

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 6572

To direct the Director of the National Institutes of Health to carry out a program, to be known as the “X-Labs Initiative”, to support breakthrough biomedical research at innovative research institutions, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 10, 2025

Mr. HARDER of California (for himself and Mr. OBERNOLTE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To direct the Director of the National Institutes of Health to carry out a program, to be known as the “X-Labs Initiative”, to support breakthrough biomedical research at innovative research institutions, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Launching X-Labs
5 for Breakthrough Science Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. NIH INSTITUTIONAL AWARDS FOR BREAKTHROUGH**
2 **BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH.**

3 Part A of title IV of the Public Health Service Act
4 (42 U.S.C. 281 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
5 the following:

6 **“SEC. 404P. NIH INSTITUTIONAL AWARDS FOR BREAK-**
7 **THROUGH BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH.**

8 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of NIH shall estab-
9 lish a program, to be known as the ‘X-Labs Initiative’,
10 to provide long-term institutional awards to eligible enti-
11 ties in accordance with the requirements of this section.

12 “(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the program shall
13 be—

14 “(1) to enable and catalyze innovative research
15 institutions to conduct breakthrough biomedical re-
16 search; and

17 “(2) to assist such institutions in the acquisi-
18 tion of R&D plant, as necessary, to complete such
19 research.

20 “(c) INSTITUTIONAL AWARDS.—

21 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the pro-
22 gram, the Director of NIH shall, acting directly or
23 through the head of an NIH institute or center,
24 make institutional awards to eligible entities on a
25 competitive basis.

1 “(2) XL-SERIES ACTIVITY CODE.—The Director
2 of NIH shall designate the ‘XL-series’ as a distinct
3 NIH activity code available to all NIH institutes and
4 centers making institutional awards under the pro-
5 gram.

6 “(3) CATEGORIES.—An institutional award
7 under the program shall be made within one of the
8 following categories:

9 “(A) XL01 FUNDING.—Awards of XL01
10 funding to support basic science research insti-
11 tutions whose principal activities, or proposed
12 principal activities, are directed toward advanc-
13 ing foundational scientific discovery. The pur-
14 pose of such awards shall be to provide such in-
15 stitutions stable, long-term funding and mini-
16 mal budgetary reprogramming requirements.

17 “(B) XL02 FUNDING.—Awards of XL02
18 funding to support science institutions whose
19 principal activities, or proposed principal activi-
20 ties, are directed toward developing new sci-
21 entific resources, including datasets or measure-
22 ment tools or techniques, with deliverables that
23 are clearly defined at the beginning of the
24 award.

1 “(C) XL03 FUNDING.—Awards of XL03
2 funding to support nonprofit institutions that
3 award focused research organizations, indi-
4 vidual researchers, or research collaborations or
5 centers funds to conduct breakthrough bio-
6 medical research.

7 “(D) XL04 FUNDING.—Awards of XL04
8 funding to support the formation and planning
9 of new scientific institutions that will be eligible
10 for XL01, XL02, or XL03 funding.

11 “(4) SPECIAL RULES APPLICABLE TO XL03
12 FUNDING.—

13 “(A) REGRANTS.—An eligible entity that
14 receives an award of XL03 funding described in
15 paragraph (3)(C) shall, subject to the terms of
16 the award, make regrants using funds from the
17 award to support research teams, early-stage
18 projects, or innovative scientific initiatives con-
19 sistent with the purposes of this section. Such
20 teams, projects, and initiatives shall be located
21 in the United States.

22 “(B) REQUIREMENTS.—An eligible entity
23 that receives an award of XL03 funding de-
24 scribed in paragraph (3)(C)—

1 “(i) shall use such funding to provide
2 assistance, through regrant described in
3 subparagraph (A), to organizations (in this
4 section referred to as ‘regrant recipients’)
5 that the eligible entity determines are un-
6 likely to receive support through tradi-
7 tional NIH grants despite the break-
8 through potential of the research to be
9 conducted by the regrant recipient;

10 “(ii) shall use innovative methods to
11 identify, fund, and evaluate the research to
12 be conducted using such assistance; and

13 “(iii) not later than one year after the
14 date on which the eligible entity provides
15 such assistance to a regrant recipient, shall
16 make available to the public a summary of
17 the method by which the eligible entity
18 identified, funded, and plans to evaluate
19 the regrant recipient.

20 “(5) AMOUNTS.—

21 “(A) XL01, XL02, AND XL03 FUNDING.—

22 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Director of
23 NIH shall structure an award of XL01,
24 XL02, or XL03 funding such that the
25 award totals not less than \$5,000,000 and

1 not more than \$50,000,000 per fiscal year
2 for a period of 7 consecutive fiscal years.
3 The amount of such an award shall be de-
4 termined based on institutional scope, sci-
5 entific ambition, and programmatic needs.

6 “(ii) RENEWALS.—The Director of
7 NIH may renew an award described in
8 clause (i) for not more than one additional
9 period of 7 consecutive fiscal years, subject
10 to—

11 “(I) a competitive review of insti-
12 tutional performance and scientific
13 impact over the previous period;

14 “(II) the availability of appro-
15 priations; and

16 “(III) a programmatic cap on the
17 proportion of institutional awards eli-
18 gible for renewal, to be determined by
19 the Director of NIH, to ensure reg-
20 ular entry of new institutions into the
21 program.

22 “(B) XL04 FUNDING.—

23 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Director of
24 NIH shall structure an award of XL04
25 funding such that the award totals not less

1 than \$1,000,000 and not more than
2 \$5,000,000 per fiscal year for a period of
3 1, 2, or 3 consecutive fiscal years, as deter-
4 mined by the Director of NIH.

5 “(ii) PROHIBITION ON RENEWALS.—
6 The Director of NIH may not renew an
7 award described in clause (i).

8 “(6) APPLICATIONS.—An eligible entity seeking
9 an award under the program shall submit to the Di-
10 rector of NIH an application at such time, in such
11 form, and containing such information as the Direc-
12 tor of NIH may require.

13 “(7) MAINTAINING ELIGIBILITY.—To remain el-
14 igible for an institutional award under the program
15 and remain in good standing with respect to an
16 award, an eligible entity shall not compete for or re-
17 ceive any other Federal research funding in the form
18 of a research grant, excluding a training grant, dur-
19 ing the award period of the entity for XL01, XL02,
20 or XL03 funding.

21 “(8) EARLY TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION.—

22 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director of NIH
23 may terminate or suspend an award made to an
24 award recipient under this section prior to the
25 expiration of the applicable period of the award

described in paragraph (5) if the Director determines that the award recipient—

“(i) is not meeting the deliverables referred to in paragraph (3)(B), if applicable;

“(ii) is no longer an eligible entity; or

“(iii) is otherwise failing to comply with the terms and conditions of the award.

“(B) REVOCATION OF FUNDS; REALLOCATION.—Upon a determination to terminate or suspend an award under subparagraph (A), the Director of NIH may revoke any remaining funds from the award and reallocate such funds to new awards under this section.

“(d) ADMINISTRATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The program shall be administered by the Director of NIH, in coordination with the heads of relevant institutes and centers.

“(2) INSTITUTE PARTICIPATION.—Any institute or center within the National Institutes of Health may utilize the program to fund institutions within their areas of scientific focus, subject to coordination with the Director of NIH and the availability of funds.

1 “(3) OTHER TRANSACTIONS AUTHORITIES.—

2 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Di-
3 rector of NIH may use the authorities available
4 under section 402(n)(1) or other applicable trans-
5 actions authorities to carry out this section.

6 “(e) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

7 “(1) INITIAL REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year
8 after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually
9 thereafter for 2 additional years, the Director of
10 NIH shall submit to the appropriate committees of
11 Congress a report describing—

12 “(A) the progress made in establishing the
13 program, including the development of applica-
14 tion processes, review criteria, and award cat-
15 egories;

16 “(B) the number and types of applications
17 received under the program;

18 “(C) the number, type, and amount of
19 awards made under the program; and

20 “(D) any challenges or barriers encoun-
21 tered in the implementation of the program.

22 “(2) PERIODIC EVALUATION.—Not later than 5
23 years after the date of the first award under the
24 program, and once every 5 years thereafter during
25 the term of the program, the Director of NIH shall

1 submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a
2 report evaluating—

3 “(A) the scientific impact and outcomes of
4 institutions receiving support under the pro-
5 gram;

6 “(B) the effectiveness of the program in
7 advancing the purposes described in subsection
8 (b);

9 “(C) lessons learned from implementation
10 of the program and recommendations for pro-
11 gram improvement; and

12 “(D) the extent to which the program has
13 reduced administrative burden and enabled re-
14 search that is high-risk and high-reward.

15 “(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

16 “(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CON-
17 GRESS.—The term ‘appropriate committees of Con-
18 gress’ means—

19 “(A) the Committee on Energy and Com-
20 merce and the Committee on Appropriations of
21 the House of Representatives; and

22 “(B) the Committee on Health, Education,
23 Labor, and Pensions and the Committee on Ap-
24 propriations of the Senate.

1 “(2) BASIC SCIENCE RESEARCH INSTITU-
2 TION.—The term ‘basic science research institution’
3 means a research institution conducting systematic
4 study directed toward greater understanding of fun-
5 damental principles or phenomena of nature without
6 specific applications in mind.

7 “(3) BREAKTHROUGH BIOMEDICAL RE-
8 SEARCH.—The term ‘breakthrough biomedical re-
9 search’ means scientific research that has the poten-
10 tial to create substantial, field-defining advances in
11 knowledge, methods, or technologies that enable sig-
12 nificant improvements in human health or scientific
13 capability.

14 “(4) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible en-
15 tity’ means—

16 “(A) a nonprofit research organization;

17 “(B) an institution of higher education, as
18 defined in section 101 of the Higher Education
19 Act of 1965;

20 “(C) a for-profit entity with nonprofit sub-
21 sidiaries dedicated to scientific research;

22 “(D) an individual with plans to establish
23 a nonprofit research organization; or

24 “(E) any other research organization that
25 the Director of NIH determines appropriate.

1 “(5) FOCUSED RESEARCH ORGANIZATION.—

2 The term ‘focused research organization’ means a
3 time-limited, goal-oriented nonprofit entity that con-
4 centrates resources and talent on achieving a defined
5 scientific or technological objective not sufficiently
6 pursued within existing academic, corporate, or gov-
7 ernment structures.

8 “(6) FOUNDATIONAL SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY.—

9 The term ‘foundational scientific discovery’ means
10 research that produces broadly enabling scientific
11 knowledge, methods, or tools that support subse-
12 quent applied or translational advances.

13 “(7) INSTITUTIONAL AWARD; AWARD.—The
14 term ‘institutional award’ or ‘award’ means an
15 award of funding made under the program.

16 “(8) INSTITUTIONAL SCOPE.—The term ‘insti-
17 tutional scope’ means the size and organizational ca-
18 pacity of an institution to undertake research activi-
19 ties, including the breadth of its scientific research,
20 number of personnel supported, and physical re-
21 search infrastructure relevant to the proposed
22 award.

23 “(9) NIH.—The term ‘NIH’ means the Na-
24 tional Institutes of Health.

1 “(10) NONPROFIT RESEARCH ORGANIZATION.—

2 The term ‘nonprofit research organization’ means a
3 domestic public or private organization exempt from
4 taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Rev-
5 enue Code of 1986 that conducts or supports sci-
6 entific research as a primary purpose.

7 “(11) PROGRAM.—The term ‘program’ means
8 the program authorized under subsection (a).

9 “(12) PROGRAMMATIC NEEDS.—The term ‘pro-
10 grammatic needs’ means the degree to which an
11 award would advance the strategic research prior-
12 ities and unmet needs of NIH and its institutes and
13 centers, as determined by the Director of NIH.

14 “(13) R&D PLANT.—The term ‘R&D plant’
15 means fixed assets used primarily for research and
16 development, including the construction, expansion,
17 leasing, or modernization of research facilities and
18 the acquisition of major movable research equip-
19 ment.

20 “(14) REGRANT.—The term ‘regrant’ means
21 the provision of a subaward or other financial assist-
22 ance by an award recipient under the program to
23 carry out research activities consistent with the pur-
24 poses of the original award.

1 “(15) SCIENTIFIC AMBITION.—The term ‘sci-
2 entific ambition’ means the scale, novelty, and trans-
3 formative potential of an institution’s proposed re-
4 search agenda under an award, as measured by the
5 significance of the scientific questions addressed and
6 the potential to advance fundamental or
7 translational understanding.

8 “(16) UNITED STATES.—The term ‘United
9 States’ means the States and the District of Colum-
10 bia.

11 “(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
12 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
13 such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years
14 2026 through 2031.”.

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