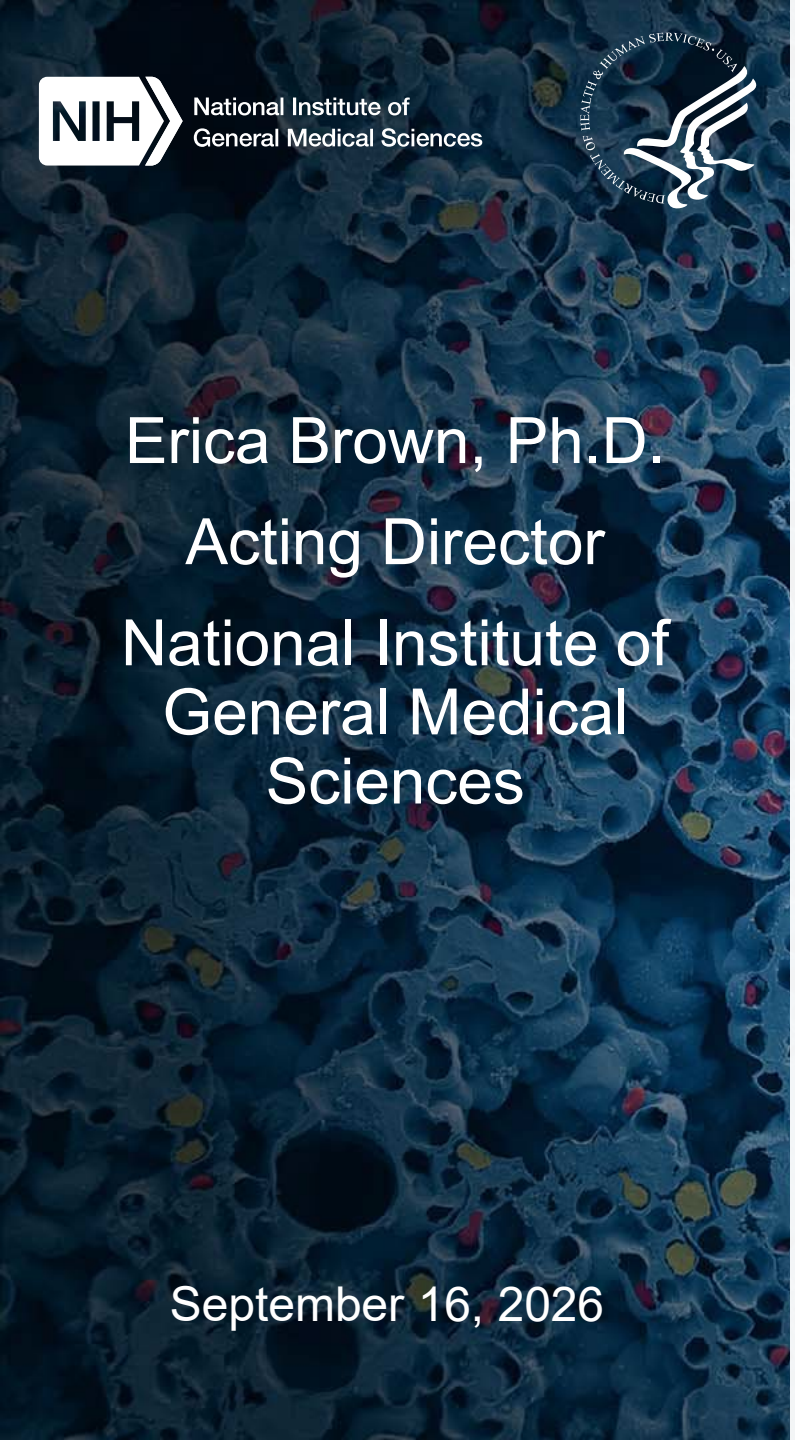


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Supporting Tribal Research, Training, and Capacity Building Initiatives: From Program Evaluation to Implementation

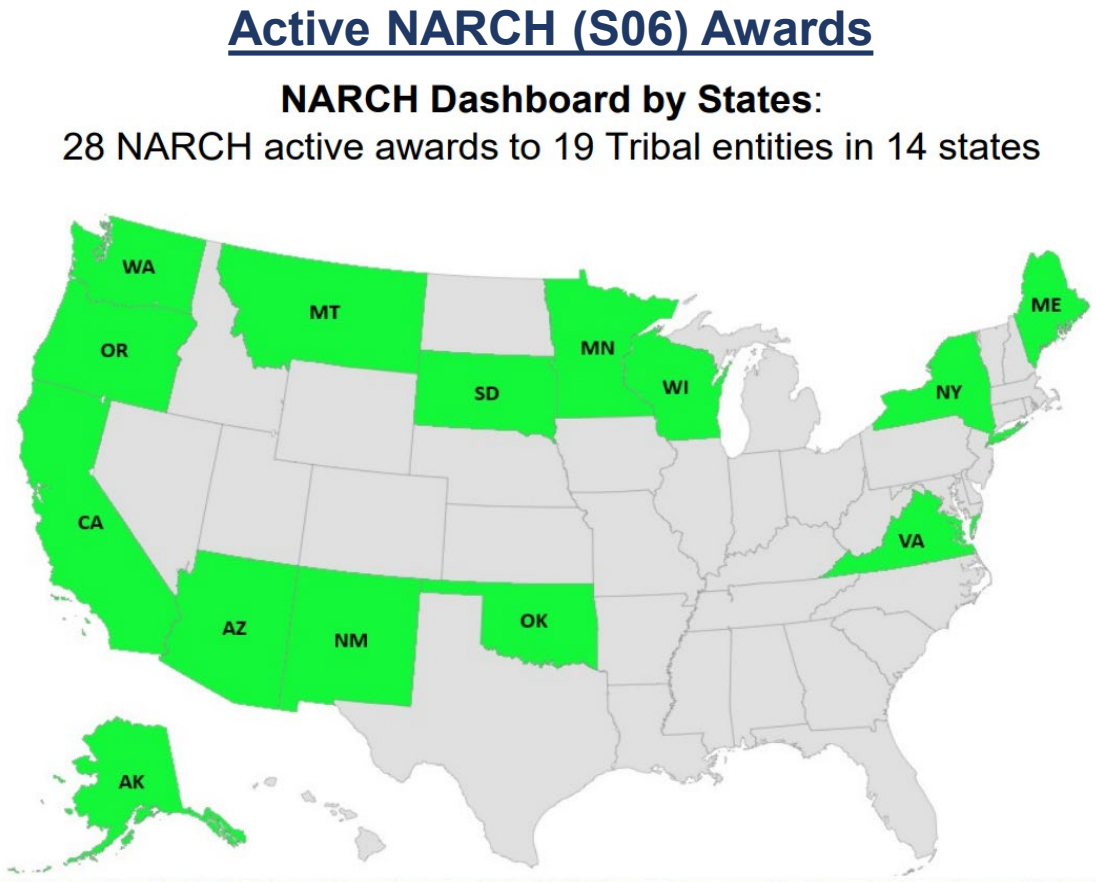
NIH Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting

Background on Today's Presentation

- NIGMS continues to sponsor programs that support American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities in the prioritization of their community-identified health research and training needs.
- Programs highlighted in this presentation include NARCH, NARCH Planning Grants (R34), TURTLE, and TIRBEE.
- NARCH has recently been enhanced, with new opportunities developed and implemented based on previous feedback from the NIH TAC and formal Tribal Consultation.
  - Recently-launched initiatives include NARCH Planning Grants (R34), TURTLE, and TIRBEE.
- Today's presentation provides an update to the NIH TAC on the implementation of both its prior input and related feedback received through Tribal Consultation.

Native American Research Centers for Health (NARCH) Program

- Established in 2000 to support federally-recognized Tribes and Tribal entities in the conduct of health-related research that improve Tribal health.
- Collaborative effort across 20 NIH ICs.
- Managed at NIGMS since FY2017.
- Two program types:
  - Research and Development
  - Planning Grants



NARCH Evaluation and Tribal Consultation: 2020–2022

Year	Milestone	NIGMS Response / Action
2020	**Decision to evaluate NARCH**	• NARCH program evaluation process initiated with input from NIH THRO; comprehensive program analysis conducted by NIGMS.
	Consultation planning with NIH THRO	• Tribal Nation engagement and consultation process developed in collaboration with NIH THRO.
2021	**First NARCH presentation to NIH TAC**	• NAGMS Council working group findings and draft suggestions presented; NIH TAC feedback incorporated.
	Formal Tribal Consultation	• Tribal input and feedback gathered on NARCH and proposed approaches to enhancement.
	Tribal Consultation Report developed in collaboration with DPCPSI and released	• Tribal feedback and NIGMS responses documented in formal consultation report and published on the NIGMS Evaluation Reports webpage.
	Draft evaluation findings presented to NAGMS Council	• Evaluation findings presented by the NAGMS Council working group.
	Written comments requested from Tribal Nations on NIGMS' posted response	• Tribal Nations' written comments received by NIH THRO and shared with NIGMS.
2022	**Final NARCH evaluation report released**	• Final evaluation incorporating Tribal feedback published on the NIGMS Evaluations Report webpage.

From Tribal Input to Program Implementation: 2023–Present

Year	Milestone	NIGMS Response / Action
2023	NARCH program revamped/enhanced	• NARCH (S06) NOFO (PAR-23-166) released.
	NARCH application planning support program launched	• NARCH Planning Grants (R34) NOFO (PAR-24-041) released.
2024	Tribal research review and oversight program launched	• TIRBEE (R24) NOFO (PAR-24-260) released.
	Tribal biomedical research training pathways program launched	• TURTLE NOFOs: UE5/T34 (PAR-24-236); UE5/T32 (PAR-24-235) released.
2024 – 2026	Applications received and initial awards made	• Awards issued across NARCH, NARCH R34, TIRBEE, and TURTLE programs.
2026	NARCH program continuation	• NARCH (S06) concept clearance approved by NAGMS Council in February.
	TURTLE and TIRBEE program continuation	• Concept clearances approved by NAGMS Council in September.
	NIGMS return to NIH TAC	• Implementation update and continued NIH TAC guidance.

*NOFO: Notice of Funding Opportunity

New NIGMS Programs Supporting Tribal Research, Training, and Infrastructure

1. NARCH Planning Grants

- **Provides planning grants for Tribal entities *without* NARCH awards to:**
  - Increase participation of eligible Tribal organizations in the NARCH (S06) program.
  - Assess Tribal research workforce and administrative needs.
  - Build administrative capacity for application support and grants management.
  - Provide time and resources for Tribal organizations to define research questions relevant to them.
  - Identify collaborators and advisors and build relationships/partnerships.
- **Expected Outcome:** Submission of a NARCH (S06) application within **one year** of the end date of the NARCH (R34) Planning Grant award.

NARCH Planning Grants (continued)

- **Eligibility:**
  - Tribal entities **not** currently supported by a **NARCH (S06) award**.
  - Tribal entities **not** supported by an **active NARCH (R34) Planning Grant award**.
- Each eligible Tribal entity may submit only one application per due date.
- A NARCH R34 Planning Grant is **non-renewable**.

2. Tribal Undergraduate to Graduate Research Training and Leadership Experiences (TURTLE)

- Phased awards that allow Tribal organizations to develop and implement institutional training grants for undergraduate and graduate students pursuing biomedical degrees:

1. **Undergraduate training NOFO: UE5/T34** (PAR-24-236)
2. **Graduate training NOFO: UE5/T32** (PAR-24-235)

TURTLE Program Goals

- **The development of a pool of scientists who:**
  - Possess the skills to perform research on Tribal health and health disparities in a culturally appropriate, responsible and rigorous manner.
  - Earn biomedical bachelor's or PhD degrees and have the technical, operational, and professional skills to pursue careers in Tribal health research.



- **In FY2026, NIGMS awarded its first two TURTLE grants:**
  - Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness
  - Fort Belknap Reservation

3. Tribal Institutional Review Board Establishment and Enhancement (TIRBEE)

- Supports federally recognized Tribal communities and organizations in building biomedical research capacity and infrastructure by reducing reliance on external IRB mechanisms and supporting Tribal autonomy over research administration through funding to:
  1. **Establish Tribal Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) or**
  2. **Enhance the capacity of existing Tribal IRBs.**

***TIRBEE (R24) NOFO: PAR-24-260**

TIRBEE Awards

- **In FY2026, NIGMS awarded its first two TIRBEE awards to:**
  - Chickasaw Nation
  - Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council

Early Implementation Progress

- Across NIGMS Tribal health research programs, 33 competing applications were received between FY 2025–2026, including 8 from new applicants, **resulting in 14 awards to date.**
- **TIRBEE accounted for 6 of the 8 new applicants,** with 2 new applicants to NARCH S06/R34 programs.
- TURTLE received 2 applications and **made 2 awards**.

Competing Applications and Awards

Program / Fiscal Year	Applications	New Applicants	Awards
NARCH R34 Planning Grants	**2**	**1**	**1**
2025	1	0	1
2026	1	1	0
NARCH S06	**16**	**1**	**9**
2025	8	0	5
2026	8	1	4
TIRBEE	**13**	**6**	**2**
2026	13	6	2
TURTLE	**2**	**0**	**2**
2026	2	0	2
Grand Total	**33**	**8**	**14**

NIH Highlighted Topics (HTs)

NIH Highlighted Topics (HTs)

- Describe potentially timely, new, and/or emerging research priority areas for one or more ICs for applicants to consider.
  - HTs may or may not have dedicated funding.
- NIH supports many types of research *beyond* the highlighted topics.
- Applicants are encouraged to consult with program staff early to discuss alignment of ideas with the HT.

https://grants.nih.gov/funding/find-a-fit-for-your-research/highlighted-topics

Examples of Current HTs

Title	Participating ICOs
Behavioral and Cognitive Signals of Aging in Real-World Contexts	NIA, NCI, NIMH, OBSSR, THRO
Accelerating Disease Prevention Research by New Approach Methodologies	NCI, NCATS, NIA, NIDA, ORWH, THRO
Health and Extreme Weather: Advancing Critical Research to Address the Direct and Indirect Health Impacts of Weather-Related Natural Disasters and Emerging Weather-Related Harms	NIEHS, NCCIH, NCI, NHLBI, NIA, NIAID, NIAMS, NIDDK, NIMH, NIMHD, NINR, OBSSR, ODP, ORWH, THRO
Advancing Research Across the Cancer Care Continuum of Early-Onset Cancers	NCI, NIDCR, ODP, THRO
Environmental Contributors to Infertility	NIEHS, NICHD, NIGMS, ORWH, THRO
Characterizing Indoor Exposures to Advance Exposome Research	NIEHS, THRO, NIA
Increasing Engagement in Treatment for Behavioral Health	NIAAA, NCCIH, NIDA, OBSSR, THRO
Integrating Environmental Science and Engineering with Biomedical Research for Effective Exposure Prevention and Disease Intervention	NIEHS, ORWH, THRO

Email Alerts for New HTs: https://grants.nih.gov/funding/find-a-fit-for-your-research/highlighted-topics/subscribe

Thank You
Questions?

