



WASHINGTON UPDATE

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Featured News

Science Committee Releases NSF Reauthorization Proposal

On March 26, the House Science Committee on Science, Space, and Technology released the text of the *National Science Foundation for the Future Act*, its proposed reauthorization legislation for the National Science Foundation (NSF). The bipartisan bill was introduced by Science Committee Chair Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) and Ranking Member Frank Lucas (R-OK), along with Reps. Haley Stevens (D-MI) and Michael Waltz (R-FL), the Chair and Ranking Member respectively of the Subcommittee on Research and Technology.

Although Rep. Lucas had previously introduced a competing bill, the *Securing American Leadership in Science and Technology Act*, in the press release accompanying the Committee's bill, he thanked Rep. Johnson for "working with me to craft a bipartisan bill" and for "including provisions on research security, which has been a growing concern for

Republicans on our Committee.”

The Science Committee’s bill would set funding targets for the NSF’s budget over the course of the next five fiscal years (FY), bringing the agency’s overall budget from its current \$8.5 billion to \$18.3 billion by FY 2026. However, as an authorization bill, the legislation can only identify desired targets; Congressional appropriators would still need to act each year to enact funding increases for the agency. The bill would also establish a new research directorate within NSF, the Directorate for Science and Engineering Solutions (SES), which, according to the Committee’s press release would enable NSF to “take big risks and experiment with new approaches to accelerating the translation of science and technology into solutions to society’s major challenges.” While in some ways similar to the Technology Directorate proposed in the [Endless Frontier Act](#) introduced in the previous Congress, the scale of the SES Directorate’s budget would be more proportionate to NSF’s overall budget (as opposed to being multiple times larger) and the Directorate would set its own scientific priorities rather than adhering to a list set by Congress.

The *NSF for the Future Act* includes a number of provisions that would affect the social science community, including language that the social, behavioral, and economic sciences (SBE) should be actively included in NSF cross-cutting and interdisciplinary activities like the Convergence Accelerators, Big Ideas, and Mid-Scale Research Infrastructure. COSSA will release a full analysis of the bill and its potential impact on the social sciences to [COSSA members](#) later this week.

New from COSSA

Register for April's Headlines Webchat

COSSA members are encouraged to sign up for the monthly [COSSA Headlines](#) webchat on Thursday April 8, in which COSSA staff will break down the most important social and behavioral science news from the past month and answer your questions. Individuals employed by or affiliated with a COSSA member organization or university can register for the webchat [here](#).



FROM THE ARCHIVES: Science Board Approves New NSF Merit Review Process (April 7, 1997)

In celebration of COSSA's 40th anniversary, we are diving into the decades of [Washington Update archives](#) to share articles from years past that resonate with today's news.

On March 28 the National Science Board approved a new merit review process for proposed grants submitted for National Science Foundation (NSF) funding. Proposed by a Task Force of the Board in November (see Update, [December 16, 1996](#)), NSF took comments from the community for three months and made some changes for their final recommendations.

The new process tries to simplify and clarify rules for those who evaluate proposals. Under the old system reviewers were asked to consider four general criteria. The new system asks for assessments of proposals based on the answers to two broad questions: What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity? And 2) What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity? For each of these, there are a series of more specific questions that should be considered, including how the proposal broadens participation of women and minorities, enhances the infrastructure of sciences, and benefits society. [...]

The new process also includes a single composite rating, separate comments for each criterion, and a summary recommendation that addresses both criteria. The new system will go into effect for all proposals received beginning October 1, 1997.

[Read more from this issue.](#)

John Anderson, NAE President, Answers “Why Social Science?”



This week's Why Social Science? comes from John Anderson, President of the National Academy of Engineering (NAE), who writes about the importance of collaboration between engineers and social scientists. Read it [here](#) and [subscribe](#).

Congressional News

Census Bureau Faces Questions on Release of 2020 Data

The Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee (HSGAC) held an oversight hearing on March 23 to review activities related to the 2020 Census and the Census Bureau. The hearing featured the testimony of Ron Jarmin, Acting Director of the Census Bureau; J. Christopher Mihm, Managing Director for Strategic Issues at the Government Accountability Office (GAO), and Nick Marinos, Director of Information Technology & Cybersecurity at GAO. Panelists answered questions on the outcome of the 2020 Census operation, including its use of new technologies, efforts to reach diverse communities, and the status of the Post-Enumeration Survey. In addition, several Republican members of the Committee questioned Director Jarmin about the Census Bureau's decision to wait to release apportionment and redistricting data, despite Congressional deadlines, in order to produce more accurate data (see [previous coverage](#)). The Senators noted that the Bureau's current timeline for releasing the information conflicts with some states' constitutional deadlines to conduct reapportionment, which has led some states to sue the Bureau to release the data sooner. Jarmin maintained that the Bureau was doing everything it can to release accurate data as quickly as possible. A recording of the hearing and the witnesses' written testimony is available on the [HSGAC website](#).

Senate Health Committee Holds Hearing on COVID-19 Response and Addressing Health Disparities

On March 25, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) held a [hearing](#) on health equity and health disparities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee members heard testimony from Vice President for Health Equity at Vanderbilt University Medical Center Dr. Consuelo H. Wilkins, Executive Vice President of the Seattle Indian Health Board Abigail Echo-Hawk, Managing Director of the Poverty to Prosperity Program at the Center for American Progress Taryn Mackenzie Williams, and President and CEO of Atrium Health Gene A. Woods.

Committee Chair Patty Murray (D-WA), Ranking Member Richard Burr (R-NC), and Committee members all expressed concerns over deep health disparities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, including for communities of color, individuals with disabilities, the elderly, and rural communities. The Committee members questioned the witnesses on a variety of topics including COVID-19 vaccines and how to equitably distribute them to at-risk communities, the effect of the pandemic on Indian and tribal health services, the increased importance of telehealth during the pandemic, diversity among clinical trial participants for vaccines, and incorporating health equity practices in health data and data management.

The witnesses' testimonies and a full recording of the hearing are available on the [HELP website](#).

House Science Subcommittee Holds Hearing on Rebuilding the Federal Scientific Workforce

On March 17, the House Science, Space and Technology Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight held a [hearing](#) to address strategies to rebuild the federal scientific workforce especially related to recruiting and retaining scientific talent. The Subcommittee heard testimony from Acting Director for Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics at the U.S. Government Accountability Office Candice Wright; President and CEO at the Partnership for Public Service Max Stier; Director of the Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists Dr. Andrew Rosenberg; and Former Director of Science and Technology at the Office of Water at the Environmental Protection Agency Dr. Betsy Southerland.

Subcommittee Chairman Bill Foster (D-IL) and Ranking Member Jay Obernolte (R-CA) both acknowledged the need to improve the capabilities of the federal government to hire scientists, and Subcommittee members of both parties seemed broadly supportive of suggestions provided by the panelists to increase the federal scientific workforce and reform federal hiring practices. Some of the recommendations discussed by Subcommittee members and panelists included reducing the budgetary and political restraints on hiring scientists, improving the federal government's "brand" as an employer, simplifying the federal job-hunting process for scientists, offering meaningful scientific internships as a legitimate pipeline to full-time employment, investing in STEM education opportunities in elementary schools, and deemphasizing the reliance on temporary workers and contractors at federal agencies. Both Foster and Obernolte expressed interest in pursuing legislative action on these topics in the future.

Statements from [Foster](#) and full Science Committee Chairwoman [Eddie Bernice Johnson](#) (D-TX), witness testimonies, and a full recording of the hearing are available on the [SST website](#).

Executive Branch News

NSF Issues New Framework for Identifying Broader Impacts; NSB Seeks Additional Guidance

On March 18, the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate (SBE) released a [Dear Colleague Letter](#) (NSF 21-059) offering guidance to proposal writers for shaping their broader impacts arguments. The notice makes no changes to NSF's existing merit review criteria, which currently considers a project's intellectual merit and broader impacts potential. Rather, it offers a framework for SBE researchers to consider "to develop and communicate their projects' broader impacts more effectively" and "for connecting fundamental research outcomes to quality of life improvements for others." The framework includes three guiding questions for principal investigators to consider:

1. Who can the scientific opportunities and communicative products empower?
2. Whose quality of life can the empowerment improve?
3. What actions make these broader impacts more likely?

Additional details are available [here](#).

Separately during its February meeting, the [National Science Board](#) (NSB) passed a [resolution](#) directing the use of broader impacts expertise on NSF Committees of Visitors (COV). COV panels provide external evaluations of NSF's existing programs and processes, making recommendations to the agency and the NSB for ways to improve programs and agency functions. Recent COV reviews noted significant disparity in how proposal review panels discuss intellectual merit and broader impacts, often with broader impacts receiving much less attention. In response, the NSB has directed the agency to develop a plan for ensuring that broader impacts expertise is included on all future COV panels. This is meant as a first step toward addressing concerns about uneven application of intellectual merit and broader impacts criterion on review panels. A recording of the NSB meeting is available [here](#).

NIH Further Extends Registration, Reporting Enforcement Delay for Some Clinical Trials

On March 23, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) issued a notice ([NOT-OD-21-088](#)) further delaying enforcement of the [NIH Policy on Dissemination of NIH-Funded Clinical Trials Information](#) for basic experimental studies with human participants (BESH). As [previously reported](#), NIH established a revised definition of “clinical trials” several years ago, which now includes some basic behavioral and social science research and mandates new reporting requirements. The new registration and reporting requirements—specifically requirements to register and report in [ClinicalTrials.gov](#)—have presented challenges for some types of behavioral and social science projects that now fall under the BESH category. In response, NIH delayed enforcement of these requirements for BESH projects through September 24, 2021. This latest move delays enforcement for two additional years, through September 24, 2023, allowing the agency additional time to “work with the BESH community to explore solutions that allow for the dissemination of information in ways that are useful to other researchers and members of the public, while also maintaining the NIH commitment to stewardship and increasing transparency.” In the interim, if not reported in [ClinicalTrials.gov](#), BESH projects are expected to be registered and results reported on alternative publicly available platforms. See the [Notice](#) for full details.

NSF Releases Annual Call for Advisory Committee Nominations

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has issued its annual call for recommendations for membership to its various advisory committees and technical boards. These committees advise NSF’s offices and directorates on program management, research direction, and policies impacting the agency. Committees of particular interest to the COSSA community include the Advisory Committee for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences and the Advisory Committee for Education and Human Resources. Guidelines for recommendations and committee contact information can be [found in the Federal Register](#). Recommendations for membership are maintained for 12 months.

Science Community News

CNSTAT Releases Seventh Edition of *Principles & Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency*

The Committee on National Statistics (CNSTAT) of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine has released a pre-publication version of the seventh edition of [Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency](#), a report released every four years to coincide with presidential terms. The consensus study report provides an explanation of the federal statistical system and offers guiding principles and best practices for federal statistical agencies. The report outlines five guiding principles federal statistical agencies should adhere to in order to produce and disseminate relevant, timely, accurate and credible information to the public and policymakers: (1) produce information relevant to policy issues and society, (2) maintain credibility among data users and stakeholders, (3) build trust among the public and data providers, (4) retain independence from political and other undue external influence, and (5) pursue continual improvement and innovation. CNSTAT will hold a [webinar](#) on April 21 to celebrate the report’s release.

Applications Closing Soon for National Academies’ Mirzayan Fellowship

The application window for the Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellowship at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) will be closing on April 30, 2021. This 12-week fellowship is intended for current or recent graduate students to gain a broader understanding of the role of science and technology in influencing public policy as well as to broaden career prospects outside of academia. The newest cohort will run from August 30, 2021 to November 19, 2021. More information on how to apply is available on the [NASEM website](#).

COSSA Member Spotlight

PAA to Host Briefing on Demographic Insights into COVID-19

The Population Association of America will host a [virtual congressional briefing](#), “[Living, Working, Dying: Demographic Insights into COVID-19](#)” on Friday, April 23, 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. ET. The event will feature presentations by prominent population scientists who will present findings on the disparate impacts of COVID, especially as they relate to mortality, education, food insecurity, and family dynamics, and what additional research and data are needed to understand and address its far-reaching effects. The speakers are Dr. Noreen Goldman, Princeton University; Dr. Caitlyn Collins Washington University in St. Louis; Dr. Marc Garcia University of Nebraska; and Dr. Anna Gassman-Pines Duke University. Registration is available [here](#).

Resources & Opportunities

COSSA Letters & Statements

- 3/29/2021: [Friends of NCHS Statement on FY 2022 Funding for the National Center for Health Statistics](#)
- 3/25/2021: Letter in Support of FY 2022 Funding for Firearm Morbidity and Mortality Prevention Research, [House/Senate](#)
- 3/24/2021: [Sign-On Letter to President Biden in Support for the RISE Act](#)
- 3/16/2021: [Friends of IES Letter on FY 2022 Funding for the Institute of Education Sciences](#)

Nomination Opportunities

- **NEW:** NSF: [Request for Recommendations for Membership on Directorate and Office Advisory Committees](#)

New & Expiring Funding Opportunities

- NSF: [Future Manufacturing \(FM\)](#) (Closes: May 14, 2021)
- NSF: [Understanding the Rules of Life: Emergent Networks](#) (Closes: May 10, 2021)
- NIH/OBSSR: [Advancing Health Communication Research on HIV Prevention, Treatment and Cure](#) (Closes: May 8, 2021)
- **NEW:** NSF: [Convergence Accelerator 2021 Cohort: Networked Blue Economy \(Track E\) & Trust & Authenticity in Communications Systems \(Track F\)](#) (LOIs Due: May 5, 2021)
- NIH/OBSSR: Firearm Injury and Mortality Prevention Research ([R21/R33 Clinical Trial Optional](#)) ([R01 Clinical Trial Optional](#)) (Closes: May 1, 2021)
- NIH/NIMHD: [Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): Competitive and Administrative Supplements for the Impact of COVID-19 Outbreak on Minority Health and Health Disparities](#) (Closes: May 1, 2021)
- NIH/NIA: [Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): NIA Availability of Administrative Supplements and Revision Supplements on Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) (Closes: May 1, 2021)
- **NEW:** NSF: [Mid-scale Research Infrastructure-1 \(Mid-scale RI-1\)](#) (Closes: April 23, 2021)
- BJS: [NICS Act Record Improvement Program \(NARIP\)](#) (Closes: April 22, 2021)
- NIH: [Administrative Supplements and Urgent Competitive Revisions for NIH Grants to Add or Expand Research Focused on Maternal Health, Structural Racism and Discrimination, and COVID-19](#) (Closes: April 21, 2021)
- NIH/NIMH: [Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\) regarding the Availability of Administrative Supplements and Urgent Competitive Revisions for Mental Health Research on the 2019 Novel Coronavirus](#) (Closes: April 16, 2021)
- BJS: [Continuation of the Federal Justice Statistics Program](#) (Closes: April 13, 2021)

- BJS: [Census of Law Enforcement Training Academies](#) (Closes: April 12, 2021)
- BJS: [National Criminal History Improvement Program \(NCHIP\)](#) (Closes: April 8, 2021)
- [HEAL Initiative: HEALthy Brain and Child Development Consortium Administrative Core](#) (Closes: April 1, 2021)
- [HEAL Initiative: HEALthy Brain and Child Development Data Coordinating Center \(U24\)](#) (Closes: April 1, 2021)
- HEAL Initiative: HEALthy Brain and Child Development Study ([Collaborative U01-Clinical Trial Not Allowed](#)) ([U01 - Clinical Trial Not Allowed](#)) (Closes: April 1, 2021)
- NIH: [Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\) regarding the Availability of Administrative Supplements and Urgent Competitive Revisions for Research on the 2019 Novel Coronavirus and the Behavioral and Social Sciences](#) (Closes: April 1, 2021)
- NIH/NIDA: [Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\) regarding the Availability of Administrative Supplements and Urgent Competitive Revisions for Research on the 2019 Novel Coronavirus](#) (Closes: March 31, 2021)

[More funding opportunities.](#)

Requests for Comment & Calls for Papers

- NASEM/DBASSE: [Requesting Comments: Call to Action for Science Education](#)
- AHRQ: [Request for Information on the Use of Clinical Algorithms that Have the Potential to Introduce Racial/Ethnic Bias into Healthcare Delivery](#) (Closes: May 4, 2021)
- SPSSI: [Call for Proposals: SPSSI's 2021 Virtual Conference](#) (Closes: April 16, 2021)
- NIH: [Inviting Comments and Suggestions to Advance and Strengthen Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Biomedical Research Workforce and Advance Health Disparities and Health Equity Research](#) (Closes: April 9, 2021)
- DOJ/BJS: [Public comments requested on the proposed reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved BJS data collection: 2021 Identity Theft Supplement](#) (Closes: April 5, 2021)
- NSF: [Dear Colleague Letter: Interdisciplinary Frontiers of Understanding the Brain](#) (Closes: March 31, 2021)

Notices, Resources, & Reports

- **NEW:** NSF: [Dear Colleague Letter: A Broader Impacts Framework for Proposals Submitted to NSF's Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate](#)
- **NEW:** NASEM: [Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency](#)
- **NEW:** NIH: [Continued Extension of Certain Flexibilities for Prospective Basic Experimental Studies With Human Participants](#)

Open Positions, Fellowships, & Professional Development Opportunities

- **NEW:** NASEM: [Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellowship Program](#) (Closes: April 30, 2021)
- NIH: [Faculty Institutional Recruitment for Sustainable Transformation \(FIRST\) Program: FIRST Coordination and Evaluation Center \(U24 Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#) (Closes: April 23, 2021)
- NASEM: [New Voices in Sciences, Engineering and Medicine 2021](#) Cohort (Closes: March 31, 2021)
- ED: [Summer Internship Opportunities](#) (Closes: March 31, 2021)

Upcoming Events



- **VIRTUAL:** [Southern Sociological Society Annual Meeting](#), April 7-10, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting](#), April 7-11, 2021

- **VIRTUAL:** [COSSA Headlines | April](#), April 8, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting](#), April 8-10, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [CASBS Webinar: Health, Expertise, and the Public Interest](#), April 9, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting](#), April 9-12, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [Society of Behavioral Medicine Annual Meeting](#), April 12-16, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Annual Meeting](#), April 13-17, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference](#), April 14-18, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [Southwestern Social Science Association Annual Meeting](#), April 15-17, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [Midwest Sociological Society Annual Meeting](#), April 18-21, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [American Council of Learned Societies Annual Meeting](#), April 22-24, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [Living, Working, Dying: Demographic Insights into COVID-19](#), April 23, 2021, 12:00pm
- **VIRTUAL:** [COSSA Social Science Advocacy Day, April 27, 2021](#)
- **VIRTUAL:** [Association of Research Libraries Meeting](#), April 27-29, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [Population Association of America Annual Meeting](#), May 5-8, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [American Association for Public Opinion Research Annual Conference](#), May 11-14, 2021
- **VIRTUAL:** [COSSA Headlines | May](#), May 13, 2021

A list of COSSA members' annual meetings and other events can be found on the COSSA [events page](#). COSSA members who have an upcoming event they would like to see listed in the Events Calendar and on our website should send an email to jmilton@cossa.org.

COSSA Members

Governing Associations

American Anthropological Association
 American Association for Public Opinion Research
 American Economic Association
 American Educational Research Association
 American Political Science Association
 American Psychological Association
 American Society of Criminology
 American Sociological Association
 American Statistical Association
 Law and Society Association
 Linguistic Society of America
 Midwest Political Science Association
 National Communication Association
 Population Association of America
 Society for Personality and Social Psychology
 Society for Research in Child Development

Membership Organizations

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences
 African Studies Association
 American Association of Geographers
 American Council of Learned Societies
 American Evaluation Association
 American Historical Association
 Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies
 Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management
 Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations
 Association of American Law Schools

Colleges and Universities

Arizona State University
 Boston University
 Brown University
 Carnegie Mellon University
 Case Western Reserve University
 Columbia University
 Cornell University
 Duke University
 George Mason University
 Georgetown University
 Harvard University
 Indiana University
 Johns Hopkins University
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology
 Michigan State University
 North Carolina State University
 Northwestern University
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 Pennsylvania State University
 Princeton University
 Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
 Stanford University
 University of Arizona
 University of California, Berkeley
 University of California, Irvine
 University of California, Los Angeles
 University of California, Santa Barbara
 University of Chicago
 University of Colorado, Boulder
 University of Georgia
 University of Illinois
 University of Iowa
 University of Maryland
 University of Michigan

Association of Research Libraries
Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences
Council on Social Work Education
Economic History Association
History of Science Society
Midwest Sociological Society
National Association of Social Workers
National Council on Family Relations
Rural Sociological Society
Social Science History Association
Society for Personality Assessment
Society for Prevention Research
Society for Research on Adolescence
Society for Social Work and Research
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues
Society of Behavioral Medicine
Southern Political Science Association
Southwestern Social Science Association

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Centers and Institutes

American Academy of Political and Social Science
Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences
Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research
Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan
Institute for Social Science Research, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
NORC at the University of Chicago
RTI International
Social Science Research Council

About COSSA

The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is a nonprofit advocacy organization working to promote sustainable federal funding for and widespread use of social and behavioral science research and federal policies that positively impact the conduct of research. COSSA serves as a united voice for a broad, diverse network of organizations, institutions, communities, and stakeholders who care about a successful and vibrant social science research enterprise. The COSSA membership includes professional and disciplinary associations, scientific societies, research centers and institutes, and U.S. colleges and universities.

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