

1969–2019



Funding for the National Science Foundation



The **National Science Foundation (NSF)** supports fundamental, curiosity-driven science enabling researchers to advance groundbreaking discoveries. NSF investments are essential to probe scientific frontiers, improve health, and strengthen the nation's economy. We urge Congress to support at least **\$10 billion** for NSF in FY 2022.

Health and Discovery

NSF provides a vital foundation for the nation's science and technology portfolio.

- NSF-funded research in fields such as chemistry, physics, and computer science lays the foundation for advances in neuroscience.
- Basic research also enables the **pursuit of treatments to prevent and delay** debilitating illnesses and improve preventive and public health practices worldwide.

Economic Growth and Prosperity

Federal investments in NSF secure economic benefits for generations to come.

- Economists agree about **50 percent of the country's economic growth** can be traced to investments in research and development.¹
- One dollar of research money from NSF generates approximately **\$2 in economic output**.²
- Scientific discovery leads to new business. There were **671** university research spin-off companies formed in 2011.³

The Future of the Scientific Enterprise

NSF funding must be maintained to pursue undiscovered breakthroughs. No one knows what innovations will go unexplored without increased or level funds.

- NSF is the funding source for approximately **24 percent** of all federally supported basic research conducted by America's colleges and universities.
- NSF drives innovation by investing in **high-risk, cutting edge science and engineering** at the frontiers of knowledge.
- Private industry alone can't support these programs—even as public funding for research and development has increased over the past several years, **industry investment has dropped**.⁴
- Scientists are able to build on foundations laid by others due to publicly-funded research with methodology and results **open to the public**.
- Through graduate fellowships, research funding, and the Math and Science Partnership program, NSF trains the next generation of America's scientists. Since 1952, NSF has awarded more than **60,000** Graduate Research Fellowships.⁸
- The scientific enterprise depends on **consistent funding** to support America's scientific workforce. If the scientific pathway is disrupted, there will be enduring long-term consequences as our talented researchers move on to other fields.

NSF BY THE NUMBERS

\$8.5 billion

NSF FY 2021 budget

92 percent

of the NSF budget invested through local research institutions⁵

13,075

FY 2020 grants supported by NSF⁵

313,000

personnel at NSF⁷

1,900

institutions are supported by NSF⁷

85 percent

of Americans agree that scientific research that advances the frontiers of knowledge should be supported by the federal government⁶

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Sources

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- ² Gundaya, D. and Inazu, J.K. *The Economic Impact of Federal Funds on a Local Community in Hawaii*. June 2011.
- ³ *Sparking Economic Growth 2.0*. The Science Coalition. October 2013.
- ⁴ Chakma, J., Sun, G., Steinberg, J.D., Sammut, S.M., Jaggi, R. *Asia's Ascent — Global Trends in Biomedical R&D Expenditures*. *The New England Journal of Medicine*. 370:1. January 2014.
- ⁵ *FY 2021 Budget Request to Congress*. National Science Foundation. NSF-16-034. February 2020.
- ⁶ *Science and Engineering Indicators 2016*. National Science Board. NSB-20-162. February 2016.
- ⁷ *FY 2020 Performance and Financial Highlights*. National Science Foundation. NSF-21-003. February 2021.
- ⁸ *About*. NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program.

The Society for Neuroscience (SfN) is a nonprofit membership organization of around 30,000 scientists and physicians who study the brain and nervous system. Visit SfN.org or email advocacy@sfn.org to learn more.