FASEB
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

Representing Over 110,000 Researchers

6120 Executive Blvd., Suite 230, Rockville, MD 20852 | faseb.org

FASEB Comments in Response to Dear Colleague Letter Seeking Input on the National Science Foundation (NSF) Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 – 2030 Strategic Plan

Comments transmitted electronically via online form

January 26, 2026

Question 1: What opportunities exist that could help enable progress towards NSF's objectives and strategies?

Attainment of the goals and objectives outlined in NSF's draft strategic plan are wholly dependent upon active engagement of and communication with the scientific community. Strategies that have been successful in the past include Virtual Office hours via appropriate scientific directorates and communications distributed by the Office of the Director and/or National Science Board. Given the significant reductions in NSF staff resources over the past 12 months, we strongly urge active partnership with scientific societies and coalitions to help amplify messaging associated with the strategic plan and new policies, procedures, and funding opportunities implemented to attain strategic plan goals.

Question 2: How might NSF foster partnerships with a wide range of organizations to implement the strategies in its FY 2026 – 2030 strategic plan?

Partnerships are dependent upon timely and transparent communication. Scientific societies and coalitions representing researchers who are currently funded or aspire to be funded by the NSF will be critical towards attainment of the goals and objectives set forth in the strategic plan. However, any communication that seeks feedback from existing or potential partners will need to allow ample time for appropriate feedback. As an example, NSF issued this draft strategic plan with a two-week comment period. For organizations with volunteer governance, such as scientific societies, this timeframe is inadequate for decision making. Therefore, we encourage NSF to consider the needs of stakeholders ranging from individual scientists to research institutions and organizations when establishing timelines for external engagement and partnerships.

Question 3: What existing data or evidence should NSF consider as it develops mechanisms to evaluate progress and measure success in achieving the objectives in the draft FY 2026 – 2030 strategic plan?

Previous NSF strategic plans have utilized data regarding allocation of the NSF budget by project type (research projects, facilities, STEM education/workforce), U.S. state and territories, institution type, number of individuals supported, and public-private partnerships. Assessment of application and award rates to EPSCoR regions can be used to understand capacity development in underserved regions.

Question 4: Is there any other information that would assist NSF in achieving the goals and objectives under its draft FY 2026 – 2030 strategic plan?

FASEB was pleased to see the inclusion of the two-year agency priority goal seeking ways to reduce administrative burden in its proposal and award management processes, as this is a long-standing priority issue for our community.

In January 2025, FASEB issued a comprehensive report and recommendations for the adoption of Generative AI in the biological and biomedical sciences that could be useful in supporting Goals 2 and 3 of the proposed plan. The final report is available on the FASEB website.

We look forward to serving as a resource to NSF staff as you embark on this important effort.

Optional: Please provide your affiliation or other context that will help NSF understand your response.

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) represents 22 scientific societies and over 100,000 individual researchers within the biological and biomedical sciences, many of whom have received NSF funding to support their training and/or research efforts. FASEB was funded by the Biology Directorate's Leading Culture Change Through Professional Societies of Biology (BIO-LEAPS) to support leadership development of early-career investigators. The award – issued in April 2024 – was prematurely terminated in April 2025 due to changes in administration priorities.