

(4) Scientific and technological activities which may be properly supported exclusively by the Federal Government should be distinguished from those in which interests are shared with State and local governments and the private sector. Among these entities, cooperative relationships should be established which encourage the appropriate sharing of science and technology decisionmaking, funding support, and program planning and execution.

(5) The Federal Government should support and utilize engineering and its various disciplines and make maximum use of the engineering community, whenever appropriate, as an essential element in the Federal policy-making process.

(6) Comprehensive legislative support for the national science and technology effort requires that the Congress be regularly informed of the condition, health and vitality, and funding requirements of science and technology, the relation of science and technology to changing national goals, and the need for legislative modification of the Federal endeavor and structure at all levels as it relates to science and technology.

(c) Procedures

The Congress declares that, in order to expedite and facilitate the implementation of the policy enunciated in subsection (a) of this section, the following coordinate procedures are of paramount importance:

(1) Federal procurement policy should encourage the use of science and technology to foster frugal use of materials, energy, and appropriated funds; to assure quality environment; and to enhance product performance.

(2) Explicit criteria, including cost-benefit principles where practicable, should be developed to identify the kinds of applied research and technology programs that are appropriate for Federal funding support and to determine the extent of such support. Particular attention should be given to scientific and technological problems and opportunities offering promise of social advantage that are so long range, geographically widespread, or economically diffused that the Federal Government constitutes the appropriate source for undertaking their support.

(3) Federal promotion of science and technology should emphasize quality of research, recognize the singular importance of stability in scientific and technological institutions, and for urgent tasks, seek to assure timeliness of results. With particular reference to Federal support for basic research, funds should be allocated to encourage education in needed disciplines, to provide a base of scientific knowledge from which future essential technological development can be launched, and to add to the cultural heritage of the Nation.

(4) Federal patent policies should be developed, based on uniform principles, which have as their objective the preservation of incentives for technological innovation and the application of procedures which will continue to assure the full use of beneficial technology to serve the public.

(5) Closer relationships should be encouraged among practitioners of different scientific and technological disciplines, including the physical, social, and biomedical fields.

(6) Federal departments, agencies, and instrumentalities should assure efficient management of laboratory facilities and equipment in their custody, including acquisition of effective equipment, disposal of inferior and obsolete properties, and cross-servicing to maximize the productivity of costly property of all kinds. Disposal policies should include attention to possibilities for further productive use.

(7) The full use of the contributions of science and technology to support State and local government goals should be encouraged.

(8) Formal recognition should be accorded those persons whose scientific and technological achievements have contributed significantly to the national welfare.

(9) The Federal Government should support applied scientific research, when appropriate, in proportion to the probability of its usefulness, insofar as this probability can be determined; but while maximizing the beneficial consequences of technology, the Government should act to minimize foreseeable injurious consequences.

(10) Federal departments, agencies, and instrumentalities should establish procedures to insure among them the systematic interchange of scientific data and technological findings developed under their programs.

(Pub. L. 94-282, title I, §102, May 11, 1976, 90 Stat. 460.)

§ 6603. Sense of Congress on innovation acceleration research

(a) Sense of Congress on support and promotion of innovation in the United States

It is the sense of Congress that each Federal research agency should strive to support and promote innovation in the United States through high-risk, high-reward basic research projects that—

- (1) meet fundamental technological or scientific challenges;
- (2) involve multidisciplinary work; and
- (3) involve a high degree of novelty.

(b) Sense of Congress on setting annual funding goals for basic research

It is the sense of Congress that each Executive agency that funds research in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics should set a goal of allocating an appropriate percentage of the annual basic research budget of such agency to funding high-risk, high-reward basic research projects described in subsection (a).

(c) Definitions

In this section:

(1) Basic research

The term “basic research” has the meaning given such term in the Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-11.

(2) Executive agency

The term “Executive agency” has the meaning given such term in section 105 of title 5.

(Pub. L. 110–69, title I, §1008, Aug. 9, 2007, 121 Stat. 581; Pub. L. 114–329, title II, §204(a)(2), Jan. 6, 2017, 130 Stat. 2998.)

Editorial Notes

CODIFICATION

Section was enacted as part of the America COMPETES Act, also known as the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act, and not as part of the National Science and Technology Policy, Organization, and Priorities Act of 1976 which comprises this chapter.

AMENDMENTS

2017—Subsecs. (c), (d). Pub. L. 114–329 redesignated subsec. (d) as (c) and struck out former subsec. (c) which related to annual reports to Congress.

§ 6604. Interagency working group on research regulation

(a) Short title

This section may be cited as the “Research and Development Efficiency Act”.

(b) Findings

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Scientific and technological advancement have been the largest drivers of economic growth in the last 50 years, with the Federal Government being the largest investor in basic research.

(2) Substantial and increasing administrative burdens and costs in Federal research administration, particularly in the higher education sector where most federally funded research is performed, are eroding funds available to carry out basic scientific research.

(3) Federally funded grants are increasingly competitive, with the Foundation funding only approximately 1 in every 5 grant proposals.

(4) Progress has been made over the last decade in streamlining the pre-award grant application process through the Federal Government’s Grants.gov website.

(5) Post-award administrative costs have increased as Federal research agencies have continued to impose agency-unique compliance and reporting requirements on researchers and research institutions.

(6) Researchers spend as much as 42 percent of their time complying with Federal regulations, including administrative tasks such as applying for grants or meeting reporting requirements.

(c) Sense of Congress

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) administrative burdens faced by researchers may be reducing the return on investment of federally funded research and development; and

(2) it is a matter of critical importance to United States competitiveness that administrative costs of federally funded research be streamlined so that a higher proportion of federal funding is applied to direct research activities.

(d) Establishment

The Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in coordination with the Office of

Science and Technology Policy, shall establish an interagency working group (referred to in this section as the “Working Group”) for the purpose of reducing administrative burdens on federally funded researchers while protecting the public interest through the transparency of and accountability for federally funded activities.

(e) Responsibilities

(1) In general

The Working Group shall—

(A) regularly review relevant, administration-related regulations imposed on federally funded researchers;

(B) recommend those regulations or processes that may be eliminated, streamlined, or otherwise improved for the purpose described in subsection (d);

(C) recommend ways to minimize the regulatory burden on United States institutions of higher education performing federally funded research while maintaining accountability for federal funding; and

(D) recommend ways to identify and update specific regulations to refocus on performance-based goals rather than on process while achieving the outcome described in subparagraph (C).

(2) Grant review

(A) In general

The Working Group shall—

(i) conduct a comprehensive review of Federal science agency grant proposal documents; and

(ii) develop, to the extent practicable, a simplified, uniform grant format to be used by all Federal science agencies.

(B) Considerations

In developing the uniform grant format, the Working Group shall consider whether to implement—

(i) procedures for preliminary project proposals in advance of peer-review selection;

(ii) increased use of “Just-In-Time” procedures for documentation that does not bear directly on the scientific merit of a proposal;

(iii) simplified initial budget proposals in advance of peer review selection; and

(iv) detailed budget proposals for applicants that peer review selection identifies as likely to be funded.

(3) Centralized researcher profile database

(A) Establishment

The Working Group shall establish, to the extent practicable, a secure, centralized database for investigator biosketches, curriculum vitae, licenses, lists of publications, and other documents considered relevant by the Working Group.

(B) Considerations

In establishing the centralized profile database under subparagraph (A), the Working Group shall consider incorporating existing investigator databases.

(C) Grant proposals

To the extent practicable, all grant proposals shall utilize the centralized investi-