

# Making the Most of Stimulus Funding Available for Behavioral Research

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As discussed in the [column](#) by Dan Greenberg, science fared well in the stimulus bill Congress passed – the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. We are very thankful that the President and Congress recognized the important role research plays in our nation's economy. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) received \$10 billion extra, the National Science Foundation received \$3 billion extra, and most of the funding needs to be spent quickly (in about a two-year period). Any funded researcher will be obligated to include many less common reporting requirements related to the stimulative nature of the research (e.g., job creation). Now is the time to apply for certain grants, to call agency program officers about the grant you almost got, or to talk to your funding officer about the potential for a supplement if you already have an NIH grant.

## **Apply for an NIH grant for research that you can do in about two years.**

Of the NIH \$10 billion, at least \$200 million over the next two years is for a new initiative called NIH Challenge Grants in Health and Science Research, to fund 200 or more grants up to \$1 million each. The program will support research on "Challenge Topics," and first on the list is Behavior, Behavioral Change, and Prevention. This is a unique opportunity to conduct research in a short time frame. The application deadline is April 27, 2009, and grants will begin this fall. See [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/challenge\\_award/](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/challenge_award/)

## **If you recently applied to NIH and received good reviews but were not funded, contact the program officer who oversaw the process.**

At the end of the last federal fiscal year, about 14,000 applications were approved for funding but went unfunded. NIH is planning to review these applications to see if any would benefit from two-year funding. This will not be done in a formulaic manner; rather, grants will be analyzed on a case-by-case basis. Program officers will be involved in this process, so it can only help to contact them to discuss your application.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has released a general announcement about stimulus funding (<http://www.nsf.gov/recovery/>), and the Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences Division is expected to receive about \$80 to \$90 million dollars to fund grants already reviewed. These grants will have regular durations of up to five years, and funding of new researchers and high-risk, high-return research will be top priorities. NSF program officers will contact potential investigators shortly to discuss possible funding.

## **If you have an existing grant, you may be eligible for a supplement.**

The stimulus funding will also be used to expand an existing NIH grant. Some funding will be awarded

through a competitive process, while other funding will be administratively allocated. Each Institute and agency will determine its priorities for supplemental funding, but here are the NIH-wide announcements: NOT-OD-09-058, NOT-OD-09-060, and NOT-OD-09-056.

### **A word of advice.**

This funding is part of the Recovery Act, so it's meant to create jobs and stimulate the economy, all in a transparent and trackable way. If you do any of the above, be sure to pay particular attention to the economic impact of your grant: How many jobs will it create? How will you measure and track spending? Job creation? If you are at, or are partnering with, an institution located in an under-represented geographic area, it would be wise to highlight that, since geographic location may be a criterion for grant awards. After all, the economy needs to be stimulated throughout the United States.

For more information on all of the above, see <http://www.nih.gov/recovery/> and <http://www.nsf.gov/recovery/>.