NSF & RHODE ISLAND

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2019, the National Science Foundation made $56,491,000 in awards to Rhode Island in support of fundamental research, advanced technical education, entrepreneurial training, STEM teacher training, long-term ecological monitoring, small business development, major research instrumentation, and more.

DID YOU KNOW?

DISCOVERY | Understanding how the brain creates thoughts and memories and manages the human body is one of today’s great scientific challenges. With up to $9,200,000 million from NSF’s Next Generation Networks for Neuroscience (NeuroNex) program, researchers at Brown University are leading a five-year effort to develop new tools to control and image the brain. The funds established The Neuronex Technology Hub, a national center where scientists manipulate and observe brain circuitry using bioluminescence, the same process fireflies and many aquatic animals use to produce light, and optogenetics, a means to control brain circuits with light.

STEM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT | Leveraging research expertise and resources from across the state, the Rhode Island Consortium for Coastal Ecology, Assessment, Innovation and Modeling focuses on monitoring and predicting the impacts of climate variability on Narragansett Bay, the largest estuary in New England. The consortium also provides paid internships for undergraduates, courses to introduce high school students to the consortium’s research, and recruitment of graduate students and early career faculty.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS | NSF made $1,707,000 in awards in FY 2019 in support of graduate students through its flagship Graduate Research Fellowship Program, which supports students pursuing master’s and doctoral degrees in STEM disciplines.

SCIENCE & ENGINEERING (S&E) INDICATORS | 4.84% of the Rhode Island workforce is employed in S&E occupations, and 7.83% of Rhode Island’s business establishments are industries with high employment in science, engineering and technology occupations.*

COMPETITIVE RESEARCH | NSF made $10,180,000 in awards to Rhode Island academic institutions through its Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR), which promotes scientific progress in states that have traditionally received lesser amounts of NSF research and development funding.

RESEARCH ASSET | In FY 2018, the University of Rhode Island received a five-year, $4,300,000 renewal to operate the R/V Endeavor. With its home port at the university’s Narragansett Bay campus, the R/V Endeavor has traveled more than 1 million nautical miles from the Arctic to the South Pacific, conducting more than 600 research expeditions. The ship has made important contributions to the state’s economy as well as advancing understanding of the ocean and its processes.