NSF 2026
Idea Machine

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NSF 2026

- Next generation of Big Ideas;
- Transcend established scientific structures and standard operating procedures;
- Cross boundaries in innovative ways, fill recognized gaps or take advantage of new opportunities;
- Seek systemic community input.
Identifying new directions for research.
“If you want to have good ideas, you must have many ideas; ... and what you have to learn is which ones to throw away.” – Linus Pauling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What makes a good Big Idea?</th>
<th>How will we recognize one?</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Has a worthwhile objective(s)</td>
<td>2000 &gt;&gt; 30</td>
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<td>• Ambitious &amp; challenging; may require a paradigm shift in our thinking</td>
<td>• Does the same theme emerge in multiple entries?</td>
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<td>• Progress would have significant impact</td>
<td>• Is NSF staff exceptionally enthused?</td>
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<td>• Requires the talents of the research community</td>
<td>• Is this an idea that has already prompted some excitement?</td>
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<td>• Will attract creative contributions from many researchers</td>
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<td>• Will benefit many stakeholders, both inside and outside of the research community</td>
<td>30 &gt;&gt; 4</td>
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<td>• Did it resonate in the public comments?</td>
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<td>• Is the Blue-Ribbon panel excited?</td>
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<td>• Does it make sense for NSF?</td>
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COMING SOON
THE NSF 2026 IDEA MACHINE

Finding "Big Ideas 2.0": Identifying new directions for research.

The NSF 2026 Idea Machine is a competition to help set the U.S. agenda for fundamental research in science and engineering. Participants can earn prizes and receive public recognition by suggesting the pressing research questions that need to be answered in the coming decade, the next set of "Big Ideas," for future investment by the National Science Foundation (NSF). It's an opportunity for researchers, the public, and other interested stakeholders to contribute to NSF's mission to support basic research and enable new discoveries that drive the U.S. economy, enhance national security, and advance knowledge to sustain the country's global leadership in science and engineering.

What's Next?
We plan to launch the Idea Machine competition in late August 2018.

Bookmark this page and check back for updates. Additional information will be provided as soon as it becomes available.

• Entrants suggest "grand challenge" questions for future research
• Video pitches & public comments
• A blue-ribbon panel advises NSF
• Best ideas receive public recognition, cash prizes
• Launches August 31, 2018
• https://www.nsf.gov/ideamachine

Idea Machine
Competition Website
We need your help to

• Spread the word

• Encourage idea submission

• Nominate blue ribbon panelists
Backup slides
Blue-Ribbon Panel recommends 6 entries
Blue-Ribbon Panel picks 12 entries for remote interviews
Public comments collected; NSF analysis added
NSF staff picks 30 representative entries
Videos invited & posted online
Competition opens/entries accepted

Timeline:
- Sep 2018: NSF Staff Judging
- Nov 2018: Online Entries
- Jan 2019: Video pitches & Public Comment
- Mar: Blue-Ribbon Panel
- May: Interviews
- Winning Ideas Selected
- July: Funding Opportunities Identified
- Prizes Awarded

Identifying new directions for research.
Idea Machine Challenge

STEP 01: Competition opens/entries accepted
STEP 02: NSF staff selects 30 representative entries
STEP 03: Videos invited & posted online
STEP 04: Public comments collected; NSF analysis added
STEP 05: Blue-Ribbon Panel picks 12 entries for remote interviews
STEP 06: Blue-Ribbon Panel recommends 6 entries
STEP 07: NSF staff adds analysis
STEP 08: NSF Leadership selects 2-4 winning entries
STEP 09: Prizes awarded for winning ideas
STEP 10: Funding opportunities