

ACTION ALERT: Research in Peril — Proposed White House Regulation Politicizes Federal Research Funding

AVAC encourages scientists, partners and advocates to speak out against political interference in research and funding. Here's how.

June 4, 2026 By AVAC

In an ongoing attempt to decimate and politicize science, the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) proposed [sweeping new regulations](#) to significantly expand political interference in federal research funding decisions across all federal grants, threatening science, global health and the HIV/AIDS response.

These rules, if adopted, would mandate that federally funded science align with a politically motivated “America-First” research agenda aimed at dismantling decades of powerful global collaboration. International scientific partnerships would be broadly discouraged, if not prohibited. Awards could be terminated at any time, for any reason.

The rules also dramatically restrict public access to information about federally funded research—from grant funding opportunities to study results to hand-picked selection of research projects by administration officials. Moreover, new rules require “pre-issuance” by senior political appointees in making preliminary decisions for prospective grant proposals, marking a remarkable shift in decision-making power from objective, scientific content experts to ideologically driven loyalists.

Those are just the highlights. See a comprehensive [summary of key changes](#) in OMB's proposed rule.

Everyone who cares about HIV prevention, biomedical research and global health should be deeply alarmed. These rules have the potential to dramatically reshape the trajectory of the entire federal HIV research to rollout continuum—threatening 2030 targets and the pathway to global health equity.

As Holden Thorpe, Editor-In-Chief of Science Journals wrote today in [Science](#), “The changes would inevitably lead to unlegislated reductions in funding and damage U.S. leadership in science, both in academia and industry.”

International collaboration with countries identified solely by the administration would be prohibited under the new rules, but more notably, all research that involves the expenditure of funds outside the U.S. would require case-by-case approval. This bureaucratic hurdle would effectively prevent most if not all partnerships from moving forward.

—Holden Thorpe, Editor-In-Chief of Science Journals

AVAC encourages researchers, partners and advocates to make their voices heard. The proposed rule is currently open for public comment through July 13, and you can take action now:

- Go to [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov).
- Type in OMB-2026-0034 into the search box at the top.
- Find the entry for Regulation for Federal Assistance and click on the blue button that says “comment” and enter your comments.
- Written comments are limited to 5000 characters, but document attachments are allowed as well.

Reach out to avac@avac.org if you need support.

AVAC and partners are developing sample messages for submitting your public comments, coming soon. In the meantime, follow the latest developments in AVAC’s weekly [Global Health Watch newsletter](#) and follow our friends at [Stand Up For Science](#) who are tracking this closely.

[This action alert](#) was originally published June 3, 2026, by AVAC, an international non-profit organization that leverages its independent voice and global partnerships to accelerate ethical development and equitable delivery of effective HIV prevention options, as part of a comprehensive and integrated pathway to global health equity. [Learn more at avac.org](#).

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