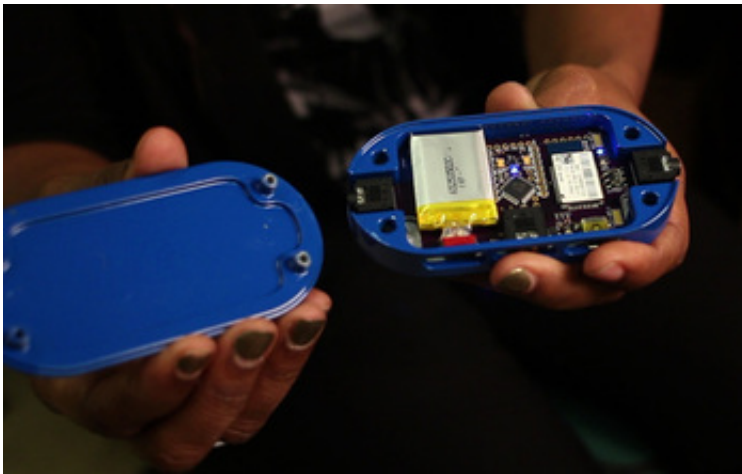


# New initiative targets emerging models of technological innovation

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Stakeholders from academia, business, nonprofits and government can work together to accelerate the translation of science and engineering research into real-world implementations and realize the innovations so necessary for societal progress and well-being. With support from an NSF grant, Georgia Tech robotics professor Ayanna Howard developed an input device that would enable children with disabilities to operate tablet computers. She wanted to commercialize the technology to get it into the hands of the children and has started a company, Zyrobotics, to commercialize the device. With the help of NSF's Innovation Corps program, a public-private partnership, she found that the device has a much larger market than she originally imagined, extending to adults with disabilities and potentially to persons with Alzheimer's. Credit: Maxwell Guberman, Georgia Institute of Technology

Technological innovation—as essential as ever for economic

growth—now occurs in a rapidly changing global and local context.

To identify the emerging models of [technological innovation](#) that will propel U.S. competitiveness in the coming decades, the Council on Competitiveness is beginning the Exploring Innovation Frontiers Initiative (EIFI) with support from the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Today, NSF Director Dr. France A. Córdova joins leaders of academia, business, nonprofits and government from the southeastern United States to kick off the two-year initiative in Atlanta, Ga.

Córdova's keynote remarks encourage regional leaders to understand and spur [innovation](#) as it evolves in response to changes in the global economy, financing, physical resources, new technologies and demographics.

"NSF is proud of its role in supporting fundamental and translational research performed at universities and small businesses, which can seed innovations in both private and public sectors," Córdova said.

The U.S. and the world face enormous challenges: to increase the [economic growth rate](#); to provide food, water, energy and other natural resources to rising populations; to protect against cyber and other unconventional threats; and to provide high-quality and cost-effective health care to diverse communities. The need for transformative high-impact innovations has never been greater.

The event, hosted by Georgia Tech, is the first in a series organized by the Council on Competitiveness.

In addition to exploring models of innovation, attendees will discuss tapping into the nation's innovation capacity, nurturing new talent and

ideas, translating innovation into widespread prosperity, and growing national and regional economies.

"The Exploring Innovation Frontiers Initiative is fundamentally about the collective act of sensing," said Deborah L. Wince-Smith, president and CEO, Council on Competitiveness. "In order for complex systems to survive, adapt, evolve and grow in the face of turbulent change, we must sense the meaningful changes on the horizon and begin to prepare our organizations, institutions, and workforce to leverage these changes for future productivity and prosperity."

Additional EIFI events are planned in cities around the country; the next will be hosted by the University of California, Riverside, on Nov. 23, 2015.

"New technologies and new ways of engaging across communities give us remarkable opportunities for innovation across the science and engineering enterprise to bring growth, transformation, and resiliency in the face of regional and global challenges," Córdova said.

The Exploring Innovation Frontiers Initiative is part of a broader NSF effort to establish partnerships to enhance the impacts of NSF investments.

Provided by National Science Foundation

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