Understanding the Real Costs of Federally-Funded Research

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Resources

- UCSF Video
- ASU Graphic
- Associations Graphic
- US R&D Expenditures
DIRECT FUNDING + FACILITIES & ADMINISTRATIVE COST
Putting the Federal Research Dollar to Work
for Advancing Research, Economic Development & Competitiveness

75¢
Research project costs

25¢
Research support costs (facilities & administrative)

Compliance costs
7¢
Human & animal safety, radiation & chemical safety, lab management
4¢
Data security & telecommunications, information resources
1¢
Contract compliance

Research facilities costs
7¢
Security, Occupational Health & Safety, HVAC
2¢
Shared equipment
2¢
Utilities
2¢
Research space

Workforce development
Student support 27¢
Research staff support 20¢

Economic development
Subcontracts 16¢
Materials, services & travel 10¢
Dedicated equipment 2¢

Photo: Students collaborate in one of ASU’s Department of Psychology labs. Research opportunities for students enrich their education and provide hands-on training.

NAA reimbursement is not used to operate and maintain building space that isn’t used directly for research, such as classrooms or lobbies.

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Costs of Federally Sponsored Research

The total cost of federally sponsored research includes a combination of both direct and facilities and administrative (F&A) costs. Both types of expenditures are key to an institution’s ability to conduct cutting-edge research. F&A consists of the construction and maintenance costs of laboratories and high-tech facilities; energy and utility expenses; and safety, security, and other government-mandated expenses. These costs are real and research cannot be conducted without them.

Direct costs - These expenses solely cover research and include lab supplies and equipment; salaries and stipends for researchers and graduate students; and travel costs for conducting and sharing research.

Upkeep of any building space not used directly for federally-funded research, such as classrooms or lobbies, is not covered by F&A reimbursement.

Radiation and chemical safety, including safety training and hazardous waste disposal.

Utilities - ventilation, heat, air conditioning, water, and lighting.

Secure data storage, internet, telecommunications, and high-speed data processing.

Personal in support of research, including security, financial, administrative, technical, maintenance, and janitorial staff.

Costs of federal, state, and local regulatory compliance, including human and animal safety review boards.

Library and research facilities.

Advanced research lab equipment.

AAMC

Association of American Universities (ethics, research data)

AIRC Association for Independence in Research (research data)

Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities

COGR Council On Governmental Relations
US R&D Expenditures

Figure 3

U.S. Research and Development Expenditures, By Performing Sector and Source of Funds: 2010-2015