



# Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate (SBE) at the National Science Foundation (NSF)

## Relevant Statutes and Congressionally Directed Programmatic Activities

### **Social and Other Sciences Research and Scientific Data Collection**

U.S.C. (Public Law): [42 U.S.C. 1861, et seq.](#) (National Science Foundation Act of 1950)

**Description:** The Foundation is authorized and directed— (1) to initiate and support basic scientific research and programs to strengthen scientific research potential and science education programs at all levels in the mathematical, physical, medical, biological, social, and other sciences, and to initiate and support research fundamental to the engineering process and programs to strengthen engineering research potential and engineering education programs at all levels in the various fields of engineering, by making contracts or other arrangements (including grants, loans, and other forms of assistance) to support such scientific, engineering, and educational activities and to appraise the impact of research upon industrial development and upon the general welfare

“...to provide a central clearinghouse for the collection, interpretation, and analysis of data on scientific and engineering resources and to provide a source of information for policy formulation by other agencies of the Federal Government.”

**SBE Program(s):** All

### **Social and Other Sciences Research**

U.S.C. (Public Law): [42 USC 1862o-5](#) (America COMPETES Act of 2007, P.L. 110-69, section 7018))

**Description:** The Foundation is authorized and directed— (1) to initiate and support basic scientific research and programs to strengthen scientific research potential and science education programs at all levels in the mathematical, physical, medical, biological, social, and other sciences, and to initiate and support research fundamental to the engineering process and programs to strengthen engineering research potential and engineering education programs at all levels in the various fields of engineering, by making contracts or other arrangements (including grants, loans, and other forms of assistance) to support such scientific, engineering, and educational activities and to appraise the impact of research upon industrial development and upon the general welfare

**SBE Program(s):** All

### **SBE Postdoctoral Research Fellows (SPRF)**

U.S.C. (Public Law): [42 USC Ch. 16, §1862o](#) (America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, (P.L. 111-358, section 505))

**Description:** The Director shall require that all grant applications that include funding to support postdoctoral and graduate student researchers include a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals, and shall ensure that this part of the application is evaluated under the Foundation's broader impacts merit review criterion. The requirement may be satisfied by providing such individuals with access to mentors, including individuals not listed on the award. Mentoring activities may include career counseling, training in preparing grant applications, guidance on ways to improve teaching skills, and training in research ethics.

**SBE Program(s):** SPRF

### **National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics**

U.S.C. (Public Law): [42 USC Ch. 16, §1862p](#) (America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, P.L. 111-358, section 505))

As of March 2026



**Description:** There is established within the Foundation a National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics that shall serve as a central Federal clearinghouse for the collection, interpretation, analysis, and dissemination of objective data on science, engineering, technology, and research and development. (b) DUTIES.—In carrying out subsection (a) of this section, the Director, acting through the Center shall (1) collect, acquire, analyze, report, and disseminate statistical data related to the science and engineering enterprise in the United States and other nations that is relevant and useful to practitioners, researchers, policymakers, and the public, including statistical data on—

(A) research and development trends; (B) the science and engineering workforce; (C) United States competitiveness in science, engineering, technology, and research and development; and (D) the condition and progress of United States STEM education; (2) support research using the data it collects, and on methodologies in areas related to the work of the Center; and (3) support the education and training of researchers in the use of large-scale, nationally representative data sets.

**SBE Program(s):** NCSES

#### **Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)**

**U.S.C. (Public Law):** [42 USC Ch. 16, §1862p-6](#) (America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, P.L. 111-358, section 505)

**Description:** RESEARCH SITES.—The Director shall award grants, on a merit-reviewed, competitive basis, to institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, or consortia of such institutions and organizations, for sites designated by the Director to provide research experiences for 6 or more undergraduate STEM students for sites designated at primarily undergraduate institutions of higher education and 10 or more undergraduate STEM students for all other sites, with consideration given to the goal of promoting the participation of individuals identified in section 33 or 34 of the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C.1885a or 1885b).

**SBE Program(s):** REU Sites

#### **SBE Sciences Research**

**U.S.C. (Public Law):** [42 USC §19055](#) (CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, (P.L. 117-167)

**Description:** Social, behavioral, and economic sciences

The Director shall-

- (1) actively communicate opportunities and solicit proposals for social, behavioral, and economic science researchers to participate in cross-cutting and interdisciplinary programs, including the Convergence Accelerator and agency priority activities, and the Mid-Scale Research Infrastructure program; and
- (2) ensure social, behavioral, and economic science researchers are represented on relevant merit review panels for such activities.

**SBE Program(s):** All

#### **Science and Engineering Indicators Report**

**U.S.C. (Public Law):** [42 USC Ch. 16, §1863j](#)

**Description:** j) Report to President; submittal to Congress

(1) The Board shall render to the President and the Congress no later than March 15 of each even numbered year, a report on indicators of the state of science and engineering in the United States.

**SBE Program(s):** NCSES and NSB

#### **Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities (WMPD) Report**

**U.S.C. (Public Law):** [42 U.S. Code § 1885d](#) (NSF Authorization and Science and Technology Equal Opportunities Act, P.L. 96-516)

**Description:** Requires the Director to submit a biennial report with an accounting and comparison, by sex, race, and ethnic group and by discipline, of the participation of women and men in scientific and engineering positions.

**SBE Program(s):** NCSES and NSB

#### **Cyber Workforce Research and Development**

U.S.C. (Public Law): [42 USC §18995](#) (CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, P.L. 117-167, Sec. 10315)

**Description:** (a) The Director shall make awards on a merit-reviewed, competitive basis to institutions of higher education or nonprofit organizations (or consortia of such institutions or organizations) to carry out research on the cyber workforce. (b) Research In carrying out research pursuant to subsection (a), the Director shall support research and development activities to (1) understand the current state of the cyber workforce, including factors that influence growth, retention, and development of that workforce; (2) examine paths to entry and re-entry into the cyber workforce; (3) understand trends of the cyber workforce, including demographic representation, educational and professional backgrounds present, competencies available, and factors that shape employee recruitment, development, and retention and how to increase the size, diversity, and capability of the cyber workforce; (4) examine and evaluate training practices, models, programs, and technologies; and (5) other closely related topics as the Director determines appropriate.

SBE Program(s): NCSES, Science of Organizations (SoO); Science of Science (SoS); and Science of Learning and Augmented Intelligence (SLIA)

#### **Measuring Impacts of Federally Funded R&D**

U.S.C. (Public Law): [42 USC §19056](#) (CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, P.L. 117-167, Sec. 10347)

**Description:** (a) Measuring impacts of Federally funded research and development. The Director shall make awards on a competitive, merit-reviewed basis to institutions of higher education or non-profit organizations (or consortia of such institutions or organizations) to support research and development of data, models, indicators, and associated analytical tools to improve our understanding of the impacts of Federally funded research on society, the economy, and the workforce, including domestic job creation.

SBE Program(s): NCSES, SoO, and SoS

#### **Technology and Behavioral Science Research**

U.S.C. (Public Law): [42 USC §19066](#) (CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, P.L. 117-167, Sec. 10357)

**Description:** Technology and behavioral science research

The Director shall make awards on a merit-reviewed, competitive basis for research and development to (1) increase understanding of social media and consumer technology access and use patterns and related mental health, behavioral, and substance use disorder issues, particularly for children and adolescents; and (2) explore the role of social media and consumer technology in rising rates of mental health and substance use disorder issues, including within communities experiencing long-term economic distress.

SBE Program(s): SLAI, DS, PAC, and SP

#### **Research on the Impact of Inflation**

U.S.C. (Public Law): [42 USC §19070](#) (CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, P.L. 117-167, Sec. 10363)

**Description:** The Director may make awards, on a competitive merit-reviewed basis, to institutions of higher education or nonprofit organizations (or consortia of such institutions or organizations) to support research to improve our understanding of the impact of inflation.

SBE Program(s): Economics, Accountable Institutions and Behavior (AIB); Security and Preparedness (SAP)

#### **STEM Workforce Data (Skilled Technical Workforce)**

U.S.C. (Public Law): [42 USC §18994](#) (CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, P.L. 117-167, Sec. 10314)

**Description:** Requires the Director to consider the feasibility and benefits of incorporating questions or topic modules to existing NCSES surveys that would vary from cycle to cycle. In addition, the Director shall continue and accelerate efforts to enhance the usefulness of NCSES survey data for longitudinal research and analysis.

SBE Program(s): NCSES

#### **Cybersecurity Workforce Data**

U.S.C. (Public Law): [42 USC §18996](#) (CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, P.L. 117-167, Sec. 10317)

**Description:** Establishes within NCSES a cybersecurity workforce data initiative to assess the feasibility of providing statistics on the cybersecurity workforce.

**SBE Program(s):** NCSES

#### **National Secure Data Service**

**U.S.C. (Public Law):** [42 USC §19085](#) (CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, P.L. 117-167, Sec. 10375)

**Description:** Requires Director, in consultation with OMB Director and NAIRR interagency committee, to establish a National Secure Data Service (NSDS) demonstration project of a governmentwide data linkage and access infrastructure for statistical purposes no later than one year after enactment of Act, and to engage with Federal and State agencies to collect, analyze, report and disseminate statistical data to support governmentwide evidence-building activities.

**SBE Program(s):** NCSES

#### **Collection and Reporting of Data on Federal Research Awards**

**U.S.C. (Public Law):** [42 USC §19152](#) (CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, P.L. 117-167, Sec. 10502))

**Description:** Requires Federal research agencies to collect standardized record-level data for all applications for merit-reviewed research and development awards. Requires, starting no later than 2 years after issuance of policy by OSTP Director to ensure data uniformity and standardization (per §10502(a)(2)), Federal research agencies to submit such data to the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) in the format required by the OSTP Director

**SBE Program(s):** NCSES

#### **Collection of Data on Faculty Demographics**

**U.S.C. (Public Law):** [42 USC §19070](#) (CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, P.L. 117-167, Sec. 10504)

**Description:** The Director shall carry out a survey to collect data from award recipients on the demographics of STEM faculty, by broad fields of STEM, at different types of institutions of higher education that receive Federal research funding. The Director may collaborate with other Federal statistical agencies in the development of the survey

**SBE Program(s):** NCSES

#### **Efficiency of Skilled Technical Labor Markets and Skilled Technical Workforce**

**U.S.C. (Public Law):** [42 USC §1862p](#) (Innovations in Mentoring, Training, and Apprenticeships Act, P.L. 115-402, §4, 132 Stat. 5346)

**Description:** "(a) Efficiency of Skilled Technical Labor Markets.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, working through the Directorate of Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences, in coordination with the Secretary of Labor, shall support research on labor market analysis innovations, data and information sciences, electronic information tools and methodologies, and metrics."

(b) Skilled Technical Workforce.—"

(1) Review.—The National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics of the National Science Foundation shall consult and coordinate with other relevant Federal statistical agencies, including the Institute of Education Sciences of the Department of Education, and the Committee on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education of the National Science and Technology Council established under section 101 of the America COMPETES [Reauthorization] Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-358) [42 U.S.C. 6621], to explore the feasibility of expanding its surveys to include the collection of objective data on the skilled technical workforce.

"(2) Report.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act [Dec. 31, 2018], the Director of the National Science Foundation shall submit to Congress a report on the progress made in expanding the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics surveys to include the skilled technical workforce, including a plan for multi-agency collaboration to improve data collection and reporting of data on the skilled technical workforce.

**SBE Program(s):** Economics; NCSES; SoO; and SOS

### **Opioid Research and Treatment**

**U.S.C. (Public Law):** [42 USC Ch. 16, §1862u](#) (Expanding Findings for Federal Opioid Research and Treatment Act, P.L. 116-335)

**Description:** The Director of the National Science Foundation, in consultation with the Director of the National Institutes of Health, shall support merit-reviewed and competitively awarded research on the science of opioid addiction.

"The Congress finds that—"(1) research gaps currently exist in the prevention and treatment of opioid addiction;

"(2) the National Science Foundation's research on opioid addiction has increased understanding of the neuroscience of addiction, substance abuse intervention, the role of illicit supply networks, the secondary effects on families, the use of technology to address the opioid epidemic, and options for alternative, non-addictive therapeutics for pain; and

"(3) the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health have recognized that fundamental questions in basic, clinical, and translational research would benefit greatly from multidisciplinary approaches and collaboration."

**SBE Program(s):** Cognitive Neuroscience (CogNeuro), Law and Science (LS), Cultural Anthropology (CA), Biological Anthropology (BA), and SP

### **Research to Prevent Suicide**

**U.S.C. (Public Law):** [42 USC Ch. 16, §1862v](#) (Advancing Research to Prevent Suicide Act, P.L. 116-339.)

**Description:** National Science Foundation research (a) In general

The Director of the National Science Foundation, in consultation with the Director of the National Institutes of Health and the Director of the National Institute of Mental Health and taking into consideration prioritized research agendas or strategic plans, as appropriate, shall, subject to the availability of appropriations, award grants on a competitive, merit-reviewed basis to institutions of higher education (or consortia of such institutions) to support multidisciplinary, fundamental research with potential relevance to suicide, including potential relevance to prevention and treatment, including, but not limited to—(1) basic understanding of human social behavior; (2) the neural basis of human cognition; (3) basic understanding of cognitive, linguistic, social, cultural, and biological processes related to human development across the lifespan; (4) basic understanding of perceptual, motor, and cognitive processes, and their interaction, in typical human behavior; and (5) basic understanding of the relevance of drug and alcohol abuse.

**SBE Program(s):** PAC; DS; CogNeuro; and

### **Research on Impacts of Social Media on Human Trafficking**

**U.S.C. (Public Law):** [42 USC Ch. 16, §1862w](#) (Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2022, P.L. 117-348)

**Description:** NSF support of research on impacts of social media on human trafficking

(a) Definitions In this section: (1) Human trafficking

The term "human trafficking" means an act or practice described in section 7102(11) of title 22.

(2) Social media platform

The term "social media platform" means a website or internet medium that— (A) permits a person to become a registered user, establish an account, or create a profile for the purpose of allowing users to create, share, and view user-generated content through such an account or profile; (B) enables 1 or more users to generate content that can be viewed by other users of the medium; and (C) primarily serves as a medium for users to interact with content generated by other users of the medium. (b)

Support of research

The Director of the National Science Foundation, in consultation with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall support merit-reviewed and competitively awarded research on the impact of online social media platforms on the maintenance or expansion of human trafficking, which may include—

(1) fundamental research on digital forensic tools or other technologies for verifying the authenticity of social media platform users and their materials, that are utilized

in the promotion or operation of human trafficking networks;



(2) fundamental research on privacy preserving technical tools that may aid law enforcement's ability to identify and prosecute individuals or entities promoting or involved in human trafficking;

(3) social and behavioral research related to social media platform users who engage with those promoting or involved in human trafficking;

**SBE Program(s):** PAC; DS; CogNuero; and