



Division of Strategic Coordination

Elizabeth Wilder, Ph.D., Acting Director



- The Division of Strategic Coordination (DSC) serves as a focal point for coordination of trans-NIH programs and for development and implementation of strategic initiatives at the NIH.
- The DSC's mission is to:
 - foster coordination of research that spans the missions of multiple Institutes and Centers (ICs)
 - implement a process of strategic planning in those areas for which emerging opportunities and specific grand challenges meet the criteria for funding via the Common Fund.

DSC Key Roles

- Gather input from the scientific community concerning emerging opportunities and scientific roadblocks that affect a broad spectrum of health research
- Coordinate a trans-NIH planning process for strategic initiatives that draws from the community input
- Work with trans-NIH groups to implement the plans
- Work with trans-NIH groups to evaluate the programs

The DSC is not yet divided into functional branches but as staffing increases, two branches are anticipated with the following roles:

- Analysis Branch – this branch will include scientific program staff who work fluidly with scientific staff in the ICs to:
 - Ensure trans-NIH communication regarding areas of shared interest
 - Develop concepts for possible new Common Fund programs through:
 - Portfolio Analyses of specific program areas
 - Assessment of specific needs in the community
 - Implement programs that have been selected as Common Fund programs
 - Articulate questions for Common Fund program evaluations

DSC Structure (cont)

- Operations Branch – this branch will oversee budgetary and administrative issues required to implement Common Fund programs and to communicate with the scientific and lay communities. Specifically, this branch will:
 - Administer the Common Fund, interacting with ICs and Office of Budget to:
 - Develop and track budgets for individual initiatives, including staff costs, ensuring that ICs are reimbursed for their effort in managing Common Fund programs
 - Transfer funds from the Common Fund to the ICs that administer individual awards
 - Develop Congressional Budget justifications for each program and to report on how the dollars are spent
 - Plan and implement strategies for gathering input from the community and for vetting ideas through the Council of Councils and the NIH Leadership
 - Ensure Common Fund programs are consistent with policy, and as necessary, to develop new policies for the Common Fund
 - Develop and implement communication strategies for NIH, external scientific, and lay communities about Common Fund programs

DSC Current Activities

We are currently involved in implementing 4 cohorts of Roadmap programs. Between now and the November CoC mtg, we will engage in different activities for each cohort.

- Cohort 1: having recently been approved for continued funding via the Common Fund, most of these programs are planning for recompetition. We will work with teams for each program to develop detailed plans and issue new RFAs.
- Cohort 2: RFAs are currently active; we will work with these groups to oversee review, develop funding plans, and ensure awards are issued
- Cohort 3: Having recently been approved, we will work with groups for each program to develop detailed implementation plans and to issue RFAs
- Cohort 4: The 4th cycle of planning is beginning with a Request for Input from the community and brainstorming with the DSC Subcommittee of the CoC. This idea-gathering stage will occur through May; ideas will be developed into program concepts by October for Concept Approval at the November CoC meeting.

- Improved communication via our public website is critical. This will be a major effort for the office over the next several months.

Focus of Today's Breakout Session

We expect the two meetings of the CoC to follow a rhythm of articulating suggestions for new programs in the spring and concept approval in the fall. We begin this cycle at this meeting.

- Discuss emerging opportunities or overwhelming obstacles that should be addressed by new programs
 - Input from Subcommittee Members
 - Concepts being developed by NIH staff

- Consider how the Council can most effectively identify obstacles/opportunities in the future, recognizing that input from scientific experts across the breadth of health research is crucial to our process.
 - Working Groups
 - Other?