

# Congress Passes '03 Budget as Bush's '04 Arrives

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The White House released its budget proposal for fiscal year 2004 in early February. Problem was, Congress hadn't quite finished the 2003 budget. The situation was ameliorated when Congress approved a 2003 fiscal year omnibus spending bill on February 13, and sent it to the White House for approval.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH President's Budget Comparison Fiscal Year 2003 vs. Fiscal Year 2004				
	FY 2003 <sup>p</sup>	FY 2003 <sup>c</sup>	FY 2004 <sup>p</sup>	Increase
<b>NIH</b>	\$27,343	\$27,160	\$27.893	2.4%
<b>NIMH</b>	\$1,333	\$1,349	\$1,382	2.6%
<b>NIDA</b>	\$960	\$968	\$996	2.4%
<b>NIAA</b>	\$415	\$419	\$430	2.9%
<b>NCI</b>	\$4,609	\$4,622	\$4,771	2.7%
<b>NICH</b>	\$1,195	\$1,213	\$1,245	3.2%
After a five-year process in which the budget for the National Institutes of Health nearly doubled, the White House's budget for 2004 includes only a 2.4% increase for NIH.				

c: Congressional Budget      All amounts in millions of dollars.

p: President's Budget

After a five-year process in which the budget for the National Institutes of Health essentially doubled (in approximately 15 percent increments every year for five years), NIH was given a 2.4 percent increase for 2004. This will bring funding for the institute to \$27.9 billion. While NIH still plans to issue a record number of grants in the 2004 fiscal year, most of the new awards will be in bioterrorism.<sup>1</sup>

As for the National Science Foundation, the increases were greater in terms of percentages, but again,

the budget released by the White House does not tell the whole story. While the White House claims a 9 percent increase, this is compared to the President's 2003 fiscal budget, which was the only available information at the time. When compared to the budget passed by Congress, the increase proposed for fiscal 2004 is only slightly above 3 percent.

The Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences directorate at NSF, while the recipient of a favorable increase in the 2003 budget, received mixed news. Slated to receive \$195.6 million by the president, the directorate received \$191.1 million from Congress. While that is still a fair increase, SBE lost a higher percentage of its proposed increase than any other directorate for fiscal 2003. Four of the six directorates received more funding from Congress than the president requested; SBE and the Geosciences directorate received less.

As a result of the 2003 budget delay, plans to establish three or four Science of Learning Centers needed to be placed on hold. The good news is that those centers and a foundation-wide priority area in human and social dynamics can now go forward, since the 2003 budget has passed. Also on the up side, the human and social dynamics priority area is scheduled to receive a 145 percent increase in 2004, from \$10 million to \$24.5 million.

1. Source: *Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 4, 2003.