



Biophysical Society Response on Updating NSF Strategic Plan Submitted September 27, 2016

Representing a community of researchers in the most fundamental areas of Physics, Biology and Biomedicine, the Biophysical Society finds the 2014-2018 strategic plan to be a strong document outlining the Foundation's unique role in supporting basic science research and the full complement of the scientific workforce. With ongoing external pressures to make basic researchers explicitly define the practical applications and outcomes of their efforts, it is important for the NSF strategic plan to stress its ongoing commitment to fundamental research. It must recognize explicitly and strongly the massive contribution that fundamental research makes "to the knowledge base from which all innovation is derived." The Society also appreciates that the strategic plan highlights the need to work across disciplinary boundaries and to support and promote the scientific training and education needed for continued development and enhancement of a strong and diverse scientific workforce.

The Society encourages NSF to keep these points in sharp focus in the next strategic plan. The NSF should also consider including a discussion of the important role that investigator-initiated research plays in advancing science, articulating why high risk research is an important investment area for the NSF to include as a portion of its portfolio, and how the need to support both the development and acquisition of technology and equipment requires sustained attention.

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