



For more information, contact:

[Chris Zurawsky](#)

Director of Communications

412-770-5409

[Emily Stimmel](#)

Communications and External Relations Manager

724-787-5286

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AACI Thanks Dr. Francis S. Collins for NIH Leadership, Commitment to Scientific Progress

The Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) extends its deep appreciation to **Francis S. Collins, MD, PhD**, for his dedication to biomedical research as director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for 12 years. Dr. Collins announced his retirement from the NIH and the federal government on Saturday, March 1.

Dr. Collins is perhaps best known for his contributions to mapping the human genome. Advances in DNA sequencing achieved through the Human Genome Project have led to many discoveries, including gene mutations that contribute to heritable cancer risk. Dr. Collins also spearheaded clinical trial reforms to protect patients who participate in clinical research and to improve how research results are reported.

He first joined the NIH in 1993 as director of the National Center for Human Genome Research and led the NIH through the presidencies of Barack Obama, Donald Trump, and Joe Biden. In his retirement announcement, Dr. Collins noted that during his tenure, “investment in medical research was seen as a high priority and a nonpolitical bipartisan effort – saving countless lives, relieving human suffering and contributing substantially to the U.S. economy.” He added, “It is the main piston of a biomedical discovery engine that is the envy of the globe. Yet it is not a household name. It should be.”

His retirement came shortly after major upheavals at the NIH and other federal agencies, including [funding cuts](#) and [mass firings](#). In his retirement announcement, Dr. Collins described his NIH colleagues as “individuals of extraordinary intellect and integrity,” and called on all Americans to share their respect and support for these dedicated public servants.

As a professional association representing over 100 leading academic cancer centers in the United States and Canada, AACI’s primary public policy advocacy goal is ensuring robust, predictable federal funding for cancer research.

“AACI thanks Dr. Collins for his contributions to our understanding of the human genome, his commitment to improving clinical research, and his unwavering support of the NIH,” said AACI Executive Director Jennifer W. Pegher. “Our member cancer centers have benefited significantly from his leadership.”

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AACI’s mission is to accelerate progress against cancer by enhancing the impact of North America’s leading academic cancer centers and promoting cancer health equity. For more information, please visit aaci-cancer.org.