

Essay on a review of the need for government funding science

[Science](#), [Genetics](#)



Science and scientific research are very important undertakings of any government that cares about its citizens. Think about the health sector; how would it be if the government stopped funding its research? There would definitely be a crisis in such a sector. This is research intended for the public good. Besides, no company or individual has enough economic muscle to fund such research. However, there are other forms of research funded by the government, which many people feel do not deserve such funding. A research intended to move technology or technological products to whole new heights is considered by many as a research that should be funded by individuals or companies and not the government. According to Henry Miller in his book, *Investing in Bad Science: The dubious Projects of Government Agencies*, for a research to be legitimately federally funded, it should a) follow recognized experimental methodologies, b) be in the national interest, and c) focus on nontrivial questions or problems. Unfortunately, these seemingly simple criteria are often contravened.

Think of the National Science Foundation (NSF) getting an \$84, 000 grant for a research to find out why people fall in love and another \$500, 000 to discover which particular stimuli cause monkeys, human beings and rats to bite with clenched jaws. It is ridiculous.

Former Alaska Governor and presidential candidate Sarah Palin once said: “ Sometimes these dollars go to projects that have little or nothing to do with the public good. Things like fruit fly research in Paris, France. I kid you not.” But on the other hand, what the public might consider trivial could actually be very beneficial to them. For example, Sarah Palin’s judgement on the importance of a research in fruit flies was uninformed since the organism

shares almost half of its genes with humans and the research generated very crucial information regarding the human aging process and how genes normally work.

In conclusion, the government needs to have a clear policy on which specific scientific research projects should be funded and which ones don't deserve funding, instead of funding research in general and leaving the choice of the projects at the discretion of the National Science Foundation.