



American Innovation and Competitiveness Act (P.L. 114-329)

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Overview

- The American Innovation and Competitiveness Act is a policy bill; it does not authorize funding levels.
- Recent previous NSF reauthorization bills:
 - America COMPETES Act (P.L. 111-358) – 3 year authorization bill, FY'11 – FY'13, signed into law Jan. 4, 2011.
 - America COMPETES Act (P.L. 110-69) – 3 year authorization bill, FY'08 – FY'10, signed into law Aug. 9, 2007.
- States that NSF shall maintain the Intellectual Merit and Broader Impact criteria as the basis for evaluating grant proposals.
- Congress engaged NSF throughout the legislative process.



Programs Created, Modified, or Expanded

- Sec. 102. Transparency and Accountability
 - Requires the Director to periodically update policy guidance for NSF staff and merit review participants.
 - Requires each notice of an NSF-funded research project reflect our statutory mission, address both merit review criteria, and clearly identify goals.
 - Updates the Broader Impact review criterion in Sec. 526 of the 2010 COMPETES Act.
- Sec. 103. EPSCoR Reaffirmation and Update
 - Reaffirms and updates EPSCoR requirements.
 - Changes the name from “*Experimental*” to “*Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research*”.



Programs Created, Modified, or Expanded

- Sec. 109. Mid-Scale Project Investments
 - Establishes a definition for “Mid-Scale Projects” which matches NSF definition for “Mid-Scale Programs”
 - Directs NSF to evaluate existing and future needs for mid-scale investment
- Sec. 110. Oversight of NSF Major Multi-User Research Facility Projects
 - Defines “Multi-User Research Facilities Project” as any project fund from:
 - MREFC account or;
 - R&RA account with construction/acquisition cost > \$100M or >10% of Directorate CP, whichever is less
 - Increase oversight of project over entire life-cycle;
 - Maintain Large Facilities Office
 - Appoint a senior agency official for oversight of all major facilities (currently COO as MREFC Panel Chair)
 - Requires Independent Cost Estimate (ICE) for construction
 - Requires incurred cost audit of construction stage at least once every three (3) years



Programs Created, Modified, or Expanded

- Sec. 311. Informal STEM Education
 - Amends the STEM Education Act of 2015 to develop “a national partnership of institutions involved in informal STEM learning.”
 - Encourages, “fostering on-going partnerships between institutions involved in informal STEM learning, institutions of higher education, and education research centers; and developing, adapting, and making available informal STEM education activities and educational materials.”
- Sec. 315. Hispanic-Serving Institutions Undergraduate Program Update
 - Updates the 2010 COMPETES Act to require the NSF Director to award grants to Hispanic Serving Institutions to enhance the quality of undergraduate STEM education and increase retention and graduation rates of students pursuing associate’s or baccalaureate degrees in STEM.



Programs Created, Modified, or Expanded

- Sec. 601. Innovation Corps
 - Formally authorizes the NSF I-Corps program and encourages the expansion of I-Corps at other agencies.
 - Establishes follow-on grants, making funds available to support innovations that are not mature enough to compete for SBIR/STTR funds.



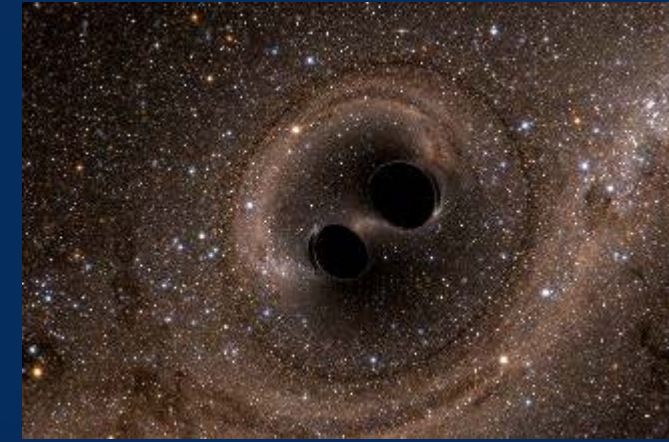
Other Items of Interest

- Sections throughout the Act which contain “Sense of Congress” provisions are non-binding provisions, but do reflect the priorities of Congress.
 - The affirmation by Congress of the importance of NSF’s merit review process is one example
- Sec. 115. Misrepresentation of Research Results
 - NSF may revise regulations relating to research misconduct to ensure research results published in a peer-reviewed publication and authored by a PI using results from an NSF-funded award do not contain falsifications, fabrication, or plagiarism.



Other Items of Interest

- Sec. 201. Interagency Working Group on Research Regulation
 - The Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in coordination with the Director of OSTP, shall establish an interagency working group for the purpose of reducing administrative burdens on federally funded researchers.
- Sec. 208. Coordination of International Science and Technology Partnerships
 - Directs OSTP to establish a body under the NSTC responsible for identifying and coordinating international science and technology cooperation.



Other Items of Interest

- As with the two previous NSF re-authorization bills, this policy bill emphasizes the importance of STEM education to Congress.
- Overall this Act seeks to maximize research and STEM education opportunities that help create innovations that fuel our economy and help create jobs.

