B5: Additional Reasons for Implementing Modular Grants
(26.7% said yes, there are additional reasons for implementing modular grants)

Main Themes:
- Reduce administrative burden and costs for NIH
- Reduce administrative burden for PI and PI's institution; saves time for PI when preparing the application
- Reduce the average size of awards; encourages PIs to stay within $250,000 limit
- Simplify the review process; keeps reviewers focused on the science

E2b: Raise Modular Grant Limit Beyond $250K
(Of those that had a preference, 45.8% said they would prefer the limit to be higher than $250,000)

Main Themes:
- The cost of research has risen (particularly salaries for students and postdocs, also some equipment and supplies)
- Limit was established 5 years ago; it has not kept up with inflation or cost of living increases
- Certain types of research, such as animal research and clinical trials, are more expensive and inherently excluded due to the modular grant limit
- The modular grant cap limits research collaboration
- Current limit seems artificial – why not increase it?

Additional Comments:
- New suggested limit is generally $300K (or by one or two modules)
- There is a bias against nonmodular grants; nonmodular grants get more scrutiny and are therefore less likely to be funded
- Fewer grants are being proposed as modular because research costs simply go beyond $250,000
- The modular grant system will work regardless of the size of the grant

E2c: Keep Modular Grant Limit at $250K
(Of those that had a preference, 54.2% said they would prefer that the limit not be higher than $250,000)

Main Themes:
- Current limit is reasonable; most PIs do not need more; proposals with larger budgets can always use the nonmodular format, if necessary
- Requests higher than $250,000 should be justified; PIs should be accountable for more expensive research studies
- Increasing the limit will result in PIs asking for the new maximum amount which means fewer grants will be funded
- Detailed budgets are needed for larger and/or more complex projects since they aid reviewers in understanding what is being proposed

Additional Comments:
- The modular grant system should be eliminated altogether
- The modular grant limit should be lowered
- Reviewing modular grants is frustrating
- While the limit should not be increased now, in time an increase will be necessary to account for inflation

E3: Reasons for Liking Modular Grants
(79.9% of PRs made a comment when asked about the aspects of the modular grant application process they like)

Main Themes:
- Saves time during review; review of grants is simpler; less paperwork to "wade through" (note: some peer reviewers wrote that modular grants save a lot of time during review sessions, while others wrote that the time savings is minimal)
- Focuses study section meetings on the science of proposals and not on the budget, resulting in better quality reviews; reduces "nit-picking" and "bickering" over budget details.
- Benefits for PIs – flexibility, simplifies application procedures, less paperwork to fill out
- Provides a cap on grant awards; keeps costs down so more awards can be made
- Salary information is kept private

Additional Comments:
- For those who are PIs and peer reviewers, there are benefits associated with the modular grants system as a PI, but as a reviewer there are drawbacks such as the lack of a detailed budget to review
- Applicants usually have to submit detailed budgets to their institution anyway, which negates some of the benefit

E4: Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants
(68.0% of PRs made a comment when asked about the aspects of the modular grant application process they did not like)

Main Themes:
- Difficult for reviewers to evaluate the true cost of the research; hard to determine if proposed costs are realistic
- Difficult to make recommended cuts due to lack of information; reductions in funding are arbitrary (it is common to simply cut one module)
- Regional differences are difficult to detect
- No way to assess overlap due to lack of Other Support information
- Budgets are padded; PIs ask for the maximum amount (especially young investigators), making less money available for grants in general
- Applicants do not take the time to think carefully about what their research should cost (particularly young/new PIs)
- Problem with consortium/indirect costs included in the $250,000 cap.

Additional Comments:
- Should be able to request ½ a module if needed; should be more flexibility in requesting funds (not having to make requests in whole modules)