

May 8, 2025

The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
House Appropriations Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
House Appropriations Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Aderholt, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Capito, Ranking Member Baldwin, and  
Members of the Appropriations Committees,

Thank you for your leadership in making important federal funding decisions related to medical research. The 36 undersigned organizations are stakeholders of the research led by the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) within the National Institutes of Health (NIH). **We write to request that you include \$747 million for NIAMS in the fiscal year 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bills, consistent with the Ad Hoc recommendation of a 9% increase for the overall NIH Budget.**

The NIAMS leads the federal effort on research into the causes, incidence, treatment and prevention of diseases and disorders of the bones, joints, muscle, skin and connective tissues. It touches the most fundamental aspects of human mobility and function. These diseases and disorders are costly, chronic, debilitating and common and impact the lives of millions of Americans, affecting nearly every household in the United States.

Current initiatives of NIAMS include:

- **NAIMS role in the Accelerating Medicines Partnership Autoimmune and Immune-Mediated Diseases (AMP AIM) program** is a prime example of public-private partnerships driving innovation. The program looks at shared mechanisms of autoimmune and immune mediated diseases, particularly the cellular and molecular interactions that lead to inflammation and can lead to discoveries for some of the most debilitating and life-altering diseases such as lupus and arthritis.
- NIAMS is leading the **NIH Back Pain Consortium Research Project (NIH BACPAC)**. Lower back pain is the leading cause of disability in the U.S. and

contributes to opioid use. This initiative convenes patients, providers, and researchers to study back pain and develop personalized treatment plans.

In addition, NIAMS' robust external engagement program ensures that supported research is patient centered and meets the needs of stakeholder communities. Stakeholders of the NIAMS research portfolio offer the following observations:

- “Research conducted and funded by NIAMS is critical to advancing the understanding of neuromuscular diseases and finding new treatments. Rare neuromuscular diseases have few treatment options and are often quite severe, so the research supported by NIAMS could truly save lives.” – Paul Melmeyer, Muscular Dystrophy Association
- “A well-funded NIAMS research portfolio is critical to sustaining progress in understanding alopecia areata. While the approval of treatments for severe disease marks a historic milestone, there remain significant unmet needs, particularly for pediatric patients and those with mild to moderate disease. Continued research to further understand underlying disease mechanisms and identify new therapeutic targets for treatment development are greatly needed and can only be achieved with robust research funded by NIAMS.” – Nicole Friedland, CEO, National Alopecia Areata Foundation
- “The International Pemphigus & Pemphigoid Foundation has led the way in voicing the needs of the pemphigus and pemphigoid community. We work closely with our partners like NIAMS to inspire policies supportive of the needs of pemphigus and pemphigoid community and other rare disease patients and their families.” – Marc Yale, IPPF
- “The National Psoriasis Foundation is pleased to be a supporting partner in the Accelerated Medicines Autoimmune and Immune Mediated Diseases (AMP® AIM) program run through NIAMS and the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health. AMP AIM and other research funded by NIAMS is critical to defining mechanisms of psoriatic disease and identifying new targets for treatment and diagnosis that will benefit our community.” Bob Friesel, PhD, National Psoriasis Foundation

Our FY 2026 funding request would enable NIAMS to continue critical research initiatives and explore new opportunities to identify causes, treatments and ways to prevent some of the most prevalent diseases and disorders in the United States. The funding request accommodates the Biomedical Research and Development Price Index as well as a 9% increase over the fiscal year 2025 enacted level for NIAMS. The requested amount represents a fraction of what is needed to adequately fund an Institute that currently is significantly underfunded relative to the disease burden within its purview.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. For additional information, please contact the NIAMS Coalition Co-Chairs, Pat Wildman ([wildman@lupus.org](mailto:wildman@lupus.org)) and Lee Grossman ([grossman@oref.org](mailto:grossman@oref.org))

Sincerely,

American Behcet's Disease Association  
American College of Rheumatology  
American Medical Society for Sports Medicine  
American Society for Bone and Mineral Research  
American Society of Gene and Cell Therapy  
Arthritis Foundation  
Arthritis National Research Foundation  
Autoimmune Association  
Autoinflammatory Alliance  
Coalition of Skin Diseases  
Dermatology Foundation  
Dermatology Nurses' Association  
Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research  
FSHD Society  
Gorlin Syndrome Alliance  
International Pemphigus & Pemphigoid Foundation  
International Pemphigus and Pemphigoid Foundation  
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.  
Lupus Foundation of America  
Lupus Research Alliance  
Muscular Dystrophy Association  
National Alopecia Areata Foundation  
National Eczema Association  
National Scleroderma Foundation  
National Spine Health Foundation  
Nevus Outreach  
Orthopaedic Research and Education Foundation  
Orthopaedic Research Society  
Rheumatology Research Foundation  
Sjogren's Foundation  
Society for Pediatric Dermatology  
Spondylitis Association of America  
The Sturge-Weber Foundation  
TSC Alliance  
Vasculitis Foundation  
VITFriends Vitiligo Support Group Inc.