



CHARTER
of the
MICROBIOME INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LIFE SCIENCES
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE
NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL

A. Official Designation

The Microbiome Interagency Working Group (MIWG) is hereby established by action of the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC), Committee on Science (CoS), Subcommittee on Life Sciences (LSSC).

B. Purpose and Scope

A microbiome is the assemblage of microorganisms that lives in a particular environment. A growing body of research has shown that microbiomes play dynamic and essential roles in an astounding array of biological processes, ranging from nutrition and disease in humans to nutrient acquisition and stress tolerance in plants and stability of soil and aquatic environments.

In recognition of the critical role played by microbiomes and to help identify research areas that could benefit from Federal investment, a Fast Track Action Committee on Mapping the Microbiome (FTAC-MM) was formed. The FTAC-MM inventoried Federal investments in microbiome research over a three-year period (FY12-14) and produced a [Report](#) describing the nature of the investments. The Report also identified specific technical, technological, and human resource needs and priority research areas that might serve as a future foundation for achieving a predictive understanding of microbiomes and their functions.

The purpose of the MIWG is to develop a Federal Strategic Plan for microbiome research. The Plan should use the needs, gaps, and Report's recommendations as a foundation, taking into account how future Federal actions could benefit from an understanding of and engagement with current international activities. The Plan should provide recommendations for improving coordination of microbiome research among Federal agencies and also between Federal agencies and non-Federal domestic and international microbiome research efforts. The MIWG will also strive to enhance the Federal R&D enterprise by embracing diversity, recognizing that inclusion of a broad range of backgrounds and perspectives is critical to achieving robust intellectual dialogue.

C. Functions

To achieve its goals, the MIWG will:

1. Draft a comprehensive Federal Strategic Plan for the development of a predictive understanding of microbiomes and microbiome function, utilizing the information and recommendations described in the FTAC-MM Report together with information about major international government-funded activities as its foundation (June 2016).
2. Outline steps and timelines for implementing and disseminating the Plan with the goals of promoting efficiency, reducing redundancy, leveraging resources, and supporting international and cross-disciplinary microbiome science (October 2016).

D. Membership

The following NSTC departments and agencies are represented on the MIWG:

Department of Agriculture (Co-chair);
Department of Commerce;
Department of Defense;
Department of Energy (Co-chair);
Department of Health and Human Services;
Department of Interior;
Department of State;
Department of Veterans Affairs;
Environmental Protection Agency;
National Aeronautics and Space Administration;
National Science Foundation;
Agency for International Development; and
Smithsonian Institution.

The following organizations in the Executive Office of the President shall also be represented on the MIWG:

Office of Management and Budget; and
Office of Science and Technology Policy.

Cooperating departments and agencies shall include other such Executive organizations, departments, and agencies as the MIWG Co-chairs may, from time to time, designate.

E. Private-Sector Interface

The MIWG may seek advice from the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) and will recommend to the CoS and/or the Assistant to the President for Science and Technology the nature of any additional private-sector¹ advice needed to accomplish its mission. The MIWG may also interact with and receive *ad hoc* advice from various private-sector groups as consistent with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA).

¹ The Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App., as amended, does not explicitly define "private sector," but the phrase is generally understood to include individuals or entities outside the Federal government such as, but not limited to, the following: non-Federal sources, academia, State, local or Tribal governments, individual citizens, the public, non-governmental organizations, industry associations, and international bodies.

F. Termination Date

Unless renewed and approved by the Co-chairs of the CoS prior to its expiration, the MIWG shall terminate no later than one year from the date of approval.

G. Determination

I hereby determine that the establishment of the MIWG is in the public interest in connection with the performance of duties imposed on the Executive Branch by law and that such duties can best be performed through the advice and counsel of such a group.

Approved:



Carrie Wolinetz
Co-chair of Subcommittee on Life Sciences, and
Associate Director for Science Policy
National Institutes of Health
Department of Health and Human Services

02/15/16

Date



Chavonda Jacobs-Young
Co-chair of Subcommittee on Life Sciences, and
Administrator, Agricultural Research Service
Department of Agriculture

02/15/16

Date



James L. Olds
Co-chair of Subcommittee on Life Sciences, and
Assistant Director for Biological Sciences
National Science Foundation

02/15/16

Date



Sharlene Weatherwax
Co-chair of Subcommittee on Life Sciences, and
Associate Director of Science for Biological and Environmental Research
Office of Science
Department of Energy

02/15/16

Date