

# US grants for zebrafish studies on the rise

Analysis from US National Institutes of Health charts shift in model-organism trends.

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Uri Manor/NICHD

A zebrafish facility at the US National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland.

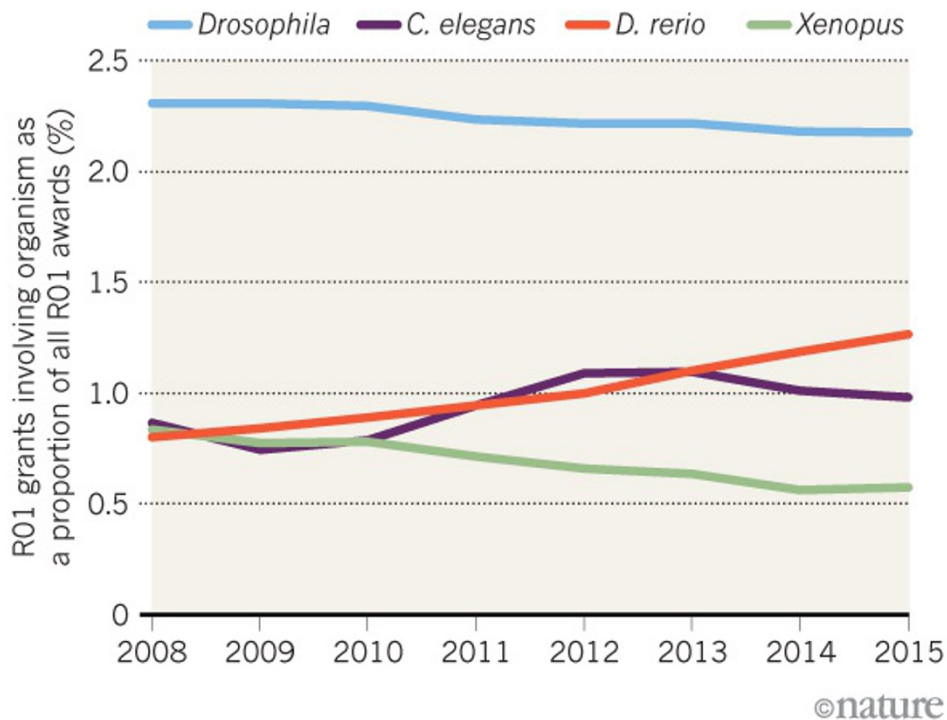
Zebrafish are the rising stars of model-organism research, an analysis of grants from the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) shows.

A team at the NIH Office of Portfolio Analysis [assessed trends](#) in the agency's funding of model-organism research between 2008 and 2015, through its R01 awards, the largest NIH grant programme for individual investigators. Using a text-mining algorithm and manual searches, they studied grant data for four animal models: fruit flies (*Drosophila melanogaster*), nematode worms (*Caenorhabditis elegans*), zebrafish (*Danio rerio*) and *Xenopus laevis* frogs. Together these organisms were mentioned in more than 9,500 successful grant applications.

The analysis revealed that grants for zebrafish studies accounted for 0.8% of all R01 awards in 2008, but for 1.27% in 2015 — a rise of almost 60%. And the proportion of *C. elegans* studies rose from 0.87% to 0.98%, a more modest overall increase of about 36%. By contrast, awards for research with *Xenopus* frogs dropped by some 30%, from 0.83% to 0.57%.

## ZEBRAFISH COURT FUNDING DOLLARS

Grants for zebrafish (*Danio rerio*) research from the US National Institutes of Health's R01 award programme are on the rise.



The shifts are broadly representative of the numbers of applications received, the team says, indicating a shift in model-organism trends.

In an [extension of the analysis](#), the team found that nearly 50% of funded R01 grants in the same period were for mouse studies — a proportion that has increased yearly since 2008.

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