Public Law 94-471
94th Congress

An Act

Authorizing appropriations to the National Science Foundation for fiscal year 1977.

Oct. 11, 1976
[H.R. 12566]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "National Science Foundation Authorization Act, 1977."

National Science Foundation Authorization Act, 1977.
42 USC 1861 note.

AUTHORIZATION FOR ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

SEC. 2. (a) There is authorized to be appropriated to the National Science Foundation for the fiscal year 1977, for the following categories:

(1) Mathematical and Physical Sciences and Engineering, $231,525,000.

(2) Astronomical, Atmospheric, Earth and Ocean Sciences, $244,850,000.

(3) Biological, Behavioral, and Social Sciences, $130,425,000.

(4) Science Education Programs, $69,400,000.

(5) Research Applied to National Needs, $69,000,000.

(6) Scientific, Technological, and International Affairs, $22,000,000.

(7) Program Development and Management, $43,500,000.

(b) The National Science Foundation shall recommend and encourage the pursuit of national policies designed to foster research and education in science and engineering, and the application of scientific and technical knowledge to the solution of national and international problems.

(c) The National Science Foundation is authorized and directed to provide assistance to the Office of Science and Technology Policy established by the "Presidential Science and Technology Advisory Organization Act of 1976" (42 U.S.C. 6611).

Ante, p. 463.

(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of this or any other Act not less than 10 per centum of the amount authorized for category (5) of subsection (a) of this section shall be expended to small business concerns.

(e)(1) The National Science Foundation shall establish uniform procedures for establishing the responsibility for material published with the assistance of or under the sponsorship of the Foundation. The Foundation shall also establish procedures for reporting on the utilization of research projects assisted under the program "Research Applied to National Needs".

(2) The National Science Foundation shall arrange for the dissemination of all substantive technical reports through the National Technical Information Service of the Department of Commerce.

(3) In the conduct of the energy research and development activities under the "Research Applied to National Needs" category, the National Science Foundation shall coordinate all new energy research project awards with the Administrator of the Energy Research and Development Administration or his designee.

42 USC 5820 note.

(f) The Director of the National Science Foundation is authorized and directed to conduct a feasibility study of operating the peer review system used in the evaluation of grant proposals within the Founda-

42 USC 1864 note.

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tion so as to assure that the identity of the proposer is not known to the reviewers of the proposal. Any such system shall be considered to supplement and not to supplant the peer review system in operation in the Foundation on the date of enactment of this Act.

Transfer of funds, limitation.

(g) No funds may be transferred from any particular category listed in section 2(a) to any other category or categories listed in such section if the total of the funds so transferred from that particular category would exceed 10 per centum thereof, and no funds may be transferred to any particular category listed in section 2(a) from any other category or categories listed in such section if the total of the funds so transferred to that particular category would exceed 10 per centum thereof unless—

Report to Speaker of the House, President of the Senate and congressional committees.

(1) a period of thirty legislative days has passed after the Director or his designate has transmitted to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and to the President of the Senate and to the Committee on Science and Technology of the House of Representatives and to the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare of the Senate a written report containing a full and complete statement concerning the nature of the transfer and the reason thereof, or

(2) each such committee before the expiration of such period has transmitted to the Director written notice to the effect that such committee has no objection to the proposed action.

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND POLICY ANALYSIS

SEC. 3. The National Science Foundation is authorized and directed to support basic and applied research and education programs, and to conduct and support policy analysis, information dissemination, and international cooperative programs consistent with the Nation's foreign policy objectives designed to make the results of scientific research conducted abroad more readily available to United States scientists, engineers, and technologists, to promote international cooperation in science and technology, to assist in the resolution of critical and emerging problems with significant scientific or technical components, such as world food and population problems, and to insure full coordination of these programs with related activities conducted by other Federal agencies and organizations. The Director of the National Science Foundation shall consult with the Secretary of State to assure that the programs authorized under this section are consistent with the foreign policy objectives of the United States.

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

SEC. 4. The National Science Foundation is directed to encourage and promote the conduct of interdisciplinary research through broadly based undergraduate interdisciplinary education programs, interdisciplinary research projects which provide for apprenticeship training, interdisciplinary fellowship programs, and arrangements for degree training, including postgraduate degrees in more than one discipline, in institutions of higher education.

SCIENCE FOR CITIZENS

42 USC 1862 note.

SEC. 5. (a) The National Science Foundation is authorized and directed to conduct an experimental "Science for Citizens Program" and an augmented Public Understanding of Science Program under which funds will be available for pilot projects to:

(1) improve public understanding of science, engineering and technology and their impact on public policy issues.

(2) facilitate the participation of experienced scientists and engineers as well as graduate and undergraduate students in helping the public understand science, engineering and technology and their impact on public policies; and

(3) assist nationally recognized professional societies and groups serving important public purposes in conducting a limited number of forums, conferences, and workshops to increase public understanding of science and technology, and of their impact on public policy issues, after consideration of the following eligibility factors:

(A) the extent to which the proposal of the society or group will contribute to the development of facts, issues, and arguments relevant to public policy issues having significant scientific and technical aspects, and

(B) the ability of the society or group, using its own resources, to conduct such forums, conferences, and workshops.

(b) One or more review panels shall be established for the purpose of evaluating applications for awards under this section. The membership of each review panel shall have balanced representation from the scientific and nonscientific communities and the public and private sectors. Panels, establishment.

(c) No contract, grant or other arrangement shall be made under this Section without the prior approval of the National Science Board. Contract approval.

(d) To assist the Congress in evaluating activities initiated pursuant to this Section, the Director of the National Science Foundation, in consultation with a review panel having a balanced representation from the scientific and nonscientific community and the public and private sectors, is directed to prepare a comprehensive analysis and assessment of such activities to be submitted to the House Committee on Science and Technology and the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, not later than October 31, 1977. An interim report is required no later than March 1, 1977. Analysis, submittal to congressional committees. Interim report.

CONTINUING EDUCATION IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

SEC. 6. (a) The National Science Foundation shall develop a program plan for continuing education in science and engineering in order to enable scientists and engineers who have been engaged in their careers for at least five years to pursue courses of study designed to— Program plan. 42 USC 1862 note.

(1) provide them with new knowledge, techniques, and skills in their special fields; or

(2) acquire new knowledge, techniques, and skills in other fields which will enable them to render more valuable contributions to the Nation.

(b) The program plan developed under this section shall include, but not be limited to—

(1) the development of special curricula and educational techniques for continuing education in science and technology; and

(2) the award of fellowships to scientists and engineers to enable them to pursue courses of study which provide continuing education in science and engineering.

(c) The Foundation is directed to provide the House Committee on Science and Technology and the Senate Committee on Labor and Pub- Report to congressional committees.

lic Welfare, not later than March 1, 1977, with a detailed report on the program plan developed under this section, including recommendations for its implementation in fiscal year 1978.

MINORITIES, WOMEN, AND HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS

Executive position search. 42 USC 1873 note.

SEC. 7. (a) The Director of the National Science Foundation shall initiate an intensive search for qualified women, members of minority groups, and handicapped individuals to fill executive level positions in the National Science Foundation. In carrying out the requirement of this subsection, the Director shall work closely with organizations which have been active in seeking greater recognition and utilization of the scientific and technical capabilities of minorities, women, and handicapped individuals. The Director shall improve the representation of minorities, women, and handicapped individuals on advisory committees, review panels, and all other mechanisms by which the scientific community provides assistance to the Foundation. The Director of the National Science Foundation shall report quarterly to the Congress on the status of minorities, women, and handicapped individuals and activities undertaken pursuant to this section.

Quarterly report to Congress.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this or any other Act, the National Science Foundation shall, with funds available from the program "Minorities, Women, and Handicapped Individuals in Science" conduct experimental forums, conferences, workshops or other activities designed to improve scientific literacy and to encourage and assist minorities, women, and handicapped individuals to undertake and to advance in careers in scientific research and science education.

Grants.

(c)(1) In order to promote increased participation by minorities in careers in science and engineering, the National Science Foundation is authorized and directed to make available planning and study grants for programs including, but not limited to, Minority Centers for Graduate Education in Science and Engineering in accordance with this subsection.

(2) The grants for Minority Centers for Graduate Education shall be used to determine the need for and feasibility of developing Centers to be established at geographically dispersed educational institutions which—

(A) have substantial minority student enrollment;

(B) are geographically located near minority population centers;

(C) demonstrate a commitment to encouraging and assisting minority students, researchers, and faculty;

(D) have an existing or developing capacity to offer doctoral programs in science and engineering;

(E) will support basic research and the acquisition of necessary research facilities and equipment;

(F) will serve as a regional resource in science and engineering for the minority community which the Center is designed to serve; and

(G) will develop joint educational programs with nearby undergraduate institutions of higher education which have a substantial minority student enrollment.

Criteria. Report to congressional committees.

(3) The Director, in consultation with groups which have been active in seeking greater recognition of the scientific and technical capabilities of minorities, shall establish criteria for the award of the grants, and shall report to the Committee on Science and Technology

of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare of the Senate on the results of activities including an evaluation and assessment of the entire program carried out under this subsection, not later than March 1, 1977.

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

SEC. 8. The National Science Foundation is authorized and directed to establish an Office of Small Business Research and Development. The Foundation through the Office of Small Business Research and Development and in cooperation and consultation with the Small Business Administration shall—

Establishment. 42 USC 1883.

(1) foster communication between the National Science Foundation and the small business community, and insure that the set-aside for small business concerns provided under this Act or any other Act authorizing appropriations for the National Science Foundation is fully and effectively utilized;

(2) collect, analyze, compile, and publish information concerning grants and contracts awarded to small business concerns by the Foundation, and the procedures for handling proposals submitted by small business concerns;

(3) assist individual small business concerns in obtaining information regarding programs, policies, and procedures of the Foundation, and assure the expeditious processing of proposals by small business concerns based on scientific and technical merit;

(4) recommend to the Director and to the National Science Board such changes in the procedures and practices of the Foundation as may be required to enable the Foundation to draw fully on the resources of the small business research and development community; and

(5) make quarterly reports to the Congress concerning the activities of the Office of Small Business Research and Development.

Quarterly reports to Congress.

NATIONAL SCIENCE BOARD

SEC. 9. (a) Section 4 of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 is amended by inserting before the period at the end of subsection (a) a comma and the following: "within the framework of applicable national policies as set forth by the President and the Congress".

Ante, p. 473. 42 USC 1863.

(b) Section 4(g) of such Act as redesignated by this section is amended—

(1) by inserting after "the Director," the following: "after consultation with the Chairman of the Board"; and

(2) by striking out "GS-15" and inserting in lieu thereof "GS-18".

LIMITATION

SEC. 10. (a) In addition to such sums as are authorized by section 2, not to exceed $6,000,000 is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 1977, for expenses of the National Science Foundation incurred outside the United States to be paid for in foreign currencies which the Treasury Department determines to be excess to the normal requirements of the United States.

Appropriation authorization.

(b) Appropriations made pursuant to this Act may be used, but not to exceed $5,000 for official consultation, representation, or other extraordinary expenses upon the approval or authority of the Director of the National Science Foundation, and his determination shall be final and conclusive upon the accounting officers of the Government.

(c) Appropriations made pursuant to this Act shall remain available for obligation, for expenditure, or for obligation and expenditure, for such period or periods as may be specified in Acts making such appropriations.

INFORMATION REQUIREMENT

42 USC 1882.

SEC. 11. Notwithstanding any other provision of this or any other Act, the Director of the National Science Foundation shall keep the Committee on Science and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare of the Senate fully and currently informed with respect to all of the activities of the National Science Foundation.

Approved October 11, 1976.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 94-930 (Comm. on Science and Technology) and No. 94-1689 (Comm. of Conference).

SENATE REPORTS: No. 94-888 accompanying S. 3202 and No. 94-890 (both from Comm. on Labor and Public Welfare).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 122 (1976):

Mar. 24, 25, considered and passed House.
May 27, considered and passed Senate, amended, in lieu of S. 3202.
Sept. 24, Senate agreed to conference report.
Sept. 29, House agreed to conference report.