



# BUSINESS FOR FEDERAL RESEARCH FUNDING

April 10, 2026

The Honorable Ted Cruz  
U.S. Senate  
Chair, Committee on Commerce,  
Science & Transportation  
Washington D.C., 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
U.S. Senate  
Ranking Member, Committee on Commerce,  
Science & Transportation  
Washington D.C., 20510

The Honorable Brian Babin  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Chair, Committee on Science, Space &  
Technology  
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Ranking Member, Committee on Science, Space &  
Technology  
Washington D.C. 20515

Re: Impact of Research Funding Uncertainty on Global Competitiveness

Dear Chair Cruz, Chair Babin, Ranking Member Cantwell, and Ranking Member Lofgren:

On behalf of the [Business for Federal Research Funding \(BFRF\) Coalition](#), we write to share a report we recently produced examining the efforts of our global competitors to recruit U.S.-based scientists. As an employer coalition advocating on behalf of robust federal research funding, we first would like to express our gratitude and thanks for sustaining appropriate levels of critical research funding support across agencies through the FY26 appropriations process. However, our research institutions continue to confront uncertainty surrounding funding levels, the timely release of grant funds, the cancellation of already-funded projects midstream, and delayed review of submitted grant applications, among other upheavals.

This environment is negatively impacting our ability to attract and retain our future entrepreneurs and a workforce that will grow the economy through the innovation of new products and services. While the United States strives to lead in artificial intelligence, quantum computing, biotechnology and advanced manufacturing, research institutions provide critical talent pipelines to our workforce of today and tomorrow. Those pipelines are now threatened as our competitors across the globe seek to lure this critical talent pool to enhance their own research capabilities.

As representatives of over 80 business organizations and chambers of commerce across 36 states, we know firsthand that federally funded research is a powerful engine for American innovation, ensuring that our nation experiences economic growth and our companies maintain their global competitiveness. We are deeply concerned by the breadth of these new global programs, and their success recruiting junior and senior researchers seeking stable funding amidst the current uncertain federal funding environment – a significant risk to our ability to out-innovate our competitors. The resulting loss of jobs and economic growth will be felt for years to come.

This report summarizes the efforts of 21 countries and the European Union to develop and launch initiatives to lure U.S.-based researchers to local research institutions, including U.S.-born scientists, international scientists currently based in the U.S., and returning citizens who attended school and/or currently work in the U.S. Among the most significant programs include the \$1.7 billion CAD (\$1.2 billion USD) “Canada Global Impact+ Research Talent Initiative,” the European Union’s €500 million (\$576 million USD) “Choose Europe for Science” initiative, and France’s €100 million (\$115 million USD) “Choose France for Science.”

Our competitors are not pursuing these programs simply due to altruism for scientists who may have lost access to federal funding over the past year. Instead, they are investing in these programs because they know that research funding is a smart investment that helped grow our economy and attracted talented individuals from all over the world to the U.S., including many of their own citizens. Research investments constitute “force multipliers.” It directly supports the employment of individuals engaged in R&D work inside federal agencies and by organizations located across the country. But research funding also indirectly creates jobs through the businesses needed to build facilities, materials, and instruments to support federally sponsored R&D work and has positive ancillary effects by fostering regional industry innovation and growth. Last year, funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) alone supported more than 390,000 jobs, produced \$94.15 billion in economic activity, and a 250% return on investment.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Key Findings from the Report:**

- Research institutions from states in every region of the country have lost researchers to these new global recruitment programs, including Colorado State University (Austria), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Canada), University of Central Florida (Japan), and the University of Alaska-Fairbanks (Sweden), as well as numerous researchers from NASA, the National Laboratories, NIH, the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Mayo Clinic.
- The global programs represent government, industry and academic partnerships, target all stages of the career pipeline – from graduate students to senior researchers – offer competitive salaries, relocation, equipment and lab member support, and stable research funding streams.
- Many countries offer expedited visas and residency permits for researchers, including a Canadian program offering an accelerated pathway to permanent residency for current U.S. H-1B visa holders and a Norwegian program offering residency permits in as little as a month.
- While most global recruitment programs are open to all academic disciplines, many target researchers in artificial intelligence, energy and climate, health and health technology, quantum computing, and deep tech.

The report’s findings reaffirm other recent reports about the consequences of the recent research funding uncertainty. Numerous universities have rescinded admissions offers, cut their graduate student programs by 60-70%, and paused hiring, including at research laboratories.<sup>2</sup> According to a March 2026 national poll of nearly 1,000 researchers supported by NIH by *STAT*, 70% cut

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<sup>1</sup> [NIH’s Role in Sustaining the U.S. Economy](#). *United for Medical Research*. 2026.

<sup>2</sup> [‘Reign of terror.’ Universities freeze hiring, rescind offers, start layoffs amid Trump cuts](#), *Boston Globe*, 2025.

graduate admissions or rescinded offers, 13% lost researchers to institutions in other countries, and 53% advised students to consider job and career opportunities in countries outside of the U.S.<sup>3</sup> *Nature* reported that more than 75% of surveyed junior and senior scientists were considering moving to other countries for employment opportunities.<sup>4</sup>

Over the last year, participation also increased among U.S. students in international career fairs, including the annual German Academic International Network (GAIN) Annual Conference and Talent Fair, which includes representatives from more than 120 German institutions, funders and businesses, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology's European Career Fair (ECF), the largest European fair in the U.S. attracting employers from more than 20 countries and open to candidates from across the country.<sup>5</sup> Conversely, international graduate student enrollment – the vast majority of whom are in STEM fields (57%) – declined by 3% last year.<sup>6</sup>

These findings are deeply concerning for the future of our economy and our global competitiveness, and the resulting loss of talent and industry capacity will be felt for years to come. The loss of early and mid-career researchers is particularly concerning as their work will produce future start-ups and patents, and their loss affects our future capacity for mentorship, education, and skills training which are vital to producing the next generation of scientists. There are already early warning signs that the U.S. is losing ground to our competitors, including a recent study in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* which found that China's share of the world's biopharma development increased from 8% to 32.3% over the past 10 years; the U.S.'s share fell from 48.2% to 37.4%.<sup>7</sup>

Congress has an important role to play in uplifting our economy, and we urge you to consider these findings as you continue working on FY2027 funding legislation. Robust support for research and development across the federal agencies, including strategic increases in key growth areas such as quantum computing and health technology, and expeditious consideration of incoming grant applications, is critical to protecting our position as a global leader. We are concerned by reports of the steep drop in new NIH awards in FY2026 and urge you to support continued caps on multi-year awards to ensure more researchers and worthy projects receive access to critical early funding streams and are not incentivized to relocate abroad.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to advance the U.S. research and innovation ecosystem.

Sincerely,

## **The Business for Federal Research Funding Coalition**

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<sup>3</sup> In some geographic regions, the proportion of scientists reporting a loss of colleagues to institutions in other countries is as high as 42%. [Full results of NIH grant recipient survey. Survey: NIH cuts push labs to brink, hit early-career scientists hard | STAT](#)

<sup>4</sup> "75% of US scientists who answered Nature poll consider leaving." *Nature*. March 27, 2025.

<sup>5</sup> [MIT European Career Fair](#), *MIT European Club*, 2026. [Annual GAIN Conference](#), *German Academic International Network*, 2026.

<sup>6</sup> [Academic Levels of International Students](#). *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*. 2025.

<sup>7</sup> [Geographic Shifts in Early-Stage Biopharmaceutical Innovation](#), *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 2026.

# **COALITION MEMBERS**

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