Impact of COVID19: Creating the New Normal for Research

2021 Frontiers in Immunobiology & Immunopathogenesis Symposium

March 5, 2021
The University of Arizona College of Medicine Tucson
University of Arizona
Meeting the Moment

Cardiology Careers: Building a Healthy Heart & Profession Panel Discussion

College of Medicine
Tucson

More Answers to Your Questions About COVID-19 Vaccinations
Q&A with Deepta Bhattacharya, PhD
Unprecedented challenges call for well-prepared leaders like YOU

It is more honest to frame the new, post-COVID-19 normal not as predictions, but as a series of choices.

Fate will not create the new normal; choices will.
Our Choices Matter

- Choosing to wear a mask
- Choosing to make sure all voices are at the table
- Choosing to get COVID vaccine when eligible
- Choosing to value multiple career paths
- Choosing to speak up for science
- Choosing to "hand the microphone" to others to allow them space to speak
COVID-19 is a disruptive event that requires a higher priority for science and technology

Which statement is closest to your view? Statement A: The COVID-19 pandemic is a disruptive event and requires that the United States assign a higher priority to science and technology. Statement B: Things will get back to normal soon; we don't need increased efforts in science.

Science and Technology Action Committee: A National Plan

**Leadership**
- Elevate the Science Advisor to the President to the Cabinet ✓
- Ensure science has a prominent voice in the Administration

**Coordination**
- Empower the NSTC with four Coordinators and new funding to address large-scale, long-term, existential challenges
- Identify new challenges through horizon scanning

**Investment**
- Double federal expenditures for R&D and STEM education over a five year period, to 1.4% of GDP, est. $380B
- Invest new funds in research, technology and manufacturing, infrastructure, education and human capital

https://sciencetechaction.org/

The Committee acknowledges and thanks the Kavli Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, IBM, Simons Foundation International, and Schmidt Futures for their support of this project.
Research!America’s Mission

The Research!America alliance advocates for science, discovery, and innovation to achieve better health for all.

Research!America is an innovator in advocacy for research.

@researchamerica  research_america
We bring stakeholders together to heighten the priority of research and to help assure scientific progress and the health and vitality of the scientific enterprise.
Research!America Strategies for Success

- Keep a finger on public pulse via public opinion surveys
- Develop timely policy and advocacy resources
- Continuously cultivate new advocates and congressional champions
- Execute grassroots/grasstops advocacy campaigns
- Monitor and share federal developments
- Convene cross-sector discussions to inform research-relevant policy issues
- Work with the broad science community to assure all boats will rise
State of Play: Research $

- The House has passed a $1.9T relief package and the Senate is working on their bill.
  - No dollars for COVID-19 related research gaps.

- Work is underway on another relief package that’s expected to focus on the economy, jobs, and infrastructure. We’re pressing for research $.

- The President is expected to release his FY22 budget request sometime in late spring.

- Stifling budget caps may prevent R&D funding increases.
Urgent: Take Action Today!

Congress can’t increase funding for NIH if the overall “cap” on the budget is too low.

Urge your Members of Congress to weigh in with Budget Committee leadership for budget parameters that enable a bold increase in R&D.

Scan the QR code to reach out! You can also Tweet @POTUS through the QR code.

Take action now!
“You can change the image of things to come. But you can’t do it sitting on your hands.”

Research!America Chair Emeritus, Former Congressman John Edward Porter
Q: What do elected officials and scientists have in common?
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A: Serving the public’s interest.

You can effectively engage with any elected official by thanking them for serving the public’s interest. And then say how you serve the public’s interest.
Challenge: Pass the Starbucks Test (socially distanced of course)
Who Represents You?

Senator Mark Kelly (D-AZ)

Senator Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ)

Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ-2)

Congressman Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ-3)

Live or vote off campus? Visit https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials to find those who represent you!
“...public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed.”

President Abraham Lincoln
Research!America Surveys

- Commissioning public opinion surveys on research issues for 28 years:
  - National Surveys
  - State-Based Surveys
  - Issue-Specific Surveys
- Online surveys are conducted with a sample size of 1000-2000 adults and sampling error of +/-3.1% to +/-2.1%. The data are weighted in two stages to ensure accurate representation of the U.S. adult population.
- For many surveys, we oversample minority populations.
Ending the COVID-19 pandemic tops first 100 days priorities

Please indicate which of the following should be the top FIVE priorities for President Biden's and the new Congress' first 100 days in office.

- Ending the COVID-19 pandemic: 69%
- Assuring economic stability and growth: 49%
- Growing jobs: 45%
- Unifying the country: 42%
- Expanding access to health coverage: 29%

Source: A Research!America survey of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2021
8 in 10 think the work of scientists benefits them

In general, to what extent do you think the work that scientists do benefits you?

Source: A Research!America survey of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2021
Strong Support for Basic Science

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Even if it brings no immediate benefits, basic scientific research that advances the frontiers of knowledge is necessary and should be supported by the federal government.

85% say they strongly or somewhat agree it should be supported by the federal government.

This is up from 77% in August 2020, and 80% in January 2019.

Source: A Research!America survey of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2021
Strong Support for Federally Supported Scientific Research in Universities

As you may know, the federal government provides public funds to universities to conduct basic scientific research. Do you approve or disapprove of the federal government spending to sponsor scientific research at universities?

Source: A Research!America survey of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2021
8 in 10 Americans recognize the value of both public and private research in the development of COVID-19 vaccines

Can you name a living scientist?

Of those saying “yes”, Dr. Fauci named by 35% from 24% in August 2020.

Total saying “yes” increased from 20% in 2019 to 27% in 2021.

More Than Half Americans Cannot Name a Place Where Medical or Health Research is Conducted

Can you name any institution, company or organization where medical or health research is conducted?

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2021
Many Americans are unaware that medical research happens in all 50 states

To the best of your knowledge, would you say that medical research in the U.S. is conducted in all 50 states?

Create the New Normal: Increase the Visibility of Science
Strong Majority of Americans Think Scientists Should Inform Elected Officials About Their Research

How important is it for scientists to inform elected officials about their research and its impact on society?

- Very important: 59%
- Somewhat important: 30%
- Not very important: 5%
- Not at all important: 4%
- Not sure: 0%

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2021
Strong Majority of Americans Think Scientists Should Inform the Public About Their Research

How important is it for scientists to inform the public about their research and its impact on society?

- Very important: 59%
- Somewhat important: 32%
- Not very important: 5%
- Not at all important: 0%
- Not sure: 0%

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2021
COVID-19 has pushed science to the forefront of public attention.

Experiencing science in “real time” → This is new for scientists too.

Scientists are not trained to engage the public.

We propose federally-funded PhD students get specific training.

Participate in a Public Engagement (PE) course.

Ensure that new generations of scientists are increasingly visible and comfortable with the broader community → increase trust of and support for science, stronger interest in STEM careers, stronger, science-driven economy.

Mary Woolley, Jenny Luray, and Sarah Ackerman, September 2020
The New Normal on Campus

- Sponsor and support student science policy groups on your campus
- Partner with communications faculty
- Empower everyone to engage

Research!America recently announced third year of civic engagement microgrants

https://www.researchamerica.org/advocacy-action/student-advocacy
Advocacy Action From Your “Desk”

- Email, tweet, or call your member of Congress
- Stay informed — read our Weekly Letter
- Join our alliance member webinars and calls
- Talk to your friends and neighbors
- Engage everyone in your department in public outreach activities

https://www.researchamerica.org/contact-members-congress
Meet the Moment: Put a Face on Research: YOURS!
Remember

The most important four words a scientist can say and convey are ...
“I work for you.”
Research!America Works for You

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