

Update from the Office of the Vice President for Research

July 14, 2025

FAQ about UConn Research January 1, 2025 – July 14, 2025

IMPACT OF FEDERAL RESEARCH LANDSCAPE ON UCONN RESEARCH

How has the federal research landscape directly affected UConn?

UConn has been affected by the changing federal research landscape in 3 major ways since January 20, 2025, resulting in an **estimated loss of \$100 million in research and other sponsored activity funding as of July 10th.**

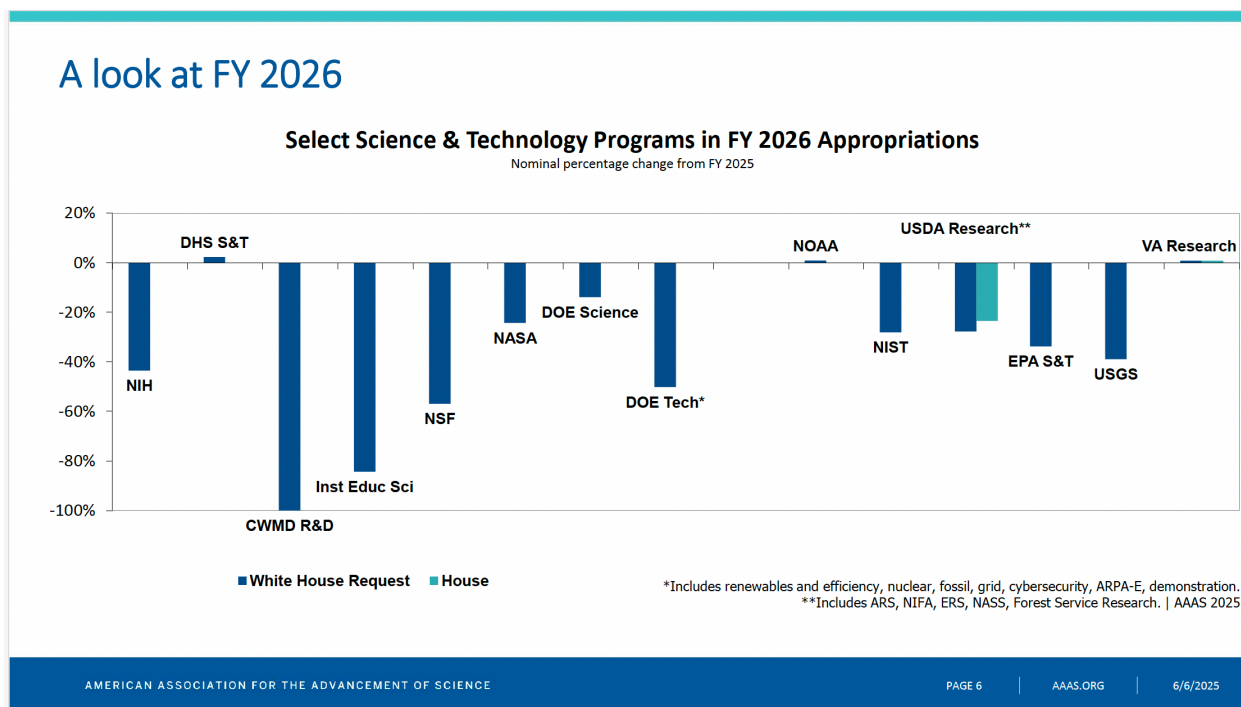
- 1) Grant award terminations.** Since January 20 and as of July 10, 59 research awards, totaling \$52.16 million, have been terminated at UConn. Seven awards, totaling \$1.9 million, have been terminated at UConn Health. Eleven terminated awards, totaling \$12.37 million, have been reinstated at UConn, and one terminated award, totaling \$23,450, has been reinstated at UConn Health. These awards have been reinstated because of appeals, lawsuits, and/or for other unknown reasons. **As of 7/10/25, UConn has 48 terminated awards, totaling \$39.79 million, and UConn Health has six terminated awards totaling \$1.88M.**
- 2) Slowdown of new federal research funding.** Prior to January 20, 2025, UConn was on pace for a record year in sponsored activity. Since January, UConn has experienced a slowdown in new awards, leading to an estimated loss of about \$60 million in new federal research awards compared to what was projected for FY2025, based on the first two quarters and compared to FY2024. We project FY2026 awards to be almost \$100 million lower than FY2025 awards due to the anticipated cuts to the federal research budget, including nearly 50% cuts to both NSF and NIH.
- 3) Unknowns.** The current federal research landscape is unusually volatile and unpredictable. This uncertainty is driven by several interrelated factors:
 - Policy changes: many policy changes introduced by the Administration have not been implemented due to ongoing legal challenges, so their full effect and impact are unknown. This includes policies regarding indirect cost (IDC) recovery.
 - Terminated grants: Agencies have attempted to terminate grants that they claim are not in alignment with new priorities. Lawsuits have overturned some of these terminations, and others have pending appeals.
 - Administrative slowdowns: Significant cuts to the staff of most funding agencies have led to slow or non-existent communications and delays in processing important administrative actions, such as non-competitive renewals.
 - R&D Budgeting and Priorities: The R&D funding priorities of the Administration remain somewhat vague and high-level, making it difficult to predict future funding opportunities. This issue is further complicated by uncertainties regarding the White House's FY26 budget requests, which include significant cuts for research funding.

What is happening at federal research agencies (e.g., NIH, NSF)?

It remains unclear if federal research funding will be reduced significantly across all science mission agencies. Final numbers will not be available until Congress passes the FY2026 appropriations (anticipated no sooner than December 2025). Congress may also end up passing a Continuing Resolution, which would carry forward the budget from FY2024 (carried into FY2025), resulting in stable budgets across agencies.

There will also likely be a major fight over the Administration's efforts [to rescind](#) previously made appropriations, which require approval of Congress. The OMB may pursue the limits of this process, including proposing rescissions affecting billions of dollars, knowing that Congress does not have time to reject them prior to their lapsing (i.e., meaning they are no longer legally available for obligation). We will keep you apprised of UConn's efforts to mitigate these actions in Washington.

The chart below from AAAS illustrates the percentage change in federal funding for science and technology in the White House's budget request.



Please see this [full presentation](#) for further information.

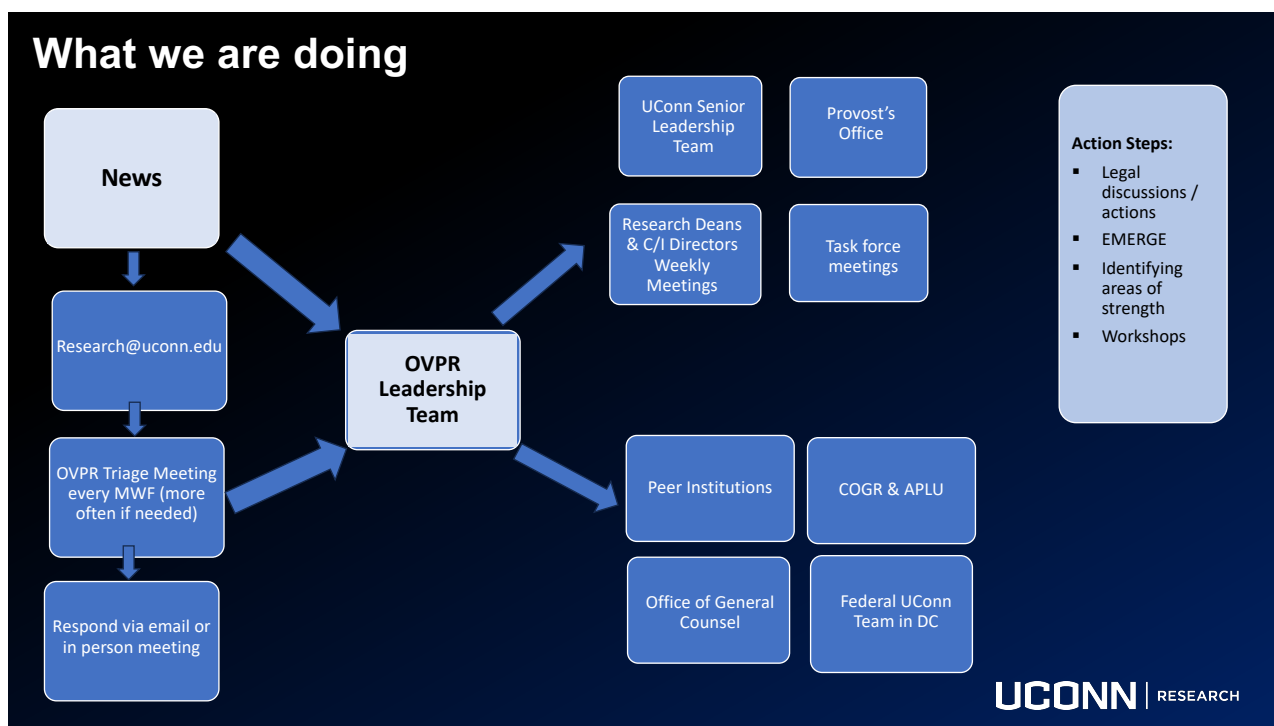
Are federal IDC rates changing?

Federal IDC rates are likely to change.

In the past several months, several federal agencies that sponsor research have tried to reduce IDC rates to a flat 15% across all higher education. These efforts have been stopped by federal courts, but these decisions are still being contested by the federal government.

There is an ongoing effort involving 10 national organizations, including the APLU and AAU, members of Congress, the OMB, and many others across the country, to develop a new model for the federal government to use in determining IDC rates to reimburse universities for the indirect costs to support research and other sponsored activities. This effort generated two provisional models that were released for review and feedback in June 2025. A final model has been **developed incorporating this input and is anticipated to be released on July 15 with an opportunity for feedback from research institutions.**

What has UConn done to respond to and address the changing federal research landscape?



Task Forces: Within a week of the November 2024 presidential election, the OVPR, Provost's Office, research deans, and center/institute directors (that report directly to the OVPR and Provost's Office) decided to establish 4 ad-hoc task forces to help UConn monitor and respond quickly to the changing federal landscape. These task forces have each met at least once or twice a month since November.

FAQ Webpage: In January 2025, the OVPR created the Federal Research Funding FAQ as a centralized platform for sharing news, sponsor guidance, University guidance, and events related to the unfolding changes to federal funding policies.

Federal Governmental Relations: OVPR Leadership has been working closely with UConn's Government Relations team to advocate with the State and Federal government regarding research funding and stay informed of federal actions.

Office of General Counsel: UConn's Office of General Counsel has provided OVPR leadership with important guidance regarding the legal context and implications of various policy changes and agency actions. The OVPR and OGC have also partnered in pursuing legal remedies to issues raised by these actions, as warranted.

Triage meetings: OVPR leadership, together with senior staff from SPS, Research Security, Research Development, and Research Compliance, met daily in February and every Monday, Wednesday, and

Friday since March (more often during times of peak activity) to review and address questions from researchers about the impact of federal policy changes on their grant awards and proposals.

Weekly research leadership meetings: To enable fast-paced information sharing and collaboration in response to changing circumstances, **OVPR leadership has been meeting weekly** with Associate Deans for Research and a group of Center/Institute directors (those who report to the OVPR or Provost's office).

National engagement: President Maric, Provost D'Alleva, Vice President Alpay, and many others from UConn's leadership and research communities have been meeting regularly with their colleagues in peer positions or organization-based meetings from universities across the country, as well as COGR, APLU, and many others.

EMERGE program: In May 2025, the OVPR launched the Emergency Research Grant Expenditure (EMERGE) program to provide short-term essential support to investigators who have had external funding disrupted because of changes in federal funding policies and priorities. The program would not be possible without the ideas and feedback of research leaders from around the University.

Has UConn been involved with lawsuits to protect UConn research?

Yes, UConn has supported legal efforts to protect UConn research. These actions have often been taken by national organizations of which UConn is a member. At other times, the University has provided materials and support for actions taken by the State of Connecticut. A significant example of this was [the legal action](#) taken in response to NIH's attempt to limit IDC rates to 15%.

Has UConn appealed terminations?

Yes, UConn has appealed terminations in cases where there was PI interest and strong legal standing to do so.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

What can I do to help advocate for research / UConn research? How can I share the impact of my own work?

Please share your story and ask colleagues across the country to also share their stories about the impact of their research with the public and their federal delegation (U.S. senators and representatives). We created a [webpage](#) to showcase investigators' stories via news stories, white papers, and video reels. A webform is included for investigators to request help with developing their own resources.

I'm not a researcher, but I would like to help. What can I do?

Please help us share the incredible impact that the research created by UConn investigators has on the public. Ask colleagues across the country to also share their stories about the impact of their research with the public and their federal delegation (U.S. senators and representatives). We created a [webpage](#) to showcase investigators' stories via news stories, white papers, and video reels. A webform is included for anyone who may be able to help write, edit, or help develop media material to share these stories.

What resources are available to help researchers explore new sources of funding?

The OVPR's Research Development Services (RDS) team is available to provide consultation, opportunity prospecting, writing, and editing services for all faculty grantseekers, and the team is particularly eager to help faculty impacted by federal funding cuts to find new sources of funding. RDS has been working with project teams from the University-wide Taskforces, to develop supports and resources for researchers who are seeking funding from industry and private foundations. Those resources will be posted to the OVPR website in the coming weeks.

FUNDAMENTALS OF UCONN RESEARCH

What are IDC rates?

IDC (Indirect Cost) rates are a factor (percentage) applied to the **direct costs** of a sponsored project account to **reimburse** the university for some of the **indirect costs** associated with supporting the work funded by the sponsor.

Direct Costs are expenses that are directly attributable to a specific project or activity that can be separately budgeted and accounted for in the University's financial system.

IDCs (also known as Facilities and Administration costs or F&A) are costs incurred by the institution to support research, other sponsored activities, and other institutional activities of the University.

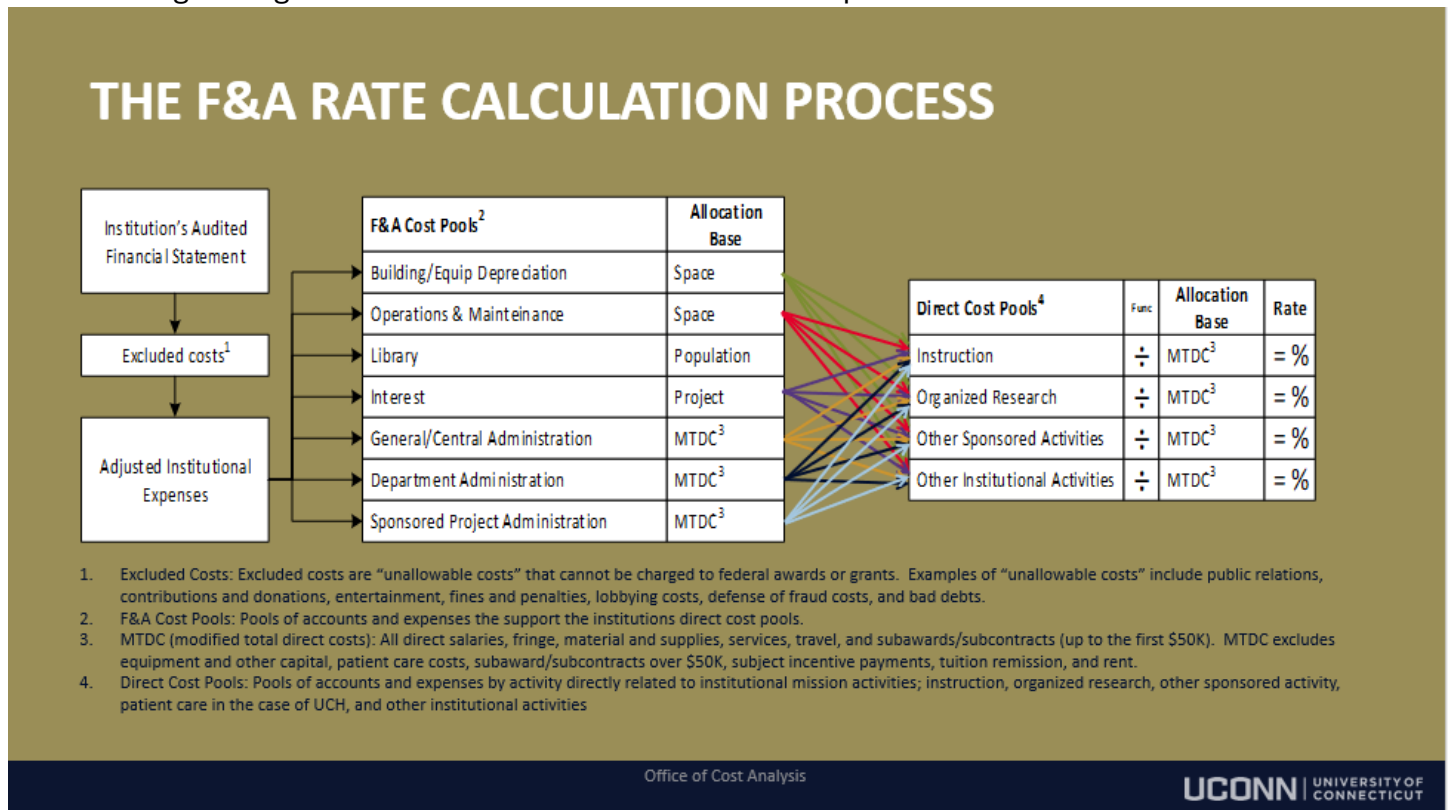
- The **administrative** portion of the rate has been capped at 26% since 2001. The administrative portion includes department and central administrative costs and sponsored program administration that support research and other sponsored activities across UConn.
- The facilities portion of the rate includes costs related to buildings and equipment, utilities, maintenance and repairs, environmental health and safety, and other facility costs.

Example:

Direct project costs:	\$100,000
IDC rate or factor:	60%
Indirect cost recovery:	\$60,000

The IDC rates for federally funded projects are set through a regular four-year negotiation cycle between the University and the federal government. During this negotiation, universities must demonstrate and defend the costs associated with supporting research through a cost allocation process.

The following is a high-level schematic of this cost allocation process.



Indirect cost recoveries are reimbursements to the University for costs incurred to support research and other sponsored activities. These dollars are returned to UConn as unrestricted funds. The University has full discretion on the use of these funds, with no federal or other requirement to return these funds to the actual units where the costs were incurred.

Since 2001, the federal government has limited the administrative portion of the rate to 26%, thus reducing the institution's full recovery of indirect costs incurred in support of federally funded research and other sponsored activities. In addition, the rate negotiation typically results in a reduction in the facilities portion of the rate as well.

During UConn's last rate negotiation based on its FY2022 financial statements, the full rate associated with supporting research was 83.7 cents for every direct cost dollar. The difference between this full rate and the negotiated rate of 61% shifts 22.4 cents for every direct cost dollar back onto the institution.

Please visit the [OVPR's website](#) for a more complete explanation of the direct and indirect funding model for research and other sponsored activities.

The Council on Governmental Relations (COGR) also hosts a variety of [helpful resources](#) about IDC costs if you would like to learn more or help others understand the need for IDCs.

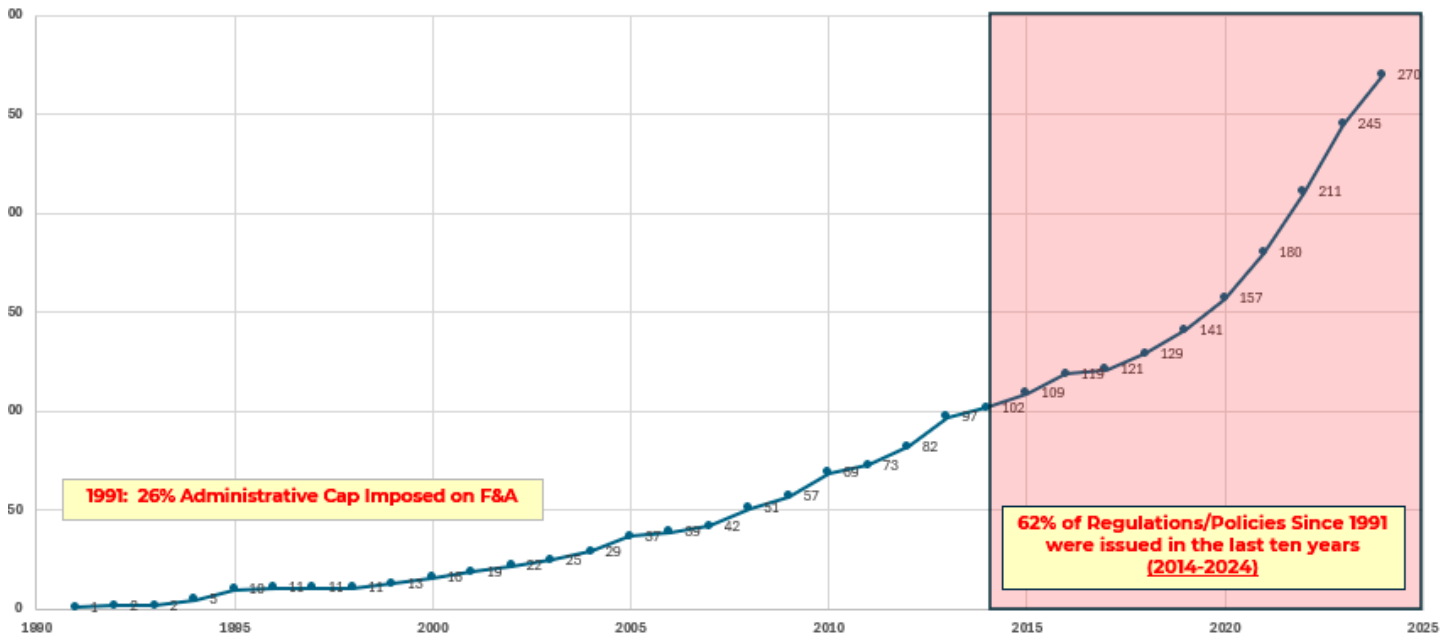
Why does the federal government often pay a higher IDC rate than other sponsors (e.g., foundations)?

The federal government has rules about what costs can be included in research budgets (direct costs) that other sponsors may not have, such as capital equipment and subject incentive payments. Federally funded research also comes with significant compliance and financial reporting requirements, which are reimbursed through IDCs.

In some instances, the federal government IDC rate may be lower than a foundation or private sponsor rate - such as with fellowships and training grants.

What has driven the rising costs of conducting federal research in recent years?

Regulations & Policies Adopted or Substantially Modified & Changes in Interpretation Affecting Federal Research. Cumulative Since 1991.



Federal requirements for federally funded sponsored activities have [significantly increased](#) over the past few years. These requirements have increased the administrative burden on UConn's staff in Research Integrity & Compliance, Research Security, and Sponsored Programs.

Specific research administrative functions required to support federally funded sponsored activities include:

- Regulatory Compliance: project-specific costs associated with compliance with human and animal subject protections, biosafety, radiation safety, clinical trial monitoring, system security plans and research security policies, and other related regulations.
- Award Monitoring, Oversight and Reporting: the administrative, financial, and performance management of federal awards.
- Research Information Services: costs related to journal subscriptions, database access, institutional repositories, and related resources.
- Research Security: safeguarding the research enterprise against the misappropriation of research to the detriment of national or economic security and related violations of research integrity, and foreign government interference. The implementation of compliance requirements over the past several years including monitoring of malign foreign interference, mandatory research security and export control training, and increased cybersecurity standards have significantly impacted the compliance costs of doing research.

How are IDC recoveries used by the University?

Since 2011, it has been the practice of the University to return a portion of IDC recoveries to deans, departments, PIs, and centers and institutes. These [distributions](#) are made to unrestricted accounts to support UConn's research mission in accordance with existing University policies and procedures and in ways to bolster UConn's rise among the nation's top research universities.

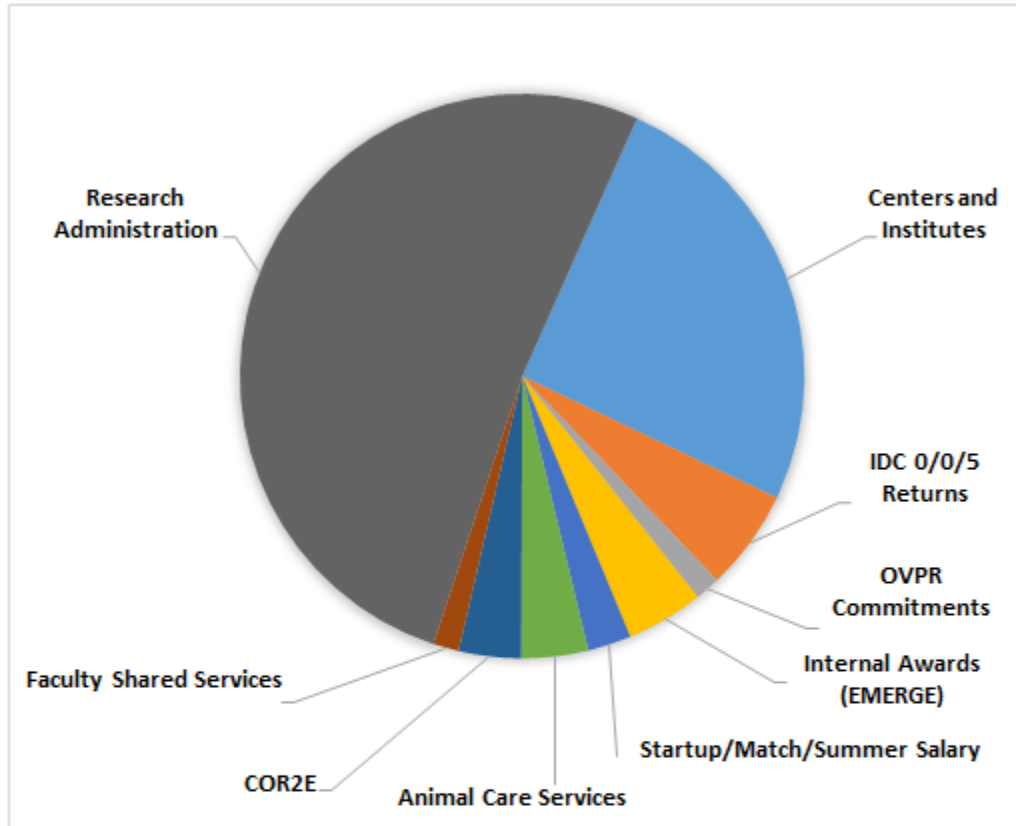
FY2026 IDC at Storrs and regional campuses

In FY2026, we project UConn indirect cost recoveries to be about \$52M. The following is a high-level summary of the planned allocation of these funds to support the research mission of UConn:

FY2026 OVPR BUDGET AND USE OF IDC RECOVERIES

Total Budgeted IDC Recoveries	\$52,100,000
Total Budgeted Expenses	45,134,507
IDC Recoveries in Excess of Budget Returned Central Budget Office	\$ 6,965,493

FY26 OVPR STORRS BUDGET



OVPR Budget (net of internal revenues)	FY26 Budget	
Centers and Institutes	\$ 11,479,062	25%
IDC 0/0/5 Returns	2,605,000	6%
OVPR Commitments	650,000	1%
Internal Awards (EMERGE)	2,000,000	4%
Startup/Match/Summer Salary	1,125,000	2%
Animal Care Services	1,723,745	4%
COR ² E	1,612,718	4%
Faculty Shared Services	667,671	1%
Research Administration	23,271,311	52%
Total	\$ 45,134,507	100%

The figure above details OVPR's budgeted investments of recovered IDCs for FY26. Actual recovered funds greater than these budgeted expenses (currently projected to be \$6.9 million) will be swept centrally as part of a strategic investment fund for research, as described below.

How will the amount of IDC recoveries in excess of budgeted expenses for FY26 be used by the University?

In FY2026, IDC recoveries are projected to be more than budgeted expenses by \$6.9 million. This is a **projected surplus** that will allow the University to allocate more resources to EMERGE and to invest in [strategic research priorities](#). **These are planned surpluses, not actual fund balances.** IDC recoveries may be less than projected because of lower-than-expected research expenditures, which reduces our indirect cost recoveries, or an immediate change by the federal government in the methodology used to reimburse universities for actual indirect costs incurred. Should any disruption in the recovery of indirect costs occur, this will reduce the projected surplus.

RESEARCH AND THE CURRENT UCONN BUDGET CHALLENGES

What action steps are being taken by the University to address budget gaps?

Please see the [latest announcement from President's Office](#)

Will PI salary savings balances be swept centrally? If so, is this a one-time action or an ongoing policy?

No, PI salary savings accounts will not be swept by the University's central budget office. Some units have unit-specific policies regarding these accounts that may impact balances.

Are IDC account balances being swept centrally? What will that process look like?

School/college, center/institute, and department IDC accounts, along with other unrestricted university accounts, will be the subject of review and discussion with the leadership appropriate to the unit to see what can be centralized to manage spending and prioritize allocation of resources to areas consistent with UConn's mission.

Will the IDC accounts of individual PIs be impacted?

No, PI IDC accounts, and other PI-specific accounts, including IDC or DCAA accounts, residual accounts, start-ups, royalty accounts, academic enhancement, and salary savings accounts will not be affected at this time. These accounts should continue to be used to support the PI's lab and research program. Some units may have unit-specific policies regarding these accounts, which is outside the scope of this FAQ.

What will the IDC balances that are swept centrally be used for?

Unrestricted funds, including IDCs, that are centrally managed will be pooled to manage spending and prioritize the allocation of resources consistent with the university's missions.

Will the University be moving to a new F&A structure? If so, is there a timeline for this?

We anticipate that the federal IDC (F&A) reimbursement model will be changing, possibly as early as FY2026/2027. Please follow [COGR](#) and the [UConn research FAQ page](#) for more information as it is released.

Does UConn make money by conducting research?

Unfortunately, no! There is no financial gain to UConn for conducting research. Research at a public university is a shared cost between the federal and state governments and the institution. UConn's research activities generate tremendous value for our state and local communities, our nation, and our students. UConn's mission as a public land-, sea-, and space-grant university means that we work tirelessly to pursue the public good in all that we do. Our research improves the health and well-being of our citizens. It creates solutions to real-world problems and serves as an engine of economic growth. It enables individuals and communities to flourish. The investments made into research and education pay incalculable dividends for society. [Read more about the importance of supporting University-based research here.](#)

How does the sweeping of fund balances affect the ability of units to commit support to EMERGE grant applications?

With the plans to pull back funds that are not committed to a managed central pool, we know that units may not have the dollars needed to support EMERGE needs. In anticipation of this result, the EMERGE review process will be enhanced to include content-area subject matter experts, as needed, in addition to input from the EMERGE committee (comprised of research deans and C/I directors) to make recommendations on EMERGE proposals.

What are short- (one year) and medium-term (three year) plans for internal funding?

OVPR internal funding programs are currently paused. The OVPR hopes to re-establish a portion of these programs for the second half of FY2026 and/or FY2027 if the fiscal climate improves.

How will IDC distributions be handled in FY2026? How long will this change be in place?

For UConn, the distribution of IDCs generated in FY2025, which would typically occur in late Fall 2025, has been paused. The University will evaluate its financial situation in early 2026 to determine if a distribution of FY2025 IDCs will occur. Effective July 1, 5% of FY2026 IDC recoveries will be distributed to PIs on a real-time basis (as the costs are recovered versus at the end of the fiscal year). This change will go into effect on or about September 1. Additional details about this rollout will be out soon.

How will the redistribution of funds impact C/I service facilities?

All centers and institutes that report directly to the Provost's Office and/or the OVPR will receive funding on a needs-based basis. Each center/institute will provide a budget request based on planned activities for FY2026. All other centers and institutes that were subsidized by the OVPR will receive support through their home school or college. Funds previously distributed by the OVPR to schools/colleges and centers and institutes will be allocated by the Provost and OVPR in conjunction with the school or college dean.

What support services (for Research) will be lost or reduced?

Internal funding programs will be temporarily paused to allow any research-related discretionary funds to be used for the EMERGE program.

Will UConn still push to stay at the forefront of scientific technology acquisition to support successful funding applications for researchers?

Yes. Purchase requests will be considered based on the likely impact of the purchases on achieving outcomes within [UConn's 2034 Strategic Plan](#), including supporting externally funded projects and as funding is available.

Will there be a redistribution of effort (i.e., for teaching more) for research faculty (either at Storrs or at UCHC)?

Unit heads, with guidance from the Provost's Office, will continue to address workload assignments.

If their discretionary accounts are swept, how will centers/institutes fund programmatic activities such as travel, conferences, and gap funding between grants?

We recognize that discretionary accounts support important programmatic activities, such as travel, conferences, and gap funding between grants. In the current fiscal environment, all units will need to carefully review and prioritize their spending to focus on the most essential activities. Where possible, we will work with centers/institutes to identify alternate funding sources, encourage external partnerships, and explore cost-recovery opportunities to help sustain critical programs. We understand that these are difficult adjustments; our goal is to preserve our core mission during this period of financial constraint.

Our school and department discretionary accounts fund research personnel. What will be the process for recuperating these funds for critical research functions?

Each department, school/college, and center/institute will need to carefully review their budgets and re-prioritize spending to align with current fiscal realities. We recognize that discretionary funds are essential for supporting core research activities, and we will work with units to identify alternative sources of support where possible. This may include reallocating existing funds, seeking efficiencies, and focusing on sustaining the most critical functions to maintain research excellence during this challenging period.

What help can I get to support my GAs?

You may apply for the EMERGE program if you have an unanticipated gap in funding due to the federal climate. The OVPR Research Development Services team is available to help investigators find and pursue external funding opportunities. Please request services via the OVPR RDS [webform](#).

If IDCs for departments, colleges and centers and institutes are to be swept, will there be alternatives for discretionary funds necessary for the functioning of those units?

We recognize that departmental, school and college, and center/institute IDC returns have historically provided essential discretionary funds to support research operations, faculty development, and strategic initiatives. Going forward, each unit will need to carefully re-evaluate its budget priorities to sustain critical functions.

The Provost's Office and OVPR will work with department heads, deans, and center/institute directors to explore other limited sources of support, reallocate central funds where possible, and identify

efficiencies that help maintain research productivity. These alternatives may not fully replace prior discretionary funds. Our goal is to preserve the most essential activities and support the core research mission through this difficult period.

Will PIs be allowed to use their individual academic enhancement accounts, residual accounts, and IDC/DCAA accounts for travel to conferences?

At this time, faculty will continue to have access to their individual academic enhancement, residual, and IDC/DCAA accounts, but spending should be prioritized and limited to critical functions. Supporting graduate students, postdocs, and maintaining essential lab functions should take precedence over travel and other discretionary expenses.

Travel may be supported from these accounts but should be limited to essential university travel in accordance with the [Guidance issued by the President and Provost](#), and must comply with university policies and the intended use of the funds. We ask all faculty to be thoughtful stewards of their resources, focusing on activities that are critical to sustain their research programs and advance their scholarly impact.

Who is responsible for outstanding charges if I receive a termination notice?

If a grant or account is terminated, the Principal Investigator (PI), in collaboration with their department and school/college, is responsible for addressing any outstanding charges. This may involve reallocating expenses to other allowable sources or covering any remaining balances from departmental or discretionary funds. **Investigators with terminated grants may also apply for [EMERGE Funding](#) to cover emergency costs.**

The OVPR is committed to assisting PIs and units during this process as we have done so far. We will work closely with you to review outstanding charges, provide guidance on allowable costs, and help identify potential solutions to resolve any financial obligations resulting from the termination.

If I must pivot my research, it may take a couple of years to re-establish sources of external funding. How can I maintain my program for this long period?

We fully understand that shifting the focus of a research program—whether to align with emerging funding priorities or to adapt to changing circumstances—takes time, often several years. Maintaining your program during this transition is a critical concern, and we want to support you through it.

In the short term, we encourage you to work with your department and school/college leadership to explore bridge funding options, internal collaborations, and potential cost-sharing opportunities. We are also actively looking at ways to prioritize limited institutional resources to support faculty during these transitional periods.

While we cannot fully offset the current fiscal challenges, we are committed to helping maintain the continuity of research programs and will work with you to identify the most viable path forward. Open communication about your evolving plans will help us better align support where it's needed most.