank you to the dozens of imaging societies who joined over 500 (*and counting*) organizations/societies and companies to support NIH funding FY27. We will be accepting additional signatures through COB today. Please **complete this form** if interested. The letters are attached to this email (it may not be fully updated if you have signed on in the past 24 hours).

Deal on SBIR-STTR Reauthorization?

- On September 30, the reauthorization for the SBIR-STTR programs expired.
- On November 17, NIH issued a notice that it would not fund any new SBIR-STTR programs but that active grants could continue.
- The Senate has struggled to finalize an agreement on reauthorizing these programs.
- On February 25, it was announced that Congress appears to have found agreement for a reauthorization of the programs.
- According to a CQ article that you can read here, senators have concurred on most elements of a bill that would reauthorize the program for five years and set new rules designed to block outsize participation by individual companies.
- We do not yet have a timeline on when the Senate and the House could vote on a final SBIR-STTR reauthorization bill.

NIH News and Announcements

Drops in NIH Grant Funding

- NIH acknowledged in a blog post this week that funding rates for investigators seeking research grants from the NIH dropped sharply in 2025.
- The drop in funding rates is due to NIH using multi-year grants. This practice drives NIH to commit hefty chunks of its annual funding to funding multi-year grants upfront, squeezing the amount available for other awards.
- According to Forbes, drops in grants for cancer research were down 24% from 2024; mental health was down 43%; diabetes was down 30%; and neurological disorders and stroke were down 26%.

NIH Institute and Center Directors' Perspectives on Implementing the Unified Funding Strategy

- On Monday, NIH Institute and Center (IC) Directors issued a joint blog on their perspectives on the implementation of the agency's Unified Funding Strategy.
- The Directors stress that merit review will still be a rigorous, 2-step process.
- All ICs will now follow a standard set of core tenets to make funding decisions: scientific merit assessed during peer review, alignment with the NIH mission, program balance, career stage, geographic balance, and stewardship of available funds.

National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

- According to a report on February 19, NIST instituted a 3-year cap on international graduate and postdoctoral students.
- As a result, Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) of the House Science and Technology committee and Rep. April McClain Delaney (D-MD) sent a letter to the NIST Acting Under Secretary Craig Burkhardt demanding answers.
- You can read their press release here and the letter to NIST Acting Director here.

MEDIA

"Colleges Cut Ties with Organizations that Help People of Color"

"No One Should Run Two Agencies"

"Bhattacharya's growing power in Trump's HHS worries health experts"

"Federal Science Workforce Declines Sharply Under Trump"

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Academy Research Roundtable Discussion will be held on **Wednesday, March 25, 2026**, at the AAAS Headquarters in Washington, DC. The roundtable will convene invited

representatives from academia, industry, societies, early-career investigators, and representatives invited from multiple government agencies, including NIH, NIBIB, NCI, NHLBI, NIST, FDA, CMS, HHS, and ARPA-H.

You can view the agenda here.
More information about the Academy Roundtable is available here, and a link to register can be found here.

The Academy is leading a multi-society collaboration among the following imaging societies for a single, collective day of advocacy in Washington, DC, on March 24:

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

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

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!