



National Institutes of Health
National Institute of
General Medical Sciences
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-6200
<http://www.nigms.nih.gov>

February 17, 2021

Dear Tribal Leader and Urban Indian Organization Leader:

I am writing to notify Tribal Nations that the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is initiating formal Tribal consultation on the Native American Research Centers for Health (NARCH) program. The National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) within the NIH, in conjunction with multiple NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices (ICOs), administers and supports the NARCH program. The NARCH program provides research and career enrichment opportunities to meet the specific health needs identified and prioritized by American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Tribes and Tribally based organizations.

Among the objectives of the NARCH program are to:

- Work toward reducing health disparities in AI/AN communities by allowing these communities to control and prioritize health related research and career enhancement projects and opportunities that are specific to their unique community needs;
- Encourage the growth of research capacity and infrastructure within AI/AN communities by providing such communities with the framework necessary for research sustainability; and
- Enhance health related research partnerships while simultaneously supporting scientists and research professionals interested in AI/AN health research from within and outside of the AI/AN communities.

NARCH awards are made in alignment with the above objectives to support:

- Research directly linked to health concerns specifically identified, selected, and prioritized by Tribal communities; and
- Training resources to support productive careers in biomedical research related to AI/AN community health needs.

In FY 2018, NARCH awards totaled \$10.1 million. Grant applications made to the NARCH program are submitted by (and awarded to) the Tribe or Tribal organization, supporting Tribal communities to establish and guide their own research priorities while also drawing upon any necessary added expertise from the research community. More information about the NARCH program can be found here: [https://www.nigms.nih.gov/capacity-building/division-for-research-capacity-building/native-american-research-centers-for-health-\(narch\)](https://www.nigms.nih.gov/capacity-building/division-for-research-capacity-building/native-american-research-centers-for-health-(narch)).

In alignment with NIGMS' strategic priority of ensuring that each of its programs are meeting their intended objectives, the NARCH program will be undergoing a formal program evaluation in 2021. NIGMS intends to maintain its support for the NARCH program at or above current levels and would like to ensure, through this evaluation, that the program optimally meets the health, research, and education needs of Tribal communities. Thus, draft recommendations crafted from the evaluation will be shared with and presented to the [NIH Tribal Advisory Committee](#). In addition, in accordance with Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Tribal



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Consultation Policy and the [NIH Guidance on the Implementation of the HHS Tribal Consultation Policy](#), the NIH anticipates holding a virtual Tribal Consultation in June, 2021. We respectfully encourage you to participate in this agency consultation that will facilitate dialogue, information exchange, and the opportunity for Tribal Leaders to provide meaningful input on the draft recommendations stemming from the NARCH program evaluation.

Participant information:

What: (Virtual) NIH Tribal Consultation on the Native American Research Centers for Health (NARCH) Program Evaluation.

Anticipated Date: Monday, June 14, 2021.

Time: 2:00pm to 3:00pm Eastern Time.

Live videocast link: <https://nih.zoomgov.com/j/1604232555?pwd=ZThya1NUek5nenowRGFDTFBPUzhDQT09>

Meeting ID: 160 423 2555; Passcode: 217702

If you have any technical questions related to connectivity or audio/visual matters regarding the meeting, please contact Arthur Lynch at 301-451-5902 or arthur.lynch@nih.gov.

If you are unable to attend, you are encouraged to send any testimony, comments, and questions to NIHTribalConsultation@nih.gov before June 2021.

We look forward to your participation in this event and to listening and learning from each of you. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Richard Aragon, Ph.D., Director, Division of Data Integration, Modeling, and Analytics, NIGMS, at richard.aragon@nih.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jon R. Lorsch".

Jon R. Lorsch, Ph.D.
Director
National Institute of General Medical Sciences
National Institutes of Health