

Expanding Partnerships for Innovation and Competitiveness (EPIC) Act

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The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) promotes U.S. innovation and competitiveness by advancing measurement science, standards, and technology in ways that enhance economic security and improve quality of life. NIST currently lacks the flexibility to vigorously promote interactions between academia, industry, and government agencies that would enable it to fully achieve its objectives, including more rapid technology transfer to the private sector. Funding constraints create missed opportunities for public-private collaboration in critical technology areas, delayed standards development, aging infrastructure, staffing challenges, and reduced research capacity.

To provide scientific agencies with a broader range of tools, Congress has authorized independent foundations to support the NIH, CDC, USDA, and DOE. These foundations work synergistically with their related agency to facilitate public-private R&D partnerships, allow private and philanthropic funds to supplement federal R&D funding, and increase commercialization of federally funded R&D.

A NIST Foundation would improve and expand research, commercialization, and standard setting for emerging technologies by enabling public-private collaboration and mobilizing resources.

The EPIC Act:

Establishes a Foundation for Standards and Metrology (FSM) to engage with the private and philanthropic sectors to support NIST's mission in advancing measurement science, technical standards, and emerging technology research. The FSM will—

- **Increase access to private and philanthropic funding.** As a non-profit organization, FSM will have the flexibility to engage with various sources for funds to support NIST initiatives and attract new non-traditional partners.
- **Advance collaboration.** FSM will convene industry, non-profit and philanthropic organizations, and institutions of higher education with NIST researchers to advance shared goals.
- **Train tomorrow's workforce.** FSM will support education and training of new researchers in emerging technologies through awards, grants, and fellowships. FSM will also provide funding and professional development opportunities for NIST researchers to recruit and retain talent at the agency.

Endorsers of the EPIC Act: Four former Directors of NIST, SEMI Americas, Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA), NIST Coalition, SPIE, SeedAI, Institute for Progress, Information Technology and Innovation Foundation (ITIF), Center for AI Policy, Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA), Institute for AI Policy and Strategy, Carnegie Mellon University, University of Colorado, Boulder, Americans for Responsible Innovation, ChainGuard, CJW Quantum Consulting LLC CEO, American Physical Society, ACT | The App Association, CivAI, SandboxAQ, American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), Google.