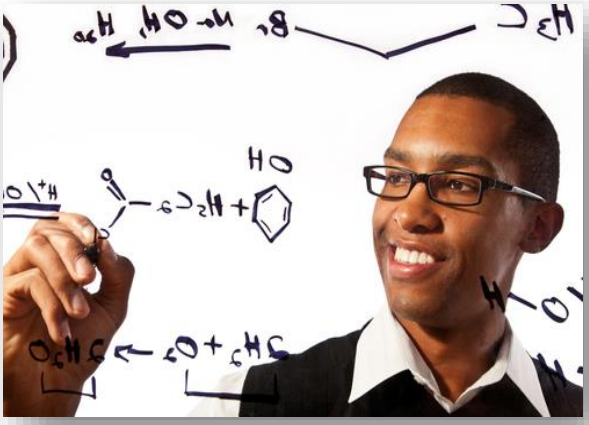
UNCF
Public Policy and Government Affairs

SUPPORT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION CENTERS FOR RESEARCH EXCELLENCE IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (CREST) PROGRAM



RECOMMENDATION

Support **$26 million** for the Centers for Research Excellence in Science and Technology (CREST) program at the National Science Foundation (NSF).

NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

With African Americans comprising only 5 percent of the 5.4 million scientists and engineers in the U.S. workforce, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) play a more important role than ever in identifying and cultivating diverse talent in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. The National Science and Technology Council's Committee on STEM Education (CoSTEM) has noted that all federal agencies must work to improve the capacity of U.S. education institutions to support effective STEM education and learning programs. Full funding for programs like CREST helps move the nation closer to fulfilling this CoSTEM objective.

BACKGROUND

The CREST program provides federal support through multi-year cooperative agreements to enhance institutional research, as well as recruitment and retention efforts, at Minority-Serving Institutions across the nation. CREST projects support the full spectrum of STEM disciplines and promote innovative thought and analysis.

For example, the Enhancing Global Research and Education in STEM (G-STEM) project at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia seeks to prepare African American women in the STEM disciplines to be globally engaged. By working synergistically with other offices and departments on campus to establish formal international research collaborations and develop a structured mentoring program for STEM students seeking global research experiences, G-STEM seeks to become a model for how other institutions can develop international research experiences for their students.

The CREST program also enhances research capacity at HBCUs through the HBCU-Research Infrastructure for Science and Engineering (HBCU-RISE) initiative. For example, Tuskegee University (Tuskegee, Alabama), was awarded a grant to implement research projects that will address the serious environmental issue of dealing with waste products through presenting new findings on sustainable products. The project will provide start-up funds for junior faculty members and offer a minor in Materials Science and Engineering for all STEM undergraduates at Tuskegee with the goal of increasing the pool of students entering the graduate program.

CREST Funding History	
FY 2012	$24 million
FY 2013	$23 million*
FY 2014	$23 million
FY 2015	$24 million
FY 2016	$24 million
FY 2017	$24 million
HBCU Coalition FY 2018 Request	**$26 million**

*Reflects across-the-board sequestration cut, pursuant to the Budget Control Act of 2011.