

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is the lead federal agency for research on mental illnesses. In fiscal year (FY) 2020, the Institute published the new NIMH Strategic Plan for Research, which serves as a broad roadmap for the institute's research priorities, spanning fundamental science to public health impact. Each spotlight in this report showcases the progress toward accomplishing the goals of this plan in FY 2022. NIMH continues to build on these and other scientific advances to achieve our mission to transform the understanding and treatment of mental illnesses through basic and clinical research, paving the way for prevention, recovery, and cure.

To read the Strategic Plan in full, please visit www.nimh.nih.gov/strategicplan.

Spotlights

Developing Tools to Enable Early Intervention for People at Clinical High Risk for Psychosis

In 2022, participant recruitment began for the **Accelerating Medicines Partnership® Program – Schizophrenia (AMP® SCZ)**. AMP SCZ is a public-private partnership between NIMH, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the European Medicines Agency, and public and private organizations, with the goal of identifying indicators that help to predict trajectories and improve outcomes for people at clinical high risk for psychosis. As of 2022, the AMP SCZ program consisted of a data analysis and coordination center and two research networks with 42 study sites across 14 countries. Over a span of 2 years, participants will complete repeated clinical, cognitive, neuroimaging, genetic, biomarker, behavioral, and other assessments. The **AMP SCZ website** serves as an information hub for researchers and for people who may be interested in joining the study.

Aligns with Goal 2: Examine Mental Illness Trajectories Across the Lifespan

Multistage Autism Screening in Early Intervention Settings

Early screening can help children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) receive services and supports as early as possible, which can lead to better health. However, many families may not receive early screening and diagnosis due to disparities in access. Researchers in the NIMH-funded ASD Pediatric, Early Detection, Engagement, and Services Research (ASD PEDS) Network tested an early **multistage screening process for ASD** at three federally funded early intervention sites. This multistage screening process led to a noticeable increase in ASD diagnoses, especially among Spanish-speaking families. Multistage screening for ASD may improve early ASD detection and reduce health disparities.

Aligns with Goal 4: Strengthen the Public Health Impact of NIMH-Supported Research

Promising Intervention for Lowering Long-Term Suicide Risk in Youth

Over the past 20 years, overall U.S. suicide rates have increased, and over the past 15 years, youth suicide rates have increased as well. In a study supported by NIMH, researchers examined whether Family Check-Up (FCU), a family-based intervention originally designed to address substance use and behavioral problems, might also address suicide risk (suicide thoughts and behaviors) in youth. Compared to youth who did not receive any intervention, **youth who received the FCU intervention had lower suicide risk**. This effect lasted up to 9 years, and did not differ by race, ethnicity, or gender, suggesting the intervention was equally effective at reducing suicide risk across various populations of youth. This research also underscores the value of examining existing interventions across various research domains.


Aligns with Goal 3: Strive for Prevention and Cures | Challenges and Opportunities

NIMH: FY 2022 AT A GLANCE

BUDGET (APPROPRIATION)

 **\$2.217 billion**


FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AND INITIATIVES

 **50** NIMH-led
124 NIMH-participated

TOTAL PROJECTS

 **3,800+** funded

NEW AND RENEWAL RESEARCH PROJECT GRANTS

 **2,769** applications received

673 grants awarded

success rate **24%**



NIMH FUNDS RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS IN:

49 states + D.C. and Puerto Rico

 **23** countries

Spotlights

Highlighting Advances in the NIH BRAIN Initiative

The *Brain Research Through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies*® (BRAIN) Initiative aims to revolutionize our understanding of the human brain. The BRAIN Initiative® is highly collaborative, encompassing ten NIH institutes and centers (with NINDS and NIMH as co-leads), five federal agencies, private foundations, and international organizations.

Researchers in the NIH BRAIN Initiative Cell Census Network developed a comprehensive **atlas of cell types in the mouse brain** and are now collecting information in other species. The NIH BRAIN Initiative also launched **two transformative projects**: the BRAIN Initiative Cell Atlas Network (BICAN) and the Armamentarium for Precision Brain Cell Access. BICAN researchers are developing a reference atlas of brain cell types in monkeys and humans across the lifespan. Other researchers are building an armamentarium, or toolkit, of molecular probes that will allow researchers to target specific brain cells and circuits. These large-scale projects promise to transform neuroscience research, illuminating foundational principles governing the circuit basis of behavior and informing new approaches to the treatment of human brain disorders.

Aligns with Goal 1: Define the Brain Mechanisms Underlying Complex Behaviors

NIMH's Approach to Mental Health Disparities Research

NIMH is committed to advancing practices and informing policies that aim to reduce mental health disparities, promote equity, and address the needs of people from underserved communities and people who are underrepresented in health research. To strategically guide these efforts, the institute developed an **Approach to Mental Health Disparities Research**. The Approach outlines five specific priority research areas: youth suicide in Black and other minoritized communities; population-based studies; mechanism-based intervention development and testing; implementation science; and integrated, multi-stakeholder approaches to research. NIMH particularly encourages research that identifies mechanisms contributing to the persistence of mental health disparities and tests interventions aimed at reducing disparities, improving outcomes, and promoting equity.

Aligns with Challenges and Opportunities

NIMH: FY 2022 AT A GLANCE

NEXT GENERATION RESEARCHERS

98 new and early-stage investigators



209 early established investigators

NIMH-CONDUCTED (INTRAMURAL) RESEARCH

39 research groups



10 core facilities/resources

PUBLICATIONS



9,000+ papers published in peer-reviewed journals

DIGITAL OUTREACH



6 social media events

296,000+ email subscribers



23 million page views on the NIMH website

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