

## FNIH Frequently Asked Questions

### *About the FNIH*

**1. What is the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (FNIH)?**

The FNIH forges public-private partnerships and alliances to advance breakthrough biomedical discoveries that can change and improve the quality of people's lives. Established by Congress to support the mission of the [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#), the FNIH raises funds, provides scientific expertise and administers research programs for a wide range of health challenges.

For more than a decade, Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator, has recognized the FNIH as an organization that "*exceeds industry standards.*"

**2. What does the FNIH do?**

The FNIH creates effective alliances to advance biomedical research and improve human well-being. The FNIH raises funds, provides scientific expertise and administers research programs for a wide range of health challenges that support the mission of the NIH. The FNIH also supports the training of new researchers, patient programs and organizes health-related educational events and symposia.

**3. When was the FNIH established?**

The U.S. Congress established the FNIH in 1990. The FNIH began work in 1996.

**4. Is the FNIH a government organization?**

No. The FNIH is an independent not-for-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

**5. How does the FNIH work with the NIH?**

The FNIH raises and administers private funds and manages the relationships of individuals, corporations and organizations to carry out research, educational and patient programs in support of the mission of the NIH. The FNIH facilitates the exchange of ideas between NIH and private partners in a pre-or non-competitive environment that is not possible otherwise.

If you are an NIH employee looking for funding support, please see question #18.

**6. Why does the FNIH raise private funds for NIH?**

The FNIH typically is asked to find private sector support for NIH initiatives that can be done more efficiently than would be the case if either the federal government or private sector worked independently. By forming and managing collaborations between private entities and the NIH (sometimes including other federal partners), the FNIH helps bring additional financial and scientific resources to address significant health challenges.

The FNIH is the sole entity responsible for carrying out private donor solicitation in support of and in collaboration with all 27 institutes and centers of the NIH.

**7. What are some current examples of the types of research projects the FNIH facilitates?**

One example of a current research project is the [Accelerating Medicines Partnership Type 2 Diabetes \(AMP T2D\) initiative](#), which enables researchers everywhere to search and analyze genetic and clinical information of individuals with type 2 diabetes through a public portal. This open-source platform is intended to generate new understanding of the disease.

Another example is the FNIH's work to combat mosquito-borne disease through an extension of the [Grand Challenges in Global Health initiative](#), which was supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The FNIH and research partners are exploring, testing and troubleshooting technologies to stop the spread of dengue, malaria and the Zika virus. The FNIH is helping to conduct risk assessments, build infrastructure and develop business and governance plans to further the research of these potentially life-saving technologies.

**8. What is an example of a successful program managed by the FNIH?**

For example, the FNIH manages the [Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative \(ADNI\)](#), a public-private partnership that has profoundly influenced the understanding of Alzheimer's disease by identifying and validating biological markers that indicate its onset and progression. The study tracks volunteers at clinical sites with normal cognition, mild cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's disease to create a widely-available database of imaging, biochemical and genetic data, which can lay the groundwork for Alzheimer's discoveries. Now in its third phase, ADNI continues to build on the success of its initial phases, confirming the utility of biomarkers that can help improve clinical trial design and support drug development.

By standardizing technologies and protocols, the study has improved clinical trial design and the understanding of the disease and its progression. Furthermore, ADNI's open-access data policy continues to be a model of successful data sharing in a pre-competitive environment. ADNI data have been downloaded for research purposes more than 11 million times and scientists have used them to publish more than 1,200 scientific papers.

**9. What is the FNIH Biomarkers Consortium?**

The [Biomarkers Consortium \(BC\)](#) is a public-private biomedical research partnership managed by the FNIH that endeavors to discover, develop and seek regulatory approval for biological markers (biomarkers) to support drug development, preventive medicine and medical diagnostics.

The BC is helping create a new era of precision medicine, with more highly-predictive markers that have an impact during a patient's illness or lifespan. The goal is to combine the abilities of the public and private sectors to accelerate the development of biomarker-based technologies, medicines and therapies for the prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment of disease. Learn more about the BC [here](#).

**10. Does the FNIH support programs that directly help patients?**

Yes. The FNIH helps support patient care activities and amenities that provide comfort and assistance to patients and their loved ones being treated at the NIH Clinical Center, the world's largest hospital devoted entirely to clinical research. For example, the FNIH raises funds to maintain the [Edmond J. Safra Family Lodge](#), which has hosted more than 100,000 room nights for NIH Clinical Center patients, caregivers and their families since its opening in 2005.

**11. Does the FNIH support programs that educate and train future scientists?**

Yes. The FNIH is helping the NIH create new career-building opportunities for aspiring researchers. For example, the NIH is now one of a select group of higher learning institutions taking part in the [Amgen Scholars Program](#), which provides hundreds of summer research opportunities to undergraduate students.

The FNIH also supports the [Medical Research Scholars Program \(MRSP\)](#), which is a one-year intensive training program on the NIH campus for up to 70 medical, dental and veterinary students. MRSP provides students with hands-on experience working in labs of top NIH scientists.

**12. Does the FNIH facilitate events?**

The FNIH organizes and facilitates more than 50 professional symposia, conferences and workshops each year, creating opportunities for innovative thinkers in biomedical sciences to share ideas and engage the public in disease and health awareness. Learn more about current events [here](#).

**13. What is the Lurie Prize in Biomedical Sciences?**

The Lurie Prize in Biomedical Sciences is an award and \$100,000 honorarium that recognizes outstanding achievement by a promising young scientist in biomedical research. The Prize is made possible by a generous gift from FNIH Board member Ann Lurie. Previous award recipients include [Jeannie T. Lee, M.D., Ph.D.](#), [Karl Deisseroth, M.D., Ph.D.](#), [Jennifer Doudna, Ph.D.](#), [Ruslan M. Medzhitov, Ph.D.](#), and [David M. Sabatini, M.D., Ph.D.](#)

For more information, please visit [fnih.org/LuriePrize](http://fnih.org/LuriePrize).

**14. What is the FNIH Award Ceremony?**

The FNIH Award Ceremony brings together thought leaders from the NIH, pioneers in biomedical science, the biotech and pharmaceutical industries, philanthropists and business executives for an evening to celebrate the presentation of the Lurie Prize in Biomedical Sciences.

To learn more about this year's Award Ceremony and sponsorship opportunities, please visit [fnih.org/AwardCeremony](http://fnih.org/AwardCeremony).

## ***Funding Opportunities***

### **15. How much funding has the FNIH raised since its establishment?**

Since its inception, the FNIH has raised more than \$1 billion in support of the mission of the NIH.

### **16. Why should I donate to the FNIH?**

By contributing to the FNIH, you become a partner in groundbreaking biomedical research and discoveries that have the potential to improve the quality and length of life. The FNIH manages numerous programs—in areas ranging from cancer to Alzheimer’s disease to global health—with efficiency, effectiveness and accountability, all to support the mission of the NIH. Your gift will build directly on the nation’s investment in superior, cutting-edge biomedical research that improves health and saves lives.

Learn more by visiting [fnih.org/get-involved](https://fnih.org/get-involved) and hear from some of our donors at [fnih.org/get-involved/why](https://fnih.org/get-involved/why).

### **17. How can I (as an individual or organization) donate to the FNIH?**

There are many ways for individuals and organizations to get involved and partner with the FNIH.

Click on these links to learn how or [donate now](#):

- **Individual Giving:** [fnih.org/get-involved/individuals](https://fnih.org/get-involved/individuals) or contact the Advancement Office at 301-402-4976 or [Advancement@FNIH.org](mailto:Advancement@FNIH.org)
- **Organizations:** [fnih.org/get-involved/organizations](https://fnih.org/get-involved/organizations) or contact the Development Office at 301-402-6647 or [Development@FNIH.org](mailto:Development@FNIH.org)

### **18. I work at NIH. How can I request funding support from the FNIH?**

NIH staff and contractors who would like to request the FNIH’s assistance in funding or managing a program or special event should contact the NIH Office of the Director, which serves as a central clearinghouse for engaging the FNIH. The Office of the Director’s NIH-FNIH Steering Committee reviews all such requests on behalf of the NIH and those that receive the Committee’s approval are forwarded to the FNIH. The FNIH then undertakes a due diligence process including an assessment of the project’s interest to potential donors. The FNIH’s Board of Directors through its Public Private Partnership Committee is ultimately responsible for authorizing new collaborations.

To begin the process, NIH representatives should contact [Elizabeth Baden](#).

### **19. How do I apply to the FNIH for a grant or other funding?**

The FNIH does not consider individual grant requests. The FNIH must raise funds for each of the programs it supports.

For research funding opportunities, please [contact the NIH](#) or visit [grants.nih.gov/grants/oer.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/oer.htm).