Science Societies

President's budget request proposes research funding cuts

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> Last week, the president released his fiscal year (FY) 2027 budget proposal, and as expected, it calls for reductions across most domestic agencies and programs. The proposal prioritizes increased funding for defense, national security, and veterans while also directing targeted investments toward areas such as artificial intelligence, capital improvements, energy, critical minerals, and nuclear. At the same time, it signals that many other programs may face cuts.

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The USDA budget would be cut by approximately 19%. While significant, this is less severe than other agencies such as the USEPA EPA, which faces a proposed 52% cut. Other departments—including Interior, Treasury, and Health and Human Services—are slated for reductions in the 11–13% range.

Almost all federal research programs would receive funding cuts in the budget request. At USDA, the request would cut NIFA funding by more than $600 million, a 39%

reduction. The budget again has prioritized competitive research programs over capacity programs, cutting or even zeroing out capacity programs like Hatch and Smith-Lever. On conservation, the budget zeroed out Conservation Technical Assistance, which resulted in the significant cut to NRCS Conservation Operations. At other agencies, the budget would be cut by more than 50% at the National Science Foundation (NSF) and 15% at the Department of Energy–Office of Science. The budget also zeroes out funding at the Forest Service for forest and rangeland research. See details below.

Agency–program[a]	FY26 final	FY27 Society request	FY27 president's request	% difference
USDA–AgARDA	$0.0005	$0.001	$0.001	0%
USDA–ARS	$1.793	$1.900	$1.699	–5%
USDA–NIFA	$1.677		$1.022	–39%
USDA–AFRI	$0.435	$0.455	$0.419	–4%
USDA–Hatch	$0.265	$0.300	$0.000	–100%
USDA–Smith-Lever	$0.325	$0.420	$0.175	–46%
USDA–EQIP	$0.003	$0.005	$0.005	67%
USDA–SARE	$0.048	$0.060	$0.000	–100%
USDA–ConOps	$0.850	$1.050	$0.111	–87%
USDA–Conservation TA	$0.698	$0.000	$0.000	–100%
NSF	$8.750	$9.900	$3.963	–55%
DOE–Office of Science	$8.400	$9.500	$7.139	–15%
ARPA-E	$0.350		$0.200	–43%
USGS–(total discretionary)	$1.420		$0.893	–37%

Agency–program[a]	FY26 final	FY27 Society request	FY27 president's request	% difference
USEPA–S&T	$0.744		$0.508	–32%
USFS–Forest and Rangeland Research	$0.309		$0.000	–100%

[a]AgARDA, Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority; AFRI, Agriculture and Food Research Initiative; EQIP, Environmental Quality Incentives Program; SARE, Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education; ConOps, Conservation Operations; TA, Technical Assistance; S&T, Science and Technology.

While the budget request expresses the priorities of the administration, it's the job of Congress to make the final funding decisions. Congress is moving full steam ahead with the FY2027 appropriations process with the House Appropriations Committee releasing its FY2027 markup schedule. The Ag-FDA funding bill will move next week with the bills that fund NSF, the Department of Energy–Office of Science, and USEPA moving later in May. The Senate Appropriations Committee will be moving forward with its process likely next month.

The Societies met with nearly 100 Congressional offices as part of the Congressional Visits Day in February to advocate for food, agriculture, and natural resources research programs. You can learn more about opportunities to advocate for science and research and learn advocacy skills through the Societies' Policy and Government Relations Certificate program.

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