

national network of advisors and partnering institutions.

The Directorate for Engineering manages I-Corps, but interested researchers should first discuss proposal ideas with a topic-specific program

officer such as Galvin. Potential applicants should then talk to an I-Corps program officer—only proposals with prior written authorization from an I-Corps program officer are accepted.

Up to 100 I-Corps awards will be

made annually, with submission deadlines of March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15. More information on the I-Corps program can be accessed at [www.nsf.gov/i-corps](http://www.nsf.gov/i-corps).

**Kendra Redmond**

### NSF announces new workplace flexibility policies

[www.nsf.gov/career-life-balance](http://www.nsf.gov/career-life-balance)

Last fall, Subra Suresh, director of the National Science Foundation, announced the “NSF Career-Life Balance Initiative,” a 10-year plan to provide greater work-related flexibility to women and men in research careers. Among the best practices that NSF will expand Foundation-wide are ones that will allow researchers to delay or suspend their grants for up to one year in order to care for a newborn or newly adopted child or fulfill other family obligations. This initiative is designed to maximize current

NSF policy to facilitate scientists’ reentry into their professions with minimal loss of momentum.

“Too many young women scientists and engineers get sidetracked or drop their promising careers because they find it too difficult to balance the needs of those careers and the needs of their families,” said Suresh. “This new initiative aims to change that, so that the country can benefit from the full range and diversity of its talent.”

Women currently earn 41% of PhD

degrees in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), but make up only 28% of tenure-track faculty in those fields. According to NSF, reducing the rate in which women leave their STEM careers is especially important in the quest for gender equality because women in STEM jobs earn 33% more than those in non-STEM occupations and the wage gap between women and men in STEM jobs is smaller than in other fields.

NSF is also calling upon universities and research institutes to adopt similar policies for their employees and grantees.

### Directions in the Philippines for emerging science research set

[www.pcierd.dost.gov.ph](http://www.pcierd.dost.gov.ph)

Researchers in the Philippines can now program their research activities in emerging science with the setting up of the sector’s research and development roadmaps.

Led by the Department of Science and Technology’s Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development (DOST-PCIEERD) in workshops held last October, the crafting of the R&D roadmaps involved stakeholders in the fields of genomics and nanotechnology.

“One important thing that you should consider in crafting the roadmaps is the final outcome of the research activity,” Sec. Mario Montejo advised the stake-

holders. “In the end, the final product that comes from research should uplift the lives of the Filipino people.”

In nanotechnology, research activities will center on addressing the top 10 problems of the world in the next 50 years, including energy, water, food, environment, and poverty, among others. In the field of information communications and technology and semiconductors, nanotechnology research will be geared toward building core facilities for nanometrology, solar-cell testing, and failure analysis. Also set in the pipeline are nanomaterials sample preparation, chemical analysis and imaging, advanced materials, and high-resolution characterization.

Nanotechnology studies with energy applications will focus on device structures, bulk heterojunction-type solar cells, water-splitting photovoltaic system, and hydrogen fuel cells.

The stakeholders in this field also laid out plans to develop human resources, linkages, and marketing schemes of potential technologies to the industry.

In the field of health genomics, R&D will focus more on the development of diagnostic kits for commonly encountered diseases. Also set in the pipeline are molecular marker studies, DNA fingerprinting, sustainable drug discovery, and bioenergy production.

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