



April 7, 2016

Frances Collins, Ph.D.  
Director  
National Institute of Health  
Building 1, Room 126  
1 Center Drive  
Bethesda, MD

Email: [francis.collins@nih.gov](mailto:francis.collins@nih.gov)

Dear Dr. Collins:

On behalf of the Biophysical Society, I would like to thank you and your colleagues in the NIH leadership for the recent letter to the editor in *Science* magazine, which conveys your strong support and commitment to funding basic research. We recognize the short-sighted pressure to justify federal expenditures with immediate practical gains, and we agree with the recognition your letter expresses for the major achievements of the basic research funded over many years by the NIH, and the benefits it brings continuously to our nation and humanity at large.

Our scientific society continues to be engaged in the effort to educate the public and lawmakers about such benefits and achievements, and the scientifically well-established fact that cures and treatments rely on a foundation of basic understanding of how things work. But in the current tight fiscal environment, the continued efforts of basic researchers need the understanding and reassurance your letter offers that investigator-initiated applications for creative and transformative projects in fundamental research are welcomed by NIH.

I would also like to thank you for making the changes to the public health relevance section of the grant application. Our membership appreciates the effort invested by the NIH institutes in the evaluation of the grant portfolio and for revising policies when the evidence points to the need for a change. The clarified directions will help researchers focus on the real strengths of their projects.

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As always, we are committed to working with you and the NIH center and institute directors to ensure that the US has a strong and vibrant biomedical research enterprise. Please let me know how the Biophysical Society can continue to be of assistance to you in these endeavors.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Scarlata  
President

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