



A Message from the Director of the National Science Foundation

LIGO has done it again! The Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory detected ripples in the fabric of space-time, or [gravitational waves](#), this time from a source 3 billion light years away. After more than 40 years, NSF's continued belief in—and support of—the LIGO mission and large science collaboration is providing exactly what we hoped for: a porthole to examine the universe in an entirely new way.

LIGO's trailblazing discoveries of the moments of merger of black holes in binaries are indeed remarkable. They focus a lens on the benefits of an unwavering commitment to science in its purest form—basic research. No matter the size, whether a large project such as LIGO or a single young investigator pursuing research in an emerging field, NSF funding is critical to opening new ways of thinking about scientific, economic and socio-technical challenges facing the nation and the world.



In late May, I presented [NSF's fiscal year 2018 budget to Congress](#). The total agency request of \$6.65 billion continues the foundation's support for LIGO and other high-risk, high-reward projects like the Daniel K. Inouye Solar Telescope, which, when completed, will be the largest solar telescope ever built. The budget also protects NSF's core values as an agency, including cross-directorate activities and emerging interdisciplinary research opportunities. It is important to keep in mind that the congressional budget process is lengthy, and marked by much negotiation.

The one thing that's non-negotiable is NSF's mission and commitment to the U.S. research enterprise. NSF will continue to champion the curious minds that pursue unanswered questions at the frontiers of science and engineering, ensuring the nation remains a global leader in these areas.

Learn more about the budget process

[Federal Budget Basics](#)

A two-minute video by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) covering budget basics.

[Federal Budget 101](#)

AAAS provides a textual synopsis of the funding process.

[A Brief Budget Guide](#)

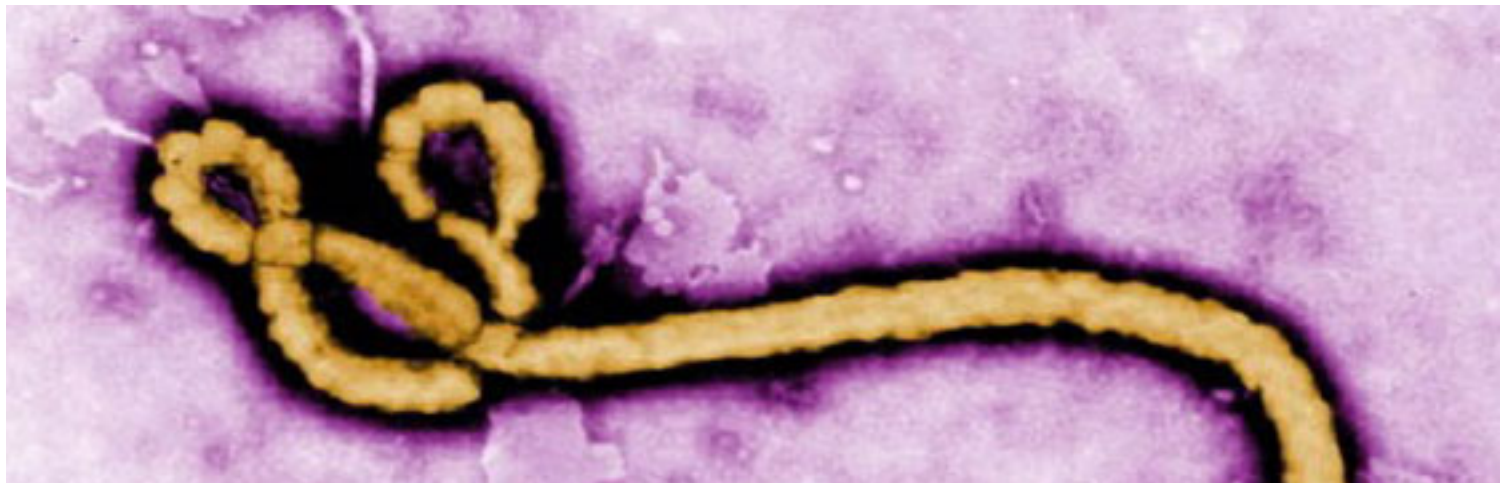
The American Council on Education offers an overview of the process with a focus on Congressional committees.

Where Discoveries Begin...



[NSF-funded startups demo emerging technologies](#)

Nearly 300 startups and small businesses showcase products and services in Atlanta.



[New approach to Ebola outbreaks could save lives](#)

International team supported in part by NSF streamlines outbreak decision-making process.



[3.3 million-year-old fossil reveals origins of the human spine](#)

Sections of the spine needed to walk existed millions of years earlier than previously thought.

What's Next?

Watch a new video from NSF, [The Terraformer: One-of-a-kind wind tunnel for hazards engineering](#).

Join NSF at [Awesome Con](#), a celebration of popular culture, June 16-18 at the Walter E Washington Convention Center.

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