



DALLAS HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
*"Remembering Dallas' past builds her future"*

## Superconducting Super Collider records, 1991-2012, undated

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### Overview

<b>Creator:</b>	United States Department of Energy
<b>Title:</b>	Superconducting Super Collider records
<b>Dates:</b>	1991-2012, undated
<b>Abstract:</b>	Documents and records regarding the proposed building of the Superconducting Super Collider near Waxahachie, Texas.
<b>Identification:</b>	2017.7, unprocessed
<b>Quantity:</b>	9 folders; .29 linear ft.
<b>Language:</b>	Material is in English
<b>Repository:</b>	<a href="#">Dallas Historical Society</a>

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### Historical Note

The system was first formally discussed in the December 1976 National Reference Designs Study, which examined the technical and economic feasibility of a machine with the design capacity of 20 TeV per proton. Fermilab director and subsequent Nobel physics prizewinner Leon Lederman was a very prominent early supporter – some sources say the architect or proposer– of the Superconducting Super Collider project, which was endorsed around 1983, and a major proponent and advocate throughout its lifetime.

An extensive U.S. Department of Energy review was done during the mid-1980s. Seventeen shafts were sunk and 23.5 km (14.6 mi) of tunnel were bored by late 1993.

During the design and the first construction stage, a heated debate ensued about the high cost of the project. In 1987, Congress was told the project could be completed for \$4.4 billion, and it gained the enthusiastic support of Speaker Jim Wright of nearby Fort Worth, Texas. A recurring argument was the contrast with NASA's contribution to the International Space Station (ISS), a similar dollar amount. Critics of the project (Congressmen representing other US states and scientists working in non-SSC fields who felt the money would be better spent on their own fields) argued that the US could not afford both of them. Early in 1993 a group supported by funds from project contractors organized a public relations campaign to lobby Congress directly, but in June, the non-profit Project on Government Oversight released a draft audit report by the Department of Energy's Inspector General heavily criticizing the Super Collider for its high costs and poor management by officials in charge of it.

Congress officially cancelled the project October 21, 1993 after \$2 billion had been spent. Many factors contributed to the cancellation: rising cost estimates (to \$12bn); poor management by physicists and Department of Energy officials; the end of the need to prove the supremacy of American science with the collapse of the Soviet Union; belief that many smaller scientific experiments of equal merit could be funded for the same cost; Congress's desire to generally reduce spending (the USA was running a \$255bn budget deficit); the reluctance of Texas Governor Ann Richards; and President Bill Clinton's initial lack of support for a project begun during the administrations of Richards's predecessor, Bill Clements, and Clinton's predecessors, Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush. The project's cancellation was also eased by opposition from within the scientific community.

Prominent condensed matter physicists, such as Philip W. Anderson and Nicolaas Bloembergen, testified before Congress opposing the project. They argued that, although the SSC would certainly conduct high-quality research, it was not the only way to acquire new fundamental knowledge, as some of its supporters claimed, and so was unreasonably expensive. Scientific critics of the SSC pointed out that basic research in other areas, such as condensed matter physics and materials science, was underfunded compared to high energy physics, despite the fact that those fields were more likely to produce applications with technological and economic benefits. However, in 1993, Clinton tried to prevent the cancellation by asking Congress to continue "to support this important and challenging effort" through completion because "abandoning the SSC at this point would signal that the United States is compromising its position of leadership in basic science".

Following Rep. Jim Slattery's successful orchestration in the House President Clinton signed the bill which finally cancelled the project on October 1, 1993, stating regret at the "serious loss" for science.

Sources: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Superconducting\\_Super\\_Collider](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Superconducting_Super_Collider)

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## **Scope and Contents Note**

Collection is comprised of pamphlets, charts, statistics, photographs, articles, site information, and work descriptions.

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## **Arrangement of the Collection**

The collection is organized into one series:

Series 1: Superconducting Super Collider, 1991-2012, undated

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## **Restrictions**

### **Access Restrictions**

Collection is open for research use.

### **Publication Rights:**

Permission to publish materials must be obtained from the staff of the Dallas Historical Society.

### **Copyright Statement:**

It is the responsibility of the user to obtain copyright authorization.

### **Sensitive Material Statement:**

Manuscript collections and archival records may contain materials with sensitive or confidential information that is protected under federal or state right to privacy laws and regulations. Researchers are advised that the disclosure of certain information pertaining to identifiable living individuals represented in this collection without the consent of those individuals may have legal ramifications for which the Dallas Historical Society assumes no responsibility.

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## **Index Terms**

This collection is indexed under the following terms.

### **Subjects (Persons)**

Leon Lederman

Jim Wright -- Fort Worth

Philip W. Anderson

Nicolaas Bloembergen

Jim Slattery

Roy F.Schwitters

**Subjects (Organizations)**

Project on Government Oversight

U.S. Department of Energy

**Subjects**

National Reference Designs Study

Higgs Boson

**Places**

Waxahachie -- Tex.

**Document Types**

Printed Materials

Photographs

Hard hat

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## **Administrative Information**

### **Preferred Citation**

Collection of the Dallas Historical Society, Superconducting Super Collider records.

### **Processing Information**

Collection is housed in folders but remains unprocessed.

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## **Detailed Description of the Collection**

### **Series 1: Superconducting Super Collider records, 1991-2012, undated 9 folders; .29 linear ft.**

Collection is comprised of pamphlets, charts, statistics, photographs, articles, site information, and work descriptions.

**Box Folder**

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|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | Isotope Crossroads Exercise Handbook, undated<br><br>Problem resolution in a crisis response, Nuclear/Radiological Incident Annex, Terrorism Incident Law Enforcement and Investigation Annex |
|   | 2 | Folder missing,   |
|   | 3 | Superconducting Super Collider Project, Waxahachie, Texas, 1993-2012<br><br>Higgs Boson, Magnet Test Lab  |
|   | 4 | SSC: Briefing Book, 1991<br><br>Pamphlets, fact sheets, lab goals, photographs  |
|   | 5 | SSC: Technical Presentation and Site Tour, undated<br><br>Itinerary, technical briefing, overview, site characteristics, and Texas support.   |
|   | 6 | SSC: Articles, case studies, 1994<br><br>Articles, agendas, and studies.  |
|   | 7 | SSC Lab: Request for quotation, 1994<br><br>Work descriptions, representations and certifications, services.  |
|   | 8 | HCR Consulting Group, 1994<br><br>Communications and Outreach Program.  |
|   | 9 | Texas National Research Laboratory Commission, 1992<br><br>Draft 1992 Public Information Program.   |

**Item**

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|---|---|
| 1 | Hard hat, undated<br><br>Move to 3D collection. |
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