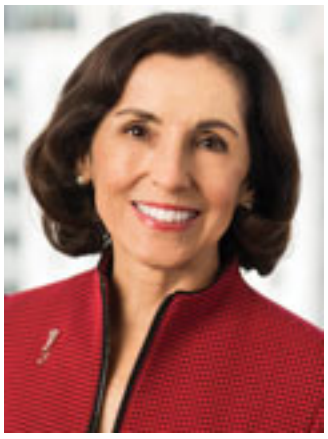
A monthly message from NSF's Director

A Message from the Director of the National Science Foundation



This month, we've witnessed nature's tremendous power as a series of hurricanes barreled through the Caribbean, Texas, Florida and nearby states. Wildfires raged in the West this summer and earthquakes have claimed scores of lives in Mexico.

For those in affected areas, know that you have the full support of NSF staff. The NSF Responses to Natural Disasters website, program officers and the specific email naturaldisasters@nsf.gov are all available to receive your project-related inquiries and to assist you moving forward.

NSF's deep concern for the people and areas affected by these kinds of catastrophic events also heightens our desire, as scientists, to understand the mechanisms that create them. NSF has a long history of advancing research that helps the nation improve its preparation, response and recovery from catastrophic events. Data about the forces behind these events can inform strategies to mitigate their effects in the future.

In the case of Hurricane Katrina, for example, nearly every NSF directorate funded research to understand the storm as it developed, and its aftermath. One project, RAINEX, the Rainband and Intensity Change Experiment, was the first hurricane research project to fly planes nearly simultaneously inside and outside a hurricane's principal rainband, gathering information to help scientists better understand changes in a hurricane's intensity. Another project enabled an anthropologist to study families displaced by the storm.

NSF relies on several programs to quickly distribute research resources. NSF's Rapid Response Research (RAPID) supports projects with severe urgency regarding the availability of or access to data, facilities or specialized equipment including quick-response research on natural disasters. Early-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) are another source of rapid funding and provide support to conduct fundamental research representing exploratory work in its early stages on untested, but potentially transformative, research ideas or approaches. Researchers can also request supplemental funding to existing awards. Details on these funding options are available in NSF's recent "Dear Colleague" letters found on the Natural Disasters webpage.

The more we know about hazards and how they affect human activity, the closer we come to averting or mitigating the damage they can inflict. NSF hopes to find new ways to beat disasters – in whatever form

they may arrive.

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

Robots to the rescue: five lessons from Katrina and other disasters
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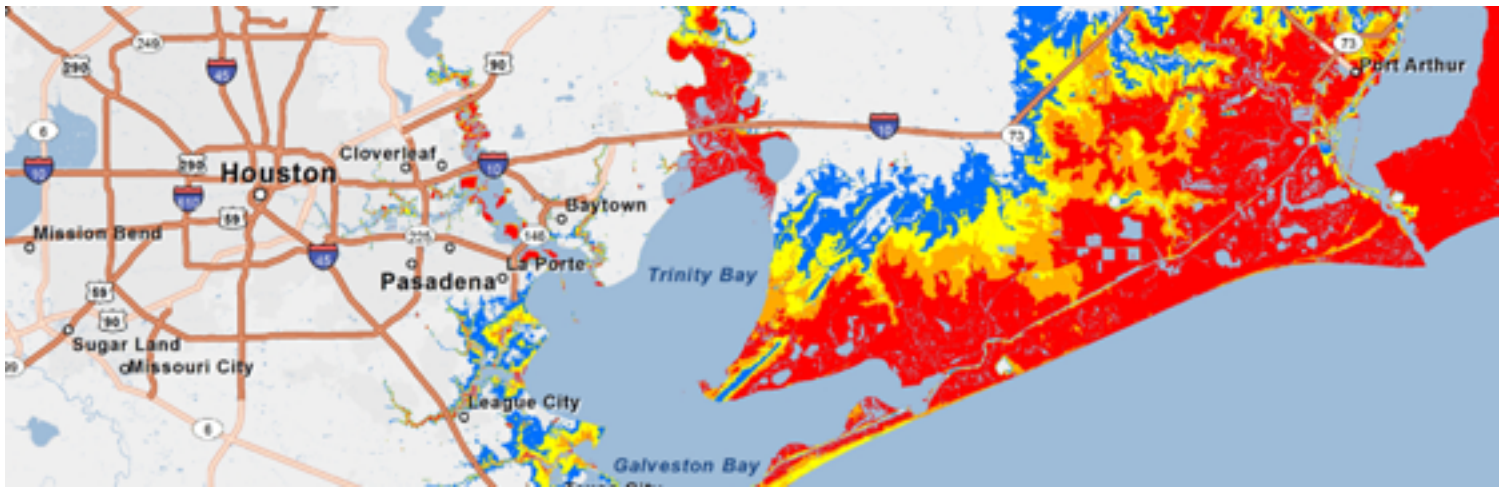

Communicating a hurricane's real risks
NSF/NOAA studies improve emergency communications.

[Scientists brave Hurricane Harvey's fierce winds]
NSF's Doppler-on-Wheels stares down Harvey while gathering operational data.

What's Next?

Video: [Harvey devastation sees largest-ever known deployment of UAVs for disaster response.]

Video: [How National Science Foundation-funded social, behavioral and economic science research improves hurricane risk communication, evacuation and recovery processes.]

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