



April 10, 2026

## **Statement on the Proposed Elimination of the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate at the National Science Foundation**

The American Political Science Association (APSA) condemns the Trump Administration's intention to dissolve the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorate at the National Science Foundation (NSF). On Friday, April 3rd, the Trump Administration released the President's [budget request](#) for fiscal year (FY) 2027. The overall budget request for NSF includes a proposed 54 percent cut for NSF. It also calls for the SBE Directorate to be dissolved and have its funding eliminated in the next fiscal year. On the same day, it was also [reported](#) that NSF leadership announced during an internal all-staff meeting that they would preemptively start making moves to dissolve the SBE Directorate in alignment with the proposed dissolution in the budget request.

The dissolution of the SBE Directorate would cause catastrophic harm to political science researchers and students, our peers in other social science disciplines, and beyond. Within the federal government, NSF's SBE Directorate funds [63 percent](#) of all academic research in the social sciences and psychological sciences in the United States, and serves as the primary source of basic research funding for political science. Since the SBE Directorate was established in 1991, APSA's membership has considered NSF to be a trusted, reliable, nonpartisan resource for political scientists seeking funding for research and professional development opportunities, including funding for first-generation scholars, early career scholars, and doctoral dissertation researchers. Basic social science, such as political science, funded through NSF's SBE serves a critical role in interdisciplinary research and as a foundation for applied or translational activities and scientific innovation and discovery. SBE also supports critical social science data infrastructure that benefits research across types of institutions and career stages, such as the [American National Election Studies \(ANES\)](#) and the [General Social Survey \(GSS\)](#). Zeroing out the SBE Directorate will undoubtedly weaken the capacity for research across NSF and the entire U.S. research enterprise. It would also have devastating impacts on STEM education, workforce development, and for the United States' competitive edge in global research and development. Furthermore, eliminating the SBE Directorate without the input of congressional appropriators would constitute an unprecedented and unconstitutional action that lacks the oversight or transparency during a time when NSF lacks a permanent director.

We call on NSF leadership to maintain full funding and support for the SBE Directorate and for Congress to reject the proposed zeroing out of the NSF SBE budget in the coming FY 2027 appropriations cycle.

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Susan Stokes,  
*President*

Taeku Lee,  
*Past President*

Beth Simmons,  
*President-elect*

Kimberly A. Mealy,  
*Executive Director*

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