

February 2025

FROM THE DESK OF THE  
**Vice President for Research**

*Lobos,*

*Every February, for Black History Month, it's so crucial to who we are as a Lobo Pack that we take the time to celebrate and reflect upon our Black students, faculty, and staff who continue to elevate the work and reputation of The University of New Mexico.*

*So many researchers are striving to pose new research questions and tackle new challenges impacting our communities - it's because of all of you that we create real change and re-imagine a new path forward.*

*I also want to acknowledge all the hard work and dedication of our Lobo researchers, faculty, staff, and students over the last month. I realize you are receiving lots of messages about federal research funding - many from UNM VPRs! I want to remind everyone that it's always important to take time for yourself, recharge your batteries, do something you love doing, and breathe. This past weekend, amid emails, calls, and text messages, I visited with family and friends, saw pictures of new babies, watched deer sleeping in the back yard, and spent time cooking - it was just what the "doc" ordered.*



*Ellen Fisher, Ph.D.  
Vice President for Research  
Professor of Chemistry*

# Federal Research Funding

UNM leadership and many offices across campus are currently tracking all shifts in federal government funding priorities that could have impacts to current and future research funding.

We are grateful to those of you who continue to communicate with us, and we know you are receiving information, messages, and communications from several sources regarding topics related to federal research funding. We want to remain clear, concise, and factual in the communication we send to you. The University has developed the following webpages where you can go to find information, reliable resources, and continuous updates from leadership.

1. Office of the President | Updates related to 2025 Federal Executive Actions
  - a. Campus Community Messages
  - b. Information as it becomes available related to employment, immigration, and more
  - c. FAQs
  
2. Office of the Vice President for Research | Federal Research Funding Updates
  - a. Joint VPR Communication
  - b. Executive orders related to research
  - c. Government Agency Responses
  - d. Research FAQs
  - e. Research faculty and staff questionnaire

We have developed a mechanism for researchers to submit questions or concerns they may have about specific, federally funded projects. If you submit a question or concern, the relevant research office will respond to you directly as quickly as possible.

Lastly, the full impact of this federal review process is unclear right now, but we are concerned about the potential negative impacts on students who may be funded by such awards. It is disruptive for our students to have their paychecks or benefits stopped and started suddenly and unpredictably. The UNM Office of Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs has agreed to provide partial funding (or funding support) to minimize disruption to our students who are funded on grants and contracts that have received stop-work orders. Details of the program, and the request form can be found [here](#).

Please continue to monitor this new webpage for the latest updates.

## February Safety Spotlight

Last month's safety spotlight focused on laser safety, which mentioned the use of appropriate eye protection. This prompted me to focus this month's spotlight entirely on eye protection in research environments. I can share numerous stories about various researchers I've known who have had accidents wherein they either lost some of their vision or had very near misses with their eyes. This is why I believe that safety glasses, goggles, and specialty eyewear are collectively the most important piece of personal protective equipment (PPE) for researchers.

Appropriate eye protection can safeguard your eyes from known potential hazards like chemical splashes, liquid nitrogen burns, flying debris, laser radiation, or other harmful substances you might be working with on a daily basis. But more than that, it can protect you from hazards you might not

anticipate, including unknown risks of a new process or experiment, mishaps arising from others working in nearby spaces, and excessive eye strain and sensitivity.

Protective eyewear is an acceptable direct charge to grants and contracts and should be provided to all researchers who work in any space with potential eye hazards. And researchers should wear protective eyewear at all times while in those spaces, regardless of what you are doing! Therefore, the first 10 people who respond to the VPR email ([vpr@unm.edu](mailto:vpr@unm.edu)) with the giveaway phrase 'Safety Spotlight: Eye Protection' will receive a new pair of safety glasses.

## Research News

### Globally-Engaged Research Award

The Global Education Office and the OVPR are now welcoming nominations for the 2025 Globally-Engaged Research Awards. This award showcases existing activities and serves to elevate the visibility and caliber of future research by promoting the incorporation of cross-cultural perspectives and international relevance into the UNM research enterprise. There are 3 award categories for faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students. Nominations will be accepted on [InfoReady](#) until March 3, 2025.

### Sevilleta LTER receives renewed funding

The UNM Sevilleta Long Term Ecological Research (SEV LTER) program has received renewed funding for six years for \$7.65 million from the National Science Foundation, along with matching funds from the State of New Mexico [Technology Enhancement Fund](#) for \$5.74 million to enhance technological developments from the research program, including sensors, software, and models. The [SEV LTER](#) studies the ecology of environmental variability, from the scales of individual organisms, like cottonwood trees and bees, to ecosystem processes, such as fluxes of water, carbon, and energy.

### UNM research: Higher alcohol tax could lead to fewer drunk driving fatalities

UNM Economics Professor Brady Horn's recent research findings show a higher alcohol tax could curb drunk driving fatalities in the state.

According to [Alcohol.org](#) in 2023, New Mexico ranks within the top 5 states in the country with the most drunken driving fatalities. Horn, senior lecturer David Dixon and graduate student Ana Milan Hinostroza started researching alcohol policy in the state several years ago through a [Research and Public Service Projects](#) (RPSP), a state initiative to address New Mexico issues. They researched everything from drinking age laws to liquor licenses. Lastly, they focused on alcohol taxes. New Mexico already has an excise tax on alcohol, however, through their [research](#), they found an increase in alcohol taxes could reduce alcohol-related fatalities.

### Four undergrads receive URAD scholarships

Four undergraduates have been chosen to receive the Undergraduate Research Scholarship for Spring 2025. The scholarship, presented by URAD is intended to support students to conduct research in their main area of interest.

The recipients are Audrey Lee, Paniz Maleki, Savannah Phelps, and Muhammed Saeed. Congratulations and I can't wait to hear about where your research goes!

### UNM BIG GIVE

Every year in the month of February, for 24 hours, UNM and our dedicated faculty, staff, and alumni across the world celebrate UNM BIG GIVE!

Starting at 12a.m. on February 12, for 24 hours you have the opportunity to give back to any program, school, college, or department no matter how large or small.

We are proud of the difference that UNM Research makes through its cutting-edge research and scholarship. Together, we can make a difference in addressing the complex challenges that affect us all. We hope you will contribute to this vital endeavor.

[Every gift to UNM Research will be matched dollar for dollar, up to \\$25,000 by VPR Ellen Fisher.](#)

### Upcoming RCR

The Office of Research Integrity and Compliance (ORIC) is hosting a special topic session for the GradPeer Mentoring Program on Authorship Practices. This graduate-student focused [session will be held](#) Thursday, April 10 at 1 p.m. We will explore the ethics of authorship order, agreements, contributions, and navigating collaborative research. Stay tuned for a set location.

ORIC is also launching its Friday 'Lunch and Learn' sessions. These sessions cover a range of research topics related to ethics. If you are interested in hosting a session, please contact Nika Mitchell at [nikamitchell@unm.edu](mailto:nikamitchell@unm.edu).

### State of Research

Get ready for a deep dive into the latest research happening at UNM for the 4th annual State of Research scheduled for Wednesday, March 12 at 4 p.m., in PAIS 1100. Registration is live.



## Research Technology

### TDM Studio

Explore the Latest Addition to the University Libraries research databases: TDM Studio from ProQuest

The library added [TDM Studio](#), a powerful text mining platform to our growing Research Technology Stack. TDM Studio gives researchers broad access to content including current and historical newspapers, theses and dissertations, and the congressional record.

If you have questions or want to schedule a demo session, contact the Graduate and Faculty Engagement Librarians ([libgradfac@unm.edu](mailto:libgradfac@unm.edu)).

To see the full list of Research Technology tools and services, visit [researchit.unm.edu](http://researchit.unm.edu).

### **A Garlic Testament Review:**

Although written over 30 years ago, Stanly Crawford's memoir *A Garlic Testament: Seasons on a Small New Mexico Farm*, contains a myriad of philosophical messages on living simply in a complex world that are still relevant today. Garlic is a crop that takes nearly a year to harvest. It requires patience and a deep understanding of this amazing migrant plant from China that we generally take for granted in today's culinary practices. Along with a detailed description of garlic farming, Crawford talks deeply about the weight of baggage carried from past experiences and merging cultures.

This, married with his description of "cranky farmer talk" resulting from the pressures of various institutions that seek "...members, subscribers, converts, customers, clients, laborers, to contribute to the cost of their overhead..." creates a narrative incredibly reminiscent of the 21<sup>st</sup> century burdens we still face. Nevertheless, the rich, descriptive language and place-based stories Crawford weaves together provide a vivid landscape of Northern New Mexico and a life chosen "to make a living, not endure one."

The testament reminds us that planting and maintaining a garden is a defiant act of independence – perfection is unattainable in the face of weeds, pests, drought, flood and a host of other obstacles. Although the barriers may be different, a similar argument could be made for building and sustaining a research program. It is indeed a reminder applicable to all of us today.