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Leading Technology Advocacy Organizations Urge Congress to Support NIST Funding Request for Responsible AI Innovation

More than 80 organizations, companies, and universities joined a letter asking congressional appropriators to fully fund the National Institute of Standards and Technology budget request for AI-related work in the upcoming fiscal year.

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 23, 2024 — Today, leading AI and technology advocacy organizations Americans for Responsible Innovation (ARI), BSA | The Software Alliance, Center for AI Safety (CAIS), Federation of American Scientists (FAS), and Public Knowledge sent a [joint letter](#) calling on Congress to prioritize funding for the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) fiscal year 2025 budget request.

The letter, which was signed by more than 80 industry, civil society, nonprofit, university, trade association, and research laboratory groups, urges investment in NIST's effort to advance AI research, standards, and testing, including through the agency's recently established U.S. AI Safety Institute.

“As cutting-edge AI systems rapidly evolve, ensuring NIST has the resources it needs to drive responsible AI innovation is essential to maintain America's technological leadership and safeguard our future,” the organizations wrote.

The joint advocacy effort, backed by industry, academia, and groups from across the AI policy spectrum, calls for the establishment of an effective AI governance framework through NIST, including technical standards, test methods, and objective evaluation techniques for the emerging technology. In addition to asking congressional leaders to meet the agency's \$48 million request for its Scientific and Technical Research Services account, the groups also expressed concern over cuts in the most recent federal budget, which could jeopardize sustainable and responsible AI development in the U.S.

“NIST has a well-earned reputation around the world for establishing the standard for rigorous and innovative measurement science, especially when it comes to emerging and rapidly evolving technologies like artificial intelligence,” said [ARI](#) President [Brad Carson](#). “By supporting this foundational work with the necessary resources, Congress can ensure continued American leadership in the global governance of AI.”

“BSA strongly supports the funding of NIST, which serves as a trusted resource for companies and organizations committed to the responsible development and deployment of AI,” said [BSA | The Software Alliance](#) CEO [Victoria Espinel](#). “The resources developed by NIST, including the AI Risk Management Framework, provide organizations with the ability to accurately identify and manage AI risks.”

“CAIS is proud to co-lead this letter to support full funding for NIST's efforts to develop and govern artificial intelligence (AI) systems and technologies safely and responsibly. NIST recently launched the U.S. Artificial Intelligence Safety Institute (USAISI), demonstrating our commitment to safeguarding U.S. global leadership in AI that would harness the power of AI for societal benefits and underscore our

commitment to mitigating its risks. I urge Congress to support NIST in fulfilling this crucial mission,” said [Dan Hendrycks](#), Executive Director, [Center for AI Safety \(CAIS\)](#).

“NIST cannot fulfill its mission to advance responsible AI innovation without immediate, adequate financial support. To pinch pennies now would be a shortsighted mistake, with both the future of responsible AI and global competitiveness on a key emerging technology hanging in the balance. We at the Federation of American Scientists are proud to co-lead this request because of our longstanding commitment to responsible AI innovation and our critical work identifying needs across AI risk measurement, management, and trustworthy AI,” said [Dan Correa](#), CEO of [FAS](#).

“NIST is a critical forum for technically informed, multi-stakeholder development of policies and guidelines. As we look for ways to establish American leadership in innovative, trustworthy, and responsible AI development and deployment, we need forums like NIST to be more well-supported – not operating with slashed budgets,” said [Public Knowledge](#) President and CEO [Chris Lewis](#).

The letter, which was submitted to Senate Appropriations Chair Patty Murray (D-WA), Vice Chair Susan Collins (R-ME), and subcommittee leaders Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Jerry Moran (R-KS), as well as House Appropriations Chair Tom Cole (R-OK), Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), and subcommittee leaders Hal Rogers (R-KY) and Matt Cartwright (D-PA), can be found [here](#).

In addition to Americans for Responsible Innovation (ARI), BSA | The Software Alliance, Center for AI Safety (CAIS), Federation of American Scientists (FAS), and Public Knowledge, the letter is signed by Accountable Tech, AI Forensics, AI Policy Institute, Alliance for Digital Innovation, Amazon, American Civil Liberties Union, Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence, BABL AI, Backpack Healthcare, Bentley Systems, Box, Capitol Technology University, Carnegie Mellon University, Center for AI and Digital Policy, Center for AI Policy, Center for Democracy & Technology, Cisco, CivAI, Clarifai, Cohere, Common Crawl Foundation, Credo AI, Docusign, Drexel University, Duke University, Duquesne University — Carl G Grefenstette Center for Ethics, EleutherAI, Encode Justice, FAIR Institute, FAR AI, Fight for the Future, ForHumanity, Free Software Foundation, Future of Life Institute, Future of Privacy Forum, Gesund.ai, GitHub, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Hitachi, Hugging Face, Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, IBM, Imbue, Inclusive Abundance Initiative, Information Ethics & Equity Institute, Information Technology Industry Council (ITI), Institute for AI Policy & Strategy (IAPS), Institute for Progress, Intel, ITIF Center for Data Innovation, Johns Hopkins University, Kyndryl, Leela AI, LF AI & Data Foundation, Lucid Privacy Group, Machine Intelligence Research Institute, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Mastercard, Microsoft, National Retail Federation, New America’s Open Technology Institute, OpenAI, Palantir, Public Citizen, Responsible AI Institute, Safer AI, Salesforce, SandboxAQ, SAP, SAS Institute, Scale AI, SecureBio, ServiceNow, The Future Society, The Leadership Conference’s Center for Civil Rights and Technology, Transformative Futures Institute, TrueLaw, Trustible, Twilio, UC Berkeley, Center for Human-Compatible AI, University at Buffalo — Center for Embodied Autonomy and Robotics, University of South Carolina — AI Institute, and Workday.

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About Americans for Responsible Innovation (ARI)

Americans for Responsible Innovation (ARI) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to policy advocacy in the public interest, focused on emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI). Learn more at www.ari.us.