

PROTECT AMERICAN SCIENCE: OPPOSE THE POLITICIZATION OF FEDERAL RESEARCH FUNDING

A proposed OMB rule would let **political priorities** override **scientific merit** and destabilize the federal funding that powers American research.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

On May 29, 2026, the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) proposed a sweeping revision of the Uniform Guidance, the government-wide rule-book for federal grants. The rule applies to **all federal grants, not only research**. For the research community, tens of billions of dollars each year in National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, and other funding are at stake, supporting universities, natural history museums, botanic gardens, and field stations in every state and congressional district.

This rule would let OMB bypass independent scientific peer review and steer congressionally appropriated funding toward shifting administration priorities—**expanding executive power over grants at the expense of Congress and scientific merit**.

HOW IT WAS PROPOSED

- Amends 91 parts of Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations across 456 sections, adding 52 new subsections and fully restating 375 sections.
- Never appeared on the Unified Agenda, giving stakeholders no advance notice.
- OMB allowed only 45 days to comment on this sweeping rule.
- OMB's own Regulatory Impact Analysis concedes it could not quantify the rule's expected costs or benefits.
- Applies government-wide and could be finalized as soon as October 2026.



WHY IT MATTERS?

WHAT THE PROPOSED RULE WOULD CHANGE

Funding decisions would be subject to political review

Senior political appointees could override expert peer review and decline to fund work that does not advance the current administration's priorities—priorities the rule does not define.

Awards could be terminated midstream

Active awards could be ended when priorities shift, disrupting clinical trials, long-term datasets, and specimen collections that take decades to build and cannot be reconstructed once interrupted.

Compliance costs would rise

Added oversight, new approval steps, and the elimination of streamlined subawards would increase administrative costs, with the heaviest burden on smaller institutions, museums, and field stations.

International collaboration would be restricted

New limits on working with foreign partners—a cornerstone of modern science—would slow discovery and could prompt researchers and projects to relocate to competitor nations.

Sharing research would become harder

New conditions on conferences, journal publishing and open access, professional memberships, and public communication would make taxpayer-funded science more difficult to access and build on.

Counter to Gold Standard Science

These changes are in tension with the administration's own Executive Order, which calls for research that is reproducible, transparent, collaborative, and subject to unbiased peer review.

Taken together, these changes **risk ceding the United States' leadership in scientific research** to strategic competitors—slowing the discoveries that strengthen the nation's health, wealth, and security.

THESE ARE NOT ABSTRACT RISKS

A long-term Alzheimer's study, a decades-long ecological monitoring program, or a clinical trial that patients rely on could be ended not for fraud or poor performance, but because federal priorities changed, leaving the data incomplete and the public investment unrecovered.

HOW CONGRESS CAN HELP

Please urge the Administration to withdraw or substantially revise the harmful provisions of the proposed rule, and protect the independent, merit-based peer review that has made American science the envy of the world.