



INDEPENDENT RESEARCH INSTITUTES ARE ESSENTIAL TO OUR NATION'S EFFORTS TO IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH

The Association of Independent Research Institutes looks forward to working with the Obama administration and the new NIH Director to carry out the research that will lead to improving the health and quality of life for all Americans.

The Opportunities

In an effort to increase the nation's commitment to public health, President-elect Obama supports renewing the U.S. commitment to science, technology, and innovation. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is responding to this charge by funding a record number of research grants, with special emphasis on groundbreaking projects in areas that show the greatest potential for improving health, including genetic medicine, clinical research, and health disparities. In addition, NIH is also supporting the next generation of biomedical research through cross-cutting, interdisciplinary initiatives such as those supported in the NIH Roadmap, the NIH Neuroscience Blueprint, the Clinical and Translational Science Award program, and the Genes, Environment and Health Initiative. Independent research institutes are involved extensively in these initiatives, making them an important and vital component of the overall U.S. medical research enterprise. Therefore, independent research institutes are positioned to help the Obama administration achieve its goal of improving the quality of life for all Americans.

The Association of Independent Research Institutes

The Association of Independent Research Institutes (AIRI) is a national organization of 90 independent, non-profit research institutes that perform basic and clinical research in the biological and behavioral sciences. AIRI institutes vary in size, with budgets ranging from a few million to hundreds of millions of dollars. In addition, each AIRI member institution is governed by its own independent Board of Directors, which allows our members to focus on discovery based research while remaining structurally nimble and capable of adjusting their research programs to emerging areas of inquiry. Researchers at independent research institutes consistently exceed the success rates of the overall NIH grantee pool, and receive about 11 percent of NIH's peer reviewed, competitively awarded extramural grants. On average, AIRI member institutes receive a total of \$1.6 billion in extramural grants from NIH in any given year.

Our Commitment

Pursuing New Knowledge

The United States model for conducting biomedical research, which involves supporting scientists at universities, medical centers, and independent research institutes, provides an effective approach to making fundamental discoveries in the laboratory and translating them into medical advances that save lives. AIRI member institutes are private, stand-alone research centers that set their sights on the vast frontiers of medical science, specifically focused on pursuing knowledge about the biology and behavior of living systems and to apply that knowledge to extend healthy life and reduce the burdens of illness and disability.

Providing Efficiency and Flexibility

AIRI member institutes' smaller size and greater flexibility provide an environment that is particularly conducive to creativity and innovation. In addition, independent research institutes possess a unique versatility/culture that encourages them to share expertise, information, and equipment across their institutes and elsewhere, which helps to minimize bureaucracy and increase efficiency when compared to larger degree granting academic universities.

Supporting Young Researchers

While the primary function of AIRI institutes is research, most are strongly involved in training the next generation of biomedical researchers and ensuring that a pipeline of promising researchers are prepared to make significant and potentially transformative discoveries in a variety of areas.

For more information, please contact:

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