

OCTOBER 2025



## Executive Summary

### Federal Government Shutdown

The federal government continues to be shutdown as Congress works to reach agreement on full-year appropriations. Research institutions nationwide are monitoring the situation closely, as resulting funding lapses are likely to immediately impact federal research operations, including delays in grant processing, halted clinical trials, and furloughs of federal research staff. Many organizations have activated contingency plans to mitigate potential disruptions. Read more about how scientists are preparing [here](#).

### Grant Funding in Higher Education

In a recent ruling, a federal judge ordered the over \$500 million in UCLA's federal grant funding that had been frozen by the White House be restored as litigation continues. Read more about the federal court ruling [here](#). This is the latest in a series of legal challenges by institutions amid funding threats. In late September, the current administration also asked nine universities to sign a "[compact](#)" agreeing to overhaul campus speech policies, revamp admissions procedures, and suppress speaking out against "conservative ideals" in their communities in exchange for preference in federal grant funding.

### The White House & Acetaminophen

National news outlets report that President Trump and senior FDA officials plan to pursue research into potential links between common medications and autism, including efforts to expand treatment approaches involving vitamin B. With strong federal backing, the FDA has initiated the process to revise labeling for acetaminophen, advising pregnant women to avoid use due to possible associations with autism. Many medical groups across the nation reject these claims and note that [their guidance to pregnant women will not be influenced](#) by the administration's statements. Read more [here](#).

## Policy & Regulatory Updates

On September 19, the Trump administration announced a new plan to increase the filing fee for H-1B visas, a visa category widely used by international postdoctoral researchers, university faculty, and STEM professionals in private industry. Beginning September 21, each application will carry a charge of \$100,000. Since H-1B petitions have historically cost only a few thousand dollars, this change represents as much as a 26-fold increase in expense for institutions and employers. Some suspect the new fee will likely decrease the possibility of recruiting scientists from abroad and damage future research, according to [Springer Nature](#). Others express concern for US economic growth, due to the H-1B policy change, as noted by the [BBC](#). For a deeper dive into the potential impacts on H-1B visa students and employees, see this [article](#).

## Upcoming HRA Federal Policy Events

Stay connected through HRA's upcoming Federal policy focused programs and gatherings. These events are designed to spark collaboration, share knowledge, and strengthen our community. Please note that registration for most HRA-hosted events is open exclusively to members.

### Federal Policy Series #6: How Researchers, Funders, and Nonprofits are Joining Forces in an Unprecedented Threat Landscape: Finding a Path Forward

**October 29, 1:30–2:30 p.m. EST (Virtual)**

The threats facing biomedical research and the broader HRA community have never been greater, and the response requires collaboration, strategy, and innovation. Join guest speakers **Corey Duke** and **Nikki Lu** from [Protect Democracy](#) for a critical conversation on how researchers, funders, and nonprofits are coming together to protect and advance scientific research. [Register here to secure your spot!](#)

**REGISTER NOW**

### Fall 2025 HRA Members Meeting Wednesday, November 19 – Thursday, November 20 (In-person and Virtual) American Society of Clinical Oncology in Alexandria, VA

**In-person spots are filling up fast! [Be sure to register by October 17](#).** Sessions related to Federal policy include:

- Navigating shifts: Impact of Federal policy changes on the biomedical workforce, November 19, 1–2 p.m.
- Why are we here and what impact can we have? A reflection of and vision for biomedical research funding and philanthropic and non-profit involvement, November 20, 9–10 a.m.
- What's the Story? Making Science Funding Meaningful to the Public, November 20, 10:30–11:20 a.m.
- Professional Development Workshop: Storytelling for Impact, November 20, 12:30–2 p.m.

**REGISTER NOW**

## Other Events of Interest

- **October 16:** [Public Webinar: Foundation Support for Lobbying and Other Advocacy](#)
- **October 23:** 2025 Brown Lecture: [When Diversity and Equity Are Imperiled and Democracy Is Fragile](#)
- **November 5:** [Rally for the Public's Health](#)

## Resources & Tools

- [How Government Funding Disruptions Affected Nonprofits in Early 2025](#)
- [General FAQs on Executive Actions Impacting Nonprofits](#)
- [A Nonprofit Checklist: What to do When Your Federal Grant or Contract is Terminated](#)
- [Federal Budget Process Explained](#)
- [Federal Budget Guide](#)

### Research Organization Highlight

**This October, we're spotlighting Protect Democracy.** Protect Democracy is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization founded in 2017 to combat threats to American democracy and defend the rule of law. The organization works at the intersection of legal advocacy, public education, and strategic partnerships to protect democratic institutions that enable scientific research and evidence-based policymaking to thrive.

In 2025, Protect Democracy has been actively supporting the research community through legal advocacy and strategic guidance as institutions navigate unprecedented challenges to academic freedom, federal funding stability, and scientific integrity. Their work includes defending against political interference in grant funding, supporting litigation to protect research institutions, and providing strategic counsel to researchers, funders, and nonprofits facing threats to their missions.

To learn more about Protect Democracy's work or access their resources, click the links below:

- [About Protect Democracy](#)
- [Their Work & Impact](#)
- [Updates & Resources](#)



## WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Have questions, suggestions, or need assistance? Dr. Christine Riordan is your primary point of contact for:

- Federal Policy Newsletter feedback and content suggestions
- Membership inquiries and support
- Event registration assistance
- General HRA questions and resources

✉ **Contact:** [christine@healthra.org](mailto:christine@healthra.org)

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We're committed to supporting our members and welcome your input on how we can continue to enhance our services and communications. If you know an organization that could benefit from HRA membership, encourage them to learn more [here](#).