



# Oregon University Innovation Research Fund

## Driving Economic Growth Through Research and Innovation

The University Innovation Research Fund (UIRF) was established by the Oregon Legislature in 2019 to enhance the competitiveness of Oregon's research and innovation universities in securing federal research grants that focus on economic development. This fund is housed in Business Oregon and provides matching grants to leverage federal funding opportunities that require state investment, ensuring Oregon remains at the forefront of cutting-edge innovation for economic impact.

The UIRF strategically supports research aligned with key Oregon economic sectors, including advanced manufacturing, high technology, renewable energy, healthcare innovation, and materials science. By facilitating federal grant awards that often require industry and community partnerships, the fund plays a crucial role in strengthening Oregon's research infrastructure, fostering job creation, and advancing economic development.

### Results to Date

Since its inception, the UIRF has provided \$7,587,500 in state matching funds, which has successfully leveraged \$45,200,000 in federal awards—a nearly sixfold return on investment. This substantial leveraging effect underscores the importance of continued state support in maintaining Oregon's leadership in research and innovation.

Project	UIRF Support	Federal Award
National Marine Renewable Energy Center	\$250,000	\$1,250,000
Improving Cell Therapy Manufacturing	\$600,000	\$600,000
Biomass Alcohol to Jet Fuel Technology	\$487,500	\$1,950,000
Oregon Mass Timber Coalitoon	\$6,250,000	\$41,400,000
Pending		
Biotech	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
Mass Timber	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000
CorMic Technology Hub Acceleration	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
Offshore Wind Energy	\$975,000	\$4,875,000
Renewable Energy - Regional Innovation Engine	\$10,000,000	\$15M - \$160M
Mass Timber - Regional Innovation Engine	\$10,000,000	\$15M - \$160M
Semiconductor - Regional Innovation Engine	\$10,000,000	\$15M - \$160M

### UIRF Impact

The University Innovation Research Fund has demonstrated a remarkable return on investment by attracting federal research dollars, fostering industry partnerships, and supporting Oregon's innovation ecosystem. An additional **\$30 million investment in the UIRF** will further amplify these successes, securing major federal research awards, expanding industry collaborations, and driving high-impact economic development initiatives for Oregon.

## Examples of UIRF Impact

### **Marine Renewable Energy Research & Industry Relocation**

With \$250,000 in UIRF support, OSU secured a \$1,250,000 million DOE award to upgrade marine renewable energy infrastructure, and another \$100,000 from private industry (Panthalassa). These upgrades enabled 150+ days of experimental testing, valued at \$750,000, and contributed to \$4 million in additional federal grants. As a result, Panthalassa relocated from San Francisco to Portland, bringing in top talent from Google, SpaceX, Raytheon, and NASA to Oregon.

### **Mass Timber**

In September 2022, the UIRF was utilized by the Oregon Mass Timber Coalition (a partnership between UO, OSU, Port of Portland and state agencies) to secure a \$41.4 million Build Back Better grant awarded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The funding will assist in developing and expanding Oregon's emerging mass timber industry through university research involving the use of mass timber in housing; development of a factory by the Port of Portland to produce mass timber housing; and forest restoration projects in the Willamette National Forest. The \$5 million allocation from the UIRF was essential in securing tens of millions invested in Oregon.

### **Request for \$30 Million in the 2025-2027 Biennium**

For the upcoming legislative cycle, we are seeking a \$30 million allocation to expand the impact of the UIRF, ensuring Oregon capitalizes on emerging opportunities. Key considerations include:

- **NSF Research Infrastructure Engineering (RIE) Finalists** – Oregon universities are finalists for three NSF RIE awards, necessitating state matching funds to secure these competitive grants.
- **Federal Funding Trends** – Increasingly, federal funding agencies require state investment as a prerequisite for grant eligibility. The UIRF ensures Oregon institutions remain competitive for these opportunities.
- **Economic Development Strategy** – The UIRF aligns with Oregon's broader economic strategy, supporting industry partnerships, workforce development, and market deployment efforts that drive long-term job growth.