U.S. National Science Foundation

NSF AT A GLANCE

FAST FACTS

1950
Year Congress created NSF

$9.06B
NSF's Fiscal Year 2024 Enacted Budget

93%
Percent of budget committed to research, education and related activities

11K
Average number of awards NSF funds each year

1.9K
NSF-funded institutions

353K
People supported through NSF funding

262
Total number of Nobel Prize winners who have received NSF funding

The U.S. National Science Foundation is an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1950 to **promote the progress of science; advance the national health, prosperity and welfare;** and **secure the national defense.**

NSF is the only federal agency whose mission supports all fields of fundamental science and engineering, from mathematics and geosciences to biological, behavioral and computer sciences.

For almost 75 years, NSF has advanced the frontiers of the full spectrum of science and engineering research and innovation. Tasked with keeping the U.S. at the leading edge of scientific and engineering discovery to the benefit of all, NSF invests in research that generates new knowledge that provides a greater understanding of the world. NSF's long-term support for solutions-oriented research has fueled industries of the future, produced advancements for the American people and created world-leading technologies.

NSF 75 YEARS OF DISCOVERY & INNOVATION

2025 marks the 75th anniversary of NSF. Throughout the year, the agency will host in-person and virtual activities to commemorate this significant milestone.
For more information, visit: new.nsf.gov/75years

WHO WE ARE

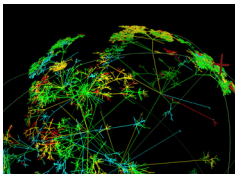
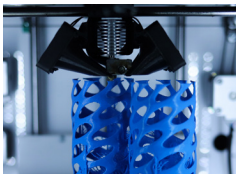
The NSF director, who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, leads a workforce driven to improve the world through research, discovery and innovation. The workforce consists of approximately 200 rotating scientists and engineers, 1,500 career employees and 450 contract employees.

In addition, the 24-member National Science Board, also presidentially appointed, establishes the overall policies of NSF. Board members and the NSF director serve six-year terms.

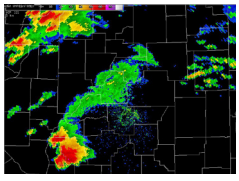
NSF Research Areas

- **Biological Sciences**
- **Computer & Information Science & Engineering**
- **Engineering**
- **Geosciences**
- **Mathematical & Physical Sciences** ($E = MC^2$)
- **Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences**
- **STEM Education**
- **Technology, Innovation & Partnerships**

Our Impacts





NSF has invested in discoveries, inventions, and innovations that have shaped the modern world, including the internet, 3D printing, American Sign Language, Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), deep sea exploration, Doppler radar and more. For more information on NSF impacts, please visit: new.nsf.gov/impacts.

WHAT WE DO

Expand the frontiers of discovery

NSF supports research that explores the unknown, seeks to demystify nature and advances the frontiers of science and engineering. The agency invests in researchers who generate new knowledge and discoveries that provide a greater understanding of the world. Situated at the intersection of all science and engineering disciplines, NSF is uniquely positioned to identify and guide investments toward cutting-edge research areas like artificial intelligence (AI), biotechnology, advanced manufacturing, semiconductor technologies and quantum information science.

Create opportunities everywhere

Now more than ever, the nation needs a robust STEM enterprise that includes a diverse, highly-skilled U.S. STEM workforce. By improving access to quality STEM teaching and learning and expanding opportunities for a more diverse population to pursue STEM, NSF is building a workforce for the needs of today as well as the industries of the future. Programs such as the NSF Eddie Bernice Johnson INCLUDES Initiative attract individuals from every sector and group in society, ensuring a pipeline of people and ideas ready to solve pressing global challenges.

Enhance U.S. national and economic security

As the U.S. faces growing international competition in emerging technology areas, NSF investment bolsters national and economic security by catalyzing and sustaining U.S. leadership in research and innovation. In many cases, NSF investments in fundamental research have led to critical outcomes, sometimes decades later, which were unforeseen yet have afforded the U.S. substantial competitive advantage. Furthermore, by democratizing access to education and infrastructure, NSF works to ensure that the U.S. is able to unlock these innovations as new products and technologies.

Support research infrastructure

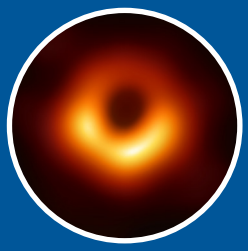
NSF funds supercomputers, ground-based telescopes and observatories, U.S. research stations in the Arctic and Antarctic, the world's largest and highest-power magnet lab, long-term ecological research sites, engineering centers, ships and other infrastructure and state-of-the-art tools to sustain the nation's scientific enterprise. Many of the research facilities NSF supports drive discoveries and serve as training grounds for the next generation of scientists and engineers.

Sustain global leadership

NSF's support for cutting-edge research has positioned the U.S. as a global leader in science and technology. The agency advances the frontiers of knowledge across the smallest and grandest of scales, from atoms and black holes to tissue engineering, AI and quantum information science. NSF's long-term support for research conducted at U.S. colleges and universities has helped transform these institutions into global centers of discovery and innovation, fueling the industries of the future and creating world-leading technologies.

Catalyze regional innovation

NSF is dedicated to expanding the nation's innovation capacity by enabling every region of the country through initiatives like the NSF Regional Innovation Engines (NSF Engines) program. The program invests in multi-sector and multidisciplinary coalitions that link academia, industry, government, philanthropy, investors and civil society. These partnerships surface practical applications and challenges, accelerate use-inspired and translational research and power breakthrough technologies and solutions. NSF Engines give rise to innovation ecosystems in communities across the country, putting regions on the map as national and global leaders in specific technologies and national, societal and geostrategic challenges. NSF is empowering all Americans to participate in the U.S. research and innovation enterprise, spurring job growth, advancing global competitiveness and improving everyday lives.



DID YOU KNOW?

Thanks to NSF support, international researchers have now captured images of two black holes, including the one at the center of the Milky Way galaxy.

Translate technologies to the marketplace

NSF investment in high-risk, high-reward research has expanded human knowledge and unlocked entirely new technologies and industries. NSF's investments through programs like the NSF Innovation Corps (NSF I-Corps™), NSF SBIR/STTR America's Seed Fund and NSF Pathways to Enable Open-Source Ecosystems bring these cutting-edge technologies from the laboratory to the marketplace and society, creating new consumer products, catalyzing new businesses and creating high-wage, good-quality jobs across the nation.

Safeguard the research enterprise

NSF is committed to protecting the integrity and security of the research enterprise. The Office of the Chief of Research Security Strategy and Policy leads NSF's efforts by developing policies and procedures that safeguard federally funded research while maintaining an open and collaborative international research environment. Initiatives like the Trusted Research Using Safeguards and Transparency framework and the Safeguarding the Entire Community of the U.S. Research Ecosystem Center empower the agency and the research community to identify and mitigate potential risks posed by foreign interference.