



September 9th, 2025

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Collins, Vice Chair Murray, Chair Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

On behalf of the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) – an alliance of over 140 professional organizations, scientific societies, universities, and businesses united in our advocacy for the National Science Foundation (NSF) – **we urge you to fund NSF at the highest level possible in FY 2026**

appropriations. NSF investments are key to bolstering U.S. innovation and competitiveness; building and fostering U.S. STEM education and workforce programs; supporting scientists and engineers with cutting-edge facilities; and addressing the most pressing issues of our time.

Thank you for your efforts to protect investments in the NSF in FY 2026 appropriations. We understand the difficult fiscal climate and appreciate the rejection of the massive cuts proposed for NSF in the budget request in the proposed FY 26 bills. We hope you will support the higher level of funding represented in the Senate bill. Cuts to NSF would be devastating to the U.S. innovation ecosystem and national security. The budget request notes that at the proposed level, NSF would impact 240,000 fewer people than it did in FY 2024 and make over 7,000 fewer awards. At this level of funding, whole fields could disappear, many students would give up on STEM, and our innovation ecosystem would lose future discoveries and the workforce that it needs to thrive. Even cuts at the House level would result in dramatic rollbacks of many critical areas of research.

CNSF members are concerned about substantial cuts in both bills for the Directorate for STEM Education, although we prefer the Senate approach to specify a level of funding. Without a specific level of funding appropriated, we fear the Administration will implement the massive cuts it has proposed, which would end many initiatives and deeply cut others. The Directorate funds critical workforce training programs,

graduate fellowships and traineeships, research to improve STEM education at all levels, and important programs that broaden participation in STEM and ensure that we can harness talent from all regions of our country. We are facing enormous workforce shortages in emerging technologies while our competitors are investing major amounts to build their science and technology ecosystems. We hope Congress will protect STEM EDU with a specific funding level and keep funding as high as possible to enable these priorities.

Our country is facing major competition from China not only in critical technologies such as AI and quantum, but also in broad areas of basic science that form the foundation for these and other technologies. We will lose our leadership if we don't expand our research and innovation ecosystem. As you know, Congress has repeatedly demonstrated strong and bipartisan intent for NSF growth. Now is not the time to cut funding and educational programs that will advance these and other critical technology areas, enable transformational efforts to enhance regional innovation, and increase support for foundational research and education activities. NSF will also not be able to scale research at the pace needed to dominate and lead in science without sustained and growing funding. We urge Congress to include NSF in any supplemental funding package focused on bolstering our defense and national security.

Finally, we request that any short-term continuing resolution protect NSF from irreversible cuts and actions until Congress has a chance to fully weigh in and finalize FY 2026 appropriations. Closures and mothballing of facilities cannot easily be undone, delays in grants lead to layoffs and lost future workforce, and the community is already challenged by many freezes and delays earlier this year. Congress should require NSF to spend at a true continuing rate and not implement dramatic changes that require Congressional approval before they take place.

As you work to finalize FY 2026 appropriations, we urge you to fund NSF at the highest possible level and to protect NSF programs and facilities from dramatic changes. Thank you for your continued bipartisan support for NSF and the millions of scientists, engineers, students, and entrepreneurs it supports to advance cutting-edge research, STEM education, and technology that will benefit us all.

Sincerely,

The Coalition for National Science Funding

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American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research
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Association of American Universities	Society for Neuroscience
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Cornell University	University of Florida
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Council of Scientific Society Presidents	University of Iowa
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Dartmouth College	University of Notre Dame
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Ecological Society of America	University of Pittsburgh
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