



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 **\$9.9 billion** for NSF in FY2027.

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. Between 2015 and 2019, 53 university research spin-off companies contributed more than \$700 million to the U.S. GDP and supported 9,300 jobs nationally.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 **70,000** Graduate Research Fellowships.⁷
- 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

\$8.75 billion

NSF FY2026 base budget

79 percent

of the NSF budget supported research and related-activities.⁵

8,377

FY2025 awards supported by NSF⁵

\$5.913 billion

in grants awarded by NSF in FY2025⁵

1,621

institutions are supported by NSF⁵

68 percent

of Americans are in favor of increasing federal funding for science and technology⁶



Funding for the National Science Foundation



Sources

- ¹ Jones, C.I. 2002. Sources of U.S. Economic Growth in a World of Ideas. *American Economic Review*, 92(1):220-239.
- 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 Volume IV*. The Science Coalition. April 2021.
- 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 2025 Agency Financial Report*. National Science Foundation.
- ⁶ Research!America. (2026, February 26). 2026 January national survey.
- ⁷ About Us. NSF Graduate Research Fellowships Program (GRFP). (2026, February 20).

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](https://www.sfn.org) or email advocacy@sfn.org to learn more.