National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22230

The Science, Technology and Society Program:
Research at the Interface of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences and Society

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Dear Colleague:

The purpose of this Dear Colleague Letter is to call your attention to an opportunity to request support for research focused on topics at the interface of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences and Society. This initiative is sponsored by the Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) in partnership with the Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS). Proposals are to be submitted to SBE's Science, Technology and Society Program (STS), which provides support for projects that examine questions arising from interactions of science, engineering, technology, and society.

Proposals for Research at the Interface of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences and Society should address one or more of the four component areas of STS: Ethics and Values in Science, Engineering and Technology; Social Studies of Science, Engineering and Technology; Studies of Policy and Science, Engineering and Technology; History and Philosophy of Science, Engineering and Technology. For more information on STS, please see the Program Solicitation, NSF 08-553: http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=nsf08553

Collaborative research proposals are strongly encouraged. Such proposals are expected to involve researchers in the mathematical and physical sciences and STS researchers (including philosophers, historians, and sociologists of science, engineering and technology), and they are expected to address current issues, trends, and questions.

Prospective topics of interest in the general area of Research at the Interface of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences and Society

include but are not limited to the following:

1. Societal aspects (such as ethical, social or policy aspects) of intellectual property, patent issues, or proprietary information in the mathematical and physical sciences
2. Privacy issues or ethical issues in data mining, storage, or collection
3. Societal pressures on the research direction, scale, or priorities in the mathematical and physical sciences
4. Under-representation of gender, race, ethnicity, or persons with disabilities in the mathematical and physical sciences and its workforce implications
5. Societal implications or perceptions of nanotechnology or chemical technology

Investigators are encouraged to contact an STS program officer to discuss prospective proposal topics and to review the STS Solicitation to ensure that eligibility requirements are met. Proposals are to be submitted to and evaluated by STS. Awards will be co-funded by STS and the relevant MPS program upon the approval of the associated MPS Program Officer.

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