



July 29, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to provide you with a copy of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of AIDS Research (OAR) [Second HIV Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Report: September 2020-July 2021](#). With this report comes my sincere appreciation for your invaluable help to organize and host listening sessions with the NIH OAR.

This report summarizes the process and feedback from NIH OAR listening sessions from September 2020 through July 2021. There were two key environmental changes in early 2020 that deeply affected these listening sessions: the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, with higher disease burdens among racial and ethnic minorities, and the resurgence of racial justice across the United States. These developments had implications for NIH HIV research program priorities, the structure and logistics of the research enterprise, and the HIV research workforce.

Within this context, the NIH OAR held 13 virtual listening sessions in six locations to gather input on emerging trends in the HIV epidemic, conducting high-priority HIV science, and maximizing research investments to achieve the goals of the [Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. \(EHE\) initiative](#) and the [NIH Strategic Plan for HIV and HIV-Related Research](#).

As the report showcases, several key themes emerged. Many participants called for greater support for priority HIV research topics, as well as efforts to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on HIV research. Other themes included the need to enhance relationships between academic and community partners, as well as increase outreach and opportunities for early career investigators (ECIs).

The NIH OAR has already started to incorporate ideas from these listening sessions. For example, we have convened listening sessions focused on ECI needs, with senior investigators in an expert panel. In April, we hosted a virtual workshop for ECIs conducting HIV and AIDS research. Feedback from the listening sessions was incorporated into the NIH OAR's activities related to the *EHE* initiative and [National HIV/AIDS Strategy \(NHAS\)](#).

Moving forward, the NIH OAR will continue work with NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices to build support for ECIs, help the research community recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, and increase academic-community partnerships. The feedback from these listening sessions will inform the NIH HIV and AIDS research and budget priorities, outreach and engagement activities with ECIs, and support for HIV-related research that aims to address health disparities and racial inequities.

Again, my sincere thanks for your assistance to ensure that the NIH HIV and AIDS research program continues to be responsive to, and informed by, the valuable insights of our key partners. Please take the opportunity to further connect with the NIH OAR by visiting our website at oar.nih.gov, signing up for our mailing list at oar.nih.gov/subscribe, or following us on Twitter at [@nih_oar](https://twitter.com/nih_oar).

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Maureen".

Maureen M. Goodenow, Ph.D.
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Director, Office of AIDS Research
National Institutes of Health