

OMB-2026-0034 Regulation for Federal Financial Assistance – What Happens Now?

As everyone is well aware, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released a proposal for new regulations for federal grantmaking on May 29, 2026 (OMB-2026-0034) and there was a 45-day comment period (ending June 13, 2026). The ASIP encouraged all of our members to submit comments expressing concerns regarding how specific provisions in the proposed regulations would harm the research enterprise overall and negatively impact the research programs of individual investigators. A number of the larger scientific advocacy groups (FASEB, Research!America, and others) provided tools and guidelines to make it easy and straightforward to submit comments and contact representatives in Congress to express the same concerns.

The comment period has now ended and so what happened and what happens next?

By the end of the 45-day comment period, nearly a half million comments (496,769 to be exact) were submitted, reflecting a tremendously successful mobilization campaign on the part of scientific societies, research institutions, and individuals. We thank all of our members that were able to participate in the comment period and express their own concerns regarding these proposed regulations. The ASIP Council submitted comments regarding 10 provisions of the new regulations that would adversely affect our members and the Society itself.

What did the comments say?

In an [online article](#) published on July 15, 2026, by STAT, an analysis of the submitted comments was reported. [This analysis](#) was performed by investigators at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill using AI-assisted tools to examine 52,322 comments that had been posted on the Regulations.gov website. While this analysis is looking at a small subset of the total comments (10.5%), the [results](#) were telling. The comments analyzed originated from identified individuals (76%), anonymous comments (22%), and comments from organizations (0.5%). In general, the majority of comments analyzed were opposed to implementation of the proposed regulations – 90% of individual comments were in opposition, 97% of anonymous comments were opposed, and 89% of comments from organizations were opposed. The provisions of the proposed regulations that garnered the greatest opposition included (i) political approval/control of awards, (ii) non-binding peer review, and (iii) mid-award termination for any reason. There was also significant opposition to other provisions of the proposed regulations, including (a) alignment of awards with administration policies, (b) DEI restrictions, (c) publication costs not allowed, (d) scientific conference pre-approval, (e) limits on international collaborations, (f) professional membership restrictions, (g) gold-standard science, (h) award rejections due to organizational affiliation, among others.

Among those expressing support for the proposed regulations, most cited concerns over “reducing waste, fraud, and abuse.” While this is a sentiment that we can all agree with, it is necessary to recognize that the current administration has adopted very inflexible positions regarding the legitimacy of climate science, vaccine research, and the origins of various diseases. It follows that funding of these areas are often labeled waste, fraud, and abuse.

The UNC investigators plan to repeat their analysis when additional comments (or all comments) are posted.

Continued pro-research action is necessary!

While the OMB is required to respond to all substantive comments, they are not required to modify the proposed regulations or delete problematic provisions despite the apparent overwhelming opposition. This was not a vote per se and OMB could decide to adopt these new regulations no matter the magnitude of opposition. It has been noted that the OMB wants to implement the new rules by October 1, 2026 so that they would apply to all 2027 funding decisions. In order for the new regulations to take effect in October, the new regulations will need to be accepted and posted by September 1, 2026. Hence, we will not be waiting very long before we see what will happen next.

It is certainly the hope of many that the submitted comments will be taken seriously by the OMB and that appropriate modifications to the new regulations will be made prior to implementation. *Time will tell.* We anticipate that litigation will result if the proposed regulations are adopted as written and perhaps even with significant modification. Certainly, the courts might declare that various provisions of the new regulations are illegal and require changes to be made, but correction of the course taken by OMB through court action will be very slow. Therefore, we need to continue to contact our representatives in Congress as legislative action could impose corrective action on the OMB in a much timelier fashion.

We encourage all ASIP members (irrespective of career stage) to continue to monitor this situation as we approach September 1st. It would be appropriate for everyone to [contact their representatives](#) in Congress to urge them to act regarding the OMB – related to these proposed regulations, as well as to their continued efforts to usurp Congress' control over appropriations and how federal dollars are spent.

We will continue to monitor this situation on behalf of our members and will alert you as events unfold over the next month.

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