



President's Strategic Investment Plan 2021-23

Over the past two years, the federal government provided support to higher education institutions to respond to the pandemic. A significant portion of the relief funds received by PSU went to our students, some went to auxiliary units to cover a portion of the direct losses due to the pandemic. PSU was also able to recover lost tuition dollars from this period. These funds augmented the central reserves. This creates an opportunity for the university to make limited strategic investments which will propel PSU forward toward achievement of our academic and financial goals.

In devising this Strategic Investment Plan, the President met with vice presidents to discuss strategic needs and opportunities within their divisions. All requests were judged against alignment with the following university priorities which, together, represent a Guidestar to investment decisions:

1. Prioritizing student success,
2. Advancing racial justice,
3. Pivoting engagement to advance community relations, and
4. Supporting fiscal sustainability and new revenue generation.

In addition, in identifying strategic investment elements, campus leaders and the President reflected upon and discussed the ideas and interests they have heard from faculty and staff over the past two years, chief among them finding ways to advance growth as a component of achieving financial sustainability, as opposed to exclusive reliance on budget cuts. In addition, faculty and staff have expressed their deep commitment to promoting racial justice and equity, advancing research, and providing faculty and staff with time and resources to support planning and implementing change.

It is important to recognize that these funds in central reserves are one-time only, *not* recurring funds. Consequently, they cannot be used to support ongoing budgets and expenditures. As a result, the President and campus leadership assessed that it was best to utilize these one-time funds to advance efforts that had already been under discussion across numerous campus bodies and that would yield the highest impact for advancing our commitments to student success, racial equity and justice, and financial sustainability.

- "Seed" and jump start initiatives that will generate new funding while supporting campus priorities;
- Test and assess pilot projects that explore new ideas.

Strategic investments will be made over the next 24-30 months, crossing three budget cycles. Each investment will be assessed against established metrics to ensure it is achieving the identified goals and impact. Reports will be provided annually to campus about the progress of these plans. For ease of presentation, the investments are classified under specific campus priorities, but many of them have the potential to create impacts that advance *multiple* priorities.

Student Success (\$8 million)

1. *Expand faculty capacity to generate new enrollments* - Increasing enrollment is a critical component of the university's financial sustainability goals. A number of units have waiting lists of students who cannot be admitted to the university due to faculty shortages. One-time funds may be requested by such units with the expectation that units will cover the ongoing faculty costs through increased revenues generated by new enrollments.
2. *Expand online academic programs* - The expansion of remote learning in response to the pandemic highlighted the value of flexible learning modalities. Investments will support faculty to develop new online degree programs and certificates.
3. *Advance Curricular and pedagogical innovation* - Retention and graduation are PSU's highest priority. This investment supports faculty development and innovation through participation in workshops and other learning opportunities to advance student success.
4. *Expand professional education programs* - As the needs of employers and communities change, PSU can translate knowledge in application and practice through professional programs to attract new students and support regional workforce development.
5. *Expand mental health services* - Student mental well-being is essential to success. The pandemic dramatically increased the number of students seeking services. This investment will support expansion of access to mental health programs during hours SHAC is not open.
6. Other key initiatives: *Technology to advance student success and cybersecurity, Advance multicultural retention, Last mile degree completion, Pilot programs* - to streamline access to emergency funds for students, promote early career assessment for students who enter PSU without a designated major pathway, and seeding development in IELP for new English language programs.

Racial Justice and Equity (\$1.3 million)

1. *Multicultural Centers for Dreamers and MENASA* - One time investments will support the build out of these two new multi-cultural centers for students.
2. *Other Racial justice initiatives* - In addition to the \$1.5 million previously committed by the President, investments will support development of tribal relations, new academic programming

and faculty development for the new Racial and Ethnic Studies requirement and planning for an Asian American and Pacific Islanders Studies program.

Enrollment growth (\$1.35 million)

1. *Sustaining full energy in enrollment growth*: To support institution-wide enrollment growth, these funds will enable pilots to expand enrollments in California, to increase marketing of PSU programs, and to increase outreach to Oregon high schools and community colleges.
2. *Expand connections to Employers for Workforce Development* - Align with employers in Portland and Oregon to ensure that employers are aware of PSU's array of academic programs.

Community Engagement to Revitalize Our Region (\$450,000)

1. *Revitalizing downtown and community connections* - Support our regional vibrancy and PSU's commitment to "Let Knowledge Serve the City" through expanded on and off-campus activities.
2. *Building partnerships with BIPOC communities* - Partnerships are mutually beneficial; supporting the community supports recruitment and retention.

Research Investment (\$1.9 million)

1. *Advance Computational Science* - Investment will support one-time startup costs for faculty being hired in the computational sciences cluster.
2. *Expansion of undergraduate research (pilot)* - The investment will support a pilot project to expand research opportunities for undergraduates working with faculty and staff.
3. *Exploration of climate change as a signature PSU program* - Investment will support assessment of campus-wide, multidisciplinary programming to respond to the climate crisis.
4. *Grow research contract processing capacity* - Investment will support the hiring of additional contract specialists for sponsored projects.

Financial Sustainability (\$450,000)

1. *Funding for Support Services review* - To parallel efforts to review and seek efficiencies in academic programs across the campus, the university is engaged in a study and review of support services and administration across the campus to identify possible innovations and operational changes that can generate efficiencies without harming campus priorities and mission.