



Lobos,

As we approach the winter break, we have updates that may be of interest to our research community, including recent developments from federal funding agencies, insights into legislative activities, as well as other relevant information that supports our collaborative efforts in advancing research.

We would also like to thank the UNM Research Rapid Response Team for their dedication and contributions throughout this past year. In addition to addressing a range of requests and emerging needs resulting from shifts in the federal funding landscape, we watched as our cross-campus team (OUC, OGCR, SPO/SPO, VPRs' offices & faculty reps) built stronger ties and relationships across operational structures with an emphasis on solidarity, communication, and transparency. Our team truly epitomizes the One University approach. Thank you!

National Science Foundation (NSF)

NSF has officially released part of its organizational realignment under the current administration. You can read more about this [here](#).

[Science](#) recently reported that NSF will be making major changes to their proposal review process. According to this report, the changes are designed to help NSF adjust to their reduced workforce. In addition to giving program officers more latitude in their decision making, it may also mean less detailed reviews being provided to researchers, which may disproportionately impact early career scientists.

On Dec. 8, the NSF issued policy changes to its [Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures \(PAPPG\)](#). Updates are effective for awards issued on or after Dec 8. Major changes include:

- Increased funding thresholds for special proposal types
- Research security requirements (e.g., new foreign financial disclosures and restrictions tied to Confucius Institutes)
- Incorporation of scientific-integrity principles and a new definition of research misconduct that includes AI tools.

It also raises the equipment threshold to \$10K, updates rules about property, formalizes new processes for SBIR/STTR submissions, introduces restrictions on procurement/use of certain foreign-manufactured drones, sets new data-sharing expectations, and clarifies research administration processes.

On Dec. 12, the NSF Directorate for Technology, Innovation and Partnerships (NSF TIP) announced the launch of a [new initiative](#) designed to launch and scale a new generation of independent research organizations. These organizations will focus on technical challenges and bottlenecks that traditional university and industry labs cannot



easily solve on their own. NSF seeks feedback on this initiative through a [Request for Information \(RFI\)](#).

Congressional Budget Activity

On Dec 10, the House of Representatives voted to pass the FY26 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Several provisions related to research funding and security were included. You can read more [here](#). The Senate passed the NDAA on Dec 17.

OSTP-Request for Information

The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) released a request for information (RFI) on Nov. 26, "[Accelerating the American Scientific Enterprise](#)," seeking input on federal policy updates. The RFI asks specific questions related to:

- Public-private partnerships
- Optimizing technology transfer and translation of scientific discoveries
- Supporting regional innovation ecosystems
- Improving grantmaking; enabling more high-risk, high-reward research
- Preparing for potentially transformative uses of AI in scientific research
- Reducing regulatory burdens on research
- Addressing STEM workforce and career and training pathways

UNM Federal Priorities - A Word from Our Gov Rel Team

UNM's Office of Government & Community Relations is in the process of gathering annual "federal funding priorities" requests for FY27, in collaboration with the UNM's research offices and pending final approvals from UNM senior leadership. U.S. House and Senate appropriators continue to work across the aisle at the committee level and move forward with negotiations on final FY26 congressional appropriations.

Whether or not Congress can come to an agreement on FY26 appropriations ahead of the next extended deadline of Jan. 30, 2026, remains to be seen. The outcome of those negotiations will greatly influence Congress' receptivity to new appropriations requests for FY27. If a deal cannot be reached, Congress may resort to funding the remaining months of federal FY26 through another continuing resolution, as they eventually did for all FY25, essentially deferring for another year any changes to current appropriations targets and levels. Of the 12 appropriations bills congress considers every year, it only adopted 3 of the 12 as part of the re-opening of the federal government in November. We will update you once Congress returns in January.

We hope everyone enjoys a rejuvenating winter break and we look forward to continuing our conversation with the UNM research community in the new year.

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