



FASEB

Federation of American Societies
for Experimental Biology

Representing Over 130,000 Researchers

P.O. Box 2288, Rockville, MD 20847 | faseb.org

January 8, 2021

Suzanne Plimpton
Reports Clearance Officer
National Science Foundation
2415 Eisenhower Ave.
Alexandria, VA 22314

Comments transmitted electronically via email (splimpto@nsf.gov) and submitted via [RFI website](#)

Dear Ms. Plimpton,

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments related to the forthcoming revision of the National Science Foundation (NSF) Strategic Plan. We are in an era of remarkable opportunities for scientific discovery and the demand for funding continues to greatly exceed current resources. As such, it is crucial that NSF clearly articulates its strategic vision and priorities towards fulfilling its mission “to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense; and for other purposes.”

The three goals of the current (2018 – 2022) [NSF Strategic Plan](#) are solid pillars upon which to build the 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan. The first goal, “Expand knowledge in science, engineering, and learning,” highlights the importance of foundational, investigator-initiated research in advancing scientific discovery. Recognizing that many groundbreaking discoveries have emerged from investigator-initiated research projects funded by individual grants sponsored by NSF, FASEB recommends a continued emphasis on and support for basic science in the new Strategic Plan.

While Strategic Goal 1 emphasizes support for science, Strategic Goal 2 ensures research capacity through support for science education and workforce development. In addition to providing fellowships for graduate and postdoctoral scholars and research experiences for K-12 students, undergraduates, and teachers, NSF sponsors critical research on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education and effective approaches to developing a competitive and diverse STEM workforce and increasing STEM literacy. The objectives within this goal echo FASEB’s own strategic plan. Therefore, we strongly recommend incorporating this emphasis on education and workforce in the new Strategic Plan.

Open and transparent operations ensure proper stewardship of federal funds and foster communication with the scientific community and the general public. Therefore, we are pleased by the emphasis of Strategic Goal 3 on enhancing NSF performance. We encourage NSF to continue its efforts to harmonize and streamline administrative processes, both internally as well

as in alignment with other federal agencies. Efforts to reduce investigators' administrative burden will simultaneously enhance the efficiency of the Foundation's operations and ensure that NSF-supported scientists focus their efforts on performing cutting-edge research and less time fulfilling compliance requirements.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this feedback on the forthcoming NSF Strategic Plan. FASEB looks forward to working with NSF leadership on the development and finalization of the 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Louis B. Justement". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Louis B. Justement, PhD