March 15, 2021

Alondra Nelson, Ph.D.
Deputy Director for Science and Society
White House Office of Science and Technology Policy

Dear Deputy Director Nelson:

On behalf of the Association for Psychological Science (APS), I congratulate you on being named deputy director for science and society. We are thrilled that the behavioral and social sciences are well represented in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

APS is a professional scientific society of 30,000 psychological scientists and students who work to advance research psychology to understand and improve the human condition. The world needs our sciences now more than ever. Behavioral and social research has much to contribute to solutions for significant societal issues, including combatting the COVID pandemic, tackling racism and building more equitable and inclusive communities, and addressing misinformation and the political and economic chaos that it can cause, among many other significant problems. The United States has an important opportunity to benefit from our science to tackle these challenges domestically. We also have an important opportunity to recapture global scientific leadership by promoting new investments and international collaborations in behavioral science research.

In your work at OSTP, we trust that you will be answering the questions that President Biden identified in his January 20 letter to your office. APS stands ready to work with you to promote needed scientific discoveries and the use of high-quality and peer-reviewed science to inform public policy decision-making.

As one point of immediate interest, APS is launching a new initiative to review the lessons we have learned as a consequence of COVID-19. We will assess how to leverage our science to inform solutions to current and future public health crises. We welcome input and engagement from your office as this initiative develops, especially as we ensure that the initiative meets the most critical needs. I welcome your perspective on how this initiative can be most useful to the government.

At your convenience, I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our new initiative and other ways that our science can be used to benefit the public.

Please feel free to contact me at rgropp@psychologicalscience.org or (202) 293-9300 x 120.

Sincerely,

Robert Gropp, Ph.D.
Executive Director