

IEEE-USA POSITION STATEMENT

ASSURING SOUND TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT

***Adopted by the IEEE-USA
Board of Directors, 23 June 2017***

Since World War II, the United States has been the world's scientific and engineering leader and, consequently, its economic leader as well. However, this leadership is being challenged, as other nations observe U. S technological capabilities and strive to match and even surpass them. With science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) becoming ever more important to national security and economic well-being, the need for well-qualified scientists and engineers at the highest levels of government becomes ever greater. It is essential that each president move expeditiously to fill the positions described below, and then retain those positions filled with outstanding personnel possessing in-depth STEM experience.

Specifically, IEEE-USA recommends that the President:

- Appoint a highly respected scientist or engineer with strong leadership abilities, broad knowledge of technical issues, and deep ties to the nation's science and engineering community to be the Assistant to the President for Science and Technology. The key role of this science and engineering advisor is not so much to answer STEM questions as it is to identify what questions need to be asked and to know how to obtain the answers. This political appointee would also usually serve as Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.
- Appoint effective technical leaders to other key science and engineering positions, including:
 - Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering,
 - Undersecretary of Homeland Security for Science and Technology
 - Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration
 - Administrator of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration,
 - Director of the National Institutes of Health,
 - Director National Institute of Standards and Technology,
 - Director of the National Science Foundation,
 - Director of the Department of Energy's Office of Science,
 - Other presidential appointees with major science and technology responsibilities; and
 - STEM-related senior positions in the Office of Management and Budget.

- Appoint well-qualified scientists and engineers with diverse backgrounds to comprise the President's Council of Advisors in Science and Technology (PCAST).

This statement was developed by the IEEE-USA Research and Development Policy Committee and represents the considered judgment of a group of U.S. IEEE members with expertise in the subject field. IEEE-USA advances the public good and promotes the careers and public policy interests of the nearly 200,000 engineering, computing and allied professionals who are U.S. members of the IEEE. The positions taken by IEEE-USA do not necessarily reflect the views of IEEE, or its other organizational units.