



# FYI: The AIP Bulletin of Science Policy News

## FY 2011 National Science Foundation Request

[Richard M. Jones](#)

Number 16 - February 4, 2010

The Obama Administration has requested an 8.0 percent increase for the National Science Foundation in FY 2011. The requested increase of \$551.9 million to \$7,424.4 million is notable at a time when most of the request for discretionary spending is flat. NSF Director Arden Bement said at a budget briefing on Monday that “In fact, the essence of NSF's 2011 Budget Request is the reaffirmation of the agency's roots as the nation's wellspring of scientific innovation.”

NSF is one of the three agencies slated for the doubling of its funding (the others being the Department of Energy Office of Science and the National Institute of Standards and Technology's laboratories.) In describing the request, Bement said “*This keeps us on the road to President Obama's plan to double NSF's budget. The plan is part of an overall strategy to increase the nation's total R&D investment to three percent of Gross Domestic Product.*”

Priority programs in the FY 2011 budget request include the Graduate Research Fellowship Program for which \$158 million is requested, \$209 million for Faculty Early Career Development, \$10 million for a Climate Change Education Program, and \$64 million for Advanced Technological Education.

The foundation's 458-page [FY 2011 Request to Congress](#) provides considerable detail on NSF's request. A summary of selected program budget changes is below, based on the foundation's FY 2010 appropriation which does not include stimulus funding.

### **Total National Science Foundation:**

Up 8.0 percent or \$551.9 million from \$6,872.5 million to \$7,424.4 million.

*There are six major components within the foundation's budget request. The first is:*

### **Research and Related Activities:**

Up 8.2 percent or \$454.9 million from \$5,563.9 million to \$6,018.8 million.

*Within the Research and Related Activities Account are the following selected Directorates:*

**Engineering:** Up 11.0 percent or \$81.7 million from \$743.9 million to \$825.7 million

**Geosciences:** Up 7.4 percent or \$65.7 million from \$889.6 million to \$955.3 million.

**Mathematical and Physical Sciences:** Up 4.3 percent or \$58.1 million from \$1,351.8 million to \$1,409.9 million

*Within this Directorate are five Subactivities, including:*

- Astronomical Sciences: Up 2.5 percent or \$6.1 million from \$245.7 million to \$251.8 million.
- Materials Research: Up 5.5 percent or \$16.7 million from \$302.7 million to \$319.4 million.
- Physics: Up 2.8 percent or \$8.2 million from \$290.0 million to \$298.2 million.

*A second account is:*

## **Education and Human Resources:**

Up 2.2 percent or \$19.2 million from \$872.8 million to \$892.0 million. A future FYI will provide further detail on the Administration's STEM request.

*The third account is:*

## **Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction:**

Up 40.8 percent or \$47.9 million from \$117.3 million to \$165.2 million.

The request includes funding for the Advanced Laser-Interferometer Gravity-wave Observatory, the Advanced Technology Solar Telescope, the Atacama Large Millimeter Array, the Ocean Observatories Initiatives, and \$20.0 million for the initiation of construction for the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON). The budget document states: "*NEON will consist of geographically distributed field and lab infrastructure networked via cybertechnology into an integrated research platform for regional to continental scale ecological research. Cutting-edge sensor networks, instrumentation, experimental infrastructure, natural history archive facilities, and remote sensing will be linked via the internet to computational, analytical, and modeling capabilities to create NEON's integrated infrastructure.*" This Biological Sciences project is expected to cost \$433.7 million over six fiscal years.

Other accounts include Agency Operations and Award Management (up 9.7 percent), National Science Board (up 6.6 percent) and the Office of Inspector General (up 2.5 percent.)

NSF estimates that if Congress provides the FY 2011 request that the foundation's funding rate for all competitive grants will increase from 23 percent to 24 percent. The funding rate for research grants will increase from 19 percent to 20 percent, with an average award duration of 3.0 years and an average annualized award size of \$159,186.00

Richard M. Jones  
Media and Government Relations Division  
American Institute of Physics  
[rjones@aip.org](mailto:rjones@aip.org)  
301-209-3095