

January 14, 2021

Ms. Anita Dunn
Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham
Mr. Ted Kaufman
Rep. Cedric Richmond
Mr. Jeff Zients
Ms. Cristen Dorgelo

Biden-Harris Transition Team
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Prioritizing science and technology research, development and education in the U.S.

Dear Co-Chairs and Distinguished Leaders:

On behalf of the Science and Technology Action Committee (STAC), a coalition of non-profit, academic, foundation, and corporate science and technology (S&T) leaders, we write today to thank you for your public service and to offer our assistance as you prepare to implement President-elect Biden's "Build Back Better" agenda.

Rebuilding our economy, confronting the coronavirus, combating climate change, and addressing a myriad of existential challenges, including food and water security and energy production, will require dramatically increasing our federal support for science and technology — research, development, and education. While our country's S&T sector is highly innovative and productive, it is critical to increase the level of coordination and collaboration; confront urgent threats directly, proactively, and strategically; and position S&T at the highest level of government. Not taking these actions impairs our ability to address urgent national challenges and our ability to compete in a global economy with nations that are methodically bolstering S&T investment, talent, and capacity.

To overcome these challenges and to create opportunities, we assert the urgent need for a National Plan with enhanced S&T leadership; strategic, multi-agency and cross-sector partnerships to confront emerging threats; and dramatically increased federal support for S&T. We propose three bold actions toward a renewed S&T commitment dedicated to surmounting overarching societal threats:

- 1. S&T Leadership.** The Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) Director should be elevated to the Cabinet and hold the title "Assistant to the President for Science and Technology," endowing S&T a stronger voice at the highest levels of government.
- 2. S&T Investment.** Over the next five years, the federal expenditure for R&D and STEM education should double relative to GDP, from 0.7% to 1.4%. This level of funding, estimated to reach roughly \$380B in year five, shall be appropriated predominantly to S&T-intensive agencies.

- 3. S&T Coordination and Collaboration Around Urgent and Emerging Threats.** Support for the federal R&D effort emanates from 20 different departments and agencies. We recommend, as part of a national strategy, the administration appoints four Coordinators to oversee cross-agency coordination: Public Health and Healthcare, Environment and Climate Change, Food and Water Security, and Energy Production and Storage.

The full **Science & Technology Action Plan** is available for review here:
[ScienceTechAction.org](https://www.scienceaction.org).

S&T discoveries and advancements have driven the U.S. economy, assured our national security, and improved the lives of Americans and people around the world. But as global competitors like China increase their investment in S&T, decades of underinvestment in the U.S. have undermined our capacity to meet the existential challenges of our time. By increasing the focus and investment in S&T, the Biden Administration can ensure the U.S. remains the world leader in the innovation that powers our economy and advances the cause of humankind.

We thank you for your commitment to science and technology and stand ready to work with the Biden Administration to implement the Science and Technology Action Plan.

Sincerely,



Sudip Parikh, Co-Chair
CEO, AAAS



Mary Woolley, Co-Chair
President & CEO,
Research!America



Keith R. Yamamoto, Co-Chair
Vice Chancellor for Science
Policy & Strategy, UCSF

Science and Technology Action Committee

(Professional affiliations are included for identification purposes only. The views expressed by the committee are not indicative of official positions of the organizations with which committee members are associated.)

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