

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 5, 2023

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Urban Development, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Urban Development, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Shaheen and Ranking Member Moran:

We write today to express our continued support for National Science Foundation (NSF) programs that broaden participation for women, minorities, and other historically underrepresented groups in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). We appreciate your past support for these programs, and ask for your continued commitment as you begin your work on funding legislation for Fiscal Year 2024 (FY 2024).

NSF defines broadening participation in terms of historically underrepresented individuals and groups, historically underserved institutions, and underserved areas. Over the years, programs like the NSF Inclusion across the Nation of Communities of Learners of Underrepresented Discoverers in Engineering and Science (NSF INCLUDES), Increasing the Participation and Advancement of Women in Academic Science and Engineering Careers (ADVANCE), and Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) have worked to provide more opportunities, diversify the workforce, promote greater equity and inclusion, and strengthen the STEM pipeline. NSF's broadening participation programs contribute to a diverse workforce that promotes creativity, productivity, and innovation, enabling the United States to become a more competitive country at the global level.

But broadening participation programs do more than contribute to global competitiveness. They also support greater equity and inclusion in STEM—providing opportunities for underrepresented groups that have historically been excluded. In 2021, the Pew Research Center reported that Black and Hispanic workers remain significantly underrepresented in the STEM workforce. Specifically, Pew found that despite Black and Hispanic workers seeing improved representation in other fields, they only comprised 9 percent and 8 percent of workers in STEM fields (respectively)—despite making up 11 percent and 17 percent of workers in all fields. Additionally, Pew found that women remain significantly underrepresented in certain STEM positions—including those in the physical sciences, computing, and engineering. More recently, NSF reported earlier this year that while the share of women and minorities in the STEM workforce has grown over the last decade, they still continue to be underrepresented. We can and must do more to address these inequities.

Broadening participation programs also strengthen and expand the ability of federal science agencies and institutions of higher education to discover talent across individual, institutional, and geographic networks to help develop the STEM workforce of the future. Recently, for

example, NSF announced that it would invest over \$39 million to establish four new alliances through NSF INCLUDES, bringing the total number up to 17 alliances. The NSF INCLUDES network comprises more than 4,000 public, private, and academic partners dedicated to broadening participation in STEM by creating access and opportunities for all. These kinds of collaborations are important for our country, and we should do everything we can to promote them as they provide more opportunities for individuals who show promise in this field.

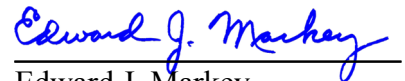
For these reasons, we ask for your continued support of these programs. Specifically, we ask you to provide at least \$1.848 billion for NSF Broadening Participation Programs (BPP) in FY 2024—consistent with the President’s budget proposal.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
U.S. Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator




Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator