



A Message from the Director of the National Science Foundation

As the yellow school buses start to make their rounds again, attention turns “back-to-school.” Whether you’re long removed from the routine of school drop-offs or are juggling multiple school schedules, September offers an opportunity to see how far we’ve come and to set new goals.

Consider how the faces of students have changed in the last 20 years in science and math classrooms. We’ve done a somewhat better job attracting women and minorities to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields, but certainly not enough. The challenging problems faced both as a nation and a world demand creative solutions, ones we will find by engaging the minds of many individuals from all walks of life.



As leaders in scientific fields, we play a crucial role in nurturing young scientists and engineers including those who are traditionally underserved in STEM fields. This week, NSF announced the inaugural awards for the [NSF INCLUDES](#) (Inclusion across the Nation of Communities of Learners of Underrepresented Discoverers in Engineering and Science) program, which aims to broaden participation in STEM to a national scale. This new initiative employs the concept of collective impact, uniting a wide variety of collaborators to solve this persistent problem.

In the coming months, take time to talk to kids in your neighborhood or maybe a local school about what you do. Your presence may stir a passion for discovery in your listeners.

Dr. France A. Córdoba
Director, National Science Foundation
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Where Discoveries Begin...



[Selling and buying water rights](#)

An NSF-funded [start-up](#) applies economic analysis to water resources, creating markets that balance business profits with resource sustainability.



[Flood forecasting gets major upgrade](#)

The new National Water Model, with advanced software and cyberinfrastructure, will help forecast flash floods with greater accuracy.



[Advancing plant research](#)

From studies of disease-resistant crops to the impact of pathogens and new biofuels, the Phytotron cultivates important progress in plant research.

What's Next?

[Coordinating Global Brain Projects Workshop, Monday, Sept. 19, 2016](#)

This meeting will promote collaboration and cooperation in the emerging large-scale international brain projects, as part of NSF support for the U.S. BRAIN (Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies) Initiative. Director Córdova will be giving introductory remarks.

[What's Next? hosted by *The Atlantic*, Oct. 4-5, 2016, Chicago, IL.](#)

What's Next? will explore the inventions that make day-to-day life better and — in the face of unprecedented challenges — make life possible. Dr. Córdova will be speaking.

[Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching](#) are the nation's highest honors for teachers of mathematics and science. The 213 teachers honored are from across the U.S.

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The school year provides lots of opportunities for [STEM skilled education](#).

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