



**National Science Foundation**  
Office of the Director

August 9, 2023

Dear Colleague:

The National Science Foundation is beginning a national search for the Assistant Director for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) and we seek your help in identifying visionary candidates. The new Assistant Director (AD) will succeed Dr. Kellina Craig-Henderson, who has served with distinction in the position until April 21, 2023.

The Assistant Director, SBE, leads a Directorate containing the Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences (BCS), the Division of Social and Economic Sciences (SES), the SBE Office of Multidisciplinary Activities (SMA), and the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES). Together, the Directorate's portfolio encompasses a broad range of the social, behavioral, and economic sciences with a total budget of nearly \$283 million. The enclosed information sheet summarizes the Directorate's activities, the responsibilities of the position, and the criteria for the search.

I am pleased that Dr Willie Pearson, Professor of Sociology at Georgia Tech, will chair the search committee. We seek your help in identifying candidates who are outstanding leaders, have a deep sense of scholarship, and understand the issues facing the social, behavioral, and economic science communities, particularly in education, innovation, and fundamental research. Candidates must also have the skills and temperament to serve effectively as a key member of the NSF senior management team, working with the NSF Director and other Assistant Directors on interdisciplinary activities. The AD/SBE also interacts with the executive and legislative branches of government and must be able to communicate effectively with leaders in business, industry, and philanthropy.

Employment will be under provisions of the Intergovernmental Personnel Act. We welcome recommendations of individuals from any sector, including academia, industry, and government. The National Science Foundation is an equal opportunity employer committed to engaging a highly qualified staff that reflects the diversity of our nation.

Please send your recommendations, including any supporting information that you might be able to provide, to the AD/SBE Search Advisory Committee via e-mail to [sbesrch@nsf.gov](mailto:sbesrch@nsf.gov) or at the following address: National Science Foundation, Office of the Director, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314. Please submit your recommendations by September 8, 2023.

Thank you for your help with this important task.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sanchanathan'.

Sethuraman Panchanathan  
Director

Enclosures

## **Search Advisory Committee Review Criteria for the Assistant Director for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (AD/SBE), NSF**

### **We are seeking demonstrated evidence of:**

#### *Strategic Vision*

- Working knowledge of the major current intellectual challenges and opportunities in the social, behavioral, and economic science communities.
- Ability to think strategically and formulate integrated plans for research and education activities in the social, behavioral, and economic sciences, especially at the interfaces of, and boundaries with, other disciplines.
- Ability to bring about strategic change within and outside the organization to meet organizational goals. Includes the ability to establish an organizational vision and to implement it in a continuously changing environment.

#### *Leadership, Direction, Representation*

- Ability to lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Includes the ability to provide an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others, facilitates cooperation and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts. Ability to provide innovative and transformative leadership of people, reflective of NSF's organizational values.
- Ability to serve effectively as a member of NSF's senior management team, helping to develop consensus both within the SBE directorate and across the agency on policy and plans.
- Ability to plan, prioritize, and coordinate interagency and international research and education programs and to forge government-industry-university partnerships.
- Ability to manage an organization consisting of approximately 126 scientific and administrative professionals; ability to manage human, financial, and information resources strategically.
- Ability to communicate NSF policy and strategic plans to the external community, including the public, Congress, industry, and colleagues in other disciplines.
- Ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations. Includes the ability to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge, analyzing problems, and calculating risks.

#### *Commitment*

- Commitment to the goals of the NSF Strategic plan — *Transforming the Frontiers, Innovating for Society, and Performing as a Model Organization* — and to the strategies for achieving these goals through developing intellectual capital, integrating research and education, and promoting partnerships. Demonstrated ability to conceptualize the role of the social, behavioral, and economic sciences in achieving those goals.
- Commitment to the vision, initiatives, and relationships articulated by NSF Director Sethuraman Panchanathan to advance science and serve the nation in innovative ways. Examples of Dr. Panchanathan's vision are outlined in an April 2021 article, "[We need to strengthen and accelerate US science and technology process](#)" (TheHill.Com).
- Commitment to the appointment and development of a highly qualified staff that reflect the diversity of our nation and to the equitable representation of underrepresented groups and institutions on advisory committees, in workshops, and proposal review panels.
- Commitment to equitable representation of underrepresented groups in the national enterprise.

#### *Credibility within Research and Education Community*

- Substantial research contributions and experience in academic, government and/or private national research and education endeavors as evidenced in publications, innovative leadership in research administration and/or professional leadership awards.
- Ability to build coalitions internally and with other Federal agencies, State and local governments, nonprofit and private sector organizations, foreign governments, or international organizations to achieve common goals.
- Demonstrated commitment to scholarship and significant scientific contributions to the social, behavioral, and economic science communities.
- Broad understanding of universities and other institutions where research and education in the social, behavioral, and economic sciences are conducted.
- Familiarity with the existing U.S. and international infrastructure that supports research and education.

**The National Science Foundation**  
**Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE)**

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent agency of the United States Government. Its vision is to enable the nation's future through its strategic goals of transforming the frontiers, innovating for society, and performing as a model organization. The Foundation seeks to realize these goals using five core values: vision, dedication to excellence, learning and growing, broad inclusiveness, and accountability to the research community and the taxpayer. NSF invests in supporting research that advances the frontiers of knowledge and establishes the nation as a leader in transformational science, in developing a world-class, broadly inclusive science and geosciences workforce and scientifically literate citizenry, in building the nation's research capacity with critical investments in advanced instruments, tools and facilities, and in cultivating a capable and responsive organization that promotes excellence in science and geosciences research and education.

The **Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE)** is one of seven NSF directorates. The focus of the SBE Directorate is to strengthen the capability of the social, behavioral, and economic sciences to strengthen the national capacity to perform and innovate. Increased innovation contributes to our national prosperity, security, and welfare. The Directorate's goals and strategies mirror those of the Foundation. The Directorate includes the Divisions of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences (BCS) and Social and Economic Sciences (SES), the SBE Office of Multidisciplinary Activities (SMA), and the National Center for Science and Statistics (NCSES). A staff of approximately 126 employees administers a budget of approximately \$283 million annually.

The **Assistant Director for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (AD/SBE)** serves as a key member of NSF's senior management and policy team and provides leadership and direction to the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate programs and initiatives. The incumbent is responsible for planning and implementing programs, priorities, and policy within the framework of statutory and National Science Board authority. NSF seeks a candidate with outstanding leadership abilities; a deep sense of scholarship; a grasp of the issues facing the social, behavioral, and economic science communities in the areas of education and research; expertise with the production, analysis and dissemination of public data and statistics; and a commitment to the goals and strategies of the National Science Foundation.