University of Illinois System

# NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF)

**FOR FY2026, THE U OF I SYSTEM REQUESTS $9.9 BILLION FOR NSF.**

| NSF | |
|---|---|
| **FY2025** | = $9.06B |
| **FY2024** | = $9.06B |
| **FY2023** | = $9.539B |
| **FY2022** | = $8.838B |
| **FY2021** | = $8.487B |

**Appropriations Bill:** Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

**Agency:** National Science Foundation


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## NSF R&D EXPENDITURES, FY2024

| | |
|---|---|
| University of Illinois Chicago | $30.1 Million |
| University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign | $125.7 Million |

*Source: FY2024 NSF HERD Survey

The U of I System has a longstanding and successful partnership with the National Science Foundation (NSF), the only federal agency charged with funding fundamental research and education across all scientific and engineering disciplines. NSF is the cornerstone of America's basic research enterprise.

## NSF-SUPPORTED PROJECTS AT UIUC

UIUC routinely leads the nation in NSF awards.

**Research to address grand challenges of our time**

- UIUC leads a $25M NSF Quantum Leap Challenge Institute on hybrid quantum architectures and network.
- I-MRSEC, a $15.6M UIUC-led Materials Research Science and Engineering Center (MRSEC), performs fundamental, innovative materials research and supports interdisciplinary education and training of students.
- In 2023, the NSF announced four new Science and Technology Centers (STCs)—and UIUC was involved in two! UIUC researchers are co-leading the STC for Quantitative Cell Biology, while another UIUC researcher is co-principal investigator of COMPASS.
- NSF selected UIUC to create a $15M Institute for Geospatial Understanding through an Integrative Discovery Environment (I-GUIDE) to better understand the risks and impacts of climate change and disasters.
- With a 7-year, $15M NSF Expeditions in Computing award, a UIUC-led team will develop science and technology to fabricate, model, program, scale and embody biological processors.
- DELTA AI at UIUC's National Center for Supercomputing Applications is a computing resource of choice for the majority of researchers participating in the National Artificial Intelligence Research Resource (NAIRR) Pilot projects recently announced by the NSF and the DOE.
- With $15M in total funding to UIUC over 6 years, a new NSF iBioFoundry will build on more than a decade of campus research to integrate synthetic biology, laboratory automation and artificial intelligence to advance protein and cellular engineering.
- UIUC leads two new Global Centers, funded by NSF and partner agencies in Japan, Korea, Finland, and the UK to advance the bioeconomy to solve global challenges.
- UIUC won a 3-year, $1M ADVANCE grant from NSF to mitigate barriers that impede the advancement of underrepresented STEM faculty across the Urbana-Champaign campus.

**Fostering Entrepreneurship & Advancing Commercial Applications**

- Innovation Corps (I-Corps): UIUC has played a key role in growing the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem in the Midwest region as a leader of the NSF funded I-Corps Hub. Since 2013, over 515 teams have participated in Illinois I-Corps programming. Those teams have gone on to raise close to $200M in follow on funding. As a leader of the Hub, the UIUC team has helped to

support key regional efforts including teams working on the NSF Engines proposals and EDA Tech Hubs proposals to further accelerate technology commercialization of federally funded research in the Midwest.
- Industry/University Cooperative Research Centers (I/UCRCs): UIUC participates in university research to meet industry needs that transfer research results and technological advances to the U.S. marketplace.
- The NSF Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program is critical to UIUC's Research Park, particularly its tech incubator EnterpriseWorks. From 2003-2024, NSF awarded 108 SBIR/STTR awards to EnterpriseWorks companies for a total of more than $31.3M. Several NSF-funded startup companies have gone on to raise hundreds of millions of dollars in venture capital and private investments.

**Faculty Career Development**

UIUC has 103 active Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) awards, which provide funding to launch research programs for promising early-career faculty.

- Researchers are leading an Engineering Frontiers and Multidisciplinary Activities project that applies the science of teamwork to spark research collaborations across disciplines and institutions. The project seeks innovation by engaging a variety of scholars and researchers from the American Indian Higher Education Council, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, and the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education.

**Education and Graduate Training**

- Through an NRT grant, UIUC has launched the Miniature Brain Machinery (MBM) Program, which combines cognitive and behavior studies with brain cell and tissue biology studies to train the next generation of STEM workforce in advancing discovery.

## NSF-SUPPORTED PROJECTS AT UIC

NSF-supported projects at UIC range from large multi-scale initiatives to individual research grants.

UIC faculty have also received a significant number of CAREER awards from NSF designed to help rising U.S. researchers and scholars establish long-term leadership through the integration of research and education. They currently have 26 active CAREER awards.

UIC received two Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) awards, one relating to interdisciplinary research and education on next generation materials and another involving a Data Observation and Computation Collaboratory that enables domain scientists and computer scientists to collaborate on real-world problems.

Great Lakes ReNEW, funded by up to $160M through the NSF Regional Innovation Engines program, is a collaboration of more than 50 partners, including UIC. ReNEW will create a hub of research and economic development around water resources in the Great Lakes region. As part of ReNEW, UIC researchers are exploring novel technologies for removing hazardous chemicals from water.

UIC is one of 6 institutions that is splitting an $8.8M NSF grant to develop theories, research methods and tools to help expand and tailor the field of STEM education to support Black students.

UIC is part of the NSF-funded multi-institutional Open-Source Cyberinfrastructure for Urban Computing Research project, creating a cohesive ecosystem of tools and resources to transform city data into knowledge and action.

UIC is part of MOSAIC, an NSF Center for Chemical Innovation that is exploring new imaging techniques to capture chemical reactions as they happen.

NSF supports big data and visualization research at the Electronic Visualization Laboratory (EVL), which is home to CAVE2, a renowned interdisciplinary research laboratory that pioneered the development of the CAVE virtual-reality system.

The Learning Sciences Research Institute (LSRI), a campus-wide, multidisciplinary unit focused on improving instruction and learning, has several faculty who have been successfully funded by NSF in areas of STEM education.

Through a $4M NSF grant, UIC will be home to the world's first analytical, aberration-corrected and monochromated transmission electron microscope with a magnetic field-free objective lens.

UIC has a $2.5M NSF grant to improve undergraduate STEM engagement in environmental sciences, physiology and chemistry using the study of the Monarch butterfly.

A UIC researcher received a $14.1M, 5-year grant to expand the experimental capabilities at NSF's Chemistry and Materials Center for Advanced Radiation Sources, one of the world's leading facilities for the study of the crystallography of small molecules and liquid surfaces and interfaces.