



As the Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), it is my responsibility to present the Congressional Justification of the NIH fiscal year (FY) 2018 budget. This request for a \$26.920 billion total program level provides additional detail on the proposals in the President's Budget Blueprint, including dissolving the Fogarty International Center and consolidating the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality within NIH as the National Institute for Research on Safety and Quality. It also reflects the recent passage of the first major authorization act for NIH in a decade, the 21st Century Cures Act, which contains numerous provisions intended to expedite research and development of new treatments and cures.

The Cures Act authorized \$4.8 billion over a 10-year period for four priority Innovation Projects: the Precision Medicine Initiative's *All of Us*SM Research Program (\$1.5 billion), a national resource of clinical, environmental, lifestyle, and genetic data from one million or more participants who will contribute health information over many years; the *Beau Biden Cancer Moonshot*SM (\$1.8 billion), which aims to accelerate progress in cancer research and break down barriers by enhancing data access and facilitating collaborations, particularly with respect to cancer immunotherapy; the Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative (\$1.5 billion), which seeks to understand how individual cells and the neural circuits they form interact in time and space; and a new Regenerative Medicine project (\$30 million) to support clinical research using adult stem cells, in coordination with the Food and Drug Administration. The FY 2018 budget request includes \$496 million for these four projects from the NIH Innovation Account created in the Cures Act, an increase of \$144 million over the initial funding in FY 2017.

The budget request also discusses some of the most exciting scientific research areas that NIH plans to support in FY 2018. NIH continues its strong commitment to fundamental science, including development of new methods and technologies, to lay the foundation for discoveries that eventually lead to new treatments or preventive measures. Research to help battle public health crises will be a priority, including efforts to fight the opioid epidemic and to develop effective vaccines against Zika virus infection using the \$152 million emergency supplemental appropriation for Zika provided by Congress at the end of FY 2016. In addition, NIH continues to seek ways to strengthen the biomedical research workforce, especially new and early-stage investigators who represent the future but need support to achieve research independence.

Investments will be guided by our NIH-Wide Strategic Plan (Fiscal Years 2016-2020), which articulates the goals of the agency and its commitment to responsible stewardship of public funds. By capitalizing on groundbreaking advances in science and technology, and judiciously leveraging new research investments, biomedical science is poised to make substantial gains in diagnosing, treating, and preventing disease. I look forward to discussing the FY 2018 budget request and NIH's plans for the future.

Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D.

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