

**Statement of Juliane Baron, Executive Director
Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences**

FY 2021 Appropriations for the National Science Foundation

submitted for the record to the

**United States House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies**

**Honorable Jose Serrano, Chairman
Honorable Robert Aderholt, Ranking Member**

March 13, 2020

Chairman Serrano, Ranking Member Aderholt, and Members of the Subcommittee:

The Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences (FABBS) appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony for the record in support of the National Science Foundation (NSF) budget for fiscal year (FY) 2021. FABBS represents twenty-six scientific societies and nearly seventy university departments whose members and faculty share a commitment to advancing knowledge of the mind, brain, and behavior. As a leading member of the Coalition for National Science Funding, **FABBS joins the broader scientific community in urging Congress to fund NSF with at least \$9 billion in FY 2021.**

Our members sincerely thank the House Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations Subcommittee for the proposed budget level for NSF in FY 2020, what would have been a significant and deeply needed increase over FY 2019. We thank you in advance for your commitment to robust funding in FY 2021 and efforts to complete the budget in a timely manner.

Robust funding for NSF in FY21 is essential for the United States to maintain leadership in global investments. Without such funding, the United States risks falling behind in the race to discovery, some measures indicate that we already have. NSF supports fundamental research that creates a body of knowledge that produce long-term dividends to our country in areas of health, national security and economic growth. In addition, NSF research and programs build our STEM ecosystem and future generations of scientists – with a commitment to broad participation - whose work will be essential in keeping this country at the forefront of discovery.

FABBS scientists have a particular interest in the Social Behavioral and Economics (SBE) Sciences directorate, which provides an estimated 62 percent of the federal funding for fundamental research in SBE sciences at academic institutions across the country. This means that our finest universities and colleges are heavily dependent on the NSF to inform discoveries from identifying vulnerabilities in the nation’s cyber-networks to improving early detection and treatment of brain disorders such as autism and Alzheimer’s. Given the current state of affairs with COVID-19, it would be remiss not to mention the dire need for

research on a wide range of questions from how human behavior affects disease transmission: how can medical professionals convey critical health information to people in a state of general uncertainty without creating panic; or how can human networks help us understand the spread of pathogens? With minimal, unpredictable budget increases, NSF lacks sufficient funds to explore these pressing research questions. Acting quickly, earlier this month, NSF released a [Dear Colleague Letter on the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#), inviting proposals for research to model and understand the spread of COVID-19, to inform and educate about the science of virus transmission and prevention, and to encourage the development of processes and actions to address this global challenge.

In addition to receiving support from SBE, FABBS members appreciate critical funding from the Computer and Information Science and Engineering Directorate (CISE), which funds research on topics such as human-technology interaction and cyber-assisted learning, the Biological Sciences (BIO) Directorate, which funds research on topics such as sleep and circadian rhythms and sex differences in responses to stress, and the Education and Human Resources (EHR) Directorate, which funds research on increasing America's human capital through effective education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

An increase in NSF's FY 2021 budget would allow the agency to continue funding core disciplinary research, as well as invest in the Big Ideas. SBE has been centrally involved with The Future of Work at the Human-technology Frontier (FW-HTF). Current events underscore the foresight of this big idea as every sector in society scrambles to adjust to the current pandemic, through telecommuting, holding virtual conferences and remote learning for school age children. FW-HTF has been examining questions about social isolation and productivity.

At a recent LHHS subcommittee hearing, Dr. Norman Sharpless, Director of the National Cancer Institute said that he was '...obsessed with the fear that there are great scientists with brilliant ideas that federal agencies can't fund due to limited budgets...' Indeed, the National Science Board has estimated that in FY2017, nearly \$4 billion in grants evaluated by the NSF merit review process to be "very good or higher" were left unfunded due to lack of funding. The FY21 budget for NSF should aim to reduce the number of promising grants that go unable to be pursued.

Funding for the NSF has remained stagnant at a time period when we are seeing rapid growth in federal investment in research and development from our global competitors. Increasing federal support for the NSF is vital in order to ensure the health, security, and economic well-being of our nation.

We recognize that Congress faces a challenging budget reality this year. Nonetheless, increasing federal investment in fundamental scientific research across all sciences is critical to ensuring the future prosperity, security and health of our nation and its people. Thus, **we urge you to provide NSF with at least \$9 billion for FY 2021.** Along with the broader scientific community, we believe that increased funding for fundamental scientific research would help set the NSF on a solid path with potentially transformative benefits to the country.

Thank you for considering this request.

FABBS Member Societies:

Academy of Behavioral Medical Research, American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, American Psychosomatic Society, Association for Applied Psychophysiology and Biofeedback, Association for Behavior, Analysis, Behavior Genetics Association, Cognitive Neuroscience Society, Cognitive Science Society, International Society for Developmental Psychobiology, Massachusetts Neuropsychological Society, National Academy of Neuropsychology, The Psychonomic Society, Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology, Society for Computers in Psychology, Society for Judgement and Decision Making, Society for Mathematical Psychology, Society for Psychophysiological Research, Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, Society for Research in Child Development, Society for Research in Psychopathology, Society for the Scientific Study of Reading, Society for Text & Discourse, Society of Experimental Social Psychology, Society of Multivariate Experimental Psychology, Vision Sciences Society

FABBS Affiliates:

APA Division 1: The Society for General Psychology; APA Division 3: Experimental Psychology; APA Division 7: Developmental Psychology; APA Division 28: Psychopharmacology and Substance Abuse; Arizona State University; Binghamton University; Boston University; California State University, Fullerton; Carnegie Mellon University; Columbia University; Cornell University; Duke University; East Tennessee State University; Florida International University; Florida State University; George Mason University; George Washington University; Georgetown University; Georgia Institute of Technology; Harvard University; Indiana University Bloomington; Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis; Johns Hopkins University; Kent State University; Lehigh University; Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Michigan State University; New York University; North Carolina State University; Northeastern University; Northwestern University; The Ohio State University, Center for Cognitive and Brain Sciences; Pennsylvania State University; Princeton University; Purdue University; Rice University; Southern Methodist University; Stanford University; Syracuse University; Temple University; Texas A&M University; Tulane University; University of Arizona; University of California, Berkeley; University of California, Davis; University of California, Irvine; University of California, Los Angeles; University of California, Riverside; University of California, San Diego; University of Chicago; University of Colorado, Boulder; University of Delaware; University of Houston; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; University of Iowa; University of Maryland, College Park; University of Massachusetts Amherst; University of Michigan; University of Minnesota; University of Minnesota, Institute of Child Development; University of North Carolina at Greensboro; University of Pennsylvania; University of Texas at Austin; University of Texas at Dallas; University of Washington; Vanderbilt University; Virginia Tech; Wake Forest University; Washington University in St. Louis; Yale University