

Letter to scientists and organizations whose progress depends on NSF:

Dear Colleagues and Leaders of Scientific Societies,

We are reaching out as members of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 3403, AFL-CIO. Thank you for your support for the continued federal funding of National Science Foundation (NSF) grant programs.

Unfortunately, we are facing an unprecedented political attack on science. The Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) has begun directing NSF to terminate active grants. Over 400 awards have been terminated already, and there is reason to believe that many additional terminations will be forthcoming soon. At a time when Congress is considering a dramatic reduction to the NSF budget, your help is urgently needed to stop this massive assault on science and education.

In particular, you can make it clear why NSF is crucial to the security, prosperity, and health of the United States. Far too many people remain unaware of NSF's historic role in establishing this country's global leadership in science and innovation, which in turn has far-ranging benefits for all Americans, as detailed below.

To mitigate the unfolding crisis and the threat to the long-term viability of NSF, concrete steps to take include the following:

1. **Activate your membership to contact local media outlets** (televisions, newspapers, etc.) that can help to convey the real-world value and impacts of NSF's investments.

Often, the most effective approach is to combine notable facts with a human element that resonates with viewers and readers. We encourage your members to think about answering "what's in it for me" when talking about why NSF matters. Your members can work with the reporters to share their story of research and mentorship, the benefits of NSF funding, and the impacts of current or threatened cuts on the local community. [*Template Attached*](#)

2. **Direct your members to call and write to their members of Congress.**

Members can dial the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 to ask to be connected to their Senators and Representative. [*Sample call script attached.*](#)

3. **Encourage your membership to post widely on social media.**

Members can share their support of NSF on social media, tag us, and use the hashtags #WithoutNSF or #WithoutScience

Example language:

- “#WithoutNSF my [program] won’t receive the critical funding it needs to continue [doing what we do] in my community.”
- Other Hashtags to use: #SupportNSF #SaveNSF #ISupportNSF and #ISupportScience
- Facebook: [NSF's official page](#)
- Instagram: [@nsfgov](#)
- X: [@nsf](#)
- LinkedIn: [NSF Official Page](#)

4. **Organize yourselves further!** You are united by a commitment to science and interest in ensuring the survival of NSF as a global leader among scientific agencies. Find innovative ways to share your esteem for the foundation and its vital contributions. This is a moment for countrywide organizing.

Please also spread this call for action to your colleagues and to additional professional societies.

In today’s political climate, it is more important than ever that we meet the American public where they are. We have crafted the points below to grab attention and promote storytelling rather than relying on the traditional language of our fields. We hope that you will use some of these themes in communicating about the value of science generally and NSF grants specifically with those outside of the scientific community.

Here are a few examples of communication points outside the usual / traditional language of direct support for research:

The mission of NSF includes national security:

- U.S. leadership in science is an “all hands-on deck” bipartisan national security matter.
- NSF-funded technological developments keep our borders safe.
- We invest in cybersecurity research to protect the nation's digital infrastructure and to keep Americans safe.

- We fund research and efforts directly applicable to keeping Americans safe (some of which DOGE has recently cancelled).
- We collaborate with other federal agencies to develop and implement research security tools for researchers and institutions, mitigating the risks of cyberattacks by foreign adversaries and the loss of proprietary research.
- We address the risks and opportunities presented by emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (regrettably DOGE has cancelled funded studies that keep Americans safe from malicious uses of artificial intelligence).
- We prohibit funding for researchers who participate in malignant foreign talent programs.

NSF funding is key to preserving and supporting our nation's rural communities.

- We have facilities spread across the country in intentionally remote areas. Our staff, visitors, suppliers and associated industries are driving the economy of many rural communities.
- We provide funding for transportation to give rural children access to regional scientific facilities to enhance their learning opportunities.
- NSF funding for science benefits underserved communities through local education and technology development.

NSF funding supports veterans.

- We fund online resources, professional development webinars and workshops to help faculty meet the needs of student veterans, particularly those with ringing in the ears and/or hearing loss.
- We fund programs that provide research opportunities to veterans who are undergraduate and graduate students, K-12 teachers, or community college faculty.

NSF programming keeps America's youth ahead in securing the jobs of the future.

- We fund programs that integrate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) into early learning. Structured activities help children learn and be curious or interested in these areas at an early age. We fund programs that train teachers to deliver best-in-class STEM education to K-12 students, making STEM relevant and engaging to kids of all ages.

- NSF programs often provide support for teachers in terms of teaching aids but also offering increased competency, impact and quality of teaching through training, access to curricula, and supplementing salaries.
- NSF's support to K-12 schools, community colleges, and other postsecondary training opportunities helps produce talented and skilled job seekers that are needed by leading American industries (many of which currently report a lack of qualified applicants).

NSF programs create jobs and fuel the economy in all 50 states.

- The overwhelming majority of the funding that Congress allocates to NSF is redistributed via awards to organizations around the USA. Operating costs consume only a small percentage of the budget.
- Local communities are benefactors of the jobs created by organizations receiving funding through NSF grants. This includes programs that support small businesses, and startups.
- As a result of the ongoing attacks on science, millions of hard-working Americans will potentially lose their livelihoods, health insurance, and slide into poverty.

You will likely have other points to add or actions that you would like to undertake; please do so. Every form of support and every voice counts.

We are currently putting a plan together to recognize NSF's 75th anniversary, May 10, 2025. We hope you will join us in marking the date. We will circulate recommended social media posts, letters to the editor, and other outreach tools next week. In the meantime, please let us know if we can support your efforts in any way.

Sincerely,

AFGE Local 3403, AFL-CIO

Representing NSF, IMLS, NEA, NEH, USDA-ERS, USDA-NIFA, USGS-Reston, USGS-CASC, USADF

Sample Call Script:

Hi, my name is _____ and I am calling about recent cuts to NSF grants. These cuts were made by political appointees, without input from the non-political scientists and program staff. I strongly oppose cuts to programs that are critical to American innovation, national security, and leadership. I urge/demand Congressman/Senator _____ to do everything in his/her power to protect NSF funding and stop the politicization of science.

Media Outreach Template:

For use with outreach to local reporters (print, TV, radio)

Good Morning,

National Science Foundation grants in [our area] are under attack. [My organization] is at risk of losing/recently received notice that we lost \$X in funding.

The funds we receive from NSF allow us to [brief program description, in layman's terms]. [Include 2-3 sentences about how the local community benefits from your work].

I would be happy to tell you more about how our work impacts our community and the effect loss of funding will have on [Community Name]. Please let me know if I can provide you with more information or if you would like to talk.

Sincerely,

Name

Sample Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express concern about the politicization of science in our nation. For almost 75 years, the National Science Foundation has funded scientific research, national security, innovation and leadership across our nation. It has helped ensure global dominance and drive the American economy.

Recently, NSF grants have been cut with no warning and no rationale other than "to protect the interests of the government." Even more troubling, canceled programs are being deleted from databases as if they never existed.

The American people take tremendous pride in our scientific leadership. Science should inspire wonder, expand our economy, and position our nation as the global leader. It should not be used as a political weapon.

Sincerely,

Name