

To the NHLBI-supported scientific community:

We have faced extraordinary budgetary uncertainties this year and an incredibly fluid fiscal situation. At the beginning of this fiscal year, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) established a conservative approach to an interim payline with the hope that our final appropriation would allow us to reach paylines comparable to historical baselines. I recognize that the fiscal challenges we are facing have caused incredible anxiety and hardships within our scientific community. Now that Congress and the Administration have provided greater clarity on our budget for FY 2013, I would like to update you on our funding allocation and operating plans for this year.

The NHLBI's budget for FY 2013 will be approximately \$2.9 billion, which is nearly \$175 million (about 5.7%) less than the FY 2012 funding level. The magnitude of the budget reductions mandated by 'the sequester' necessitated a broad-based approach that affected all NHLBI budget lines. The implementation of the budget cuts was guided by our enduring principles to prioritize investments in investigator-initiated R01 awards, new/early stage investigators, and trainees. The fiscal austerity reflected in our appropriation necessitated a difficult choice between two options: 1) fully-funded awards with a consequential decrease in the number of awards and single-digit payline versus 2) a double-digit payline with an approximate 5-7% total cost reduction in all awards. In accordance with our stated principles and the guidance of the NHLBI Advisory Council, we elected to pursue the latter allocation approach. As a result, the NHLBI will increase the FY 2013 payline for R01 awards to the 11th percentile from the current 6th percentile. Similarly, despite the overall cut in the budget, our prioritization strategy will strive to restore paylines to other mechanisms related to trainees and new/early-stage investigators toward those of FY 2012. For additional details on our Funding/Operating guidelines, please visit our site: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/funding/policies/operguid.htm>.

My hope is that this fiscal update message will provide clarity and some reassurance that we remain committed to being responsible stewards of public resources while fulfilling our mission to invest in outstanding discovery science and nurture the next generation of scientific leaders.

Thank you for your continued patience and dedication in pursuit of the NHLBI mission together.

Sincerely,

Gary H. Gibbons, MD

Director, NHLBI



For more information about funding at the NIH level, please see the NIH notice on fiscal policy for 2013 grant awards: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-13-064.html>.