



Federation of Associations in  
Behavioral & Brain Sciences

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Dr. Cindy Hasselbring  
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FABBS STEM RFI Response

Dear Dr. Hasselbring,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding the Federal STEM strategic plan.

The comments are from the perspective of the Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences (FABBS). Our federation represents 26 scientific societies and nearly 70 university departments whose scientific members and faculty share a commitment to advancing knowledge in the behavioral and cognitive sciences.

Our comment is limited to question 24 under Community Use and Implementation of the Federal STEM Education Strategic Plan.

Despite the clear alignment with and value of the behavioral and cognitive sciences to serve the goals of the STEM Education Strategic Plan, these disciplines are not currently included in NSTC definition of STEM. The behavioral and cognitive sciences are central to technological innovation, such as speech synthesis, pattern recognition, and decision making, and are important in making improvements in areas such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and predictive analytics that will help strengthen our national security and grow our economy.

Federal agencies including the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, Department of Defense, and Department of Homeland Security recognize the behavioral and cognitive sciences as essential in building foundational knowledge to understand complex problems and in applying this knowledge to agency-specific missions. FABBS strongly encourages the NSTC to adopt a more inclusive definition of STEM to better reflect the spectrum of disciplines contributing to discovery and innovation and to best prepare our future workforce.

Many thanks for your consideration,

Juliane Baron, Executive Director