



Regulation for Federal Financial Assistance

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Dear Mr. Vought:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Proposed Rule: Regulation for Federal Financial Assistance (OMB-2026-0034; FR Doc. 2026-10817). I am Shaunesse' Jacobs Plaisimond, Assistant Professor of Religion and Health in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of South Florida. As an interdisciplinary scholar, I am also an affiliate faculty member with the Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies as well as the College of Public Health's department of Community Health Sciences. As an interdisciplinary scholar in the humanities who partners intimately with public health practitioners and clinical researchers, I am writing to express my strongest opposition against the OMB's proposed changes to the Regulation for Federal Financial Assistance.

The OMB's proposed changes would cause numerous negative consequences for academic researchers, the students who gain professional and research experience working alongside professors on awarded grants, and the community partners who could benefit from the research.

Arbitrary research cancellation creates public health risks. Proposed rule §200.340 has the potential to lead to public health crises as the country is currently experiencing with the [Cyclosporiasis](#) outbreak exponentially gripping the country. [Canceling studies](#) of the cyclosporiasis pathogen in 2025 has led to over half of the country reporting infections with little information on the source of weeks-long illness impacting U.S. citizens.

Proposed rules § 200.218 and § 200.300 further threatens the health of the public. A variety of analytical research frameworks helps maintain robust scholarly inquiry, which ensures American scientific progress and burnishes the U.S.'s global reputation. Without robust frameworks, scholarship cannot advance that benefits all lives, human and nonhuman alike. Finally, scholarship that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion is good for all citizens. Despite political pundits reducing DEI to black communities, the concept touches far more communities: children, people with disabilities, low-income people, people in rural areas that are increasingly becoming social services deserts, people of color, women, queer people, uninsured people, refugees, border communities. And this list is not exhaustive of the innumerable peoples in need of research that promotes social and embodied equity.

While the goal of increased transparency is admirable, peer review protocols already exist to ensure a transparent process that ensures rigorous evaluation of each proposal. As wisely stated by [Betsy Phillips in her public comment](#), "[t]ypically, federal funding has been awarded to proposals that, through the scientific peer review process, demonstrate immense scientific merit. This approach centers the recommendations of unbiased, scientific experts in the decision-making process, ensuring that projects that drive progress and innovation are the ones that receive federal support." The integrity maintained by research experts has led to

the development of lifesaving medical interventions and technologies, social policies that improve public health measures, and improved living conditions for marginalized communities.

There is a better way, much of which is already in place through peer review of merit awarding, that supports OMB's stated goals and honors the work of scientific experts justly awarded funding critical to the nation's wellbeing. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Dr. Shaunesse' Jacobs Plaisimond, PhD