



A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Photo: NSF/Stephen Voss

It is my pleasure to present the National Science Foundation's *Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Agency Financial Report*, my first as NSF's Director. In addition to providing the annual financial performance and accountability results, this report highlights NSF's accomplishments this fiscal year as we work with our partners in industry, government and academia to fulfill our mission, "to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense..." For seven decades, NSF has achieved this mission through critical investments advancing key national and scientific policy priorities, accomplished through broad-based support of science and engineering research and education.

NSF is an essential source of federal funding for basic research in computer science, engineering, biology, the social sciences, mathematics, geosciences, the physical sciences, and education. In FY 2020, NSF-supported scientists and engineers engaged nearly all aspects of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) research—from developing supercomputer-based models of the virus's structure and transmission to investigating anti-viral chemicals that can be safely embedded in self-sanitizing masks. A summary of the CARES Act funding NSF received is provided in this report. As we funded urgent, deployable research related to the pandemic, NSF continued to invest in ground-breaking basic research expanding the frontiers of scientific knowledge and leading to innovations supporting economic growth, societal well-being, and national security. NSF programs also are designed to promote STEM education and career opportunities for all Americans, including groups underrepresented in STEM. In FY 2020, NSF continued its funding of STEM education and education research from early childhood learning to doctoral work and beyond.

Essential to the fulfillment of its mission is NSF's work in partnership with universities, industry, and other federal agencies to advance research and bring it to bear on issues of national importance. In FY 2020, for instance, NSF took a leadership role in working with the White House, other science agencies, and the intelligence and law enforcement communities to examine risks to research and to outline actions to protect America's research enterprise.

Among federal agencies, NSF maintains its reputation for excellence in financial reporting and assurance. With the publication of the FY 2020 Agency Financial Report, I am pleased to report that NSF received its 23rd consecutive unmodified opinion from an independent audit of its financial statements. The Independent Auditors' Report identified no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. In addition, NSF provides reasonable assurance that the agency complies with the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act, and that internal control over financial reporting is operating effectively to produce reliable financial reporting. The AFR also includes summary performance information for FY 2020. For more information on NSF's performance management process and the complete results of our FY 2020 annual goals under the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010, I invite you to read NSF's Annual Performance Report, which will be released with NSF's FY 2022 Budget Request to Congress.

NSF remains committed to efficient and effective management practices and sound financial oversight. Through this commitment, NSF is able focus on advancing the frontiers of research, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity, and sustaining the Nation's global leadership in science and engineering.

/s/

Sethuraman Panchanathan

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