**Illinois State**

**University**

Board of

**Trustees**

**Report No. 2015.02/4000.01**

**Grant and Contract Activity**

***Introduction***

External funding through grants and contracts plays a major role in the advancement of faculty scholarly activities, student experiential learning and University outreach. Such activities directly support two of the core values highlighted in *Educating Illinois 2013-2018*: the pursuit of learning and scholarship, and civic engagement. Furthermore, the research, creative activities and educational outreach made possible by such external support are an integral part of all four goals of *Educating Illinois*. External funding is therefore critical to fulfilling the University’s mission.

Sources of external funding include federal agencies, state agencies and private funding sources. Funds are awarded both through competitive and non-competitive processes. It is worthwhile to note that federal initiatives, eliminated by Congress in 2011, are no longer available to support campus projects.

***Executive Summary***

External support for sponsored projects at Illinois State University totaled $19.5 million in FY2014, an increase of 8% from FY2013. This increase occurred along with a 12% increase in the number of awards. Federal, federal flow-through and state awards all increased; and other sources of funding (such as private foundations, nonprofits and corporate sponsorship) decreased in FY2014.

The Colleges receiving the most external funding in FY2014 were the College of Education ($8.7 million), the College of Arts & Sciences ($5.7 million) and the College of Applied Science and Technology ($1.7 million). The total number of grant submissions (315) in FY2014 was lower than in FY2013 (370) but the total amount requested was substantially higher ($56 million).

Additionally, in FY2014:

* Submissions included 204 different principal investigators (PIs) from Illinois State University, and funded projects involved 143 different PIs from the campus.
* Indirect funds totaling $1.5 million were awarded through University grants and contracts. Indirect funds provide additional services in support of research, scholarship, and creative expression, plus they support initiatives designed to increase extramural funding.
* Three agencies provided more than half of the total funding: the U.S. Department of Education ($4.9 million), the Illinois State Board of Education ($3.3 million), and the National Science Foundation ($2.6 million).
* The three academic units receiving the highest amount of external funding in FY2014 were the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations ($2.6 million), the Special Education Department ($2.3 million), and the School of Teaching and Learning ($1.6 million).

# *Data Summary*

The following table details sponsored project funding for FY2014 and FY2013. The numbers of awards/submissions are included in parenthesis.

**FY14** **FY13**

Total Awards $19,531,545 (253) $17,922,697 (223)

Federal Awards $10,127,254 (40) $8,218,852 (36)

Federal Flow-Through $4,005,893 (42) $3,461,734 (33)

State Awards $2,319,885 (34) $2,088,263 (32)

Other $3,078,513 (137) $4,153,848 (122)

Submissions $56,056,482 (315) $47,394,494 (370)

Total Indirect Funds Awarded $1,550,457 $1,499,522

***Current Initiatives***

In the coming year, Illinois State University will continue to focus on improving the success rate of proposal submissions, and to encourage higher levels of submission. Each of these initiatives is aligned with the Strategic Plan for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Expression.

1. ***Cross-Disciplinary Grant Development Program.*** The Cross-Disciplinary Grant Development Program supports the creation of competitive external grant proposals for research that crosses disciplinary boundaries by supporting creative works that seek to answer complex and varied questions. Our campus investigators have also voiced a desire to work on large research questions that will provide society broader impacts through inter-departmental and often inter-college collaborations. This program will provide the necessary seed money for generating preliminary data. The work funded by the seed money will make these collaborative projects more competitive by showing the feasibility of a proposed approach.
2. ***Grant Writing Mentorship Program.*** The Grant Writing Mentorship Program provides new, pre-tenure faculty members or tenured faculty members who have not secured external funding the opportunity to partner with a more seasoned grant supported faculty member. This interaction is intended to give the mentee the opportunity to solicit advice from a colleague who can share specific knowledge of how to successfully prepare an application on campus. Additionally, the Research and Sponsored Programs office will assist the mentee by providing comprehensive administrative support in the months leading up to the actual submission. All steps are taken to help those without a track record of support to be more competitive.
3. ***Undergraduate Research Awards.*** The objective of the Undergraduate Research Award Program is to provide intensive research experiences for undergraduate students in all disciplines whether disciplinary, cross-disciplinary, or educational in focus. Students participating in the Undergraduate Research Award Program engage in meaningful, substantive research projects, working closely with faculty mentors. This program promotes a longstanding value of the research mission at Illinois State University, which places a premium on active learning and engagement by both faculty and students. The development of new knowledge is the essence of a sustained commitment to our University mission.

***Additional Ongoing Activities***:

* Travel Award Program. Funds are provided to support faculty travel to meet with agency program officers. Meetings are arranged and coordinated by the Research and Sponsored Programs and Government Relations offices.
* Faculty Publication/Exhibit Support Program. Matching funds are provided in support of publication charges, open access fees and exhibition fees for publications/exhibits resulting from research and creative activities.
* Individual Counseling. Representatives of Research and Sponsored Programs meet with individual faculty members to explore funding opportunities, to provide support and to explore additional ways that the Office can help faculty in designing quality research and creative activities.
* Research Infrastructure Review. In 2012, the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) completed a peer review of Illinois State University’s institutional infrastructure and core operations for research administration. The recommendations detailed in this report are currently being implemented.
* Strategic Plan for Research, Scholarship and Creative Expression at Illinois State University. In conjunction with the Research Infrastructure Review, the recommendations of the strategic plan, developed in 2009 by the University Research Committee, are being implemented where possible.
* Intellectual Property Policy and Procedure Review. The Intellectual Property Committee has been revising current policies and procedures regarding University intellectual property in conjunction with the Academic Senate. The revisions are expected to create more transparency with staff on campus about the ownership of patents and copyrights developed using campus resources.
* Export Control Policy. The IPEC officer will also work with the Export Control Committee to implement the University’s Export Control Policy.

***New Initiatives***:

1. ***Creation of a Research Center, Phase I.***A major goal of the Strategic Plan for Research, Scholarship and Creative Expression is the creation of a University Center for Research. The proposal for the Center, drafted by the University Research Council (URC) in 2012, calls for co-locating the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs with Grants Accounting. The NCURA Peer Review also strongly supports this co-location as a way to improve and streamline the grant administration process. This co-location occurred at the beginning of the fall 2014 semester when the office of Research and Sponsored Programs moved into a temporary location in Uptown Crossing. Planning for a permanent space in Uptown Crossing that will include additional research services will occur during 2015.
2. ***Research Training Sessions with CTLT.*** The Research and Sponsored Programs office will partner with the Center for Teaching and Learning Technology (CTLT) to deliver research- and grant-related professional development workshops for faculty and staff.
3. ***Expanding Involvement in the Council of Undergraduate Research.*** In 2012, Illinois State University became an institutional member of the Council of Undergraduate Research (CUR), an organization created in 1978 to promote research opportunities for undergraduates at principally undergraduate institutions. Many academic units at Illinois State University have a rich tradition of promoting undergraduate research, but an increased involvement of faculty, students and administrators in CUR will help broaden the undergraduate research enterprise on campus.
4. ***Pre-award Budgeting in Research and Sponsored Programs.*** In order to provide improved customer service and to ensure that proposed budgets are in line with program outcomes, the Grant Specialists in the office of Research and Sponsored Programs will be trained to develop budgets in cooperation with the principal investigators. The Grant Specialists work extensively with the investigators during the proposal submission but have not been involved in the budget preparation. Incorporating the budget as a fundamental component in the planning of a project will strengthen investigators’ chances of receiving funding.