BRING ON TOMORROW

INAUGURAL ANNUAL REPORT · FISCAL YEAR 2026

OFFICE FOR RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

Building the teams, proposals, and partnerships behind Indiana University's boldest research.

$1.2B
IN PROPOSALS SUBMITTED

1,500+
FACULTY CONSULTATIONS

68
WORKSHOPS & TRAINING EVENTS

OVERVIEW

ORD has grown to meet faculty needs

The Office for Research Development (ORD) supports faculty across IU to build relationships with external funders, develop, and submit competitive research and fellowship proposals, with an emphasis on IU's strategic research goals.
Since taking shape in 2023, ORD has supported many of IU's biggest wins, including **IU LAB** and **NSF Engines**.

876

Proposals supported

Full proposals plus select letters of intent and white papers

190

Faculty worked with ORD for the first time in FY26

ORD supported these faculty to submit research proposals to external funders

~$6M

Internal funding awarded

Seed, micro, A&H, equipment, bridge, and conference funds

One integrated team, end-to-end support

OFFICE FOR RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT (ORD)

I. Faculty Research Development (FRD)

- Targeted internal funding
- Workshops and webinars
- Management of IU limited submissions program

II. Team-Based Research Development (TBRD)

- Strategic faculty outreach
- Team-building for major initiatives requiring an institutional approach.

III. Arts & Humanities (A&H)

- Internal funding for A&H initiatives
- Support for creative activity
- Leadership on state-wide A&H initiatives (e.g., Granfallon, Spirit & Place)

IV. Research Development Services (RDS)

Integrated proposal, funder-relations, pre-award, and operational support—while building the processes, analytics, and capacity needed to pursue opportunities at scale.

IV (i). Corporate and Foundation Relations (CFR)

- Foundation and corporate opportunity development
- Funder cultivation, stewardship, and prospect research
- Corporate research partnerships and advancement coordination
- Strategic internal coordination across IU's most critical private organizational funders

IV (ii). Faculty Prestigious Awards (FPA)

- Candidate identification and nomination strategy
- Nomination calendars and dossier development
- National and international honors

IV (iii). Proposal Development Services (PDS)

- Translation of sponsor priorities and agency trends into competitive proposal strategies
- Delivery of discipline-aligned writing, editing, mock panels, and critical review for federal and major foundation proposals
- Hands-on project management from concept development through submission readiness

IV (iiii). Pre Award Services (PAS)

- Budget development and justification
- Navigation of IU and sponsor processes, policies, and systems for proposal submission
- Compliance review and targeted unit support

Team numbers are administrative designations only and do not indicate hierarchy, priority, or relative significance.

Building research pipeline and capacity across IU

New internal funding programs

The National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology Challenge funded eight teams on federal biotech pillars and the Developing Industry Research, Exchange, Cooperation and Travel (DIRECT) program launched new faculty–industry research partnerships.

National initiative support

ORD re-tooled IU's research development infrastructure to enable us to pursue new and emerging opportunities including DOE Genesis Mission, NSF X-Labs, NSF NAIRR-OC and NIST BAA responses.

Strategic Faculty Research Development Curriculum Created

Built and implemented a targeted year-long curriculum of workshops and trainings designed to advance IU faculty research development capacity.

Hosted 68 faculty events

ORD held in person and online workshops and webinars around key topics including AI, industry, Department of Defense, and proposal development. More than 1,600 people attended throughout the year.

123 faculty granted internal awards

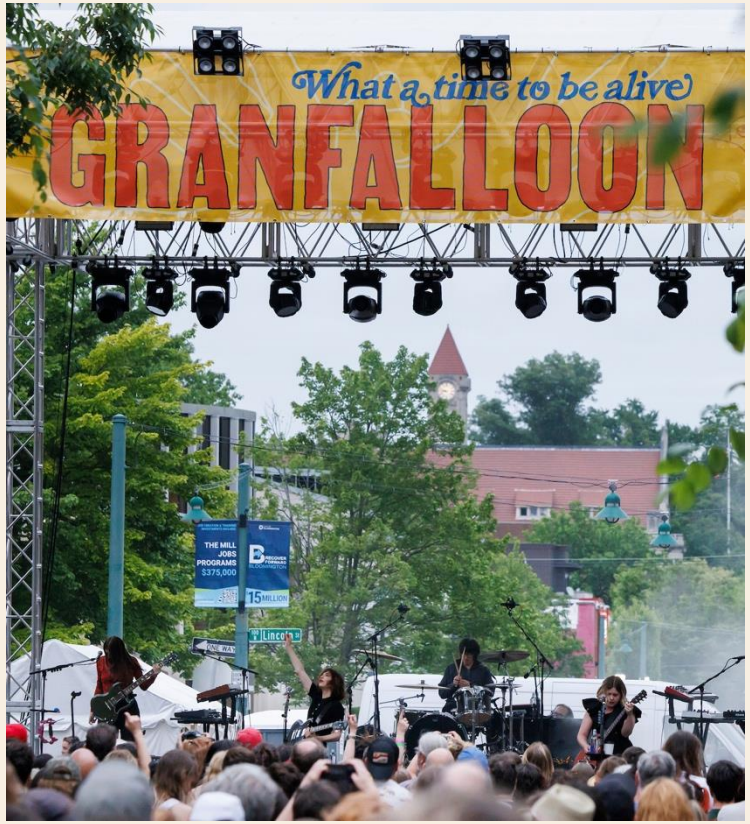
ORD awarded several grant programs to support faculty research including seed, bridge, conference, and equipment funding.

Ran 288 Limited Submission Competitions

440 faculty submitted applications and 231 were advanced to submit proposals to the external funders. ORD provides personalized support to faculty throughout the limited submission proposal process.

Faculty Research Development (FRD) supports faculty through a robust curriculum of targeted workshops and events to advance IU researchers at all career stages. They develop and manage several internal funding programs and run all limited submission competitions.

Advancing humanities research and creative work



READI 2.0

Indiana's READI 2.0 Arts & Culture Initiative allocated $3.4 million to the Upland Regional Creative Economy Commons, part of a $7 million-plus initiative serving 11 Indiana Uplands counties. The project connects three B-Line Trail sites with a regional digital platform for artists, venues, and audiences.

Dividends on A&H Fellow Investment

Elizabeth Hebbard, former Presidential A&H Fellow, won an NEH Humanities Collections grant and a Mellon New Directions Fellowship with help from RDS, attracting half a million dollars for the IU Book Lab and Peripheral Manuscripts Project.

AI in the Arts

Eskenazi School professor Caleb Weintraub took top honors at Barcelona's WSXAA and the international Metadisruption festival for AI-blended filmmaking — placing IU at the leading edge of creative AI.

Schlesinger's ArchIvory

Jonathan Schlesinger is building the world's largest open-access ivory database — pairing X-ray fluorescence, DNA and isotope work, and machine learning with conservation partners in Zambia.

Arts & Humanities (A&H) connects faculty with major funders and community partners — driving new research, public art, and creative practice across IU and the region. They host grant writing workshops, manage internal A&H funding programs, and provide personalized research development support to A&H faculty on all campuses.

Powering IU's pursuit of large-scale opportunities

IU ARC + Crane—Mission Engineering Automation Testbed

IU responded to NSWC Crane's MEAT 1.0 with hands on support from ORD. Six preproposals were submitted totaling up to $70M, including an invited $50M proposal to build out ARC's edge-computing infrastructure.

IU LAB, IU ARC + NIST, NSF, Defense funding opportunities

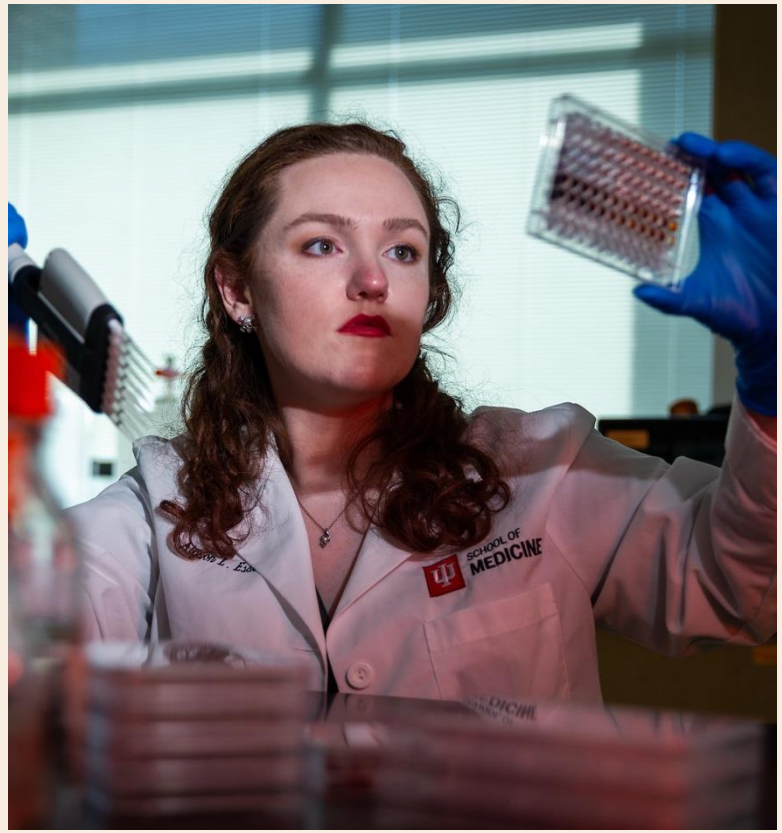
Spearheaded key strategic opportunities including the NIST CHIPS BAA (CBATI, IU CREATE, hybrid computing), NSF X-Labs, Genesis Mission, and liaised with the Conafay Group for federal agency outreach.

Environmental Resilience Institute + Burroughs Wellcome Fund—Climate and Health Excellence

ORD guided the $10M Burroughs Wellcome CHEX letter of intent (Filippelli, Boehm, Habeeb) and a new Superfund proposal spanning Public Health, O'Neill, and Medicine.

Gill Institute, H2W + ARPA-H—Health-related funding opportunities

Supported the ARPA-H pre-proposal development for Hui-Chen Lu's multi-institution team, and Steve Boehm's team studying psychedelics for alcohol and substance-use disorders — tracking ARPA-H and NIH openings and joint environmental-health work with ERI.



Team-Based Research Development (TBRD) supports faculty to build partnerships and teams to tackle the most ambitious research programs, spanning campuses and disciplines. They ensure that IU's centrally administered research institutes and centers have the support they need to obtain large-scale research funding from diverse external sponsors.

Opening doors to diverse funders

Lilly Endowment + Sidney and Lois Eskenazi Museum of Art

The Sidney and Lois Eskenazi Museum of Art was awarded a $5 million capacity-building grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., funding multi-year initiatives to expand statewide audience engagement, enhance visitor experiences, and strengthen community storytelling.

Eli Lilly & Co. Foundation + Simon Cancer Center Future Scientist Program

The IU Simon Comprehensive Cancer Center secured a three-year grant from Eli Lilly and Company Foundation for the Future Scientist Program, expanding an intensive eight-week mentored summer cancer research experience for Marion County public high school juniors to serve as a feeder into federal NCI- and ACS-funded health career pipelines.

Building and Expanding Funder Relationships: Avis Foundation, Balfour Foundation

A new foundation relationship with the Avis Foundation resulted in grant funding to expand the reach and educational impact of the Jacobs School of Music's Jacobs Virtual Academy.
IU's Office of Enrollment Management was able to further scale its nationally recognized IU Bound program with a multi-year award from the Lloyd G. Balfour Foundation.

Lumina Foundation + multi-campus initiative led by IU South Bend

Multiple IU campuses participated in Lumina Foundation's nationally competitive *From Campus to Career* initiative, leading to a $100,000 award for IU South Bend to scale career-connected High Impact Practice (HIP) programs, establish campus ePortfolio studios, and enhance workforce readiness.

Beyond federal agencies, Corporate and Foundation Relations (CFR) cultivates foundation and corporate partnerships that expand IU's reach and impact across the state and nation. CFR directly supports faculty to diversify their research funding and successfully build relationships with private partners.

FACULTY PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS (FPA)

Promoting faculty excellence

Inaugural University-Wide "Research Honors“ Celebration

ORD orchestrated and hosted IU’s first-ever university-wide Research Honors event, establishing a flagship tradition to celebrate faculty who captured elite national and international awards over the past five years and elevating the culture of research distinction across all campuses.

First-ever university-wide Research Honors celebration · Photo: Indiana University

RECORD-BREAKING NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Thirteen AAAS Fellows — an IU record

In FY26, thirteen faculty were added as fellows in the American Association for the Advancement of Science, an IU record.

Four AERA Fellows

IU Bloomington School of Education secured an unprecedented four American Education Research Association Fellowships.

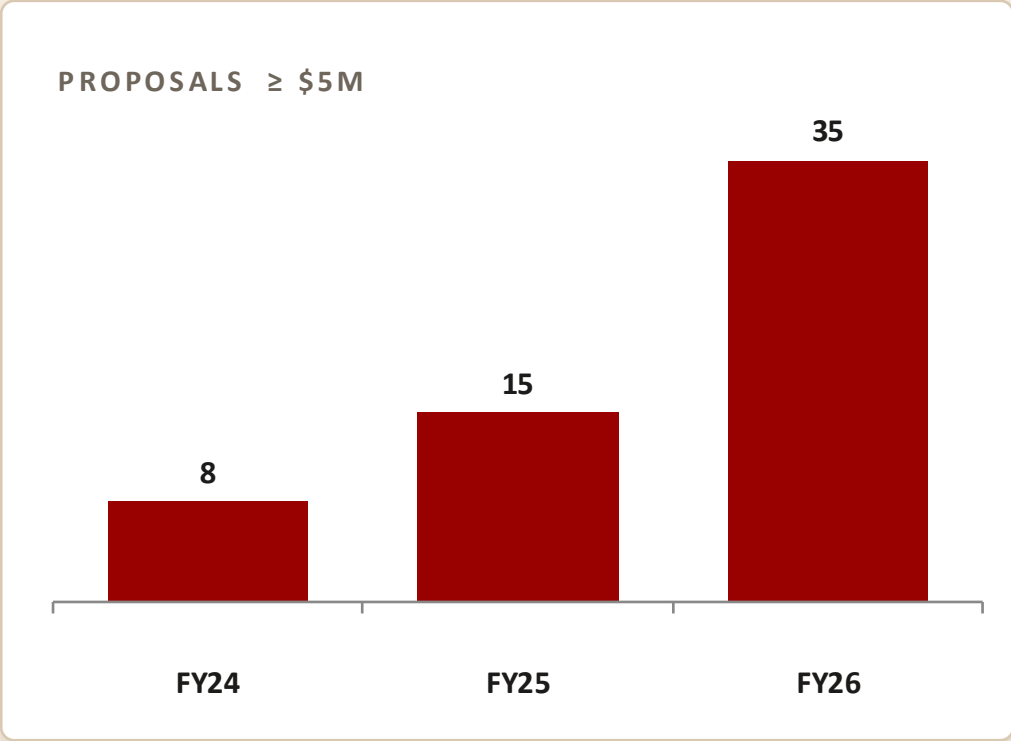
A rare humanities double

IU Indianapolis Professor Edward Curtis IV earned a Guggenheim and an ACLS Fellowship in the same year.

The Faculty Prestigious Awards Specialist proactively engages and supports faculty to seek and secure prestigious awards to increase the ranks of award winners at IU.

PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (PDS)

A rising tide of faculty proposals



FY26 HIGHLIGHTS

St. Baldrick's Foundation

ORD supported Dr. Jia Shen on several grant applications in FY26; he was recently awarded a competitive three-year award to develop a new immune-based treatment for pediatric cancer.

Prestigious William T. Grant Scholars Award

IU faculty submitted several nominations with support from ORD, yielding a successful application for IU School of Medicine professor Dr. Lauren Magee.

Continuous success for faculty working with PDS

Dr. Hee Tae Jung submitted multiple proposals, yielding successive CTSI and NIH awards totaling more than $500,000 in FY25 and FY26.

Intensive Writing Cohorts for diverse funders

PDS leads writing cohorts across the disciplinary spectrum to increase faculty capacity in quality proposal writing for funders such as NSF, NIH, Guggenheim, and ACLS.

Proposal Development Services (PDS) provides personalized support to faculty to strengthen their proposal submissions, build grant writing capacity, and secure diverse research funding across IU.

PRE-AWARD SERVICES (PAS)

The expertise behind every submission

Certified expertise

RDS has six Certified Research Administrators — including newly certified Marlys Barr and Brendan Devine in FY26. This certification recognizes longevity and expertise in the field.

Seamless coverage

PAS staff flex across peaks, uneven workloads, and PTO so faculty support never lapses.

Systems navigation

ORD's pre-award staff provides expert guidance through IU and sponsor portals, policies, and processes unfamiliar to many PIs.

University wide support

In FY26, the PAS team has worked with over 350 faculty and project directors from 150 different units, representing all IU campuses.

Cohorts & workshops

ORD staff provide hands-on support for NIH and NSF CAREER writing cohorts and dozens of training events to share their research development expertise with faculty.

Capacity-aware bridge support

By advance arrangement, PAS provides short-term coverage and mentorship for new departmental grant administrators.

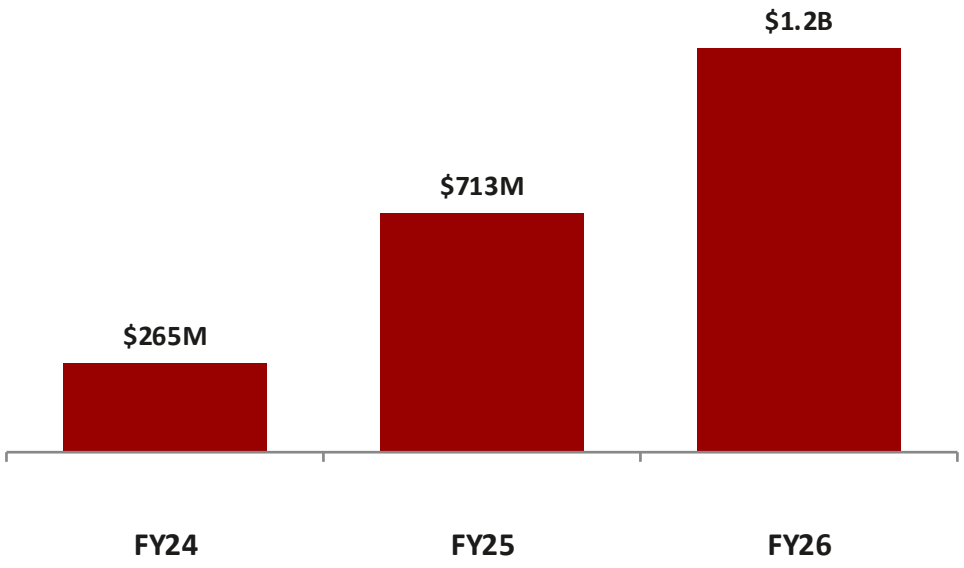
Pre-Award Services (PAS) guides faculty through IU and sponsor systems and provides timely proposal routing — supporting Bloomington, Indianapolis, and the regional campuses with a focus on units without internal pre-award grant administrators.

All ORD INITIATIVES

All-hands-on-deck approach to strategic opportunities

ORD's collaborative approach propelled a 4.5× increase in submitted dollars while advancing IU's most ambitious strategic opportunities.

TOTAL $ SUBMITTED BY ORD



4.5× growth in submitted dollars since FY24

DOE Genesis Mission

ORD guided 40+ PIs from concept to submission. Pre-Award and Proposal Development units synchronized timelines and checklists across projects, ran faculty Office Hours, decoded a complex NOFO, and became a central resource for departmental grant administrators.

NSF Engines - IMPACT

ORD led months of cross-team collaboration building corporate partnerships, developing an impressive proposal, and organizing site visits to secure this $15M transformational award to make Indiana a hub for musculoskeletal innovation.

NSF X-Labs

ORD provided comprehensive support for two strong applications for this new NSF initiative to launch and scale a new generation of organizations focused on independent, research, development and innovation.

IN THEIR WORDS

"The success of the NSF Engines effort reflects what is possible when researchers and research development teams work as true partners. ORD brought together expertise from team-based research development, corporate and foundation relations, proposal development, and pre-award services to strengthen every aspect of our application. Their thoughtful guidance, responsiveness, and commitment to excellence helped us build a competitive proposal designed to accelerate innovation, workforce development, and economic growth across Indiana."

Dr. Melissa Kacena

Director, Indiana Center for Musculoskeletal Health
Chancellor's Professor, Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis
PI, NSF IMPACT Engine in Indiana (NSF2532359)

IN THEIR WORDS

“ORD's support has been instrumental to the success of Luddy Indianapolis's research enterprise. The IU Research Equipment Fund enabled the school to establish critical AI research infrastructure that has become a cornerstone resource for our faculty and collaborators. An Emerging Frontiers Grant provided the foundation for building a Causal AI research team, already establishing itself as a promising area of future research. The many workshops and training opportunities offered by ORD have been invaluable in helping our junior faculty quickly launch and grow their research programs.”

Dr. Shiaofen Fang

Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Affairs

Luddy School of Informatics, Computing, and Engineering, Indianapolis

LOOKING AHEAD

Priorities for FY27

Directions under discussion as ORD builds on its success.

Build tools to expand research development

ORD is soon to launch an AI tool matching faculty expertise with funding opportunities and more tools to come.

Grow high-impact proposal support

Evolve toward a selective model that concentrates effort where it moves the needle.

Deepen cross-team coordination

Leverage strengths across all ORD teams and find efficiencies for improved communication and collaboration.

Diversify and Grow

Diversify funding sources and expand support, strengthening resilience and opportunity in a changing funding environment

Let's stay in touch! Please contact ord@iu.edu with comments or questions. To request services, please complete the RDS Request Form.
For more information, please visit http://research.iu.edu/funding-proposals/about/index.html

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