



May 12, 2026

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Chairman
Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
Ranking Member
Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee

Dear Chairs Collins and Moran, Vice Chair Murray, and Ranking Member Van Hollen:

On behalf of the nation's 1,015 community colleges, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) urge you to appropriate \$85 million for the National Science Foundation's Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program in FY 27.

The ATE program is the cornerstone of NSF's support for the nation's community colleges. This program focuses on the education of highly qualified science and engineering technicians for advanced technology fields that drive our nation's economy. It promotes the improvement of STEM education for science and engineering technicians at the undergraduate and secondary school levels, and in the workforce.

Two-year public community and technical colleges deliver most of the technician education in the U.S., and their faculty play a leading role in designing and implementing ATE-funded projects. A hallmark of the ATE program is its strong emphasis on business and industry partnerships—grantees collaborate closely with employers and workforce leaders, alongside government and educational institutions, to ensure programs are aligned with real-world workforce needs and deliver lasting workforce and economic impact.

Since its inception in 1993, the NSF has invested \$1.6 billion in the ATE program, supporting 1,865 projects and 66 centers across all 50 states. These investments have strengthened the technical workforce while fostering strong partnerships and educational pathways that serve students, employers, and the nation.

The ATE program addresses current and emerging industry workforce needs. Technology fields supported by the ATE program include, but are not limited to:

- advanced manufacturing technologies
- information and security technologies
- biotechnology and biomanufacturing
- engineering technologies
- micro- and nanotechnologies



- geospatial technologies
- autonomous technologies

ATE also supports major initiatives in fields that the NSF has recently identified as priorities, including artificial intelligence. These initiatives include the National Information Technology Innovation Center at Columbus State Community College in Ohio, a national center focused on AI, cybersecurity, and data science; and the National Applied Artificial Intelligence Center at Miami Dade College in Florida.

We thank you for your consideration and look forward to working with the committee during the FY 2027 appropriations process.

Sincerely,

DeRionne Pollard, Ph.D.
AACCT President and CEO

Jee Hang Lee
ACCT President and CEO