SDSU | Research Foundation

Board of Directors
Research Support Funds Ad Hoc Committee
August 6, 2025
3:00 p.m.

MINUTES

A meeting of the Research Support Funds Ad Hoc Committee of San Diego State University Research Foundation Board of Directors was held in the Susan K. Weber conference room on Wednesday, August 6, 2025, pursuant to the notice duly posted for public information.

The following Board Members were present: President Adela de la Torre
Hala Madanat
Agnes Wong Nickerson

The following Advisory Members were present: Michele Goetz
Leslie Levinson

I.   Call to Order

President Adela de la Torre called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m. and welcomed committee members. She noted that the meeting would begin with public comment. No members of the media or public were present; therefore, she moved on to the first agenda item.

II.   Overview of Current Federal Actions/Potential Impacts

Ms. Michele Goetz gave an overview of the current federal actions and potential impacts. She noted that although SDSU Research Foundation (SDSURF) ended the fiscal year strong in total award funding received, Facilities & Administrative (F&A) awarded was down by $5.4 million compared to the prior year. Management has taken actions to generate cost savings at SDSURF to create a savings roll forward to offset planned unallocated cuts in the fiscal year 2025-26 budget. She noted a number of areas being monitored that may impact SDSURF's budget, including a proposed cap on F&A of 15% and the alternative Financial Accountability in Research (FAIR) model being proposed by the Joint Associations Group (JAG). Along with the alternative model being proposed by JAG, it was noted that the Office of Management and Budget is developing its own proposed model, which has not yet been revealed.

Ms. Goetz went on to remind the committee that deep cuts to NIH, NSF, and other agencies' budgets that typically fund research have been proposed by the Trump administration; however, it is not clear how these various factors will ultimately affect Congressional budget allocations. Ms. Goetz noted that the most significant impact on SDSURF would be the rate cap or other reductions on F&A. With all of these unknowns, additional time is needed before decisions can be made regarding the distribution of the restricted research support funds. Many of the decisions related to potential distribution or use of the funds are dependent on the actions of the federal agencies in the next few months. Discussion Ensued.

III.   Discussion of Methods for Incorporating Input

Vice President of Research and Innovation Hala Madanat highlighted the importance of collecting faculty input to inform the distribution of the restricted research support funds. She noted that an important part of delaying the distribution is ensuring that the faculty have a voice and can provide feedback on where they believe the needs for funding is most crucial. VP Madanat will work with the University Research Council to solicit feedback. Additionally, a town hall meeting has been scheduled for October 2025 to answer

questions, provide information, and receive feedback. VP Madanat also informed the committee that SDSURF has created a dedicated email address to receive questions and collect feedback, as well as a dedicated SharePoint site with pertinent information as a resource to faculty.

IV.   **Resolution R25-01: Postponement on Allocation of Restricted Research Support Funds**
Ms. Goetz turned the committee's attention to the next action item. She noted that the committee has been charged by the board with four actions:

> (a) determining the timing for any RSF distributions during FY 2025-26;
> (b) determining the amounts of distributions to each category of recipient (including any reductions);
> (c) determining whether to withhold research support funds and reallocate them to alternative needs, including supporting the overall operations and infrastructure of SDSURF; and
> (d) whether adhering strictly to the RSF Policy during the term would be in the best interest of the University, its faculty, and SDSURF, including their common mission as a research-oriented institution of higher learning.

She noted that management recommends the committee adopt the prepared resolution to postpone the decision on the RSF distribution until December 31, 2025. She added that management believes additional time is needed to monitor the outcomes of the proposed changes to the F&A models, to see how Congress addresses the proposed cuts to NIH, NSF, and other agencies that fund research in the federal appropriations for FY 2025-26, and to get a better sense of how other federal actions, whether by funding agencies or under enforcement actions by the Department of Justice, could impact SDSURF revenues and overall research funding for FY 2025-26. The delay will also provide time needed to solicit input from the research community in determining how best to utilize the restricted research support funds budgeted to support and sustain the research infrastructure, including, if necessary, for SDSURF operations, for the coming year.

President de la Torre called for a motion to adopt Resolution R25-01:

RESOLUTION OF THE RESEARCH SUPPORT FUNDS COMMITTEE REGARDING POSTPONEMENT ON ALLOCATION OF RESTRICTED RESEARCH SUPPORT FUNDS

WHEREAS, the Research Foundation provides supplemental funds for faculty, professional staff, and administrators to develop new externally funded projects and to support ongoing externally funded projects; the funds are known as "Research Support Funds"; and,

WHEREAS, the existing policy of the Research Foundation for distribution of Research Support Funds ("Policy") provides that Research Support Funds are to be distributed annually in late summer/early fall to the categories of recipients identified in the Policy, and states that any reductions in distributions will be made proportionately to each category of recipient; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors, at its meeting on June 13, 2025, approved the formation of an ad hoc committee ("Committee") and charged the Committee with making prudent decisions during the FY 2025-2026 term concerning Research Support Funds including a) the timing for distributions during the Term; (b) the amounts of distributions to each category of recipient (including any reductions) during the Term; (c) whether to withhold Research Support Funds and reallocate them

to alternative needs, including supporting the overall operations and infrastructure of the Research Foundation; and (d) whether adhering strictly to the Policy during the Term would be in the best interest of the University, its faculty and the Research Foundation, including their common mission as a research-oriented institution of higher learning; and,

WHEREAS, due to various Executive Orders issued by the President of the United Status and resulting actions (or proposed actions) of certain federal agencies, including the proposed cap on indirect cost recovery, and the changing priorities of the federal government related to support (including grants and other financial support) of research (collectively, whether actual or proposed, "Federal Actions") the current situation surrounding research grants is dynamic, fluid and uncertain, requiring flexibility to meet changing needs;

NOW THEREFORE, based on the foregoing Recitals, the Committee adopts the following resolutions:

FIRST, the Committee directs Research Foundation management to postpone distributing Research Support Funds as outlined in the Policy until after December 31, 2025, to allow the committee time to assess impacts of ongoing federal actions, including attempts to cap indirect cost recoveries, and the anticipated impacts on Research Foundation revenues.

SECOND, the Committee directs Research Foundation management to establish a mechanism to solicit input from the research community to help inform the Committee on decisions regarding (b) the amounts of distributions to each category of recipient (including any reductions) during the Term; (c) whether to withhold Research Support Funds and reallocate them to alternative needs, including supporting the overall operations and infrastructure of the Research Foundation; and (d) whether adhering strictly to the Policy during the Term would be in the best interest of the University, its faculty and the Research Foundation, including their common mission as a research-oriented institution of higher learning.

FINALLY, This Resolution is effective immediately.

Motion: A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously carried to approve Resolution R25-01.

V.   New Business
President de la Torre called for any items of new business. Ms. Goetz informed the committee that communication will go out to the research community within the week to keep them informed and up to date with the RSF distribution process. She then inquired about the timing of the committee's next meeting. The committee felt that it was appropriate to meet in November 2025. President de la Torre called for any other items of new business. Hearing none, she adjourned the meeting at 3:34 p.m.

Respectfully,

Michele G. Goetz

Michèle G. Goetz
Associate Secretary-Treasurer