Rock Talk
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Progress in Meeting NIH’s Biomedical Research Workforce Goals

Posted on August 5, 2014 by Sally Rockey

While many of the NIH Advisory Committee to the NIH Director (ACD) on the Biomedical Research Workforce recommendations already have been put into effect (as discussed here on Rock Talk), we continue to follow through on our implementation goals.

One main goal we established was increasing postdoctoral stipends and considering policies on benefits and we have been continuing to support this goal in a number of ways. In February we announced postdoc stipend increases, and in March we began collecting data to inform our understanding of benefits available to postdoctoral fellows. This survey will wrap up this summer, and we will begin our analysis of the results in the fall. A special thank you to those taking the survey as well; 155 institutions submitted complete responses!

Also in March we reissued the Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) funding opportunity announcements, expanded NIH institute and center participation in the F30 and F31 training fellowships with the goal that all ICs will participate in these programs.

Another main goal we’re moving forward on is the development of simple and comprehensive tracking systems for trainees. We continue to refine and develop the Fed-wide researcher profile system that we announced in November, SciENcv, and we’ve started collecting information about all students and postdocs working on NIH research grants. Lastly, we are working to automate the tables required with NRSA training grant applications so that it is easier for applicants to complete the required information, and allows us to take advantage of relevant information in the tables for analysis.

Another implementation goal was creating an office in the NIH Office of the Director to assess the biomedical research workforce. Last year we began recruiting staff to provide ongoing modeling and analysis of NIH’s workforce and investments in training. And now I am pleased to announce that we are recruiting for a dual position within my office serving as the lead of this Division of Biomedical Research Workforce, as well as reporting to me as NIH’s chief officer for the Biomedical Research Workforce (BRW).

The person selected will have the critical responsibility for leading the development and implementation of NIH training policies and will be a key leader overseeing analyses that elevate our understanding of the biomedical workforce and how it functions, and developing policies to strengthen it. It’s expected that our new hire will work very closely with Dr. Hannah Valantine, the NIH chief officer for scientific workforce diversity. NIH will be accepting applications through September 15, so I encourage you to read the full announcement and share this information with your colleagues.

I’m excited about how much we have accomplished but there is so much more to do to assure the sustainability of our workforce. I look forward to the future conversations we will be having here and around the country as we delve deeper into workforce issues. Stay tuned for more updates.

This entry was posted in Rock Talk and tagged Biomedical Workforce by Sally Rockey. Bookmark the permalink [http://nexus.od.nih.gov/all/2014/08/05/progress-in-meeting-nihs-biomedical-research-workforce-goals/].

6 THOUGHTS ON “PROGRESS IN MEETING NIH'S BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH WORKFORCE GOALS”

Comradde PhysioProffe on August 5, 2014 at 6:48 pm said:

Do you intend to explicitly address the predictable consequences of the collision