

Science & Collections Funding

- Provided congressional testimony in support of increased fiscal year (FY) 2025 federal funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Institute of Museum and Library Services, programs that curate natural history collections within the Department of the Interior, and the Smithsonian Institution.
- Joined more than 1000 organizations in a letter urging Congress to reject any full-year continuing resolution for FY 2024 that would result in cuts to non-defense discretionary spending, the funding source for most scientific research programs.
- Through our membership in the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF)—an alliance of more than 140 scientific organizations that advocate for NSF funding—we urged appropriators to provide at least \$11.9 billion for NSF in FY 2025 and called on Congress to follow through on the promise of the CHIPS and Science Act by fully funding key science agencies at the levels authorized.
- Joined the CNSF in urging appropriators to strengthen support for NSF in the final FY 2025 appropriations bill and to consider providing additional funding for the science agency as part of a supplemental or emergency funding vehicle.

Collections Policy and Advocacy

- Provided joint comments with SPNHC in support of a proposed rule from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to modify the duration of certain Marine Mammal Protection Act permits. The revision makes it possible for NOAA to issue permits for longer than the current 5-year term.
 - Urged Duke University leadership to reconsider their decision to close their herbarium; helped garner support for a related petition that received over 20,000 signatures; and published a Viewpoint in BioScience calling for “continued enhancement, not dissolution” of the herbarium and urging transparent decision making.
 - Through our participation in the Biodiversity Collections Network (BCoN), published an article providing guidance on implementing a specimen management plan requirement for research proposals that involve collecting or generating specimens. This requirement—first proposed in the National Academies report on biological collections and then supported by the CHIPS and Science Act—is now in place for select NSF solicitations.
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- Partnered with iDigBio and others on a series of webinars and workshops in 2023 that brought together more than 300 biological collections curators, collections managers, museum leaders, research and early career professionals, AI experts, and related stakeholders from across the U.S. to develop an enhanced vision for a Biological Collections Action Center. Recommendations from these workshops were published in a white paper in 2024.
- Partnering with BCoN and AIBS on the NSF-funded BIOFAIR Data Network project to engage an expansive set of stakeholders in a series of virtual listening sessions and an interdisciplinary workshop towards building an integrated, open, findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable data network.
- Sponsored the 2024 Biological Sciences Congressional District Visits, an annual event organized by AIBS that enables scientists, curators, museum professionals, and graduate students to meet with their federal or state elected officials in their home state to help inform science policy.

Outreach

- Joined AIBS and SPNHC in co-hosting an educational webinar on repatriation, delving into the scope of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), recent updates to NAGPRA regulations, and how it relates to natural history collections.
 - Partnered with SPNHC to promote their Natural History Collections Education DemoCamp, which is designed to provide materials and resources to educators to engage students with the natural world.
 - Continuing to collaborate with international partners, including BCoN, GBIF, DiSCCo, iDigBio, Atlas of Living Australia, SANBI, and others, as a member of the International Partners for the Digital Extended Specimen. IPDES facilitates the coordination of a globally integrated network of stakeholders to build an extensible technical and social infrastructure of data, tools, and working practices in support of the Digital Extended Specimen vision.
 - Promoted National Fossil Day, which is organized by the National Park Service.
 - Alerted the natural science collections community to advocacy campaigns, opportunities to provide input on policy proposals, and calls to nominate individuals to expert panels.
 - Provided regular policy and news updates via the NSC Alliance Washington Report. The newsletter is freely available. Subscribe at www.nscalliance.org.
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The NSC Alliance is a nonprofit association that supports natural science collections, their human resources, the institutions that house them, and their research activities for the benefit of science and society. Our institutional members are part of an international community of institutions that house natural science collections and utilize them in research, exhibitions, academic and informal science education, and outreach activities.

Visit our website to learn more:

www.nscalliance.org

