

**The Physicists Coalition for Nuclear Threat Reduction**  
*Opportunities for AIP Member Societies*  
September, 2021

*With support from the American Physical Society and Carnegie Corporation, the Physicists Coalition for Nuclear Threat Reduction was established approximately one year ago. The Coalition affords its membership the opportunity to learn about and advocate for measures to reduce the dangers from nuclear weapons. The Coalition wishes to extend this opportunity to all physical scientists and engineers within the AIP umbrella, including members of affiliated societies. The Coalition is described below.*

Recognizing the grave and growing danger to the world posed by nuclear weapons, the American Physical Society (APS) has funded and sponsored a new organization, the [Physicists Coalition for Nuclear Threat Reduction](#). Based at Princeton University's Program on Science and Global Security, the purposes of the Coalition are to (1) educate and engage the US community of physical scientists (including those in engineering science) on the nuclear danger and (2) establish a national network of physical scientists that advocates for steps to reduce the threat. **The Coalition welcomes all physical scientists, including those in engineering science.**

**Opportunity for AIP Member and Affiliate Societies**

The Coalition is reaching out to other AIP member societies, requesting that they afford their membership the same opportunity to engage with this global problem, as has been offered to APS members. We expect that the interest of members of other AIP member societies will be similar to that of APS members, which has been substantial. Colloquia or presentations can be arranged, and information obtained, through the APS organizer for the Coalition, Charlotte Selton ([selton@aps.org](mailto:selton@aps.org)). General information can also be obtained from Stewart Prager ([sprager@princeton.edu](mailto:sprager@princeton.edu)) of the Coalition leadership team.

**Background and Benefits**

Since the advent of the nuclear age, physical scientists have been active in warning of, and arguing to reduce, the risks from nuclear weapons. However, after the end of the Cold War the issue has declined as an active priority for scientists, as it has for the general public. The Coalition offers an opportunity for scientists and engineers to update their knowledge of the nuclear situation and, more importantly, to advocate, as citizen-scientists, for nuclear arms control. Advocacy by the Coalition to Congress and the Executive Branch is conducted through the APS Office of Government Affairs.

To engage the physical science and engineering community, the Coalition [team of arms control experts](#) has been visiting physics departments at universities and elsewhere. At each visit, a colloquium is presented that provides an overview of the technical and policy aspects of nuclear weapons, followed by an informal meeting for those interested in learning about the Coalition. The program began in September 2020 and to date has delivered [60 colloquia](#) at university physics departments across the US and two Department of Energy national laboratories. The Coalition has also presented three APS-sponsored webinars on particular nuclear weapons issues, and one webinar that was sponsored by the American Nuclear Society for its members. The Coalition began its advocacy in the fall 2020. Through a large number of contacts between Coalition members and Congressional offices, the Coalition urged extending the New START Treaty and eliminating funds to prepare for the resumption of nuclear testing (supported by the Senate at the time). Both of these goals, which were supported by other groups as well, were achieved. The Coalition is currently advocating for the US to adopt a no-first-use-policy.

The Coalition also supports a one-year [Next-Generation Fellowship](#), which aims to increase diversity and strengthen the participation of early-career scientists and engineers in advancing nuclear threat reduction.