

# REVOLUTIONS 250<sup>IN</sup> SCIENCE



## Revolutions in Science: Discovery, Imagination, and the Future

June 25, 2026, 8:30–4:00 pm ET

This year the nation commemorates America's 250th anniversary—a key milestone for the country to reflect on the past 250 years, meet the present moment, and chart an inspired course for our shared future. At a pivotal moment for the American scientific community, the 250th presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to bring experts together on the national stage to highlight the importance of *Revolutions in Science: Discovery, Imagination, and the Future*. This day-long symposium brings together the research community to share groundbreaking research, foster cross-generational dialogue, and explore the next frontiers of science. Throughout the day, we hope you are inspired by the ways:

- Discovery drives leadership
- Public investment makes discovery possible
- People and collaboration power progress
- The next era demands urgency, not complacency

*Co-hosted by the National Academy of Sciences and the Smithsonian Institution, the 250th Revolutions in Science Symposium is made possible through the generosity of our sponsors, Schmidt Sciences and The Kavli Foundation*

### Event Emcee

**Heather Berlin**, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

### 8:30 Welcome & Framing

*This opening session situates the symposium within the nation's 250th anniversary, reflecting on the historic role of scientific discovery in shaping American prosperity and outlining why sustained excellence and public trust are essential for the next 250 years.*

- **Marcia McNutt**, President, National Academy of Sciences
- **Ellen Stofan**, Under Secretary for Science and Research, Smithsonian Institution
- **Stuart Feldman**, President and Chief Scientist, Schmidt Sciences
- **Cynthia Friend**, President and CEO, The Kavli Foundation

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## 8:45 **Signature Keynote: *The Past and Future of Innovation: Can Progress be Sustained?***

This keynote explores how discovery-driven research and practical knowledge have historically powered American leadership and examines whether the nation can sustain that momentum in a globally contested knowledge economy.

- **Joel Mokyr**, Northwestern University

## 9:15 **Fireside Conversation: The Next Era of Discovery**

This conversation will reflect on how foundational research becomes transformative impact, exploring how the discovery ecosystem is evolving and what frontiers may define the next generation of breakthroughs.

Moderator: Heather Berlin, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

- **Frances Arnold**, California Institute of Technology
- **Robert Langer**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology 10:00 Break

10:00 **Break**

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## 10:30 Plenary Panel: **Frontiers of Intelligence: From Brains to Machines**

This session examines the scientific and societal implications of intelligence across biological and artificial systems, exploring how advances in neuroscience and AI are reshaping our understanding of cognition, work, education, and human-machine interaction.

Moderator: **Carla Shatz**, Stanford University

- **Edward Chang**, University of California, San Francisco
- **Ellie Pavlick**, Brown University
- **Joshua Tenenbaum**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

## 11:30 Vision Talks: **AI as a Catalyst for Scientific Discovery**

Short, high-impact presentations highlight how artificial intelligence is accelerating discovery across disciplines—from biology to astrophysics—transforming how scientific questions are asked, investigated, and answered.

Moderator: **Lyman Page**, Princeton University

- **Sara Beery**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- **Tanya Berger-Wolf**, Ohio State University
- **Cecilia Garraffo**, AstroAI Institute, Harvard & Smithsonian

12:15 **Break**

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## 2:40 Afternoon Plenary: The Problems of Today, the Solutions for Tomorrow

Drawing from the day's discussions, this moderated conversation synthesizes recurring challenges and cross-cutting capabilities, examining where scientific opportunity and societal need intersect—and where urgency must replace complacency.

Moderator: **Laurie Leshin**, Arizona State University

- **Jennifer Lewis**, Harvard University
- **Sara Walker**, Arizona State University
- **Huda Zoghbi**, Baylor College of Medicine
- **Maria Zuber**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

## 3:30 Closing Keynote: Imagination for the Next 250 Years

This closing address reflects on the day's themes while looking beyond them, articulating a forward-looking vision of how discovery, imagination, and sustained investment can shape the next era of American science and innovation.

- **Harvey Fineberg**, Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health (emeritus)

## 3:50 Final Thoughts/Reflections

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