

GENERAL SCIENCE

NSF Stresses Research

► THE NATIONAL Science Foundation is asking Congress for a \$275,000,000 appropriation for fiscal 1962—an increase of more than \$99,000,000 over funds made available during the current fiscal year.

Largest share of the increase, if granted, would be allocated to Foundation programs for support of basic scientific research, largely at colleges and universities. A total of \$175,900,000 is proposed for such programs, increasing this year's available amount by \$75,915,000.

In a statement presented to justify the estimate at hearings before a subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations, the Foundation pointed to the reported need for 1,200,000 new scientists and engineers by 1970, plus an additional 400,000 to replace losses in the present work force.

"Educational institutions must be strengthened to meet their responsibilities for the advancement of science," the Foundation emphasized.

Immediate needs cited in addition to more basic research include new facilities and equipment, self-improvement courses for faculty members, updated course content and materials, expanded programs to support students with high ability, improved science teaching at the high school level, and improved programs for disseminating science information.

The \$89,300,000 total for individual grants and contracts in basic research would enable the Foundation to support about 36% of an estimated \$248,000,000 in research proposals expected to be received in fiscal 1962. Support would be provided on a 60% (of dollar value) basis for continuing research projects, and 18% for beginning projects.

Other phases of the program involve \$30,000,000 for improvement of graduate research laboratories at universities and other institutions; \$8,500,000 to complete building and equipment of two vessels for oceanographic research; \$10,500,000 for major research programs involving both Government agencies and non-Government institutions; and \$8,000,000 for the Foundation's information programs.

In the Foundation's education programs, \$20,000,000 is sought for scholastic fellowships; \$38,000,000 for special institutes for science and mathematics teachers; \$10,000,000 for course subject-matter content improvement; \$12,000,000 for aid to outstanding college undergraduates; and \$4,500,000 for aid to outstanding high school students.

"Delay (in accelerating the overall program) will only increase the ultimate cost both in terms of money and of lost talents," the Foundation warned.

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Edison in Hall of Fame

► THOMAS ALVA EDISON was the 25th scientist or inventor honored by having his bust placed among the busts of "Great Americans" in New York University's Hall of Fame, June 4.

The illustrious of America attain this bid for immortality in this manner: An electoral college is set up consisting of 120 Americans selected by the director of the Hall of Fame, now Dr. Ralph W. Sockman, and ratified by the senate of New York University. The electoral college meets every five years to select new additions to the Hall of Fame for that half decade. In addition to the new nominations, all those who received 20 or more votes in the election five years previously are considered.

The Hall of Fame was endowed by Mrs. Helen Gould Shepard. The first year elections were made to the Hall was 1900. In that year 29 Americans were honored in the Hall and of these seven were scientists or inventors. They were:

John James Audubon, ornithologist and renowned painter of birds, 1785-1851. Benjamin Franklin, 1706-1790, famous for his pioneer experiments on electricity, and great statesman and philosopher; Robert Fulton, 1765-1815, inventor who gave us the steamboat; Asa Gray, 1810-1888, botanist; Thomas Jefferson, scientist-farmer-President,

1743-1826; Samuel Finley Breese Morse, 1791-1872, inventor who developed the telegraph, and Eli Whitney, 1765-1825, inventor of the cotton gin.

Of the eight elected to the Hall of Fame in 1905, only one scientist was included. That was the great woman astronomer, Maria Mitchell, 1818-1889.

In 1910 ten new busts were placed in the Hall of Fame, but no scientists were represented among them. In 1915, more recognition was given to scientists and inventors. Of the nine placed there, three were scientists or inventors: Louis Agassiz, 1807-1873, Swiss-born American naturalist; Joseph Henry, 1797-1878, physicist and first secretary of the Smithsonian Institution; and Elias Howe, 1819-1867, inventor of the sewing machine.

In the 1920's, 11 busts were added to the collection but no scientists were included.

In the 1930's only seven new busts were placed in the collection but these included Matthew Fontaine Maury, 1806-1873, oceanographer, and Simon Newcomb, 1835-1909, astronomer.

The next decade saw the admission of five new busts, including that of Walter Reed, Army surgeon who determined that the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito is the only carrier of yellow fever. The 1950's saw the

admission of nine new busts and of these six were scientists or inventors: Alexander Graham Bell, to whom we owe the telephone; Josiah Willard Gibbs, mathematician and physicist; William Crawford Gorgas, who, acting on the discovery of Walter Reed, wiped out the mosquito carrier of yellow fever and so eliminated that dread disease in Cuba and other important parts of the world; Theodore Roosevelt, President, who was also naturalist and conservationist; George Westinghouse, inventor; and Wilbur Wright, pioneer in aviation.

In 1960, three new names were voted to the Hall of Fame. Beside Edison, Henry D. Thoreau, 1817-1862, naturalist and writer, and Edward A. MacDowell were enshrined.

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