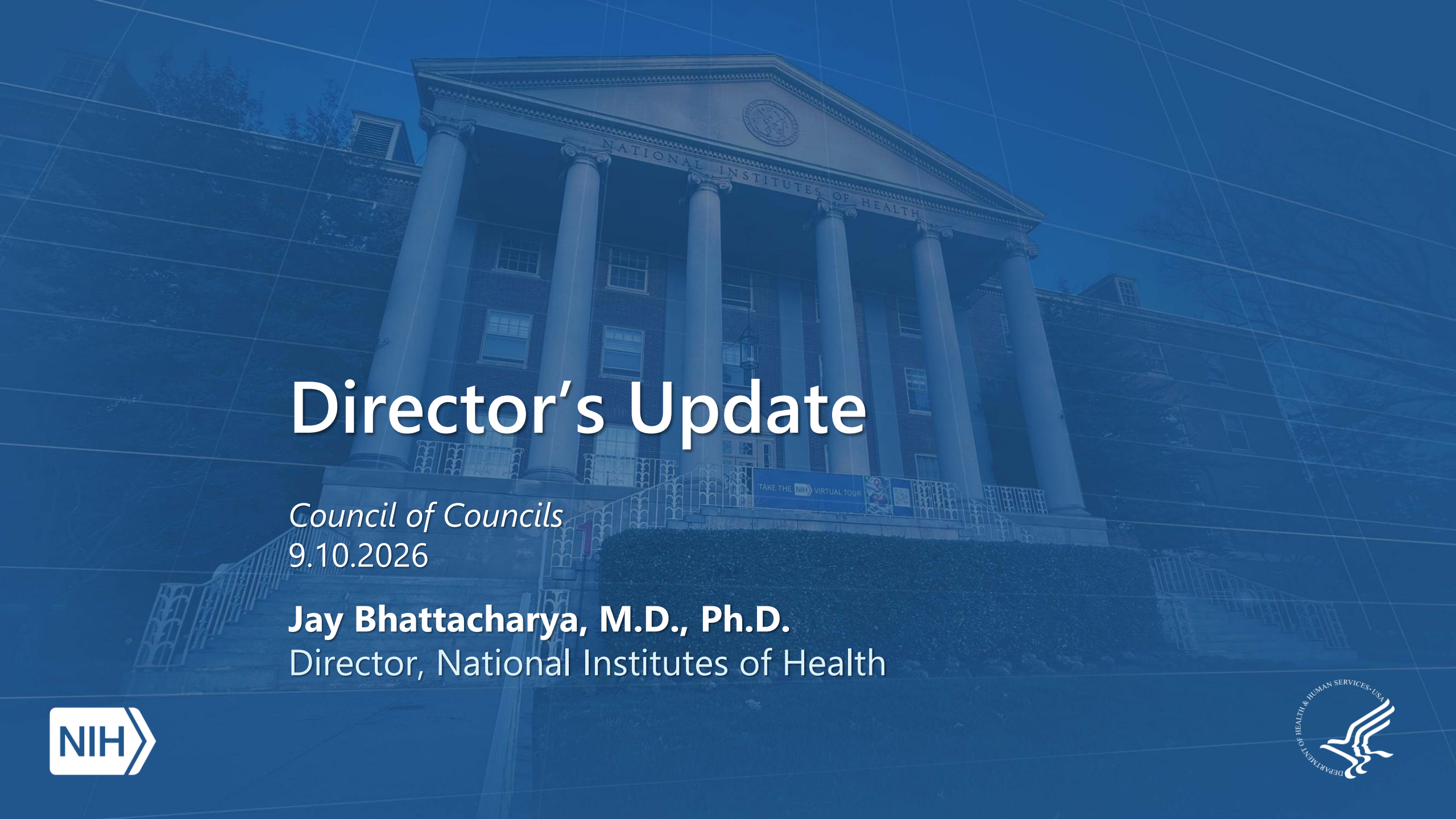


Director's Update

Council of Councils
9.10.2026

Jay Bhattacharya, M.D., Ph.D.
Director, National Institutes of Health



New Leadership Across NIH

Center for Scientific Review



Raymond Jacobson, PhD

Director, CSR

Fogarty International Center



Steven Schiff, MD, PhD

Director, FIC

National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health



Wendy J. Weber, ND, PhD, MPH

Director, NCCIH

National Human Genome Research Institute



Judy H. Cho, MD

Director, NHGRI

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development



John Gaitanis, MD

Director, NICHD

National Institute of Nursing Research



Courtney F. Aklin, PhD

Director, NINR

National Library of Medicine



Peter Embí, MD

Director, NLM

Office of Legislative Policy and Analysis



Jennifer Bazinet, PhD

Director, OLPA

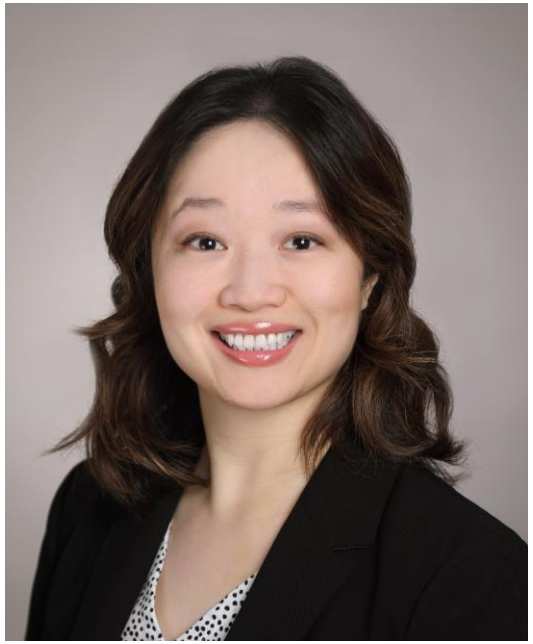
Office of the Chief Information Officer



Maureen Falvella

Chief Information Officer, Director, OCIO

NIH Ethics Office



Kristin Meredith

Director, NEO

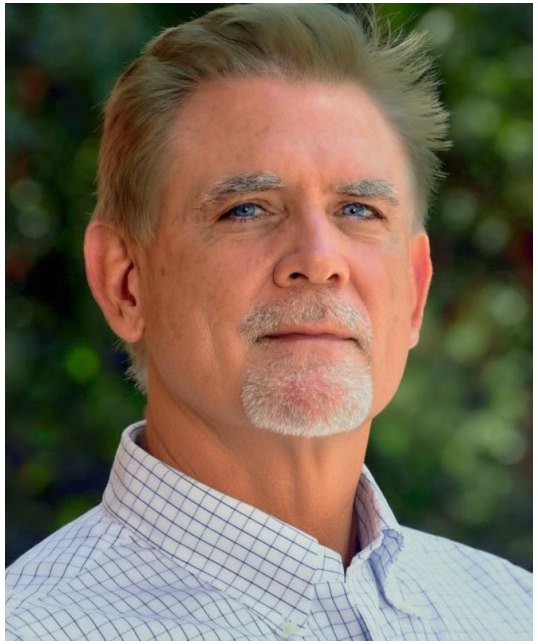
Office of Research Services



James Day, PhD

Director, ORS

Office of Research Innovation, Validation, and Application



Warren Casey, PhD, DABT

Director, ORIVA

NIH's mission is to seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems

and the application of that knowledge

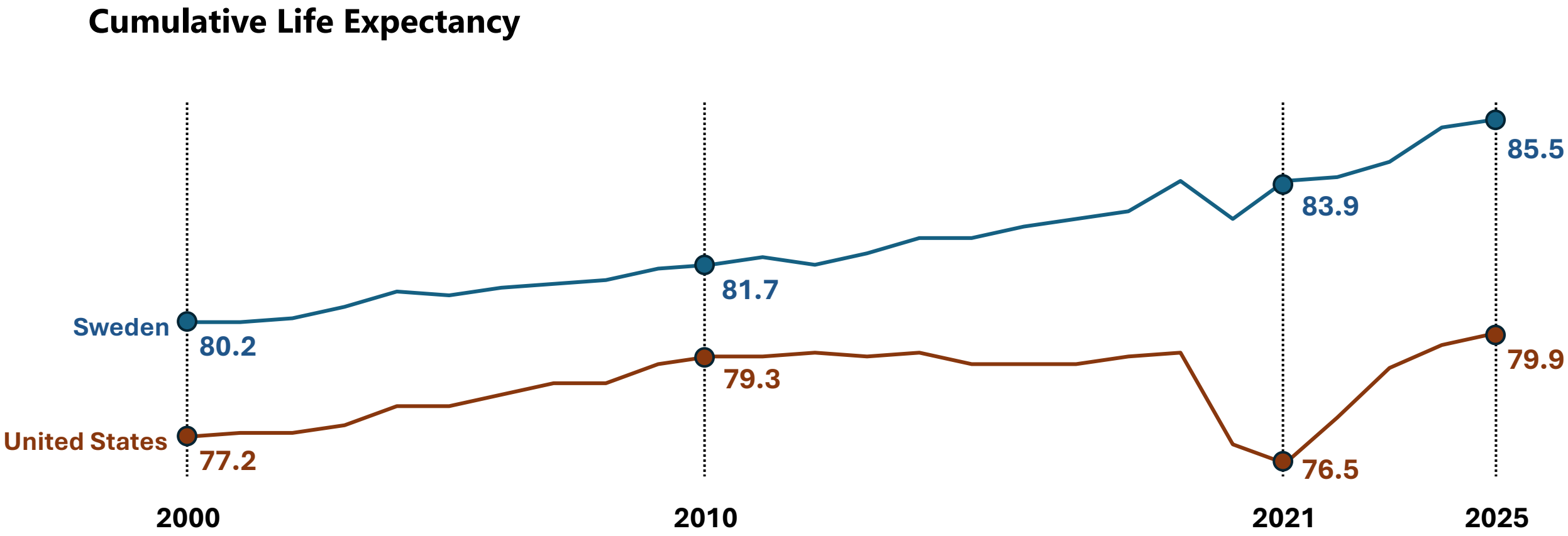
to **enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce illness and disability**



What are some mission-driving questions we need to answer?

US Longevity Progress is Too Slow

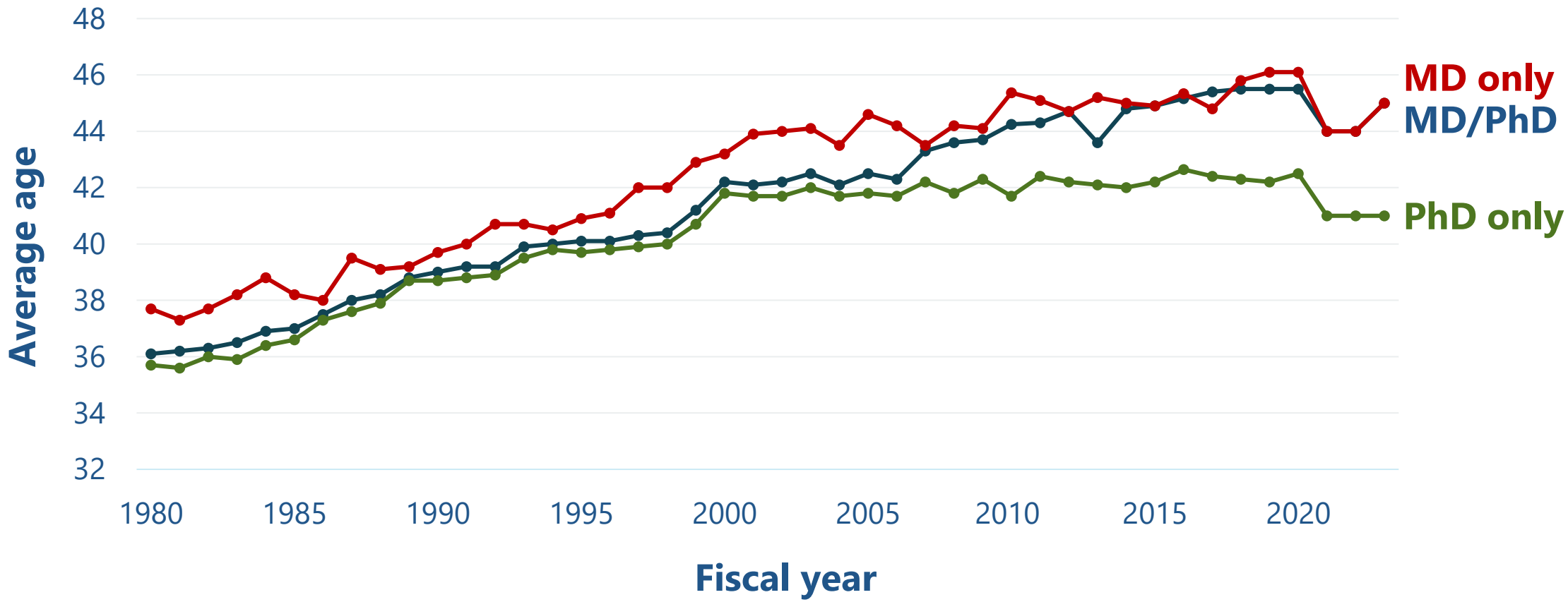
How can we help people live longer?



Source: [Mortality Watch]

Scientists Are Reaching Independence Later

How can NIH unleash innovation sooner?



https://grants.nih.gov/policy-and-compliance/policy-topics/early-stage-investigators/related-data

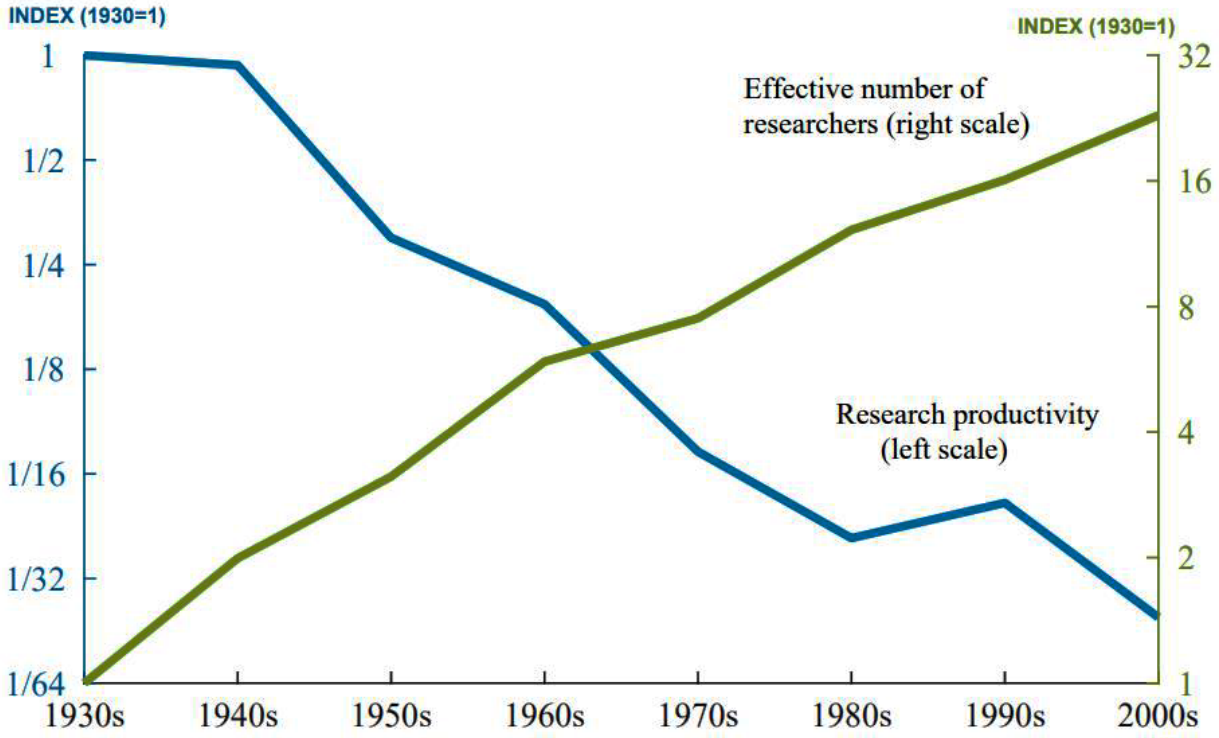
Garrison HH, Ley TJ. Physician-scientists in the United States at 2020: Trends and concerns. FASEB J. 2022;36(5):e22253. doi:10.1096/fj.202200327

https://web.archive.org/web/20250404233158/https:/nexus.od.nih.gov/all/2024/07/03/continued-support-for-early-stage-investigators-in-fy-2023/

Science of Science Research Can Inform Our Enterprise

How can we enhance research productivity?

Figure 2: Aggregate Evidence on Research Productivity



Note: Research productivity is the ratio of idea output, measured as TFP growth, to research effort. See notes to Figure 1 and the online data appendix. Both research productivity and research effort are normalized to the value of 1 in the 1930s.

Declining research productivity over time

Need for new approaches, not just more effort

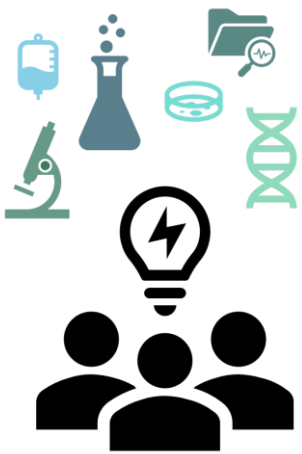
Bloom et al. (2017) "Are Ideas Getting Harder to Find" NBER Working Paper #23782



Rewiring incentives can help us answer these questions.

What Makes a Successful NIH Portfolio?

NIH's success is not determined by projects or papers, but by improved health



Discovery



Turning Discovery Into Health



Health

Reimage a Research Culture Where…



Junior Scholars Launch Sooner



Doors Open to Edge Science



Opportunity is Democratized



Replication Shepherds Discovery



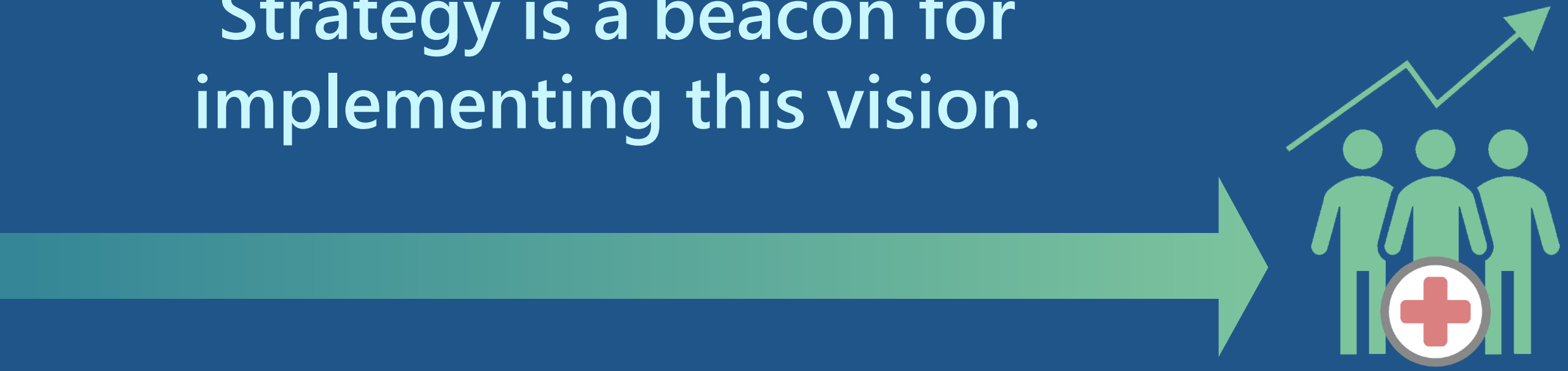
Success ≠ Papers



Health



Strategy is a beacon for implementing this vision.





Developing the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2027-2031

Jay Bhattacharya, M.D., Ph.D.
NIH Director

National Institutes of Health
Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives

Today's Agenda

01 Strategic Planning Process

02 Strategic Plan Framework



NIH National Institutes of Health
Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Planning Process

NIH's Development Strategy

NIH Mission

NIH's mission is to seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and the application of that knowledge to enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce illness and disability.

Aims of the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan

The Plan WILL:

- Be an update on the last Plan
- Clearly articulate the highest priorities of NIH overall
- Describe how NIH will achieve the highest priorities

The Plan WILL NOT:

- Be a complete overhaul of the last Plan
- Describe all the many important things that NIH does/will do
- Address priorities of the individual Institutes, Centers, and Offices since each has their own strategic plan

Strategic Planning Timeline

Phase 1

NIH Input & Framework Development

- Convened large NIH-wide Working Group
- Working Group developed Framework
- NIH Leadership approved Framework

Winter 2025 – 2026

Phase 2

Public Input & Drafting the Plan

- NIH hosted public RFI & webinars
- Working Group gathered high-profile advances and new initiatives across NIH
- Working Group drafted Plan

Spring – Summer 2026

Phase 3

Plan Approval & Release

- Presented to NIH Council of Councils and IC Directors
- NIH Leadership & HHS to approve Plan
- Plan will be publicly released

Fall 2026

**Timeline and phases overlap and are subject to change*

Public Input on NIH-Wide Strategic Plan

Public Webinars

- March 16 & April 8
- More than 3,000 attendees across both dates
- Presented on process and framework, answered live questions

Request for Information (RFI)

- Open March-May
- Approx. 2,000 responses
- Working Group considered public input to revise Framework and write Plan
- Report will be posted online

RFI Responses: Common Themes

- Sustained NIH funding
- Animal and human-based research
- Basic and translational research
- Bolstering the scientific workforce
- Transparency and public trust
- AI and data science



NIH National Institutes of Health
Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Plan Framework

NIH's Priorities and Goals

High Level Framework

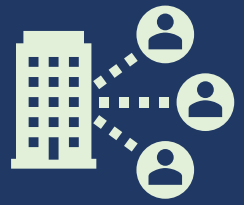
The NIH-Wide Strategic Plan is organized around three key Priorities:

Research Areas



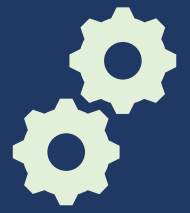
Address emerging and critical biomedical research areas

Research Capacity



Build and maintain capacity to carry out biomedical research

Research Operations



Operate with the highest integrity to oversee gold standard science

**For the purposes of the strategic plan, NIH uses the term biomedical to cover all relevant biological, behavioral, and social sciences research*

Priority 1: Research Areas



Goal 1: Advance Foundational Knowledge of Human Health and Disease

- **Objective 1:** Drive Discovery Science
- **Objective 2:** Advance Innovation and Use of New Research Methods and Tools

Goal 2: Improve Health Across the Lifespan

- **Objective 1:** Promote Health and Wellbeing and Prevent Disease
- **Objective 2:** Optimize the Development of Effective Disease Management and Treatment Interventions
- **Objective 3:** Accelerate the Discovery and Development of Cures

Priority 2: Research Capacity



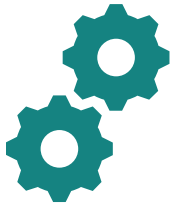
Goal 1: Develop and Sustain an Interdisciplinary Research Workforce

- **Objective 1:** Support Research Training and Career Development
- **Objective 2:** Promote Interdisciplinary Research

Goal 2: Build, Improve, and Sustain Research Resources and Infrastructure

- **Objective 1:** Cultivate Research Resources
- **Objective 2:** Modernize and Sustain Research Infrastructure

Priority 3: Research Operations



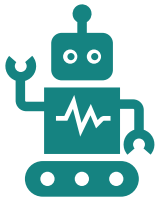
Goal 1: Enhance Research Stewardship and Decision-Making

- **Objective 1:** Set and Apply Strategic Research Priorities
- **Objective 2:** Strengthen Data-Driven Decision-Making
- **Objective 3:** Strengthen Clinical Research and Trial Stewardship
- **Objective 4:** Communicate Scientific Progress

Goal 2: Foster Transparency and Accountability to Improve Public Trust in Science

- **Objective 1:** Improve Research Rigor and Replication
- **Objective 2:** Promote Responsible Conduct of Research
- **Objective 3:** Prioritize Data Access and Sharing
- **Objective 4:** Strengthen Transparency of Agency Processes

Crosscutting Themes



Harnessing the Power of Data Science, Advanced Computation, and Artificial Intelligence



Modernizing How Science is Done to Accelerate Discovery and Improve Impact



Accelerating Solutions to Improve Health Outcomes for All



Translating Research Evidence into Real-World Health Solutions



Advancing Innovation and Trust through Partnerships and Engagement



NIH National Institutes of Health
Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives

Thank you!

Plan to be released in FY27