

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

FY 2010 Budget Request to Congress



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About the Cover:

Gemini South image of NGC 5426-27 (Arp 271) as imaged by the Gemini Multi-Object Spectrograph. The twin galaxies comprising NGC 5426-27 (Arp 271) are not as peaceful as they look. Separated by only 60,000 light years, they are on a collision course and will end up as a single elliptical galaxy. For more information about NGC 5426-72 (Arp 271) see: www.gemini.edu/node/10979. (Image courtesy of Gemini Observatory.)

NSF is the federal steward for ground-based astronomy in the United States. Research support covers a broad array of observational, theoretical, and laboratory research aimed at understanding the origins and characteristics of planets, the Sun, other stars, our galaxy, extragalactic objects, and the structure and origin of the Universe. 2009 is International Year of Astronomy (IYA), as modern astronomy celebrates its quadricentennial and commemorates numerous astronomical and scientific milestones including the 400th anniversary of Galileo's use of a telescope to study the skies and Kepler's publication of *Astronomia Nova*. 2009 is also the anniversary of many other historic events in science, including Huygen's 1659 publication of *Systema Saturnium*. For more information about IYA 2009 see www.nsf.gov/news/news_summ.jsp?cntn_id=113004&org=NSF and <http://astronomy2009.us/>.

