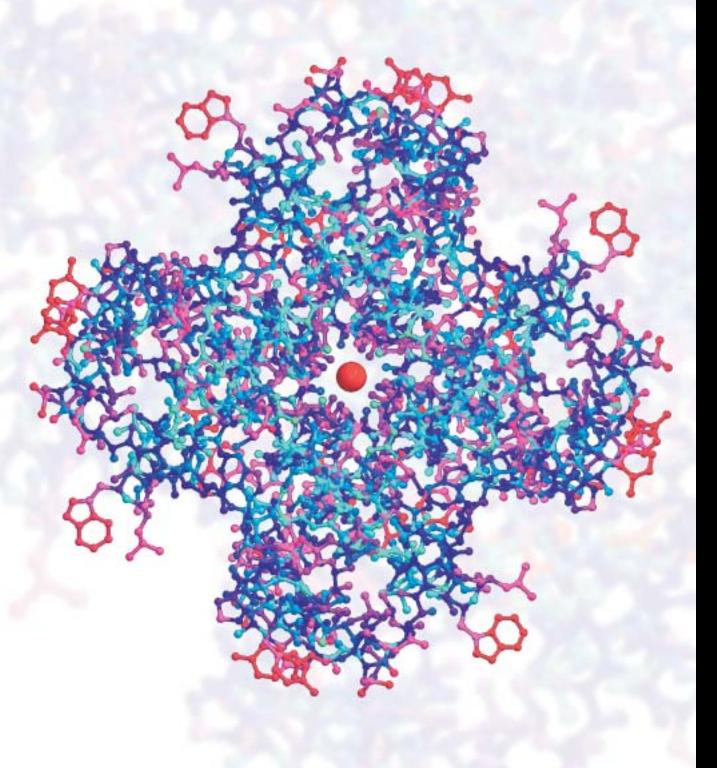
Science and Engineering Indicators 2004

Volume 1



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President Emeritus, Texas A&M University

DELORES M. ETTER

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NINA V. FEDOROFF

Willaman Professor of Life Sciences, Director, Life Sciences Consortium and Director, Biotechnology Institute, The Pennsylvania State University

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Professor and Former President, Grinnell College

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DOUGLAS D. RANDALL

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MICHAEL G. ROSSMANN

Hanley Distinguished Professor of Biological Sciences, Department of Biological Sciences, Purdue University

MAXINE SAVITZ

General Manager, Technology Partnerships, Honeywell (Retired)

LUIS SEQUEIRA

J.C. Walker Professor Emeritus, Departments of Bacteriology and Plant Pathology, University of Wisconsin, Madison

DANIEL SIMBERLOFF

Nancy Gore Hunger Professor of Environmental Science, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Tennessee

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Chancellor, Washington University in St. Louis

RITA R. COLWELL

Member Ex Officio and Chair, Executive Committee, Director, National Science Foundation

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National Science Board Subcommittee on Science and Engineering Indicators
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Cover Image

Model of the potassium channel in the bacterium Streptomyces lividans.

Roderick MacKinnon's discovery of the details of this structure and his explanation for how membranes pass electrical charge through cell walls led to his 2003 Nobel Prize in Chemistry. The potassium ion is shown in red at the center of the channel in the symmetrical structure. The surrounding four identical subunits of the protein are conserved in all known potassium ion channels. MacKinnon's work was supported by the National Institutes of Health at the Cornell High Energy Synchrotron Source (CHESS), a facility developed around an accelerator funded by the National Science Foundation originally built for studies of high-energy physics. (Cover image reprinted with permission from *Science* volume 280, number 5360, issue of 3 April 1998, copyright 1998 AAAS.)

Recommended Citation

National Science Board. 2004. *Science and Engineering Indicators 2004*. Two volumes. Arlington, VA: National Science Foundation (volume 1, NSB 04-1; volume 2, NSB 04-1A).



January 15, 2004

The Honorable George W. Bush The President of the United States The White House Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

It is my honor to transmit to you, and through you to the Congress, the sixteenth in the series of biennial Science Indicators reports, *Science and Engineering Indicators—2004*. The National Science Board submits this report in accordance with Sec. 4(j)1 of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended.

The Science Indicators series was designed to provide a broad base of quantitative information about U.S. science, engineering, and technology for use by public and private policymakers. Because of the spread of scientific and technological capabilities around the world, this report presents a significant amount of material about these international capabilities and analyzes the U.S. position in this broader context.

Science and Engineering Indicators—2004 contains quantitative analyses of key aspects of the scope, quality, and vitality of the Nation's science and engineering enterprise. The report presents information on science, mathematics, and engineering education at all levels; the scientific and engineering workforce; U.S. and international R&D performance and competitiveness in high technology; and public attitudes and understanding of science and engineering. In response to user demand, it contains a new chapter on state-level science and engineering indicators. An overview chapter presents the key themes emerging from these analyses.

This report demonstrates the strength the United States has derived from the open flow of ideas. Maintaining this openness and the relative advantage it has bestowed on the country remains crucial to the Nation's security and well-being. The proponents of openness, not those who stand ready to subvert science and technology for malevolent ends, are in the best position to exploit the fruits of science.

I hope that you, your Administration, and the Congress will find the new quantitative information and analysis in the report useful and timely for informing thinking and planning on national priorities, policies, and programs in science, engineering and technology.

Respectfully yours,

Warren M. Washington

Acknowledgments

The National Science Board extends its appreciation to the staff of the National Science Foundation for preparing this report. Organizational responsibility for the volume was assigned to the Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences, Norman M. Bradburn, Assistant Director.

Primary responsibility for the production of the volume was assigned to the Science and Engineering Indicators Program under the direction of Rolf Lehming of the Division of Science Resources Statistics (SRS); Lynda T. Carlson, Division Director; Mary J. Frase, Deputy Division Director.

The authors of the manuscript were:

Overview. Rolf Lehming, SRS

Chapter 1. Martha Alt, Xianglei Chen, Susan Choy, Jennifer Laird, MPR Associates

Chapter 2. Jean M. Johnson, SRS, Terry S. Woodin,

Chapter 3. Mark C. Regets, SRS

Chapter 4. Francisco A. Moris, Brandon Shackelford,

SRS

Chapter 5. Alan Rapoport, Derek Hill, SRS

Chapter 6. Lawrence M. Rausch, SRS

Chapter 7. Melissa F. Pollak, SRS

Chapter 8. Paula C. Dunnigan, Greg A. Palovchik,

Taratec Corporation

Alan Rapoport, John Gawalt, and Rolf Lehming directed the physical production of the volume, which benefited from extensive contributions from SRS staff. The division's senior staff and survey managers assured timely availability of data under often stringent deadlines: Richard J. Bennof, Joan S. Burrelli, Leslie J. Christovich, Mary J. Golladay, Susan T. Hill, John E. Jankowski, Kelly H. Kang, Nirmala Kannankutty, Mary M. Machen, Ronald L. Meeks, John Tsapogas, and Raymond M. Wolfe.

Robert K. Bell, Mary J. Frase, and Judith S. Sunley rendered critical assistance in preparation and review; Ronald S. Fecso provided advice with statistical and data presentation issues. Deborah A. Collins, Raj S. Raut, Tanya R. Gore, Maurya Green, and Terri S. Smith offered support with graphics and logistics.

The preparation of this report has benefited from close involvement of the National Science Board, from the development of narrative outlines to intensive reviews involving all board members. Their generous contribution of time, effort, and expertise under often stringent schedules is gratefully acknowledged. National Science Board staff provided crucial input and assistance at all stages of the project. Michael P. Crosby provided vital coordination, and Cathy Hines ably served as Executive Secretary to the Science and Engineering Indicators Subcommittee, taking over from Mary Poats.

Many others beyond the authors, National Science Board members and NSB and SRS staff provided invaluable assistance as reviewers or offered valuable substantive and statistical comments and expertise to this report. They are listed as Reviewers and Contributors.

The report was edited by Beverly Cook and associates of Aspen Systems Corporation, under the direction of Rolfe W. Larson; Cheryl S. Roesel and Tanya R. Gore provided additional editing services. Eileen Kessler and the staff of OmniStudio, Inc., provided composition and production services for the print and electronic materials. John R. Gawalt and Alan I. Rapoport produced the Information Cards. Web site design, coding, and final production was managed by Peg Whalen and performed by De Q. Vo, Bridget Tuthill, Elise Manalang, Jason Shaffer, Moe Than, and Jennifer Nowak of Compuware Corporation.

NSF's Office of Legislative and Public Affairs (OLPA), under the guidance of Curt Suplee, Director, provided media and Congressional liaison support for the report. Special thanks go to Bill Noxon and David Hart for media support and to David M. Stonner for Congressional relations support. Patricia S. Williams and her staff in the Division of Acquisition and Cost Support provided contractual assistance throughout the project.

Contributors and Reviewers

The following persons contributed to the report by reviewing chapters or otherwise assisting in its preparation. Their help is greatly appreciated.

Stuart Anderson, former Deputy INS Commissioner for Policy

John Armstrong, IBM, retired

Robert K. Bell, National Science Foundation

Dan Berglund, State Science and Technology Institute

Myles Boylan, National Science Foundation

John Bradley, National Science Foundation

Sarah Calderon, MPR Associates

Jill L. Cape, Taratec Corporation

Ann Carlson, Office of Science and Technology Policy

Lynda T. Carlson, National Science Foundation

David Cheney, SRI International

Kathryn Chval, National Science Foundation

James Colby, National Science Foundation

Susan Cozzens, Georgia Institute of Technology

Connie Della-Piana, National Science Foundation

Chip Denman, National Capital Area Skeptics

Doug Devereaux, Department of Commerce

James Duderstadt, University of Michigan

Jules Duga, Battelle Memorial Institute

Janice Earle, National Science Foundation

Karolyn Eisenstein, National Science Foundation

Emerson Elliott, National Council for Accreditation of

Teacher Education

Irwin Feller, Pennsylvania State University, emeritus Michael Finn, Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education

Amy K. Flatten, Office of Science and Technology Policy Donna Fowler, MPR Associates

Mary J. Frase, National Science Foundation

Susan Fuhrman, University of Pennsylvania

Carolyn L. Funk, Virginia Commonwealth University

Fred Gault, Statistics Canada

Alan Goodman, Institute of International Education

James A. Griffin, Office of Science and Technology Policy

David Halpern, Office of Science and Technology Policy

Kimberly Hamilton, CHI Research, Inc.

Peter Henderson, National Academy of Sciences

Jim Hirabayashi, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

John Jankowski, National Science Foundation

Elka Jones, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Kei Koizumi, American Association for the Advancement of Science

Bobbi Kridl, MPR Associates

Karen Laney-Cummings, U.S. Department of Commerce

Michelle Lennihan, Council on Competitiveness

Xiaojie Li, MPR Associates

Lindsey Lowell, Georgetown University

Jane Maienschein, Arizona State University

Charles M. Meadows, Taratec Corporation

Mary Ellen Mogee, Mogee Research & Analysis, LLC

Robert P. Morgan, Washington University, retired

Seth Muzzy, ORC Macro

Fran Narin, CHI Research, Inc.

Jongwon Park, SRI International

Greg Pearson, National Academy of Engineering

Willie Pearson, Jr., Georgia Institute of Technology

Rolf Piekarz, National Science Foundation, retired

Andrew Porter, University of Wisconsin

Susanna Hornig Priest, Texas A&M University

Joan Prival, National Science Foundation

Stacie Propst, Research! America

Senta Raizen, National Center for Improving Science

Education/WestEd

Judith Ramaley, National Science Foundation

Lauren Resnick, University of Pittsburgh

Deborah Runkle, American Association for the

Advancement of Science

Gerhard Salinger, National Science Foundation

Roland W. Schmitt, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute,

President Emeritus

Susan Sclafani, U.S. Department of Education

William Sibley, Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology

Jennifer Slimowitz, National Academy of Sciences

Thomas Smith, Vanderbilt University

Thomas Snyder, U.S. Department of Education

Paula Stephan, Georgia State University

Judith S. Sunley, National Science Foundation

Larry Suter, National Science Foundation

Peter Syverson, Council of Graduate Schools

Gregory Tassey, National Institute of Standards and Technology

John Taylor, National Venture Capital Association

Albert H. Teich, American Association for the

Advancement of Science

Toby Ten Eyck, Michigan State University

Marie Thursby, Georgia Institute of Technology

David Trinkle, Office of Management and Budget

Brigitte van Beuzekom, Organisation for Economic

Cooperation and Development

Jean Vanski, National Science Foundation

Nicholas Vonortas, George Washington University

Wanda Ward, National Science Foundation

Charles Wessner, National Academies

Mary Woolley, Research! America

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