AFOSR Overview: AFOSR is the basic research arm of the Air Force and Space Force, supporting high-risk and high-reward research in various fields such as aerospace, information, and biosciences.

- **AFOSR Granting Process**: AFOSR uses Grants.gov as the primary site for its basic research announcements, either through broad agency announcements (BAAs) or specific solicitations. Proposers are encouraged to communicate with the program officers early and often and submit white papers before full proposals.
- **AFOSR Updates**: AFOSR has removed the requirement to submit the lobbying form for prime recipients, as they agree to comply with the Lobbying Disclosure Act by signing the SF-424. AFOSR has also added a section on equipment vesting to clarify that the equipment will vest with the grantee, unless otherwise specified by the Grants officer.
- **AFOSR Opportunities**: AFOSR has several ways to connect with the research community, such as Tech Connect, Air Force and Space Force Connect, and AFRL Scholars Program. AFOSR also has several open or upcoming funding opportunities, such as the Young Investigator Research Program (YIP), the Air Force Research Lab Repperger Research Internship Program, and the Small Business Innovation Phase II Application.

DHS Overview: DHS has multiple components and agencies that issue grants and cooperative agreements for various purposes, such as disaster relief, cybersecurity, homeland security, and nuclear forensics. DHS awarded about $38 billion to 3,821 recipients in fiscal year 2023.

- **Research Programs**: DHS has seven grant programs. Most relevant to the FDP community are:
  - **Science and Technology (S&T)**: S&T has three programs that support scientific innovation and education in areas such as homeland security, cybersecurity, and first responder technologies. S&T awarded $36 million to 11 recipients in fiscal year 2023.
  - **Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD)**: CWMD has two programs that address the threats posed by chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons and agents. CWMD awarded $3.5 million to 13 recipients in fiscal year 2023.
- **Internal Updates**: DHS has updated its policies and procedures to align with the 2 CFR Uniform Guidance and provide training to its staff and stakeholders. DHS also has two different systems for grant applications and management: GrantSolutions for non-FEMA components and FEMA GO for FEMA.
- **Future Sessions**: DHS plans to have program officers present more details about the research programs in the next sessions and invites feedback and questions from the FDP community.

NIH Summary:

- **Budget Updates**: NIH is operating under a continuing resolution until March 8, 2024. The new executive salary levels have been issued and a guide notice is forthcoming (now issued: NOT-OD-24-057).
- **Policy Updates**: NIH has issued two notices regarding the SBIR and STTR programs, implementing major changes such as increased minimum performance standards, disclosure requirements for foreign entities, and a new form for reporting funded and unfunded relationships with foreign entities. NIH has also updated the Grants Policy Statement to clarify the policy on foreign subrecipients providing access to research data and documentation. NIH has introduced a simplified review framework for most research project grant applications, consolidating the five regulatory criteria into three factors: importance of the research, rigor
and feasibility, and expertise and resources. Two of these factors will receive numerical scores and one will be evaluated for sufficiency.

- **System/Process Updates**: NIH is working with NSF and other agencies on the common forms for biosketches and other support. Until these forms are fully adopted, NIH requires applicants and recipients to use the current formats. Electronic signatures and supporting documentation are required. NIH has also added a 90-day reminder email for close-out documents, in addition to the existing 10, 120, and 150-day reminders. NIH has updated the validation for the eRA Commons ID field from a warning to an error, and applicants should ensure their Commons IDs are assigned in advance of due dates. Management of the Federal Audit Clearinghouse (FAC) has transitioned from the Census Bureau to the General Services Administration; NIH reminded the audience that Single Audit reports are required to be uploaded to the FAC.

**NIFA update:**

- **NIFA Director**: Dr. Manjit Misra was appointed as the NIFA director for a six-year term in May 2023. He is a world-renowned scientist and former director of the Seed Science Center at Iowa State University. He is leading the development of NIFA’s strategic plan and vision for the future.
- **Priorities**: NIFA is implementing the administration’s priorities, supporting its partners in addressing critical needs, leading the innovation in research, teaching and extension, and partnering with its stakeholders to deliver comprehensive program leadership.
- **Budget**: The FY 2024 President’s budget proposal includes $1.8 billion for NIFA discretionary programs, a 9% increase from FY 2023 enacted levels. The allocation for capacity programs is $892 million, a 3.5% increase from FY 2023 enacted levels. The added funds reflect increased investments in AFRI, SARE, IR-4, EFNEP, and 1890 institutions.
- **Staffing**: NIFA is staffed at 363 full-time employees, slightly more than before the relocation to Kansas City. The goal is 390 employees. NIFA continues to post vacancies on USAJobs.
- **NIFA Processes**: NIFA continues to improve its processes, such as the grants modernization initiative, the scheduled program implementation from RFA to award announcement (SPIRA), the RFA template re-engineering, the public-facing data dashboards, and the policy guide update. NIFA also solicits feedback and suggestions from external stakeholders on its website.

**NASA update:**

- **Policy Updates**: Christiane Diallo ([christiane.diallo@nasa.gov](mailto:christiane.diallo@nasa.gov)) shared some policy updates from the Procurement and Grants Policy Division, such as:
  - The common biosketch and current and pending support forms, as well as the foreign influence disclosure requirements will be incorporated in the Grant and Cooperative Agreement Manual following OSTP’s approval.
  - The transition from the Federal Cash Transaction Report to the Federal Financial Report became effective December 17, 2023, and the change of financial reporting frequency from quarterly to semi-annual became effective December 20, 2023. The Health and Human Services Payment Management System Staff will provide a training for recipients focus on the utilization of PMS for the reporting of the semiannual Federal Financial Report on **February 22, 2024, from 10:30 AM - 12:00PM Eastern Time**. Recipients can join the meeting at the following link: [https://nasaenterprise.webex.com/nasaenterprise/j.php?MTID=m5e9402e4d6f2cd7b535b68be7e391dbd](https://nasaenterprise.webex.com/nasaenterprise/j.php?MTID=m5e9402e4d6f2cd7b535b68be7e391dbd)
The 2023 Equity Action Plan outlines actions to enhance grants and cooperative agreements and advance opportunities, access, and representation to underserved communities. Upon its release, the plan will be accessible on the NASA Mission Equity website at https://www.nasa.gov/mission-equity/

Program Updates: Mary Sladek (mary.f.sladek@nasa.gov) shared some program updates from the Science Mission Directorate, such as:

- The request for information regarding improving the usability of Research Opportunities in Space and Earth Sciences (ROSES), and the upcoming town hall meeting on February 20th to discuss the new requirement for inclusion plans for some ROSES notices of funding opportunity (NOFO).
- The Future Investigators in NASA Earth and Space Science and Technology (FINESST) and other ROSES NOFOs need proposal reviewers. Sign up at https://science.nasa.gov/researchers/volunteer-review-panels
- The study of 50 years of investment in hosting postdocs at NASA facilities invites input from former and current postdocs, applicants, and reviewers. For more information email: paul.hertz@nasa.gov, stefanie.n.milam@nasa.gov, and cummer@duke.edu
- The funding opportunities and workshops from the Space Operations Mission Directorate, the Office of STEM Engagement, and the Space Technology Mission Directorate.

EPA update:

- Research Grants: The EPA Office of Research and Development supports more than 90 programs that address environmental and human health challenges. The current open funding opportunity is for the People, Prosperity and the Planet (P3) awards for student teams to develop sustainable innovations. For upcoming opportunities, visit the EPA research grants website.
- Terms and Conditions Updates: The EPA has updated some of its terms and conditions for grants, such as the National Davis Bacon term and condition, the Fair Share Objectives on the utilization of disadvantaged business enterprises, and the Build America Buy America provision. All applicants and recipients were notified of these changes via a recipient applicant information notice and the grants listserv.
- Grants Listserv: The EPA grants listserv provides the latest information on EPA grants, such as new funding opportunities, webinars, trainings, and policy updates. To subscribe, visit the EPA grants listserv website.

HRSA overview: HRSA is an agency within HHS that provides equitable health care to the nation’s highest-need communities, such as rural, low-income, and vulnerable populations. HRSA supports more than 90 programs, including health centers, HIV/AIDS care, rural health, health workforce, and maternal and child health.

- Financial assistance management: HRSA awarded more than $13.8 billion in financial assistance to over 3,800 recipients in FY 2023, including grants, cooperative agreements, scholarships, and loans. HRSA conducts an annual Healthy Grants Workshop for its recipients and offers webinars on various grant-related topics.
- Simpler NOFOs pilot: HRSA is part of a pilot with HHS to simplify the Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) for applicants. The pilot aims to make the NOFOs more readable, understandable, and user-friendly, using plain language, charts, and visual aids. HRSA has nine NOFOs in the pilot and has issued one so far.