Study section/contact person	March 1997 meetings	Time	Location
Neurological Sciences Initial Review Group			
Neurology A, Dr. Joe Marwah, 301–435–-1253	Mar. 4–6	8:30 a.m.	Best Western Hotel, La Jolla, CA.

The meetings will be closed in accordance with the provisions set forth in sections 552b(c)(4) and 552b(c)(6), Title 5, U.S.C. Applications and/or proposals and the discussions could reveal confidential trade secrets or commercial property such as patentable material and personal information concerning individuals associated with the applications and/or proposals, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 93.306, 93.333, 93.337, 93.393–93.396, 93.837–93.844, 93.846–93.878, 93.892, 93.893, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: January 23, 1997.

Paula N. Hayes,

Acting Committee Management Officer, NIH.

[FR Doc. 97–2479 Filed 1–30–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–M

Division of Research Grants; Notice of Closed Meetings

Pursuant to Section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2), notice is hereby given of the following Division of Research Grants Special Emphasis Panel (SEP) meetings:

Purpose/Agenda: To review individual grant applications.
Name of SEP: Multidisciplinary Sciences.
Date: February 18, 1997.
Time: 1:00 p.m.
Place: NIH, Rockledge 2, Room 5116, Telephone Conference.
Contact Person: Dr. Lee Rosen, Scientific Review Administrator, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 5116, Bethesda, Maryland 20892, (301) 435–1171.

Name of SEP: Chemistry and Related Sciences.
Date: March 4, 1997.
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: Sheraton Hotel, Washington, DC.
Contact Person: Dr. Richard Panniers, Scientific Review Administrator, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 5106, Bethesda, Maryland 20892, (301) 435–1166.

Name of SEP: Biological and Physiological Sciences.
Date: March 12–14, 1997.
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Place: Doubletree Hotel, Rockville, MD.
Contact Person: Dr. Dennis Leszczyski, Scientific Review Administrator, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 6170, Bethesda, Maryland 20892, (301) 435–1044.

Name of SEP: Biological and Physiological Sciences.
Date: March 19, 1997.
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Place: Hyatt Regency, Bethesda, MD.
Contact Person: Dr. Richard Marcus, Scientific Review Administrator, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 5194, Bethesda, Maryland 20892, (301) 435–1256.

Name of SEP: Biological and Physiological Sciences.
Date: March 27–28, 1997.
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Place: American Inn, Bethesda, MD.
Contact Person: Dr. Nicholas Mazarella, Scientific Review Administrator, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 5128, Bethesda, Maryland 20892, (301) 435–1018.

The meetings will be closed in accordance with the provisions set forth in secs. 552b(c)(4) and 552b(c)(6), Title 5, U.S.C. Applications and/or proposals and the discussions could reveal confidential trade secrets or commercial property such as patentable materials and personal information concerning individuals associated with the applications and/or proposals, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 93.306, 93.333, 93.337, 93.393–93.396, 93.837–93.844, 93.846–93.878, 93.892, 93.893, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: January 23, 1997.

Paula N. Hayes,

Acting Committee Management Officer, NIH.

[FR Doc. 97–2481 Filed 1–30–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–M

National Center for Research Resources

AGENCY: National Center for Research Resources, NIH.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Center for Research Resources (NCRR), National Institutes of Health (NIH), is updating its 1994 strategic plan entitled NCRR: A Catalyst for Discovery. Its purpose is to anticipate, meet, and set priorities for the biomedical research community's needs for critical research resources and technologies. NCRR requests input from biomedical scientists to identify barriers to future research progress and to define future needs for shared research resources and technologies that facilitate NIH-supported biomedical research. NCRR's existing 1994 strategic plan may be assessed over the World Wild Web: <http://www.ncrr.nih.gov/plan94.htm>.

DATES: Submit responses to the Office of Science Policy, NCRR (see below) on or before May 15, 1997.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The Office of Science Policy, NCRR/NIH, One Rockledge Center, 6705 Rockledge Drive MSC 7965, Suite 5046, Bethesda, MD 20892–7965; 301–435–0866; FAX 301–480–3654; e-mail. NCRRPLAN@EP.NCRR.NIH.GOV; internet <http://www.ncrr.nih.gov>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) serves as a ''catalyst for discovery'' by creating and providing critical research technologies and shared resources. This infrastructure underpins biomedical research and enables advances that improve the health of our Nation's citizens.

The NCRR serves a unique purpose at the NIH: to develop critical research technologies and to provide cost-effective, shared, multidisciplinary resources to biomedical investigators across the spectrum of research activities supported by the NIH. NCRR's mission to:

(1) Create resources and develop technologies and research models that are cost-effective, accessible, and responsive to the research needs of the biomedical research community. To meet these needs, the NCRR must anticipate evolving trends in basic and clinical research to ensure that resources will be available to facilitate that research.

(2) Provide shared clinical, primate, and biomedical technology resources and instrumentation for use by investigators supported by the NIH. These resources, primarily centers, serve more than 10,000 researchers, who are supported through more than $1 billion of competitive awards from NIH's categorical Institutes.

(3) Develop quick, flexible approaches to new and emerging biomedical research needs and opportunities. These innovations often involve high-risk research.

(4) Strengthen the Nation's biomedical research infrastructure. Support programs that develop and enhance the capacity of institutions, including underrepresented groups, to

participate in biomedical research. Increase the exposure of K–12 students, their teachers and the public to the life sciences. Construct or renovate biomedical research facilities.

Biomedical research investigators supported by the NIH require a broad array of technologies, tools and materials for their research. The NCRR plays a key role in addressing trans-NIH research issues, such as access to state-of-the-art instrumentation and technologies; containment of the escalating costs of highly sophisticated research; development of appropriate, specialized research models; efforts to remedy the shortage of clinical and minority investigators; and efforts to improve the research infrastructure.

To ensure the continued relevance of its strategic plan, the NCRR seeks input to the following questions in terms of the issues described above:

(A) What are the most important research trends that will drive biomedical research?

(B) What research resources and technologies will be critical in addressing these trends and meeting biomedical investigators' needs?

(C) What strategies will eliminate barriers to progress and enhance access to research resources and technologies?

(D) Who would you recommend to serve as a panel member for NCRR's strategic planning process? Please list the name, degree, position title, department, institution name and address, phone and fax numbers, and specific area of expertise for each person recommended.

We have provided a user-friendly response form at NCRR's Strategic Planning Survey Web site: <http://www.ncrr.nih.gov/survey.htm>; or you may mail your response to the Office of Science Policy, NCRR/NIH, One Rockledge Center, 6705 Rockledge Drive MSC 7965, Suite 5046, Bethesda, MD 20892–7965; FAX 301–480–3654.

Dated: January 22, 1997.

Ruth L. Kirschstein,

Deputy Director, NIH.

[FR Doc. 97–2482 Filed 1–30–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–M

Recombinant DNA Research: Action Under the Guidelines

AGENCY: National Institutes of Health, PHS, DHHS.

ACTION: Notice of Action under the NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules (59 FR 34496, 59 FR 40170, 60 FR 20726, 61 FR 1482, 61 FR 10004).

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth an action taken by the Director, National Institutes of Health (NIH), under the NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Additional information can be obtained from Ms. Debra Knorr, Acting Director, Office of Recombinant DNA Activities (ORDA), Office of Science Policy, National Institutes of Health, MSC 7010, 6000 Executive Boulevard, Suite 302, Bethesda, Maryland 20892–7010, (301) 496–9838.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Today's action is being promulgated under the NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules. The action was proposed and published for comment in the Federal Register of July 8, 1996 (61 FR 35774), then revised and proposed for comment in the Federal Register of November 22, 1996 (61 FR 59726), and reviewed and recommended for approval by the NIH Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee (RAC) at its meeting on December 9, 1996.

I. Background Information and Decision on Action Under the NIH Guidelines

A. Amendments to Section IV–C–2 of the NIH Guidelines Regarding the Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee

On July 8, 1996, the Director, NIH, published a Notice of Intent to Propose Amendments to the NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules (NIH Guidelines) Regarding Enhanced Mechanisms for NIH Oversight of Recombinant DNA Activities in the Federal Register (61 FR 35774). In the Notice of Intent, the NIH Director requested public comment on proposed mechanisms to enhance scientific, ethical, and societal oversight of human gene transfer research under the NIH Guidelines. Specifically, in part, the termination of the RAC and the establishment of the Office of Recombinant DNA Activities Advisory Committee (OAC) consisting of 6–10 members.

Comments in support of termination of the RAC reflected an interest in making substantive changes in the role of the RAC. Most of these comments supported the proposed restructuring of the functions of the RAC and did not specifically endorse termination of RAC. Opposing comments focused on the historical importance of retaining the RAC as an internationally recognized forum for public discussion of the science, safety, and ethics of human gene therapy research. These authors articulated the critical role that the RAC plays in maintaining public confidence in human gene therapy research.

The importance of the continuation of the RAC, *per se,* was underscored by comments which specifically addressed the establishment of the OAC. Of the 53 comments which addressed this issue, 12 expressed support and 41 expressed opposition. The majority of comments submitted in opposition to the OAC stated that the proposed functions of the OAC could be accomplished by the RAC, or by a restructured version of the RAC. Several authors emphasized that, absent the historic credibility of the RAC, the OAC might suffer from an inability to attract and motivate the type of expertise and judgement needed for this important public forum.

On November 22, 1996, the NIH Director published Notice of Proposed Actions Under the NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules in the Federal Register (61 FR 59726). In these Proposed Actions, in part, the NIH Director proposed retaining the RAC, while modifying its roles and responsibilities relevant to human gene therapy research and reducing the membership from 25 members to 15 members, and requested comments.

During the December 9, 1996, meeting, the RAC, which had reviewed the comments received, approved the overall concepts in the Proposed Actions. The RAC specifically approved reducing the membership of the RAC from 25 members to 15 members. The motion passed by a vote of 12 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 abstentions.

The action is detailed in Section II—Summary of Action. I accept this recommendation to reduce the membership of the RAC from 25 members to 15 members, and the NIH Guidelines will be amended accordingly.

II. Summary of Action

A. Amendments to Section IV–C–2, Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee (RAC)

In Section IV–C–2, the first paragraph is amended to read:

''Section IV–C–2. Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee (RAC)

''The RAC is responsible for carrying out specified functions cited below as well as others assigned under its charter or by the DHHS Secretary and the NIH Director. The RAC consists of 15 members including the Chair, appointed by the DHHS Secretary or his/her designee, at least 8 of whom are selected from authorities knowledgeable in the fields of molecular genetics, molecular