

Federal Government Update - 9.11.26 ^[1]

September 11, 2026 by [Riley Black](#) ^[2]

Dear Colleagues,

Please find a federal government update from our teams.

NSF Releases Golden Age of Science Strategy

The National Science Foundation (NSF) [unveiled](#) ^[3] on Sept. 10 plans to implement the priorities and principles contained in the White House report, [Science: A New Golden Age](#) ^[4]. In a [letter](#) ^[5] addressed to “The Science and Technology Community” NSF acting director, Brian Stone, says the agency will redouble its commitment to foundational research, while also “introducing new and ambitious ideas” – some of which have already been announced, including the [X-Labs](#) ^[6]. NSF will also establish the following four inaugural multi-directorate Frontier Initiatives: Future of Intelligence, Frontier of Quantum Phenomena, Advanced Materials and Matter and Foundations of Biological Design.

In addition, NSF will create an Office of Metascience within the Office of the Director, which will work across NSF directorates to “develop and rigorously evaluate new approaches to funding, merit review, program management and the adoption of emerging tools.” The agency is also renewing its commitment to talent development with the goal of opening pathways “for all Americans with technical aptitude and interest to translate their potential into STEM careers.” NSF will continue its support for the prestigious [Graduate Research Fellowship Program](#) ^[7] (GRFP). CU Boulder ranks 14th in the nation for GRFP fellows with [40 graduate student recipients](#) ^[8] this year.

NSF will release additional dear colleague letters and announcements, including a series of “Grand Research Challenges,” in the coming weeks and months.

NIAID, DoW Enter Interagency Agreement

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) [announced](#) ^[9] on Aug. 28 an interagency agreement ^[10] with the Department of War (DoW) to collaborate on biodefense and pandemic preparedness research, including certain projects funded by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). The agreement allows NIAID-funded projects related to pandemic influenza, chemical and biological threats, and emerging infectious diseases to be transferred to DoW on a project-by-project basis. NIH says the partnership will support the development of medical countermeasures, including therapeutics, diagnostics and personal protective equipment.

DHS Proposes Rule to Eliminate Nonimmigrant 60-Day Grace Period

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) published a proposed rule ^[11] in the Federal Register on Sept. 11 that would remove current regulations that give nonimmigrant workers, including skilled workers on H-1B visas, a maximum 60-day grace period to find new

employment authorization if they lose their job. The 60-day grace period has been in place since 2017, [reports](#) ^[12] Reuters. Public comments on the proposal are due Nov. 10, 2026.

DOE Announces Town Hall on Genesis Mission Graduate Fellowship

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) will host a [virtual town hall](#) ^[13] on Sept. 23 to inform the implementation of a new Genesis Mission Graduate Fellowship Pilot. The pilot will create “innovative 4-year PhD pathways that include dual-competency ‘AI + discipline’ research programs at universities integrated with two high-impact research experiences,” according to DOE. DOE is inviting university speakers to address topics including dual-competency, advantages and barriers to 4-year PhD tracks, recruitment and more. CU Federal Relations is working with the campuses on securing CU representation at the town hall.

The Federal Relations and General Counsel teams are actively monitoring developments at the federal level. We are working closely with the President and Chancellors, as well as the Colorado congressional delegation to champion CU priorities. We are committed to keeping you informed. Please visit the [CU System Federal Updates and Actions page](#) ^[14] for up-to-date communications and federal memos.

Danielle Radovich Piper, Sr. VP External Relations and Strategy
Kerry Tipper, Vice President, University Counsel

[Federal Weekly Updates](#) ^[15]

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[6] <https://www.nsf.gov/news/nsf-announces-15b-nsf-x-labs-initiative-pursue-generational>

[7] <https://www.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/grfp-nsf-graduate-research-fellowship-program/nsf26-526/solicitation> [8] <https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/2026/04/14/grfp-graduate-research-fellowship-program-nsf-prestigious-fellowship-awarded-40-graduate-students>

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[10] <https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmedia.defense.gov%2F2026%2FSep%2F04%2F1%2F1%2F0%2FINTERAGENCY-AGREEMENT-NIH-AND-DOW-REDACTED.PDF&data=05%7C02%7Cheather.bene%40cu.edu%7C1c5cb56aa6bc4ff5e4dd08df0e9612af%7C>

[11] <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/09/11/2026-18631/eliminating-the-discretionary-60-day-grace-period> [12] <https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/trump-administration-proposes-waiving-grace-period-h-1b-holders-after-job-loss-2026-09-10/>

[13] https://web.cvent.com/event/8313b07c-aabb-4eae-96dd-cd2d4eb01612/summary?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery [14]

<https://www.cu.edu/office-government-relations/federal-relations/federal-updates-and-actions>

[15] <https://www.cu.edu/blog/government-relations/tag/federal-weekly-updates>