MEMORANDUM

TO: SOM Faculty
FROM: Glen N. Gaulton, Ph.D.
DATE: March 6, 2009
SUBJECT: Challenge Grants and Pay Line Expectations

CHALLENGE GRANTS

I have received several emails from faculty expressing concerns over both the list of topics and magnitude of funding associated with the Challenge Grant announcement. This follow-up communication is intended to clarify two points:

1) This round of the Challenge funds constitutes only $200M of the $10.4B total allocated to NIH. Funds will be allocated in a number of additional areas (i.e., equipment, construction, pay line increases), and we anticipate that other RFAs will be issued directly by the Institutes to targeted research areas, whether Challenge Grants or not, that will constitute far greater amounts.

2) With regard to the Challenge program specifically, be advised that the links to “High Priority Topics Within Broad Challenge Areas” in both my recent communication and the RFA only provide a cursory description of the topic areas. A full description of all Challenge Topics developed by the Institutes and communicated through the Director’s Office can be accessed at:

Omnibus Topics List - PDF (1.7 MB) or MS Word (1.3 MB)

PAY LINE EXPECTATIONS

As I have noted in previous communications, NIH is likely to use a considerable proportion of stimulus funds to improve the overall pay line. While we originally anticipated that this would apply to grants in federal FY09, informal conversations with NIH indicate that this may be expanded to include grants reviewed in federal FY08.

Accordingly, if you have an R or P-series proposal pending in this time period with a potentially fundable score, and/or unique programmatic aspect that addresses job creation, I again encourage you to contact your NIH Program Officer (PO). While the PO may not yet know the mechanism for releasing these funds, it is important, especially for grants reviewed in the previous year, to get these back on the PO’s radar as the funding is allocated.

Lastly, as these funds need to be rapidly spent please finalize any aligned regulatory approvals (e.g., IRB/IACUC) as soon as possible.

Please note that all stimulus funding opportunities are now posted on a central NIH website:

http://grants.nih.gov/recovery/