

College Unrestricted RSCA Fund (CURF)

Growth of the RSCA enterprise at SJSU necessarily relies on extramural funding. Funding that provides direct RSCA costs but that does not fully reimburse the equally essential cost of supporting the facilities and administration (F&A) of that RSCA taxes the university's resources and limits the ability to support additional research. Therefore, it is in everyone's best interest that extramural funding support the entire cost of the funded RSCA, including both direct and indirect (F&A) costs.

To try to encourage SJSU principal investigators to seek full funding for their RSCA activities, the R&I division has launched two companion programs: RAISE and CURF. The Research and Innovation Scholarly Entrepreneurship (RAISE) award program provides a fully-loaded buy-out of 0.2 FTE for the PIs who have been most successful in raising full F&A extramural funding. The College Unrestricted RSCA Fund (CURF) program invests funds into a college-controlled Research Foundation account to utilize as they see fit to support RSCA. The CURF program distributes funds based on the number of tenured/tenure-track faculty in each college, irrespective of extramural funding success. Both programs are funded entirely from a reinvestment of the portion of F&A reimbursements controlled by the R&I division. The amount of that investment is determined annually based on the availability of funds. The principle is that these two companion programs both provide incentives to extramural fundraising where that is possible *and* provide RSCA funds to colleges without regard to their extramural funding, thus supporting RSCA across the breadth of university disciplines. The annual funding for *both* programs depends on success in extramural funding.

1. Funding Allocation Mechanism:

- **Funding Source:** The Division of R&I will reinvest a specific portion of the F&A reimbursements annually for the College Unrestricted RSCA Fund allocation. The funds will be entirely drawn from the R&I division's portion of the F&A reimbursements from the previous year. The funding for this program will be determined annually based on available funding and strategic priorities.
- **Distribution Metric:** The only metric for distributing funds will be the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty members within each college in the previous year's fall semester, as reported by Institutional Research and Strategic Analytics.
- **College Allocation:** Each college will receive a portion of the total allocation proportional to the tenured and tenure-track faculty headcount as defined above.
- **Transparency:** The allocation for each college will be communicated clearly and publicly to the Deans, Associate Deans for Research, and will be available on the R&I website.
- **Annual Review:** The university will review the funding amount annually based on available resources and strategic priorities. It will also evaluate the impact of the allocation based on college reports.

2. Definition of Allowable Faculty Research Expenses:

The allocated funds are intended to be unrestricted, with the only requirement being that they support RSCA activities in the college. Allowability of expenses is governed by the [SJSU Research Foundation RSCA Account Eligible Expense Policy](#).

3. College Reporting Mechanism:

Each college will be required to submit an annual report detailing how the allocated CURF was spent. This report will ensure accountability and provide valuable data for program evaluation.

- **Reporting Period:** The funded period will run concurrently with the academic year. Reports will be due on August 1. Eligibility for future CURF allocations is contingent on both the submission of the report and the appropriate use of funds.
- **Reporting Format:** The Division of R&I will provide a standardized template for the annual report to ensure consistency and ease of analysis. This template may include sections for:
 - **Faculty Participation:** A list of faculty members who utilized the funds.
 - **Expenditure Categories:** Breakdown of spending across the allowable expense categories (e.g., supplies, travel, publication).
 - **Brief Project Descriptions:** A short summary of the research projects supported by the funds.
 - **Outcomes and Impact (Qualitative):** A section for faculty to briefly describe any preliminary findings, publications, presentations, grant applications initiated, or other research outputs resulting from the use of these funds.
 - **Justification for Expenditures:** A brief justification may be required for larger or less common expenditures.
 - **Unspent Funds:** Unspent funds may be carried over into the next academic year if needed to amass sufficient funds for a larger investment.
- **Submission Process:** Colleges will submit their annual reports via email to the VPRI.
- **Review and Feedback:** The VPRI's office will review the reports to ensure compliance with the guidelines and may provide feedback to the colleges.
- **Data Aggregation and Analysis:** The Division of R&I will aggregate the data from all college reports to understand the program's overall impact and identify areas for potential improvement. These data may also inform future funding decisions.
- **Transparency (Summary Level):** A summary report of how the funds were utilized across the university may be made publicly available (without revealing individual faculty spending details).

4. Benefits of this Program:

- **Fairness and Transparency:** Allocates funds based on a clear and objective metric (T/TT faculty numbers).
- **Direct Support for Faculty Research:** Provides flexible funding to enable colleges to determine how best to support faculty in pursuit of their research agendas.
- **Accountability:** The annual reporting mechanism ensures responsible use of funds.
- **Data-Driven Improvement:** The reporting data allows the university to assess the program's impact and make informed decisions about future funding and program design.
- **Empowerment of Colleges:** Allows colleges to strategically allocate funds to support the diverse research needs of their faculty.
- **Equity:** The CURF program is a companion program to the Research and Innovation Scholarly Entrepreneurship (RAISE) award program. The second incentivizes extramural funding with full F&A, while the first invests a portion of the F&A reimbursements in College RSCA, irrespective of extramural funding. The expectation is that both programs will grow as extramural funding increases.