I. LEVEL, SOURCES, AND STABILITY OF RESEARCH FUNDING

What comments would you like to share on this issue?

AADR remains concerned about federal research funding, which has waned due to budget cuts, sequestration, and inflationary losses. We hope Congress’s bipartisan support for NIH will result in its continuing to reject further cuts (incl., F&A costs).

Please describe any recommendations, programs, or initiatives that address this issue.

AADR supports predictable funding for researchers via multi-year appropriations with indexed increases, allowing greater focus on research and training the next generation rather than grant applications. Collaborate across ICs/fed research entities.

II. THE SCOPE OF GRANT AWARD AND REVIEW

What comments would you like to share on this issue?

AADR supports the Next Generation Researchers Initiative (NGRI). NIH should prioritize increasing the racial/ethnic diversity of grant recipients; addressing bias in peer review; and providing progress reports on NGRI and diversity initiatives.

Please describe any recommendations, programs, or initiatives that address this issue.

Increase the research budget and salary support for K08/K23 awards. Allow > 1 K award if the second award is used for a junior faculty position and the first was used for postdoctoral training to allow junior faculty time to gather data for an R01.

III. TRAINING, MENTORING, AND TRANSPARENCY

What comments would you like to share on this issue?

Variation is too great in graduate training and mentorship quality. With the high cost of education, absence of a formalized career advancement path is a particular concern to dentist-scientists, who must navigate research and clinical trajectories.
Please describe any recommendations, programs, or initiatives that address this issue.

Standardize training and increase integration between clinical and research departments for dual degree students. Provide mentorship/mentee training to PIs and students and include training plans in review of T32 and T90 grant applications.

IV. UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS

What comments would you like to share on this issue?

Consider programs that retain diversity in all career stages. Universities should address the barriers that prevent clinician-scientists from pursuing research careers (e.g., debt, lower pay of research career, work/life balance, residency, etc.).

Please describe any recommendations, programs, or initiatives that address this issue.

Diversify university leadership via hiring committees. Increase opportunities for undergrads, e.g., PREP programs. Add combined postdoc/residency opportunities (K99/R00 is logistically difficult). Provide funding to retain foreign scientists in US.