Nancy Jane Kopell is a professor of mathematics at Boston University, where she currently is co-director of the Center for BioDynamics. Kopell co-founded the Center in 1997 with Jim Collins, launching a multidisciplinary effort that combines advanced mathematics, biology and engineering to gain a better understanding of physiological systems in humans and other species and to develop new medical devices and treatments. She also co-founded the Program in Mathematical and Computational Neuroscience to provide graduate students and post-doctoral associates with a background in the physical sciences to work in neuroscience.

Kopell received her PhD in 1967 from the University of California, Berkeley. She held a Moore Instructorship at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1967 to 1969, then joined the faculty at Northeastern University. In 1978 she was promoted to full professor at Northeastern. She has held visiting positions at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in France (1970), MIT (1975, 1976-1977) and the California Institute of Technology (1976). She received Guggenheim and Sloan Fellowships and was an invited speaker at the International Congress of Mathematicians in 1983. In 1990, she was a plenary speaker at two meetings of the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics; that same year, she was awarded a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship. In 1996, she was elected to the National Academy of Sciences, and in the same year was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In April 2000, Kopell was named Boston University’s first William Goodwin Aurelio Professor of Mathematics and Science.