



National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

MAR 11 2013

MAR 15 2013

Neal Sweeney, Ph.D.
President, UAW Local 5810
2070 Allston Way, Suite 102
Berkley, California 94704

Dear Dr. Sweeney:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter concerning stipends for postdoctoral scientists. The leadership at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) shares your belief regarding the critical role postdocs play in the biomedical research workforce and the contributions they make toward the advancement of science in this country. Your observation that the compensation of these individuals has not been commensurate with their professional accomplishments is also shared by many leaders in the biomedical research community, including those who serve on my advisory committee, the Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD).

Recently, at my behest, the ACD studied the postdoctoral experience in biomedical research, including the issues of compensation and benefits. The full report can be found at http://acd.od.nih.gov/Biomedical_research_wgreport.pdf. One of several recommendations to improve the quality of training was to increase postdoctoral stipends to \$42,000 per year for entry level postdoctoral researchers, with 4 percent increases for subsequent years of experience. I am pleased to tell you that this recommendation was supported by NIH leadership, and we are considering how it can be implemented as soon as possible.

In addition, subject to Federal spending limitations and other legal and policy considerations, the NIH intends to adjust this stipend annually in accordance with published indices of inflation. The benefit packages provided to postdoctoral researchers were identified as a complex issue, but there also is broad agreement that postdoctoral researchers should receive benefits commensurate with their professional career stage. The NIH is investigating how it can play a significant role in seeing that this principle is followed. As a first step, we have issued a Request for Information (RFI) that will offer the general public, including the postdoctoral community, faculty, and leadership at research and academic institutions, an opportunity to describe available benefit packages and other information that could impact NIH policies or practices (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-13-045.html>). I encourage you to respond to the RFI.

I appreciate your concern regarding this important matter, and thank you for contributing to the dialogue. I also wish you success as you continue to pursue a career in biomedical research.

Sincerely yours,

Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D.
Director

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
FIRST

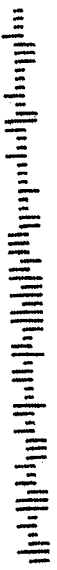
Public Health Service
National Institutes of Health
Bldg. 1 Rm. 2E MSC
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use \$300

Neal Sweeney, Ph.D.
President
UAW Local 5810
2070 Allston Way, Suite 201
Berkeley, CA 94704

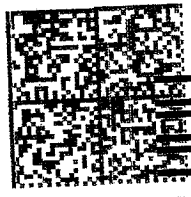
MAR 15 2013

BUS-SMP 94704



115

PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS



US OFFICIAL MAIL
\$300 Penalty
For Private Use

016H26601194
\$00.433
Mailed From 20892
03/12/2013
US POSTAGE
Hasler