

**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**

2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE  
ALEXANDRIA, VA, 22314

October 19, 2017



Dear Colleague:

The National Science Foundation is initiating a national search for the Assistant Director for Biological Sciences (BIO). We seek your assistance in the identification of visionary candidates to lead the Directorate during the coming years. Dr. James Olds has served in this position with distinction since October 2014. He has worked with his colleagues on new initiatives in Understanding the Brain, the Rules of Life, from genome to phenome, and continental-scale ecology. The next Assistant Director will have similar opportunities to shape future research and education in the biological sciences as well as ensure that BIO is a key participant in NSF's expanding efforts to support convergence research.

The Assistant Director, BIO, manages a budget of approximately \$750.0M and a portfolio comprising the various fields of biology, including the Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (MCB), the Division of Biological Infrastructure (DBI), the Division of Integrative Organismal Systems (IOS), the Division of Environmental Biology (DEB), and the Emerging Frontiers Office (EF). Enclosed is an information sheet that summarizes the Directorate's activities and the responsibilities of the position, together with the criteria that will be used in the search. Employment may be on a temporary or permanent basis in the Federal Service or by temporary assignment under provisions of the Intergovernmental Personnel Act.

We are very pleased to announce that Dr. Roger Beachy, National Science Board member and Professor at Washington University in St. Louis will Chair the Search Advisory Committee. Both the Committee and I seek your help in identifying candidates with the following qualifications: outstanding leadership; a deep sense of scholarship; and a grasp of the issues facing the biological sciences, especially in the areas of education and fundamental research. Candidates must also have the ability to serve effectively as a key member of the NSF senior management team, teaming with the NSF Director and other Assistant Directors on cross-directorate activities and interactions with executive and legislative branches of government. When opportunities arise, the candidate must be able to communicate effectively with leaders of business and industry as well as the philanthropic community. Recommendations of individuals from any sector — academic, industry, or government — are welcome.

Please send your recommendations, including any supporting information which you might be able to provide, to the AD/BIO Screening Committee via e-mail ([biosrch@nsf.gov](mailto:biosrch@nsf.gov)) or at the following address: National Science Foundation, Office of the Director, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA, 22314. We would appreciate receiving your recommendations by November 10, 2017.

Your assistance in this very important task is appreciated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "France A. Cordova".

France A. Cordova  
Director

Enclosures

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### Search Committee Review Criteria for the Assistant Director for Biological Sciences (AD/BIO), NSF

**We are seeking demonstrated evidence of:**

#### **Strategic Vision**

- Working knowledge of the major current intellectual challenges and opportunities in the biological sciences.
- Ability to think strategically and formulate integrated plans for research and education activities in the biological sciences, especially at the interfaces of, and boundaries with, other disciplines.
- Ability to bring about strategic change, both within and outside the organization, to meet organizational goals. Includes the ability to establish an organizational vision and to implement it in a continuously changing environment.

#### **Leadership, Direction, Representation**

- Ability to lead people toward meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Includes the ability to provide an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others, facilitates cooperation and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts. Ability to provide innovative and transformative leadership of people, reflective of NSF's organizational values.
- Ability to serve effectively as a member of NSF's senior management team, helping to develop consensus both within the BIO directorate and across the agency on policy and plans.
- Ability to plan, prioritize, and coordinate interagency and international research and education programs and to forge government-industry-university partnerships.
- Ability to manage an organization consisting of approximately 136 scientific and administrative professionals; ability to manage human, financial, and information resources strategically.
- Ability to communicate NSF policy and strategic plans to the external community, including the public, Congress, industry, and colleagues in other disciplines.
- Ability to meet organizational goals and customer expectations. Includes the ability to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge, analyzing problems, and calculating risks.

#### **Commitment**

- Commitment to the goals of the NSF Strategic plan — Transforming the Frontiers, Innovating for Society, and Performing as a Model Organization —and to the strategies for achieving these goals through developing intellectual capital, integrating research and education, and promoting partnerships. Demonstrated ability to conceptualize the role of the biological sciences in achieving those goals.
- Commitment to the appointment and development of a highly qualified staff that reflect the diversity of our nation and to the equitable representation of underrepresented groups and institutions on advisory committees, in workshops, and proposal review panels.
- Commitment to equitable representation of underrepresented groups in the national enterprise.

#### **Credibility within Research and Education Community**

- Substantial research contributions and experience in academic, government and/or private national research and education endeavors as evidenced in publications, innovative leadership in research administration and/or professional leadership awards.
- Ability to build coalitions internally and with other Federal agencies, State and local governments, nonprofit and private sector organizations, foreign governments, or international organizations to achieve common goals.
- Demonstrated commitment to scholarship and significant scientific contributions to the biological sciences.
- Broad understanding of universities and other institutions where research and education in the biological sciences are conducted.
- Familiarity with the existing U.S. and international infrastructure that supports research and education.

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**The National Science Foundation  
Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO)**

The **National Science Foundation** (NSF) is an independent agency of the United States Government. Its vision is to enable the nation's future through its strategic goals of transforming the frontiers, innovating for society, and performing as a model organization. The Foundation seeks to realize these goals using five core values: vision, dedication to excellence, learning and growing, broad inclusiveness, and accountability to the research community and the taxpayer. NSF invests in supporting research that will advance the frontiers of knowledge and establish the nation as a leader in transformational science; cultivating a world-class, broadly inclusive science and engineering workforce and scientifically literate citizenry; building the nation's research capacity with critical investments in advanced instruments, tools and facilities; and cultivating a capable and responsive organization that promotes excellence in science and engineering research and education.

The **Directorate for Biological Sciences** (BIO) is one of seven NSF directorates. The BIO Directorate aims to advance the frontiers of biological knowledge, increase the understanding of complex systems, and provide a theoretical basis for original research in other scientific disciplines. Together, these aims strengthen our national capacity to perform and innovate, which, in turn, contributes to national prosperity, security, and welfare. The Directorate's goals and strategies mirror those of the Foundation. The BIO Directorate contains the Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (MCB), the Division of Biological Infrastructure (DBI), the Division of Integrative Organismal Systems (IOS), the Division of Environmental Biology (DEB), and the Emerging Frontiers Office (EF). The Directorate staff of approximately 136 employees administers a budget of approximately \$750 million annually.

The **Assistant Director for Biological Sciences** (AD/BIO) serves as a key member of NSF's senior management and policy team and provides leadership and direction to the Directorate's programs and initiatives. The incumbent is responsible for planning and implementing programs, priorities, and policy within the framework of statutory and National Science Board authority. NSF seeks a candidate with outstanding leadership abilities; a deep sense of scholarship; a grasp of the issues facing the biological sciences in the areas of education and research; and a commitment to the goals and strategies of the National Science Foundation.