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Dear Colleagues,

Many of you have undoubtedly become aware of certain divisions of the Office of Health and Human Services (HHS), notably the NIH, pausing some of its activities.

While there has been a pause on various meetings (like grant review panels) at the NIH (and indeed HHS, more broadly), the current information we have on what is happening at the NIH is that this is not specifically targeting study sections (a.k.a. grant review panels), but is a blanket pause on meetings convened under what are called the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) rules.

This isn't unusual during an administration change, though it's typically more targeted. The other piece that might be playing into the cancellation of certain meetings is an indefinite suspension of all travel of HHS staff for any purpose whatsoever.

Through professional organizations, **we've been informed that this is a temporary pause, and might be lifted as early as Feb 1.** More details may be found in the attached e-mail from Elena Fuentes-Afflick, MD, MPH, Chief Scientific Officer Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), which is monitoring developments in Washington.

The information we have now suggests that this current pause is not intended to interfere with the regular grant review cycle and that missed study sections will be rescheduled. We appreciate that this is a quickly changing situation, and will issue updates as details become more clear on the status of the NIH and its functions/activities.

Please share this information with your faculty/team, as you deem appropriate.

Meharvan Singh, PhD
Vice Provost for Research