Letter to scientists and organizations whose progress depends on NSF:

We are facing an unprecedented political attack on science. The Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) has begun directing NSF to terminate active grants. Over 1000 awards have been terminated already, and there is reason to believe that many additional terminations will be forthcoming soon. At a time when Congress is considering a dramatic reduction to the NSF budget, your help is urgently needed to stop this massive assault on science and education.

You can make it clear why NSF is crucial to the security, prosperity, and health of the United States. Far too many people remain unaware of NSF's historic role in establishing this country's global leadership in science and innovation, which in turn has far-ranging benefits for all Americans, as detailed below.

To mitigate the unfolding crisis and the threat to the long-term viability of NSF, concrete steps to take include the following:

1. **Call, write and/or visit your members of Congress.**
   Dial the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 to ask to be connected to your Senators and Representative. To talk with staff in person at their local or DC office, you should make an appointment. *Sample script below*.

2. **Post widely on social media – Bluesky, Facebook, Instagram, etc.** *Sample posts below.*

3. **Contact local media outlets (televisions, newspapers, etc.) that can help to convey the real-world value and impacts of NSF's investments.**
   Often, the most effective approach is to combine notable facts with a human element that resonates with viewers and readers. We encourage you to think about answering "what's in it for the listener or reader" when talking about why NSF matters. You can work with the reporters to share your story of research and mentorship, the benefits of NSF funding, and the impacts of current or threatened cuts on the local community. *Sample letter and talking points below.*

4. **Please also spread this call for action to your departments, colleagues, friends, and family.** They don't need to be scientists to participate. If they aren't, help them with some examples.

5. **Write your story and SHARE IT.** Everyone from politicians to political commentators are asking that SCIENTISTS SHARE THEIR STORIES! *Guide below.*

Guide on Developing Your Story

As part of a delegation to Congress sponsored by AIBS, Daniel Bolnick and others asked Congressional aides for advice on helping Representatives make a case for science. Below is a quick summary of this advice, and a link to a helpful guide for writing up your story.

Quick version:

When asked about what we scientists can do to help federal funding of science, Congressional aides suggested the following:

1) Send your representatives specific, personal, heart-warming stories of the benefits of science funding, and also examples of the harm done by cuts to science. Be sure it connects with everyday lives in ways anyone can relate to.

2) Engage in science communication and public outreach to get the wider public excited about science, and concerned about cuts.

3) Focus your letter writing and phone calling wisely, on those in power (GOP), and on those who need to be persuaded (GOP). So those of you in “red states” are most important in advocating for science. Find common ground with opponents of science funding to try to persuade them.

4) Your reps (especially democrats) are cut off from information coming from federal agencies under the executive branch. They are learning about science cuts from us, or from the media, so when you learn about breaking examples of terminated grants, interference in free speech, etc, call or mail your reps to inform them.

5) You can ghost write material (Dear Colleague Letters, Oversight Letters, questions for committees and hearings) that your representative might find useful, and their staff are not qualified to write.

6) There is hope: there remains bipartisan support for science in Congress, they just need the spine to stand up for their beliefs. Hearing from constituents who support science and hearing the benefits of NSF and harms from cutting it, helps strengthen their resolve.

Sample Call Script:

Hi, my name is _____ and I am calling about recent cuts to NSF grants. These cuts were made by political appointees, without input from the non-political scientists and program staff. I strongly oppose cuts to programs that are critical to American innovation, national security, and leadership. I urge/demand Congressman/Senator _____ to do everything in his/her power to protect NSF funding and stop the politicization of science.

Share your support of NSF on social media, and use the hashtags #WithoutNSF or #WithoutScience

Example language:

- "#WithoutNSF my [program] won't receive the critical funding it needs to continue [doing what we do] in my community."
- Other Hashtags to use: #SupportNSF #SaveNSF #ISupportNSF and #ISupportScience
- Facebook: NSF's official page
- Instagram: @nsfgov
- X:@nsf
- LinkedIn: NSF Official Page

Media Outreach Template:

For use with outreach to local reporters (print, TV, radio)

Good Morning,

National Science Foundation grants in [our area] are under attack. [My organization] is at risk of losing/recently received notice that we lost $X in funding.

The funds we receive from NSF allow us to [brief program description, in layman's terms]. [Include 2-3 sentences about how the local community benefits from your work].

I would be happy to tell you more about how our work impacts our community and the effect loss of funding will have on [Community Name]. Please let me know if I can provide you with more information or if you would like to talk.

Sincerely,

Name

Sample Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express concern about the politicization of science in our nation. For almost 75 years, the National Science Foundation has funded scientific research, national security, innovation and leadership across our nation. It has helped ensure global dominance and drive the American economy.

Recently, NSF grants have been cut with no warning and no rationale other than "to protect the interests of the government." Even more troubling, canceled programs are being deleted from databases as if they never existed.

The American people take tremendous pride in our scientific leadership. Science should inspire wonder, expand our economy, and position our nation as the global leader. It should not be used as a political weapon.

Sincerely,

Name

Example email to friends and family re: 15% indirects & funding level

Dear friends and family,

As you may know, on Friday a massive change in the way NSF funds research in the US was announced, amounting to an approximately 30% cut to most grants. Some have argued that these changes won't negatively impact research because they are administrative costs. However, the cuts dramatically reduce funding for the buildings we do research in, the electricity we need and the staff that support us. You can read more here.

Additionally, the President's proposed budget would cut funding for NSF by 55%. In the past fiscal year, NSF directly supported 357,600 researchers, postdoctoral fellows, trainees, teachers and students at 1,850 universities, colleges and institutions. Halving the budget would not only erode that effort, but have follow-on financial impacts to local economies, especially in rural areas.

As a person inside this system, the cuts are terrifying and I know they will rapidly degrade US scientific innovation. If you are willing, I would be very grateful if you would write or call your representatives to oppose this cut. Below, I provide specific instructions for contacting your representatives by email, an action that should only take a few minutes. Please also forward this email to any others you feel would be receptive.

Thanks,
YourName

Instructions for writing your representatives:
1. Go to https://democracy.io/#!/
2. Enter your mailing address
3. Enter "Oppose NSF budget cuts" in the subject line
4. Write a message, or paste the one below

I am writing to ask that you fight to oppose NSF budget cuts and reverse the new NSF policy restricting indirect costs for research grants.

This unwise policy will threaten US scientific leadership. The policy will also negatively impact the lives of millions of Americans who depend on the innovations produced by NSF-funded research.

I urge you to take action to oppose this policy.

5. Choose "science" or similar for the topic
6. Send!

Here are a few examples of communication points outside the usual / traditional language of direct support for research:

The mission of NSF includes national security:

- U.S. leadership in science is an “all hands-on deck” bipartisan national security matter.
- NSF-funded technological developments keep our borders safe.
- We invest in cybersecurity research to protect the nation's digital infrastructure and to keep Americans safe.
- We fund research and efforts directly applicable to keeping Americans safe (some of which DOGE has recently cancelled).
- We collaborate with other federal agencies to develop and implement research security tools for researchers and institutions, mitigating the risks of cyberattacks by foreign adversaries and the loss of proprietary research.
- We address the risks and opportunities presented by emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (regrettably DOGE has cancelled funded studies that keep Americans safe from malicious uses of artificial intelligence).
- We prohibit funding for researchers who participate in maligned foreign talent programs.

NSF funding is key to preserving and supporting our nation’s rural communities.

- We have facilities spread across the country in intentionally remote areas. Our staff, visitors, suppliers and associated industries are driving the economy of many rural communities.
- We provide funding for transportation to give rural children access to regional scientific facilities to enhance their learning opportunities.
- NSF funding for science benefits underserved communities through local education and technology development.

NSF funding supports veterans.

- We fund online resources, professional development webinars and workshops to help faculty meet the needs of student veterans, particularly those with ringing in the ears and/or hearing loss.
- We fund programs that provide research opportunities to veterans who are undergraduate and graduate students, K-12 teachers, or community college faculty.

<u>NSF programming keeps America's youth ahead in securing the jobs of the future.</u>

- We fund programs that integrate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) into early learning. Structured activities help children learn and be curious or interested in these areas at an early age. We fund programs that train teachers to deliver best-in-class STEM education to K-12 students, making STEM relevant and engaging to kids of all ages.
- NSF programs often provide support for teachers in terms of teaching aids but also offering increased competency, impact and quality of teaching through training, access to curricula, and supplementing salaries.
- NSF's support to K-12 schools, community colleges, and other postsecondary training opportunities helps produce talented and skilled job seekers that are needed by leading American industries (many of which currently report a lack of qualified applicants).

<u>NSF programs create jobs and fuel the economy in all 50 states.</u>

- The overwhelming majority of the funding that Congress allocates to NSF is redistributed via awards to organizations around the USA. Operating costs consume only a small percentage of the budget.
- Local communities are benefactors of the jobs created by organizations receiving funding through NSF grants. This includes programs that support small businesses, and startups.
- As a result of the ongoing attacks on science, millions of hard-working Americans will potentially lose their livelihoods, health insurance, and slide into poverty.