

**State University System
Education and General
2022-2023 Legislative Budget Request
Form I**

University(s):	Florida State University
Request Title:	FSU-Top 10
Date Request Approved by University Board of Trustees:	Pending BOT Approval
Recurring Funds Requested:	\$25M
Non-Recurring Funds Requested:	
Total Funds Requested:	\$25M
Please check the request type below:	
Shared Services/System-Wide Request	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unique Request	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

I. Purpose

Overview

FSU is requesting a recurring investment of \$25 million dollars to continue the university’s unprecedented and entrepreneurial efforts to move into the Top 10 public universities in the nation. Florida is the nation’s third largest state and is recognized as having the top public higher education system in the country for five years in a row. FSU has demonstrated incredible return on investment of targeted state funding by becoming the fastest improving institution in the entire Top 50 publics. In the past six years, FSU has served the State by improving a full 20 spots, from #43 to the #19th ranked public university in the nation and Florida’s second institution ranked in the Top 20. The more highly an institution is ranked, the more difficult it becomes to move up. Despite this factor, FSU plans to continue its move to achieve the Top 10.

That FSU has accomplished this level of success without a teaching hospital is a remarkable testimony to the uniqueness and ingenuity of the university and its faculty. Florida State has invested in a comprehensive strategy guided by the university strategic plan and the BOG Accountability Plan.

To continue its move to the Top 10, FSU will strategically invest in:

- Continued growth of our distinctive and productive research base with high-level faculty hiring, particularly in the STEM fields to improve our research productivity, teaching, and national reputation as a top Research 1 university
- Building upon our nationally acclaimed student success program by becoming a model for innovative and effective academic programs and career preparation for Florida's leaders of the future
- Improving our SUS-leading transfer student success, particularly for Florida College System AA transfers
- Reducing the Student-to-Faculty ratio from 20.5-to-1 to 17-to-1 to advance teaching and research at the university
- Recruiting and supporting excellent undergraduate, graduate, faculty, and staff.

Florida State University is grateful for the continued support and investment of the Florida Legislature, particularly during these difficult times. Their support over recent years has propelled the upward trajectory of FSU and the entire State University System, advancing the quality of our universities to new heights.

FSU is positioned to help the state of Florida rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic and continue Florida's advances in higher education, research, and producing a talented, innovative workforce.

Investing in new research faculty to expand our research portfolio

With recent state investments substantially elevating the university and continuing to do so, Florida State still has far fewer dollars for faculty resources and research than the institutions that now separate FSU from a Top 10 ranking. Our Top 10 plan hinges on the continuation of a bold faculty hiring initiative that is bringing the nation's top talent to FSU. Our recent initiatives have resulted in the hiring of more than 240 outstanding new faculty members, who are teaching, conducting leading-edge research, and building the FSU and State of Florida reputation. Nonetheless, FSU remains short of its goal to add 400 new faculty overall.

Moving the needle on *U.S. News & World Report* rankings is rather straightforward. It is also tied to state investment, as many of the measures are a direct reflection of university resources. For example, 10% of an institution's ranking is determined by its per-student spending, and another 20% is based on faculty resources. Almost one-quarter of the rankings are based on the reputation of FSU among our national colleagues. Thus, Florida State's Top 10 funding request for the coming fiscal year is directed specifically at the investments that will help elevate the performance and national stature of the university and thereby the entire State of Florida.

Establishing the National Framework for Student Success

Florida State is already recognized as a national leader for improvements to its student retention and graduation rates. Since 2005, student retention at FSU improved from 87.9% to 95%, which is among the top 15 public universities in the nation. The six-year graduation rate at FSU has risen from 69.6% to 84%. The four-year graduation rate has risen from 46.2% in 2002 to 74% in 2020 (the highest four-year graduation rate in the history of FSU and the State University System). For the next set of *USN&WR* rankings, Florida State is projected to place among the top 10 in the country on these student success metrics.

We have an expectation that student success should be more than graduation and retention rates. We have established Six Pillars for Student Success to create a more holistic and beneficial effect on the student experience. Those pillars are:

1. A success team behind every student
2. Learning communities
3. Enhanced support for teaching
4. Experiential and global learning
5. Leadership and personal development
6. College to career

The success team behind every student allows us to address inequities to assure that students from all sub-populations have an equal rate of graduation and equal experiences. To assure that support, we need to increase the number of advisors at FSU to get closer to the industry recommended student-to-advisor ratio of 300:1. Increasing the number of student advisors would also give new students a single advisor for the duration of their time at FSU, freeing up faculty to better guide and direct students on properly preparing for their careers.

Florida State has deployed College Life Coaches (CLC) to provide “high-touch” academic support to at-risk students who demonstrate the greatest need. While the CLC program has been enormously successful, it lacks a sufficient number of coaches and can thereby not adequately attend to the students who would benefit most from this level of support.

Even with these limitations, FSU has one of the nation’s highest four-year graduation rates, and we have relative parity in the graduation rates of our Pell students and our various racial and ethnic populations. Our highly successful Take 15 initiative not only improves students’ times to degree, but also reduces their expenses and significantly improves their lifetime earnings.

For those students who face unique barriers or take a sub-optimal path to graduation we created the Graduation Specialists Initiative. This initiative brings together a team of specialized staff members who guide and assist 1,500+ students with high credit hours to a clear and timely path to graduation, as well as students who have dropped out of FSU and need to re-enroll to graduate.

We have been making great strides in enhancing support for teaching and redesigning our curriculum, particularly in gateway courses with high incidents of D and F grades or withdrawals (DFW). Failure to pass a gateway course is one of the keys to delayed graduation. In Fall 2017, FSU launched its Center for the Advancement of Teaching to promote proven educational practices and assist faculty in their adoption of leading-edge educational methodologies. We want to make sure that our courses maximize the learning for all of our students, particularly those who are the first-generation in their families to attend college, and employ active, experiential approaches that prepare students with the skills they need to thrive in their careers. In fact, we were just designated one of the eleven top universities in the country for successfully preparing our large group of first generation students, and noted as a national model in this important work. Impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic have also expanded the need to present students with unique and effective learning environments. We must continue expand faculty professional development and the curricular interventions that improve the educational value of all of our courses for all our students.

FSU's recent Engage 100 effort is an innovative way to introduce first-year students to higher education and provide them mentorship and support as they transition to FSU. Our Engage 100 program currently reaches about half of each incoming class, and new resources will allow us to expand it to reach the full first-year class of students and bolster student success.

Transfer Student Success

In Spring 2020, the Florida Legislature passed a bill to include transfer student graduation rates as a Performance Funding Metric for the State University System. The intent was to improve the graduation rates of AA degree transfers from the Florida College System. Florida State has a considerably higher two-year graduation rate than any of the other SUS institutions, but we need to do better. Twenty years ago, we started an enrollment management group that met once every two weeks to improve the student success for first-time-in-college freshmen. We are leveraging this group to deeply expand the support and engagement we provide to transfer students, such as through new advisors, transfer student support, and our Engage 100 project mentioned earlier. Financial aid remains an issue for these students and it is difficult to have donors, especially in the current financial context, provide sufficient philanthropic support for need-based aid.

FSU also has been engaged in a workgroup on transfer student success for the past two years with our colleagues from a dozen universities in the Southeast. This effort, sponsored by the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU), is identifying the data and interventions necessary to assure on-time

graduation for transfer students. Through this partnership, we are learning new ways to improve our transfer student performance.

Emphasis on Excellence

Top 10 universities are renowned for recruiting top students, faculty and staff. FSU has done fairly well in that regard, but we need to increase the critical mass of top leaders and influencers to climb the next rung of the rankings ladder. FSU will need to enroll more National Merit Scholars, Presidential Scholars (a program that lacks a recurring funding source), Honors, and other very top students, which together will help our state attract and retain the very best talent.

FSU's plans of hiring new faculty means we are aspiring to hire a full range of outstanding faculty members: STEM-focused National Academy members, senior faculty (full professors) of national acclaim, associate professors with extensive research experience, assistant professors that hold research promise, and other instructional faculty who will address course capacity constraints and provide smaller class sizes, especially in STEM disciplines where meeting student course demands continues to be a challenge.

Exceptional students in doctoral and graduate programs are also essential in supporting FSU's movement in the national rankings and its instruction and research portfolio. These students and scholars are key components of a competitive Research I University, and they are a core part of our Top 10 plan. We have had record enrollment of graduate students for the past two years, but we need to do a better job being competitive in the recruitment of the nation's top graduate students. FSU plans to invest in expanding our graduate student stipend support to help us move closer to market levels. Furthermore, to help accommodate the needs in undergraduate teaching, mentoring, and research, FSU will plan on investing to expand the number of graduate student assistantships.

This expansion will allow Florida State to increase its graduate student enrollment and programs and bring FSU on par with its public Research I University peers. Currently, FSU is in the bottom third of this peer group on the proportion of the student population that are graduate students. Funding is critical to our expansion of our overall graduate student population, funding expanded faculty and additional graduate assistantships.

The faculty hired through our national rankings enhancement funding will both help recruit and rely on exceptional students in doctoral programs. These students and scholars are key components of a competitive Research I University, and they are central to our Top 10 plan. To accommodate the needed growth in faculty research, we must increase the number of recurring graduate assistantships by at least 80. The assistantships will help us to attract top graduate assistants to complement our recent and future faculty hires to help

elevate FSU to the level of our peers, to strengthen the scholarship of existing faculty members, to promote the research of new hires, to teach key undergraduate courses, and to mentor graduate and undergraduate students.

Diversity and inclusion are an essential component of our strategic plan and our institutional excellence. It is imperative that we grow and support our diverse students, faculty, and staff and provide them with experiences that help everyone achieve their full potential. We have not been able to keep up with our Research I peers in providing strong financial aid packages for many of our Pell-eligible students. Tallahassee is not a large metropolitan area, so most of our Pell students must move to Tallahassee to enroll at FSU. That means their annual Cost of Attendance is roughly \$5,500 more per student than those who are able to live at home. The result is that FSU must spend considerably more on need-based aid per student than universities in metropolitan areas. We have nation-leading programs like CARE and our Unconquered Scholars programs that support first generation and lower socioeconomic students, but they only serve 20% of our Pell-eligible students. We must expand more avenues of highly targeted support to all our Pell students.

The diversity of our faculty ranks remains lower than we want in spite of specialized incentives to recruit and retain these faculty. Our students benefit when faculty from varied backgrounds and experiences mentor them. FSU has a long history of inclusion born from its days as a women's college. The precursors to our CARE program began over 50 years ago. We have earned the Excellence in Education Diversity Award for each of the past six years and have been named National Diversity Champions for the past four years. We are number four in the nation producing Black medical doctors, behind three HBCU Colleges of Medicine, and a leading producer of Black and Hispanic doctoral degrees in non-medical disciplines.

FSU also has a distinguished record as one of the leading producers of study abroad opportunities for students. Additionally, FSU recently was awarded the 2018 Platinum Level Institutional Award for Global Learning, Research & Engagement from the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities. The previous year, FSU was one of four institutions awarded the Senator Paul Simon Award for Campus Internationalization.

Resource Needs

Primary among FSU's needs is to increase the size and quality of the faculty and to retain its existing faculty. We have opportunities to hire nationally acclaimed faculty whose institutions can no longer adequately support their research. We have improved the climate for faculty at FSU and have improved our student-to-faculty ratio from 25:1 to 20.5:1. Yet we are still 177 in the latest *U.S. News & World Report* rankings of public universities on this measure. Florida State's

multi-year plan has a student-to-faculty goal of 17:1, which would place us among the top 100 public universities.

Our current ratio requires our faculty to do more with less and it affects our ability to reimagine the classroom experience and create small classes. Student-to-Faculty Ratio and class size are both *U.S. News* metrics. With the previous support of the Legislature, Governor, and Board of Governors, FSU has hired hundreds of new faculty members, but we are still short of the number needed to reach a student-faculty ratio of 17:1 ratio, which would require an additional 363 faculty members. In total, the dollars requested in FSU's 2022-2023 LBR for Top 10 Plan would allow Florida State to hire an additional 102 faculty members. These 102 additional faculty would bring the university's student-to-faculty ratio to 19.4:1, good enough to improve to 162nd in the nation.

Achieving this short-term 19.4 ratio would still have FSU behind most public universities in the United States, including institutions such as:

- University of Northern Kentucky
- University of North Florida
- University of Texas - Tyler
- University of West Georgia
- Valdosta State University

The requested funds will be used in a variety of ways annually, including:

- Hiring additional faculty
- Establishment of world-class centers of excellence through the recruitment of National Academy-caliber scientists and senior researchers
- Expanding student success efforts and advising
- Recruiting for excellence and diversity among students, faculty, and staff
- Providing funds necessary to improve scholarships and need-based aid

Specifically, these funds will be used for:

National Academy Members	\$0.5M
Full Professors	\$2.3M
Associate Professors	\$1.8M
Assistant Professors	\$4.0M
Instructional Faculty	\$2.2M
Advisors/Academic Coaches/Graduation & Transfer Student Specialists	<u>\$0.8M</u>
Total	\$11.6M + Benefits=\$15.4M
Graduate Student Stipends	\$1.7M

Undergraduate Student Success Programming	\$1.0M
Scholarships	\$2.5M
Financial Aid	<u>\$4.4M</u>
	\$25M

II. Return on Investment

Increases in funding will provide strategic investments that benefit the State of Florida:

- Elevate Florida State University in its pursuit of Top 10 status among public universities as determined by *U.S. News & World Report*.
- Achieve higher national prominence as a leader in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math to ensure that Florida State continues to be a model for the State of Florida and nation in student career readiness and placement
- Realize substantial savings for Florida families through high student retention and increased four-year graduation rates
- Provide affordable excellence across a broad spectrum of academic fields; add significantly to the university's existing centers of excellence, including its nationally ranked science, arts, and business programs
- Provide benefits associated with expanding the university's research enterprise and research discoveries that will create jobs, opportunities for start-up companies, and by generating discoveries that may directly affect Floridians.

More importantly, state investments will allow Florida State to elevate its standing in most of the Florida Board of Governors' metrics, enhance its contributions to the State of Florida, and enable Florida State University to achieve world-class distinction.

Key metrics that the *U.S. News & World Report* and *Top American Research Universities* include:

- Peer Ratings/National Reputation
- Student Retention and Graduation Rates (especially four-year graduation rates)
- Freshman Retention
- Student/Faculty Ratio
- Class Size
- Faculty Resources
- Total Research Expenditures
- Federal Research Expenditures
- National Academy Members
- Faculty Awards
- Doctorates Granted

- Average SAT
- Postdoctoral Fellows
- Alumni Giving Rate
- National Reputation

III. Personnel

National Academy Members	\$0.5M
Full Professors	\$2.3M
Associate Professors	\$1.8M
Assistant Professors	\$4.0M
Instructional Faculty	\$2.2M
Advisors/ Academic Coaches/Graduation & Transfer Student Specialists	<u>\$0.8M</u>
Total	\$11.6M + Benefits=\$15.4M

As outlined in Section I, the university plans to hire and retain additional academic advisors, academic coaches, and other student services staff to help bring student support levels closer to national standards and provide needed guidance for our student population.

Florida State will further enhance the quality of its research, instruction, and student learning through the hiring of additional faculty at various levels, with a particular focus on those in STEM and Health disciplines. The top priority will be to support departments and courses in which student success challenges remain most critical. Additional faculty will advance the quality of the learning environment for students and extend the deployment of the latest evidence-based teaching approaches, particularly for students from underrepresented backgrounds and in STEM and Health pathway courses, such as mathematics, chemistry, biology, physics, and computer science. New faculty will also help to meet growing course demands and/or enrollment changes that have hindered the ability of academic departments to offer sufficient course seats in a given semester (e.g., biology, chemistry, public health, physics, economics, political science, nutrition and integrated physiology, human development, engineering, criminology, and others). Finally, additional faculty will amplify the university's research productivity and create new research and mentorship opportunities for both graduate and undergraduate students.

IV. Facilities:

None

**2022-2023 Legislative Budget Request
Education and General
Position and Fiscal Summary
Operating Budget Form II**

University: Florida State University
Issue Title: FSU Top 10

	<u>RECURRING</u>	<u>NON- RECURRING</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
<u>Positions</u>			
Faculty	102.00	0.00	102.00
Other (A&P/USPS)	20.00	0.00	20.00
	-----	-----	-----
Total	122.00	0.00	122.00
	=====	=====	=====
Salaries and Benefits	\$15,400,000	\$0	\$15,400,000
Other Personal Services	\$1,700,000	\$0	\$1,700,000
Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0
Operating Capital Outlay	\$0	\$0	\$0
Electronic Data Processing	\$0	\$0	\$0
Financial Aid	\$6,900,000	\$0	\$6,900,000
Special Category (Specific)	\$0	\$0	\$0
<u>Student Success Programming</u>	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$1,000,000
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
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Total All Categories	\$25,000,000	\$0	\$25,000,000
	=====	=====	=====

**State University System
Education and General
2022-2023 Legislative Budget Request
Form I**

University(s):	Florida State University
Request Title:	FSU Operational Support-Top 10 & AAU Readiness
Date Request Approved by University Board of Trustees:	Pending BOT Approval
Recurring Funds Requested:	\$25M
Non-Recurring Funds Requested:	
Total Funds Requested:	\$25M
Please check the request type below:	
Shared Services/System-Wide Request	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unique Request	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

I. Purpose

Overview

Operations funding will bolster FSU’s plan to advance Florida’s economy and workforce, enable the university to reach the Top 10 and the American Association of Universities (AAU), and invest in critical ongoing needs.

Improving Positioning for Membership in the AAU

Florida State University finds itself as the only SUS institution designated “Preeminent” which does not receive specific “Operating Funds” from the legislature. FSU maintains that with such support, we will not only continue our march up the *US News* rankings, but also will be increasingly ready to earn another important marker of excellence. Despite all the positive publicity around the State University System of Florida, the nation’s third largest state continues to have only one member of the Association of American Universities (AAU). The AAU describes themselves as follows: “AAU comprises 65 distinguished research universities across the United States that continually advance society through education, research and discovery. Our universities earn the majority of competitively awarded federal funding for academic research and are educating tomorrow’s visionary leaders and global citizens.” Historically, the AAU has favored institutions with large research hospitals, expansive engineering programs, and high R&D expenditures through their research enterprises. These institutions are

considered the top research universities, and they use that status to collaborate with each other and to win external funding contracts. Membership in AAU also elevates an institution's national peer reputation, a core metric for *U.S. News & World Report* and other academic rankings, and something that is often difficult to improve quickly.

The historic composition of AAU membership did not favor an institution like FSU that has a distributed primary medicine program and an atypical, shared engineering college with FAMU. However, the AAU accepted three members in 2019 that broke their historic mold. Their website notes: *"the association's black box of membership criteria include a mix of "quantitative measures used to assess the breadth and quality of university programs of research and graduate education" and a "more qualitative set of judgments about an institution's mission, characteristics, and trajectory."* With recent legislative investments, FSU is now better positioned than ever to deliver the state of Florida its second institution in the AAU. FSU fits that new AAU mold with a strong academic trajectory, a growing research portfolio (now nearly \$300M annually in research expenditures), a diverse population, and leadership in health and other issues affecting rural and underrepresented populations.

FSU has the benefit of being home to a diversity of highly recognized research organizations including: the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory, the Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction Studies (COAPS), the Florida Center for Reading Research, the Learning Systems Institute, the Center for Advanced Power Systems, the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Institute, the Institute of Politics, and the Institute for Justice Research & Development. These are some of 60 centers and institutes at FSU that cut across a broad spectrum of disciplines.

This diversity of programs and expertise positions FSU to establish itself as a national leader in many multidisciplinary fields. FSU has begun a health data sciences initiative to build our data sciences infrastructure to improve our case for more large National Institutes of Health (NIH) funded projects. Another project, entitled Big Bets, is working to increase external funding from non-governmental sources. Both of these projects have four pilot entries, but they will require additional resources for FSU to compete with other top universities – especially those in the AAU.

In the FSU-Top 10 Legislative Budget Request, we identify efforts to build our reputation as a top research university by increasing our faculty ranks by 102. We showed our commitment to student success especially for diverse and lower-income populations and for transfer students. We also discussed our need to improve our recruitment of excellent undergraduate and graduate students, and faculty and staff. These bold investments will be necessary to move FSU into the Top 10 public universities in the nation.

This is an expensive endeavor, however, and it requires focused, data-driven investments in our operations and infrastructure to be fully realized. National Academy members, full professors, and associate professors with large research portfolios require startup packages including laboratory space and equipment, which in some disciplines may reach seven-figures. Invariably, FSU will need to retrofit aging laboratories with new machinery and technologies. Usually, these new faculty members are more expensive to employ during their first few years until they start attracting external research funding. However, the returns on these initial investments can be immense, as these faculty secure large grants and attract other high-performing faculty.

Each new faculty member in STEM or Health is expected to generate more than \$150,000 in contracts and grants a year and be a central player in FSU securing new patents and creating new business spinoffs. Recent return-on-investment studies show that research activities contribute to a strong return-on-investment; for every dollar Florida invests in its state universities, there is a return of nearly \$11.00.

In addition to startup funds for laboratory improvements, most of these faculty require the support staff necessary to manage their laboratories and research activities. The Health Data Science Initiative (HDSI) has a goal of producing the big data infrastructure necessary to earn larger grants, especially from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The support staff needed for that project include individuals who can manage the projects, computing environment, data architecture, data carpentry, data governance, and AI/Machine Learning/Cognitive Computing algorithms to name a few.

Florida State is building a data science/big data infrastructure to empower multidisciplinary research grant proposals for groups like HDSI, but we need to elevate the computing and statistical support necessary to justify winning even bigger grants. Our Magnet Lab is a great example of the value of creating a strong infrastructure that supports research on many projects that leverage that high-caliber infrastructure to promote internationally recognized research. The Big Bets project is another example where FSU is creating an infrastructure and pipeline to secure grants from private foundations and businesses. These grants are often multidisciplinary in nature, so operational resources are needed to coordinate efforts between faculty in numerous departments.

Building new research infrastructure and upgrading existing infrastructure will allow researchers to compete for more and better grants, which will not only bring external funding to the university, but it will also improve the learning environment for our graduate and undergraduate researchers. These efforts will allow FSU to produce more high-quality PhD graduates who will be ambassadors demonstrating the value of an FSU education throughout the world.

Whereas new faculty can bring expertise in new research areas, an equally important investment is in retaining assistant and associate professors who are research productive. Florida State has invested in its faculty development programs to assure that all faculty can join a network of colleagues who can mentor them to be great researchers. It is usually much less expensive to retain top quality faculty members than to hire new ones. Nonetheless, as FSU has increased its place in the rankings, our faculty are getting more offers to join other top universities. We need to counter that trend by maintaining competitive wages and providing salary and support funds as a basis for counteroffers. With the significant investments the university makes in getting new faculty members established at the university, it is particularly challenging to have them leave the university. Retaining faculty is a key strategic priority.

Existing faculty often also benefit from seed money to explore emergent research topics. This seed money allows them to partner with colleagues to demonstrate expertise on emerging topics that are ripe for earning grants. These funds are frequently used to encourage the interdisciplinary research that leads to new discoveries, product, patents, and startup companies. FSU provides some seed money for faculty researchers but will need more to elevate to a position among the top 10 universities.

Another key support for both existing and new faculty is post-doctoral scholars (post-docs) and graduate student research and teaching assistants. FSU has been able to grow its number of post-doctoral researchers and graduate assistants in the past few years. Moving graduate assistant stipends to market levels will allow the university to recruit and retain outstanding graduate student assistants. Furthermore, recent PhD graduates covet post-doctoral appointments in top research centers around the world. Post-doctoral researchers are an invaluable support structure for grant research as they bring external research experience from other institutions and they are committed almost exclusively to research for the three years of their appointment. Although post-docs can be paid by grant proceeds, most grants are not large enough to support these researchers without additional institutional support.

Florida State continues to raise private funds to support new faculty members and infrastructure needs, as well as the development of state-of-the-art teaching and laboratory facilities. Rarely do institutions receive \$100M donations as FSU did from the Jim and Jan Moran Foundation for the Jim Moran College of Entrepreneurship. We will continue to pursue private funds to support our mission, but we need state dollars to provide the strategic investments we need to get into the Top 10. It is important to note that alumni giving is also one of the *US News* metrics.

In addition to research infrastructure and faculty retention, there are operational expenses associated with a top student success program. Previous dollars have allowed Florida State to invest in the EAB Student Success Collaborative, a

project designed to increase persistence and graduation among at-risk students. This initiative has allowed FSU to identify, through statistical analysis, and then guide students to their best – or a better – course of action. Examples include students who might benefit from switching majors and providing students (and their academic advisors) with information on job prospects and expected earnings.

FSU is also investing in Salesforce to provide a common communication platform for students. This platform will allow FSU to centralize almost all communications with students under a single platform. As we invested in various platforms to improve our student retention and graduation, we also created a fragmented landscape of tools. As we focus now on the full student life cycle, it is essential for us to have a singular platform for students to access information and for advisors to access students to help them achieve on-time graduation.

Increasingly, top universities are using artificial intelligence, machine learning and data science to identify positive and negative student behaviors and outcomes. From these efforts, they can identify when students have a change in their academic performance or behaviors that may suggest a need to intervene. The EAB platform does this to a minor extent, but FSU has been working on expanding its student data science infrastructure as a way to gain better insights into student success both in school and after graduation. Expanding student success technologies and data capacities is particularly important as the university works to ensure every student is engaged and supported throughout their time at FSU, even for those who are not on campus.

Research Clusters - FSU will establish additional faculty positions including positions designated specifically for STEM research centric cluster hiring, such as in the life and data sciences. Florida State will bolster its efforts to attract nationally recognized and emerging scholars. These clusters of faculty members will amplify research activity for the university, enabling FSU to garner more federal and private grant funding, and the State University System to reach its \$3 billion annual research expenditure goal.

Getting Students Great Jobs - Our students are graduating into a changing world that expects them to have job-ready skills and experiences. We must focus on creating an access pipeline to internships, undergraduate research, and other career-building activities, especially for our lower socioeconomic students. Funding will be key to developing more experiential learning opportunities and expanding those opportunities to the full breadth of our student population.

In 2019, FSU became the largest and most diverse university in the nation to adopt an experiential learning graduation requirement. Experiential learning includes internships, undergraduate research, community and project-based

learning, international study, and other high-impact practices that provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to easily transition from college to career. Additional funding will expand programming and financial support for students, particularly for students from lower-income backgrounds, so they can engage in more of these experiences. Additional funding will also expand the capacity of our career advising and professional development programming so we can effectively guide and mentor students along their journey at FSU and beyond. FSU will also invest in expanding our employer, economic development, and corporate relations team to foster partnerships with industries. These partnerships will provide students more experiential learning opportunities and facilitate employer input on our curriculum and programming. Aligning our educational offerings with the evolving needs of employers will help ensure that all our students graduate with the skills needed to thrive in their careers.

The requested funds, which could be funded through recurring increases in existing funding programs or otherwise, will be used in a variety of ways annually, including:

- Startup funds for new faculty to establish their research centers or laboratories
- Purchase of laboratory equipment and technologies
- Development of infrastructure and expertise around data sciences;
- Employment of support staff, such as laboratory managers and technicians, fiscal assistants, grants editors, and grants managers to support new research ventures
- Employment of postdoctoral scientists who will work shoulder to shoulder with STEM faculty in their laboratories
- Seed funds to enable faculty to experiment with new research avenues in preparation for submitting grant proposals
- Compensation to assist in retaining and rewarding outstanding faculty members
- Purchase of information technology and technology support to improve student outcomes
- Expanding internships and experiential learning opportunities, especially for lower-income students, as well as the career center team that will advise all students and connect them with employers

Specifically, funds will be invested in:

Research centric cluster hires	\$3.0M
Start-up for new faculty research labs	\$6.0M
Research Support Staff	\$2.5M
Post-doctoral Scholars	\$1.5M

New Research Proposal Seed Money	\$1.0M
Faculty Retention	\$2.8M
Career Center	\$2.0M
Graduate Assistant Stipends & Retention	\$1.2M
Laboratory upgrades, machinery, and technology	\$2.0M
IT infrastructure upgrades	\$2.0M
Student Success Technologies	<u>\$1.0M</u>
	\$25M

II. Return on Investment

This strategic investment will result in significant positives for both Florida State University and the State of Florida:

1. Retaining top faculty will further FSU's goal of being ranked in the Top 10 among public universities as determined by *U.S. News & World Report* by reducing class size and improving the student-to-faculty ratio
2. Maintaining stability by keeping faculty from being lured to higher-paying institutions improves academic program continuity while providing students with greater consistency, reliability, and connectedness to the faculty and FSU
3. Retaining top faculty will allow FSU to attract additional high-achieving undergraduates, including Bright Futures, Honors, and National Merit Scholars, who often choose a college based on opportunities to engage with distinguished faculty
4. Improving faculty retention means more students will be able to engage in high-impact practices like directed individual study, undergraduate research, community and project-based learning, honors courses, entrepreneurial activities, and internships
5. Heighten the university's reputation as a STEM leader in Florida and the nation, enhancing Florida State's standing
6. Further FSU's national stature in research and creative endeavors through the attraction and retention of faculty who are at highly productive and widely regarded points in their careers
7. Establish affordable excellence across a wider array of disciplines and Florida State's centers of excellence, including its top-ranked programs in business, STEM, design, film, and other high performing fields of study
8. Improving student success and the college to career pathway through technology investments.

Continued state investments in FSU will also raise the university's standing in virtually every Board of Governors metric used in performance awards and preeminence determinations, including:

- Student Retention and Graduation Rates
- Freshman Retention
- Student/Faculty Ratio
- Class Size
- Faculty Resources
- Total Research Expenditures
- Federal Research Grants
- National Academy Members
- Faculty Awards
- Doctoral Degrees Granted
- Average SAT
- Postdoctoral Fellows
- Alumni Giving Rates
- National Rank and Reputation
- Student Post Graduation Outcomes

III. Personnel

Research Support Staff	\$2.5M
Post-doctoral Scholars (STEM and Health)	\$1.5M
Faculty Retention	\$2.8M
Student Career Service Staff	\$0.5M

As outlined in section I, FSU will continue to invest in faculty retention efforts designed to address the challenge of retaining highly regarded faculty through competitive salaries. For purposes of retention and recruitment, as well as the standards and metrics that will move FSU into the Top 10 among public universities, Florida State's faculty salaries must be in line with national norms to dissuade faculty from seeking positions at other institutions. This is critical for fending off attempts by other universities, particularly private institutions with large endowments, from luring our top faculty away. Funding will allow FSU to move closer to market-level salaries for faculty and facilitate counteroffers to productive faculty who have received offers from other institutions.

IV. Facilities

None

**2022-2023 Legislative Budget Request
Education and General
Position and Fiscal Summary
Operating Budget Form II**

University: Florida State University
Issue Title: FSU Operational Support

	<u>RECURRING</u>	<u>NON- RECURRING</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
<u>Positions</u>			
Faculty	20.00	0.00	20.00
Other (A&P/USPS)	48.00	0.00	48.00
	-----	-----	-----
Total	68.00	0.00	68.00
	=====	=====	=====
Salaries and Benefits	\$6,000,000	\$0	\$6,000,000
Other Personal Services	\$3,400,000	\$0	\$3,400,000
Expenses	\$4,800,000	\$0	\$4,800,000
Operating Capital Outlay	\$8,000,000	\$0	\$8,000,000
Electronic Data Processing	\$0	\$0	\$0
Financial Aid	\$0	\$0	\$0
Special Category (Specific)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Retention	\$2,800,000	\$0	\$2,800,000
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	-----	-----	-----
Total All Categories	\$25,000,000	\$0	\$25,000,000
	=====	=====	=====

**State University System
Education and General
2022-2023 Legislative Budget Request
Form I**

University(s):	University of Florida
Request Title:	National Ranking Operating Support
Date Request Approved by University Board of Trustees:	July 30, 2021
Recurring Funds Requested:	\$60,000,000
Non-Recurring Funds Requested:	
Total Funds Requested:	\$60,000,000
Please check the request type below:	
Shared Services/System-Wide Request	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unique Request	<input type="checkbox"/>

- I. Purpose** – 1. Describe the overall purpose of the plan, specific goal(s) and metrics, specific activities that will help achieve the goal(s), and how these goals and initiatives align with strategic priorities and the 2021 University Accountability Plan established by your institution (include whether this is a new or expanded service/program). If expanded, what has been accomplished with the current service/program? 2. Describe any projected impact on academic programs, student enrollments, and student services. University of Distinction proposals should also address the requirements outlined in the separate guidance document.

The University of Florida was founded to strengthen our state, create economic opportunities, and solve Florida’s most pressing problems. As the state’s prominence and aspirations have risen, so must UF’s. Sustained recognition as a top 5 public university will help bring credibility and resources to benefit Floridians in every corner of our state.

UF is already finding that our progress toward top 5 recognition is becoming increasingly known and is bringing opportunities that help policymakers and community leaders achieve their visions and that directly benefit the university community. Now is the time to follow through on our commitments and the important progress we have made. That is why the University of Florida is requesting \$60 million in recurring funds to:

1. Improve metrics that will bolster our top five aspirations, and contribute to the success of our students, researchers, and communities, and

2. Stand up a dedicated team that will translate multi-department expertise in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other aspects of Financial Technology (FinTech) to help Florida's economic centers accelerate these burgeoning industries.

1. Improve Key Metrics

To maintain UF's momentum toward sustained recognition as one of the nation's top 5 public universities, UF must continue to invest in a few key areas.

Student to Faculty Ratio

UF wants to lower our student to faculty ratio to 16:1 to improve student outcomes and be more competitive with the top 5 public universities. While we have been making substantial progress in recent years through increased investment in new faculty positions, student enrollment continues to increase in response to very strong demand at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. This is positive for our efforts to address workforce needs of our state, but we currently estimate needing to hire an additional 178 additional full-time, instructional faculty to achieve the 16:1 ratio.

Faculty Compensation and Productivity Metrics

Average faculty compensation at the University of Florida would need to increase by more than 12% to match that at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the next lowest among our peers in the top 10 public universities. To recruit and retain world-class faculty who drive extraordinary outcomes in the classroom and in the lab, we must close this gap.

Across the university, we are also turning our eye to per capita measures of faculty productivity. Some of the metrics that will inform our work are the Membership Indicators for the Association of American Universities (AAU), the group of America's leading research universities that UF joined in 1985. Among the relevant per capita measures that we will prioritize are competitively funded research support, scholarly citations, and awards and recognitions. By bolstering per capita productivity, we will strengthen the foundation that will drive enduring success across the university for the decades to come. That will, in turn, help lift recognition and ranking in a wide range of programs.

2. Accelerate Florida's AI and FinTech Industries

FinTech is a major and rapidly growing factor in the global economy, business landscape, and fabric of modern society. FinTech covers the evolving intersection of financial services and technology. It is a catch-all term for any technology that is used to augment, streamline, digitize or transform the broad umbrella of financial services and transactions. Underlying technologies include blockchain (crypto payments and digital currencies), mobile applications, cybersecurity,

encryption, Internet of Things (IOT), artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and cloud-based data management. FinTech improves speed, security, customization, and access to financial services and transactions. FinTech platforms and services are used across virtually every industry and geographical market.

With more than 370,000 professionals already working in Florida's finance and insurance industries, Florida has the potential to become a global player in FinTech. This emerging sector with several vibrant clusters across Florida will benefit from Florida universities that are already among the nation's top producers of talent.

What are FinTech companies looking for?

- Assurance of a talent pipeline
- Continuing education for their current workforce to apply the latest techniques and technologies
- Technology upgrades, especially in the application of artificial intelligence
- Research partnerships with faculty, postdocs, and graduate students to advance the frontiers of FinTech and help shape its regulatory environment

An early area of focus of UF's initiative will be to accelerate this industry through a multi-college effort to directly serve its needs. A goal will be to create an environment conducive to the growth of companies already in the state and compelling to those considering relocating to Florida. With the initial participation of our colleges of Business, Engineering, and Law, UF will establish a concierge service that will bridge the university's capabilities in FinTech with the needs of individual companies and the entire sector.

UF plans to use \$10 million of the recurring funds requested in this LBR to establish and maintain a multidisciplinary unit that ties university student and faculty expertise to industry needs. The recurring funds would be used to hire faculty, industry liaisons, support staff, and graduate and post-doctoral students, expand student internship opportunities, and provide for operating expenses related to this initiative.

New faculty in the Warrington College of Business, Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering, and Levin College of Law will directly serve the FinTech communities of Florida through research, graduate and undergraduate programs, continuing education, consulting projects, and outreach that leverage HiPerGator AI and UF's growing expertise in artificial intelligence, security, business analytics, and data science. They will include a FinTech Action Corps of liaisons who work directly with companies to pinpoint their problems and needs, identify UF expertise to address them, and serve as a bridge between UF and the companies to resolve the problems.

The FinTech Action Corps will leverage UF's growing array of FinTech resources in consultation with companies in the sector. FinTech companies are specialized in a specific domain and technology, and often do not have the resources or expertise to address emerging governance, management, legal, and technical challenges within their organizations. With an expanded pool of faculty and liaisons who have experience in the industry, UF will be well-positioned to offer expert consulting help in these areas that leverage faculty skills, student teams, and university computing resources.

This joint economic development and academic initiative aligns with UF's 2021 University Accountability Plan, which states that one of our strategies is "to build and exploit UF's opportunities in artificial intelligence and data science to strengthen UF, the SUS, and the state economy." This unit will help to fill an industry gap we hear about from business leaders and the communities that are trying to grow and diversify their economies while further diversifying Florida's talent pipeline and economy.

Like Governor DeSantis who said, "we are committed to making Florida the top destination for FinTech companies to grow and succeed," UF is prepared to support Florida's significant effort to encourage initiation, expansion, and relocation of FinTech companies within Florida.

II. Return on Investment - *Describe the outcome(s) anticipated, dashboard indicator(s) to be improved, or return on investment. Be specific. For example, if this issue focuses on improving retention rates, indicate the current retention rate and the expected increase in the retention rate. Similarly, if the issue focuses on expanding access to academic programs or student services, indicate the current and expected outcomes. University of Distinction proposals should also address the requirements outlined in the separate guidance document.*

UF leadership recognizes the many demands that Governor DeSantis and the Legislature must account for, but we believe an investment in the University of Florida's mission and vision will pay dividends for our State's future.

Outcomes Anticipated:

- Continued integration of AI throughout the UF curriculum and research enterprise, which will substantially contribute to the creation of a 21st century AI-enabled workforce in Florida
- Expanded collaborative research opportunities for researchers within UF, the SUS, and College System
- Reduce student to faculty ratio from 17:1 to 16:1, which will improve students' experience and outcomes.
- New and bolstered partnerships with high-demand industries

- Strengthened talent pipeline of students capable of meeting industry needs with familiarity and understanding of complex issues
- Increased opportunities for academic and civic experiences
- Improved rankings for graduate and professional programs
- Improved per capita productivity of university faculty
- Attraction of innovators and investors who will create jobs and diversify Florida's economy
- Expanded geographical reach and influence
- Creation of lasting statewide impacts
- Renewed focus on economic resilience

Performance and Preeminence Indicators to be improved:

- Percent of Bachelor's Graduates Enrolled or Employed (\$25,000+)
- Median Wages of Bachelor's Graduates Employed Full-time
- FTIC Four and Six-Year Graduation Rates
- Percentage of Bachelor's and Graduate Degrees Awarded within Programs of Strategic Emphasis
- University Access Rate
- FCS AA Transfer Two-Year Graduation Rate
- Public University National Ranking
- Science & Engineering Research Expenditures
- Non-Medical Science & Engineering Research Expenditures
- Utility Patents Awarded
- Doctoral Degrees Awarded Annually
- Number of Post-Doctoral Appointees
- Endowment Size

State investments will also support the University of Florida as it continues to achieve world-class recognition and improve on key metrics that further enhance student and faculty success.

Key metrics that the U.S. News & World Report and other evaluators use include:

- Student retention and graduation rates
- Freshman retention
- Student/Faculty ratio
- Class size
- Faculty resources
- Total Research Expenditures
- Federal Research Expenditures
- National Academy Members
- Faculty Awards
- Doctorates Granted
- Average SAT
- Postdoctoral Fellows

- Alumni Giving Rate
- National Reputation

An investment in UF will bolster our reach, impact, and ability of our students, faculty, and researchers to blaze bold trails for a brighter future.

III. Personnel – *Describe personnel hiring and retention plans, making sure to connect both plans to initiative(s) and goal(s) described in section I. State the amount of faculty FTE and staff FTE and estimated funding amounts used for retention and new hires in each category. In describing faculty hires, provide overall hiring goals, including academic area(s) of expertise and anticipated hiring level (e.g. assistant professor, associate professor, full professor. Please describe how funds used for faculty or staff retention will help the institution achieve its stated goals. University of Distinction proposals should clearly note how anticipated hires or retained individuals will help the institution elevate a program or area to national or state excellence.*

If fully funded, UF will hire 33 full-time faculty in the College of Business, College of Engineering, and College of Law with expertise in business, finance, blockchain, ethics, cybersecurity, applications of artificial intelligence, digital and cloud-based platforms, and emerging technologies to directly serve Florida’s goal of becoming a top destination for FinTech companies. An additional 3 FTE positions will be hired as support staff for the FinTech Action Corps.

Collectively, these positions will support and accelerate Florida’s FinTech industry by:

- Surveying and applying or developing solutions for industry needs;
- Increasing Florida’s talent pipeline through additional student internships and experiences, industry-informed undergraduate and graduate programs, and expanded research opportunities for graduate and post doc students;
- Providing for continuing education, consulting, and outreach services identified by the industry as necessary for sustain growth;
- Supporting technology upgrades, using both current technology and development of new technology; and
- Establishing research partnerships with industry to advance the frontiers of FinTech.

To reduce UF’s student to faculty ratio from 17:1 to 16:1, an additional 178 faculty positions will be hired at the level of Lecturers and Teacher-Scholars with an average salary of \$101,500.

UF will continue its efforts to recruit and retain faculty and staff by offering competitive compensation and benefits in order to compete with our top-ranked public university peers.

IV. Facilities *(If this issue requires an expansion or construction of a facility, please complete the following table.): N/A*

	Facility Project Title	Fiscal Year	Amount Requested	Priority Number
1.				
2.				

2022-2023 Legislative Budget Request
Education and General
Position and Fiscal Summary
Operating Budget Form II
(to be completed for each issue)

University: University of Florida
Issue Title: National Ranking Operating Support

	RECURRING	NON-RECURRING	TOTAL
<u>Positions</u>			
Faculty	211.00	0.00	211.00
Other (A&P/USPS)	3.00	0.00	3.00
	-----	-----	-----
Total	214.00	0.00	214.00
	=====	=====	=====
Salaries and Benefits	\$32,003,275	\$0	\$32,003,275
Other Personal Services	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0
Operating Capital Outlay	\$0	\$0	\$0
Electronic Data Processing	\$0	\$0	\$0
Financial Aid	\$0	\$0	\$0
Special Category (Specific)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Special Category: National	\$27,996,725	\$0	\$27,996,725
<u>Ranking Operating Support</u>	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	-----	-----	-----
Total All Categories	\$60,000,000	\$0	\$60,000,000
	=====	=====	=====

**State University System
Education and General
2022-2023 Legislative Budget Request
Form I**

University(s):	University of South Florida
Request Title:	Preeminence / National Ranking
Date Request Approved by University Board of Trustees:	Pending Approval at the USF Board of Trustees Meeting on 24 August 2021
Recurring Funds Requested:	\$50,020,903
Non-Recurring Funds Requested:	
Total Funds Requested:	\$50,020,903
Please check the request type below:	
Shared Services/System-Wide Request	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unique Request	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

I. Purpose

The University of South Florida (USF) is requesting a recurring investment of new state dollars beginning in FY 2022-23. By accelerating USF's trajectory, this investment will create economic advantages for the state of Florida by providing numerous positive benefits for current and future USF students and faculty, for the State University System (SUS) and for the state of Florida as a whole.

With USF's momentum, the impact of additional state resources of \$50 million represents an opportunity for the state to further support one of the most promising universities in the nation.

For example, in the past ten years, USF has risen faster than any public or private university in *U.S. News & World Report's (USN&WR)* annual rankings of national universities. Furthermore, leaders in higher education are recognizing the increasing impact of USF. For instance, as Holden Thorp, the former Chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill noted, it is the "...University of South Floridas of the world that are the real game-changers for students and their communities..."¹

To fully leverage its positive impact on the state of Florida, USF strives to become a Top 25-ranked public university in *USN&WR's* annual rankings. Additionally, USF's aspirations are to maximize the state's opportunity to be home to another member of the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU). AAU evaluates new members based upon their academic reputation, as well as their

¹ <https://www.chronicle.com/article/How-Well-Do-Elite-Colleges/246100>.

national leadership in its research and development enterprise. USF is well on its way – already positioned as a highly-ranked public institution in research expenditures and annually in the Top 10 for intellectual property (e.g., patent) creation.

Our request is the first phase of a multi-year investment plan – in concert with other external and philanthropic funds contributed by the university. It is particularly timely because the new investment will be made soon after the newly consolidated USF began operating as one Preeminent State Research University, geographically distributed, in July 2020. The investment will benefit all communities, all campuses, all students and all faculty of the consolidated USF.

The justification for this request is divided into the following sections:

1. Why invest in USF? A University with a Trajectory of Increasing Academic Excellence;
2. Florida’s Benefits from Additional Prestigious Universities;
3. Broad Benefits from Additional State Funds Invested in the Future of USF;
4. Building an “Architecture of Academic Excellence” for USF; and
5. Strategic Deployment of Investments to Further Enhance Academic Excellence.

Why Invest in USF? A University with a Trajectory of Increasing Academic Excellence

Evidence shows that a dollar invested in USF has stretched farther and delivered greater returns to students and the economy during the last decade than at any public university in Florida or the United States.

Consider USF’s² remarkable ascent in national rankings over the past decade. Indeed, since the first year of our last BOG-approved institutional strategic plan in 2013, USF has:

- Achieved the largest gain in *USN&WR*’s rankings of any public or private university in the United States, rising all the way up to #46 among public institutions in the 2021 rankings.
- Achieved and maintained a Top 50 ranking among all public universities in the United States in six of the 10 official rankings approved by the Board of Governors (BOG) to measure national preeminence.

² At times throughout this document, the term “USF” may refer to the historical data, ranking, etc. of the USF Tampa campus. Prior to July 2020, the three separately accredited institutions of the former “USF System” were classified differently and reported separate federal data and therefore received separate national rankings. Consolidation has eliminated the need for this separate reporting and ranking going forward.

Furthermore, USF's rise in the national rankings during the past several years has – not coincidentally – corresponded with record-breaking gains in student success metrics.

- USF was ranked as the #1 public research university in the nation for gains in the six-year graduation rate of its students between 2008 and 2018. USF raised its six-year graduation rate by 25 percentage points during that decade, a gain of six percentage points greater than the #2 ranked institution during that same period³.
- USF raised its four-year graduation rate from 37% in 2012 to 61% in 2020, which was among the largest percentage point gains (+24%) in the country during that period.
- USF was ranked #1 in America among all public universities for Latino student success⁴.
- USF was ranked #6 in America and #1 in Florida among all public universities for black student success⁴.
- USF was ranked #9 in America and #1 in Florida among all public universities for Pell Grant recipient student success⁵.
- USF is ranked #12 in America and #1 in Florida among all public universities in *USN&WR's* 2021 “Top Performers on Social Mobility” rankings, demonstrating success enrolling large numbers of – and successfully graduating – Pell Grant recipient students⁶.

Florida's Benefits from Additional Prestigious Universities

The Association of American Universities (AAU) is considered the most prestigious of all university associations. It is an invitation-only association that consists of 36 American public universities, 27 American private universities and two Canadian public universities. Currently, the University of Florida is Florida's only member institution, public or private.

Why should taxpayers and policymakers in Florida seek more AAU member institutions? The answer is simple: The most talented faculty, students and entrepreneurs gravitate to the most prestigious institutions, particularly when those institutions are located in large, metropolitan areas such as the AAU member institutions in the cities of New York, Boston, Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area, San Diego, Houston, Seattle, Atlanta, Chicago, Philadelphia and others. Moreover, membership in the AAU, in its most basic sense, is a recognition that Florida universities are nationally prestigious, and thereby so is Florida's entire State University System.

³ [Graduation Rate Trends: Public Research Institutions](#), The University of Utah.

⁴ The Education Trust, 2017.

⁵ Third Way, May 2018.

⁶ <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/national-universities/social-mobility>.

Additionally, the AAU institutions – despite representing fewer than two percent of American universities – are awarded 60 percent of the nation’s approximately \$40 billion in federally funded research each year. Upwards of 70 percent of America’s Nobel Prize winners, National Academy of Sciences members and National Medal of Science winners are faculty members at AAU institutions. The AAU institutions represent America’s greatest economic development assets by being awarded almost 5,000 new U.S. patents per year, executing over 4,000 licensing agreements and creating over 3,600 operational startup companies annually⁷.

Consequently, Florida – with only one AAU institution – may be lagging in the battle for intellectual capital and research funding, which are primary factors in the recognition and ranking of elite universities and university systems. Florida is now America’s third most populous state and fourth in the amount of tax dollars sent to the federal government but is just the #12 ranked state in terms of the receipt of federal research funding.

California boasts ten AAU member institutions (seven public) and New York is home to six others (two public). Texas has three AAU members, two of which are public. Florida is the only one of America’s top ten most populous states that is home to fewer than two AAU member institutions and the only one of America’s top five most populous states with fewer than two *public* AAU institutions. Focused state investments, coupled with increased institutional fundraising and responsible university stewardship of existing resources, could allow other Florida institutions – and especially USF – to cross the thresholds necessary to be considered for eligibility by outpacing existing AAU members’ performance.

Given the historical track record of AAU institutions to date, the state and taxpayers will be more than repaid for these additional investments. As more of its top research institutions join the ranks of the elite national universities, the state as a whole will be elevated to new economic and reputational heights. Although AAU does not guarantee membership to any institution based on a level of achievement, the association is quite transparent in revealing the “indicators” it looks for in its prospective members⁸. The AAU’s most important membership indicators (“Phase I Indicators”) relate to research competitiveness and the quality and impact of the institution’s faculty. They include competitively funded federal research expenditures, National Academy memberships and faculty awards, and faculty research citation volume and impact. Secondary, or “Phase II,” indicators that are considered include non-competitively awarded research funding, doctoral education quality, postdoctoral appointments and undergraduate education. The full listing of AAU Membership Indicators is available on the AAU’s website, www.aau.edu.

⁷ <https://www.aau.edu/who-we-are/aau-numbers>.

⁸ <https://www.aau.edu/who-we-are/membership-policy>.

Broad Benefits from Additional State Funds Invested in the Future of USF

The 2018 Florida Legislature mandated that by July 2020, the former “USF System” must consolidate into one university, geographically distributed. This goal was accomplished when on 12 June 2020 the SACSCOC Board of Trustees approved the consolidation of USF with USF St. Petersburg and USF Sarasota-Manatee effective July 2020⁹. One USF affords the state of Florida the opportunity to maximize the impact of a major, highly ranked research university located across a large metropolitan area. In fact, USF (at #46 in *USN&WR*) is already Florida’s highest-ranked public university in any of its major metropolitan areas and is poised to continue its upward trajectory.

Until June 2020, the Tampa Bay region was served by the three separately accredited institutions of the former “USF System,” each with a different mission. The newly consolidated, Preeminent USF already has campuses in Tampa, a city of nearly 400,000 located in a county (Hillsborough) with a population of nearly 1.5 million residents; St. Petersburg, a city of over 250,000 residents located in a county (Pinellas) with a population of nearly 1 million residents; and Sarasota-Manatee, representing two counties with a combined population exceeding 800,000 residents. Overall, more than 3.25 million Floridians reside in these four Tampa Bay counties alone, a population larger than 21 U.S. States can claim.

The decision by the Legislature to consolidate the former “USF System” into one university, geographically distributed provides the first opportunity in the Tampa Bay region’s history to be fully served by one preeminent, nationally ranked research university. The USF Board of Trustees’ (BOT) newly adopted institutional Strategic Plan for 2021-2031 (pending BOG approval) reaffirms the aspiration of a united USF to both reach the *USN&WR* public Top 25 but also to advance that single institution, geographically distributed, towards AAU eligibility.

The new 2021-2031 USF Strategic Plan calls for investment in all three campuses to raise the national profile of the united USF and to provide students and faculty with new academic and research opportunities never before available. It sets out the goals, strategic initiatives, and institutional core commitments necessary to advance towards those lofty aspirations. This LBR contemplates the initial phases of that investment in all three campuses, as well as the resources necessary to develop and strengthen specialized, nationally renowned academic and research centers of excellence on each of the three campuses.

One USF allows the institution to maximize new investments for even greater returns, which will be realized in every corner of the Tampa Bay region. Instead of three USF System institutions competing for limited state resources and philanthropic gifts, One USF allows new investments to pay dividends for all three campuses. This multiplier effect of new financial investments in a single USF will greatly benefit Florida, as one of its largest and fastest-growing regions

⁹ <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2020/06/June-2020-Actions.pdf>.

is recognized internationally as a destination for exceptionally talented students and faculty. It sends a message to corporations looking to avail themselves of that talent in a large and growing population center.

For the first time ever, no municipality or county in Tampa Bay will be the exclusive “home” to the region’s top public research university, nor will any single campus be the primary destination for its talent and commensurate corporate investment. Rather, each of Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas and Sarasota counties will be home to a campus of a top-ranked research university with access to the world-class talent, research programs and economic development initiatives available through a united USF.

USF’s geographical location and unique vision for alignment across Tampa, St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee make it a strong candidate for new investment, which can stretch each dollar for tripartite benefit. This provides the best return on investment to the state, and importantly, across the entirety of the eight-county Tampa Bay region.

Building an “Architecture of Academic Excellence” for USF

USF, which is a relatively young university compared with other national peers, has traditionally fared well in national rankings that compute only objective data and where institutional reputation is not a dominant factor in the rankings.

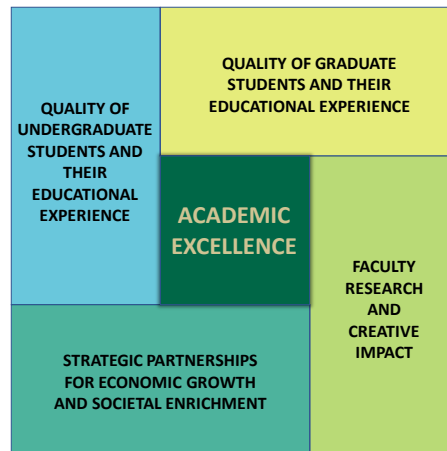
Although *USN&WR* and *AAU* consider certain objective data elements to evaluate institutional performance, a large component of their rankings and membership decisions are also based on an institution’s national academic reputation for excellence. USF has more work to do in this regard. Indeed, much of this LBR is tailored to requesting and deploying strategic investments in specific, targeted areas that will build upon USF’s already growing national academic reputation.

Leadership of USF refers to these key components and the plan to address them as the “*architecture of academic excellence*”¹⁰. The “architecture” is built upon four components:

- 1) Quality of undergraduate students and their educational experience;
- 2) Quality of graduate students and their educational experience;
- 3) Faculty, research and creative impact; and
- 4) Strategic partnerships for economic growth and societal enrichment.

Collectively, these four components form and drive the overall academic reputation of any public research institution.

¹⁰ Adapted from: <https://www.smu.edu/-/media/Site/Provost/Provost/PDF/Continuing-the-Ascent.pdf?la=en>.



An institution’s academic reputation and its effect on *USN&WR* rankings and AAU membership cannot be overstated, and in fact the two are closely intertwined. Consider that:

- 21 of the current *USN&WR* Top 25 public universities are members of the AAU¹¹;
- 31 of the 36 public AAU members are ranked in *USN&WR*’s Top 40; and
- Only three of the 36 public AAU members are ranked outside the *USN&WR* Top 50, the lowest two of which are tied at #60 (USF, at #46, currently ranks ahead of three public AAU member institutions and is tied with two others)¹².

A sustained investment in USF over a period of time, targeted in the four components of the “architecture” described above, will position USF to raise our national academic reputation. This, in turn, will continue to raise our national rankings and the likelihood of becoming eligible for AAU membership in the future. This trajectory also builds on the BOG’s stated vision for the SUS that by 2025, the State University System of Florida “will be internationally recognized as a premier public university system, noted for the distinctive and collective strengths of its member institutions.” A key strategy for fulfilling this vision will be to promote the successes and achievements of USF and the SUS to the leadership of other universities as well as to other opinion leaders nationwide to raise the overall reputation of USF and the entire SUS.

Strategic Deployment of Investments to Further Enhance Academic Excellence

Based on the architecture outlined above and USF’s extraordinary track record of success over the past decade, any new recurring investments provided by the

¹¹ The only non-AAU members ranked in *USN&WR*’s Top 25 Public National Universities for 2021 are the College of William & Mary (#11), the University of Georgia (#15), Florida State University (#19) and the University of Connecticut (#23).

¹² USF is currently tied at #46 with AAU members the University of Colorado–Boulder and the University of Oregon, and ranks ahead of Iowa State University (#54), the University of Kansas (#60) and the University of Missouri (#60).

Legislature and Governor for this initiative will be deployed specifically to achieve the following goals, all of which will advance USF's national prestige:

- Increased student success outcomes, including improved FTIC retention rates and four-year and six-year graduation rates.
- Increased individualized attention for student success by lowering the student-to-faculty ratio and the proportion of classes with fewer than 20 students and with fewer than 50 students.
- Increased faculty resources and productivity, including more competitive faculty salaries; the ability to hire more National Academy-member faculty and other world-class scholars; increasing external grant funding and research citations; and citation impact. Additional faculty will be focused primarily in areas of strategic emphasis as identified by the BOG, including science and mathematics, engineering, business and medicine.
- Enhancements to the quality of and access for incoming students, including attracting students with high SAT and ACT scores, students who graduated in the top 10% of their high school classes, as well as continuing to provide access for Pell Grant recipient students and others.
- Enhancement of institutional reputation among academic peer institutions and rankings publications across the country.
- Increased community support through philanthropy and alumni giving.

Specific investments in this first phase will be made in the following areas to enhance USF's overall national and international academic reputation via the "architecture" plan:

Quality of Undergraduate Students and their Educational Experience

\$2.0 million to enhance undergraduate student recruitment and support services.

Quality of Graduate Students and their Educational Experience

\$3.5 million to enhance graduate student recruitment and support.

Faculty, Research and Creative Impact

\$8.0 million to retain current high-performing USF faculty.

\$8.8 million to hire 20 additional National Academy members and other world-class scholars.

\$5.8 million to hire 25 additional full professors.

\$4.0 million to hire 25 additional full-time associate professors.

\$6.8 million to hire 50 additional full-time assistant professors.

\$5.8 million to hire 55 additional full-time instructors.

\$2.8 million to hire 25 additional technical personnel to support the above faculty hires.

Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth and Societal Engagement

\$2.5 million to support innovative new national and global research partnerships and R&D initiatives.

This first phase investment will result in a net gain of 175 additional faculty members, contributing to USF's overall five-year plan to add 375 net new faculty. During both the first year and the five-year plan, (if new state funding is provided) faculty will be hired at each of the three campuses consistent with the USF BOT's strategic priorities for each campus.

II. Return on Investment

The combined effect of the return on investment will:

- Strengthen Florida's position as the top state in the nation for higher education, thereby enhancing the global prominence of Florida;
- Propel USF on a trajectory toward a *USN&WR* Top 25 public ranking;
- Advance USF towards AAU eligibility;
- Improve student success outcomes and students' educational experiences; and
- Increase institutional impact as an engine for innovation and economic growth.

Given that 21 of *USN&WR*'s Top 25 public universities are members of the AAU – and the fact that positioning USF for membership in the AAU has been the goal of the USF BOT in the institution's Strategic Plan since 2007 and remains the institution's highest aspiration in the newly adopted USF Strategic Plan for 2021-2031 – USF will continue to benchmark the success of the investments against that aspirational peer group's performance. **Our goal is to meet or exceed the average of the 36 public AAU institutions' latest performance on each metric.**

USN&WR's 2021 rankings were derived from 18 specific metrics that serve as the publication's formula inputs. In ten of those 18 metrics, USF already achieves above or very near the current average of the 36 public AAU members' achievement level. The ten metrics in which USF's current performance exceeds, or is already competitive with, the average performance of all public AAU members are:

<i>USN&WR</i> Metric	Average Performance of Public AAUs	Current USF Performance
First-year Student Retention Rate	92%	91%
Over/Under Predicted Performance in the Six-year Graduation Rate	+5%	+13%

Six-year Graduation Rate of Pell Grant Recipient Students	76%	72%
Six-year Graduation Rate Performance of Pell Grant Recipient Students vs. Non-Pell Grant Students (closest to 0% or a +% is better)	-8%	-5%
Percent of Classes with Fewer than 20 Students	41%	44%
Percent of Classes with 50 or More Students (lower % is better)	20%	13%
Average Federal Loan Debt of Graduates (lower \$ value is better)	\$20,235	\$20,165
Percentage of Graduates who took out a Federal Loan (lower % is better)	44%	49%
Average SAT Scores of Incoming Students	1311	1250
Annual Alumni Giving Rate	10%	12%

Despite already being ahead of, or near, the average achievement level of public AAU institutions in the above metrics, USF's aim is to continue to improve in each of those areas. Areas of particular focus for further improvement will be retention and graduation rates and reducing student borrowing and debt. This proposed investment will allow us to improve our performance in each of these areas.

USF will strategically invest a majority of the resources provided under this request to rapidly improve performance in the remaining eight *USN&WR* 2021 ranking metrics, striving to match the current average achievement level of the 36 public AAU members. Higher achievement in many of these metrics will also contribute to increased achievement levels in the metrics above as well (e.g. student retention and graduation, class sizes, etc.). The eight *USN&WR* 2021 ranking metrics in which USF requires significant improvement to match the average performance of current public AAU institutions are:

<i>USN&WR</i> Metric	Average Performance of Public AAUs	Current USF Performance
Rolling Average Six-year Graduation Rate	81%	72%
Academic Peer Assessment Score	4.0 out of 5.0	2.8 out of 5.0
First-year Students Who Graduated in Top 10% of their High School Class	61%	34%
Average Spending Per Student	\$49,614	\$26,367
Average Faculty Compensation	\$132,052	\$109,470
Proportion of Faculty with the Highest Degree in their Field	92%	82%
Proportion of Fulltime Faculty	92%	86%
Student-to-faculty Ratio (lower ratio is better)	17:1	23:1

It is worth emphasizing that a majority of the above metrics (in which USF lags the current public AAU average performance) are directly related to available financial resources. They include: the average institutional spending per student; the average faculty member’s compensation; the proportion of all the institution’s faculty who hold the highest degree in their field; the institution’s proportion of fulltime to part-time faculty; and the institution’s overall student-to-faculty ratio.

All these metrics will be positively impacted almost immediately by this proposed investment in USF and the strategic deployment of the funds as outlined above through the “architecture” plan. More than three-fourths of the proposed first-year investment is aimed directly at hiring additional faculty in areas of strategic emphasis as outlined by the BOG and improving the salaries of current high-performing faculty. This investment will allow USF to move closer to its national peers in these financial resources metrics in which we currently lag the most.

Similarly, the “architecture” plan contemplates spending additional resources to recruit and retain more high-achieving high school students in order to improve USF’s performance in two of the remaining *USN&WR* metrics (percentage of students from the Top 10% of their high school class and the six-year graduation rate).

The final metric, the Academic Peer Assessment Score, is strictly a reflection of external perceptions of USF's academic reputation. The "architecture" plan is designed specifically to achieve gains in this outcome through targeted investments and awareness campaigns. This metric is, however, a "perceptual" ranking that tends to lag actual performance. A sustained effort will be necessary through these investments to communicate the strengths and achievements of USF and the SUS as a whole to national peers to see the requisite gains in this critical final metric.

Even with some expected lag time in subjective assessment ratings, improvements made in the financial resource metrics outlined above through this investment - coupled with USF's demonstrated track record of student success and continued unparalleled upward trajectory - will accelerate USF's ascent toward the Top 25.

In summary, USF has demonstrated a track record of using targeted investments to achieve results that well exceed other universities' performance. USF embraces metrics-based accountability; we relish it, and our results speak for themselves. The timing is auspicious now for a major investment of new state funds into USF given its national momentum and trajectory, the opportunities afforded through consolidation, and the economic impact to the state by having a major nationally ranked research university located in one of Florida's fastest-growing metropolitan areas. The "architecture" plan developed and described in this LBR presents the vision and plan to deploy those state assets to maximize the return on investment for USF students, for taxpayers, for the SUS and for the entire state of Florida.

III. Personnel

As outlined in Section I of this request, the following is the expected hiring plan if this LBR is funded in full as requested.

Specific investments in this first phase will be made in the following areas to enhance USF's overall national and international academic reputation via the "architecture" plan:

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Quality of Graduate Students and their Educational Experience

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IV. Facilities:

	Facility Project Title	Fiscal Year	Amount Requested	Priority Number
1.	N/A			

2022-2023 Legislative Budget Request
Education and General
Position and Fiscal Summary
Operating Budget Form II
(to be completed for each issue)

University: University of South Florida
Issue Title: Preeminence / National Ranking

	RECURRING	NON- RECURRING	TOTAL
<u>Positions</u>			
Faculty	175.00	0.00	175.00
Other (A&P/USPS)	25.00	0.00	25.00
	-----	-----	-----
Total	200.00	0.00	200.00
	=====	=====	=====
Salaries and Benefits	\$29,123,394	\$0	\$29,123,394
Other Personal Services	\$5,500,000	\$0	\$5,500,000
Expenses	\$7,397,509	\$0	\$7,397,509
Operating Capital Outlay	\$0	\$0	\$0
Electronic Data Processing	\$0	\$0	\$0
Financial Aid	\$0	\$0	\$0
Special Category (Specific)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Faculty Retention	\$8,000,000	\$0	\$8,000,000
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	-----	-----	-----
Total All Categories	\$50,020,903	\$0	\$50,020,903
	=====	=====	=====