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CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE  NEW

The House met today in pro forma session and will meet periodically through the August recess.

Like the House, the Senate will meet periodically in pro forma session during August. It will resume business on Tuesday September 6.

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS

CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS APPOINT MEMBERS OF DEFICIT REDUCTION COMMITTEE  NEW

Leaders of the House and Senate this week designated the 12 members of the new deficit reduction “super committee” created by the just-enacted Budget Control Act. The panel is tasked with coming up with a package of $1.5 trillion in deficit reduction measures by November 23. Congress will have until Christmas to vote up or down on the package. (See AAU Weekly Wrap-up August 5, 2011 for additional information on provisions of the Act.)

In the Senate, Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) appointed Democrats Max Baucus (MT), John Kerry (MA), and Patty Murray (WA). Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (KY) appointed Republicans Jon Kyl (AZ), Rob Portman (OH), and Pat Toomey (PA).

In the House, Speaker John Boehner (OH) appointed Republicans Dave Camp (MI), Jeb Hensarling (TX), and Fred Upton (MI). Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (CA) appointed Democrats Xavier Becerra (CA), James Clyburn (SC), and Chris Van Hollen (MD).

Senator Murray and Rep. Hensarling will co-chair the committee.
As discussed in an article in the New York Times, “The panel members are all team players. They represent their caucuses and the Congressional leaders who appointed them. Prospects for a deal thus depend on the leadership of both parties. It is difficult to envision an agreement without their support.”

**EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

**NEW NIH CONFLICT OF INTEREST RULE HAS CLEARED OMB**  NEW

The biomedical research community’s wait for publication of new conflict of interest regulations by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) may soon be over. The regulatory review website of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reports that OMB has completed its review of the final rule, indicating that it will be published soon in the Federal Register, likely in the next two weeks. The final rule is the culmination of a regulatory effort that began more than three years ago in response to several high-profile cases of researchers who failed to disclose significant financial conflicts.

News reports have indicated that the requirement for disclosing financial conflicts of interest on a public website has been removed from the final rule. AAU and other research associations opposed the requirement on the basis that such postings would “be of little practical value to the public and, without context for the information, could lead to confusion rather than clarity regarding financial conflicts of interest and how they are managed.”

**FEDERAL PLAN FOR IMPROVING CYBERSECURITY EDUCATION NOW AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT**  NEW

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) today announced that the draft strategic plan for the National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education is now available for public comment. Comments are due by September 12.

NIST is coordinating this federal interagency program, which is a “national campaign focused on enhancing cybersecurity in the United States by accelerating the availability of educational and training resources designed to improve the cyber behavior, skills and knowledge of every segment of the population.” The other participating federal agencies are the Departments of Defense and Education, the National Science Foundation, the Office of Personnel Management, and the National Security Agency.

**NSF ANNOUNCES IPA OPPORTUNITY IN GRANTS MANAGEMENT POLICY**  NEW

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is seeking candidates for a term appointment under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) to work in the agency’s policy office. This IPA opportunity is the first such posting in the policy office in more than 10 years.

The deadline for applications is close of business, September 2, 2011.

The announcement is here and reproduced below.
Dear Colleagues:

The Policy Office, within the Division of Institution and Award Support (DIAS) in the Office of Budget, Finance & Award Management (BFA), announces an opportunity for an individual with demonstrated experience in grant administration and management to assist the Policy Office in strengthening NSF’s capabilities in policy formulation and implementation for the Foundation’s assistance programs.

This position is a term appointment under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) for one year, with a possibility of renewal for a second year. The appointee will need to relocate to the Washington D.C. Metro area for the term of the appointment. The position will be filled at the equivalent of a GS-13 Federal Government employee salary (range of $89,000 to $115,000).

Under the IPA provisions, the appointee remains on the payroll of his/her home institution and the home institution will continue to administer pay and benefits. NSF will reimburse the home institution for NSF’s negotiated share of the cost of the assignment. Individuals eligible for an IPA assignment include employees of State and local government agencies, institutions of higher education, Indian tribal governments, federally funded research and development centers and qualified nonprofit organizations.

The appointee will assist with the full range of activities in the Policy Office. Broad responsibilities for the Policy Office include the development, coordination, and issuance of NSF pre- and post-award policies that govern the assistance programs of the National Science Foundation. The Policy Office is also responsible for:

- Providing guidance on policies and procedures related to NSF’s electronic proposal and award systems;
- Reviewing and approving all NSF proposal-generating documents;
- Coordination of outreach programs for external stakeholders and NSF staff;
- Coordination for the release of timely and relevant information regarding NSF policies and procedures that cover proposal preparation, merit review, and award management.

The incumbent will work closely with BFA staff, NSF Program Officers, the Office of the General Counsel and other NSF staff responsible for the management and oversight of NSF programs. Specific duties will include:

- Identifying ways to improve funding opportunities and other proposal generating documents for Principal Investigators and Sponsored Projects Office (SPO) officials;
- Assisting with the implementation of NSF policies and procedures;
- Providing expert assistance to questions posed by researchers, SPO administrators, and NSF staff; and
- Development and implementation of strategies to improve communication of changing policies and procedures to the research community.
Additional special projects may include:

- Analysis of policy implications for changes recommended by the Merit Review Task Force and the Merit Review Process Working Group, and developing implementation briefing materials and presentations for the National Science Board, senior management and NSF staff; and
- Assisting interagency efforts surrounding the consolidation of Government-wide assistance award guidance into Chapter 2 of the CFR (Code of Federal Regulations).

Applicants should possess in-depth knowledge of pre- and post-award policies and regulations at the federal level. They should have ten or more years of experience in a position with responsibility for grants management and administration. Additionally, applicants should possess excellent oral and written communication skills.

Applicants should send a letter of interest, a resume or curriculum vitae, and a brief (no more than 3 page) writing sample to the following address no later than close of business, September 2, 2011 to:

Jean Feldman
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Division of Institution and Award Support
National Science Foundation
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Phone: 703-292-8243
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