UNC GREENSBORO
Board of Trustees

Academic Affairs Committee
September 22, 2026

Discussion Item

AAC – 2 Update on Research and Engagement

The UNCG Division of Research and Engagement provides strategic direction and support to faculty, research staff, and students for research, scholarship, and creative endeavors resulting in funded grants, contracts, innovation, and community engagement leading to knowledge production, student experiences, public impact, and economic prosperity.

1. FY2026 Research and Sponsored Programs Performance

UNC Greensboro closed FY2026 with substantial growth in research and sponsored programs activity, despite significant challenges across the national research funding landscape. The University experienced increases in both the value of proposals submitted and external funding awarded. These results reflect the continued competitiveness of UNCG's researchers across academic departments, centers, and institutes, as well as the growing capacity of the University's research enterprise.

Table 1. FY2025–FY2026 Research and Sponsored Programs Activity

Research Activity	FY2025	FY2026	Change
Value of Proposals Submitted	$177.7M	$294.3M	+65.6%
External Funding Awarded	$60.23M	$71.85M	+19.3%

Note: Figures reflect research and sponsored programs activity recorded in the UNC System Research Data Mart as of September 15, 2026

During FY2026, UNCG submitted proposals totaling $294.3 million, an increase of $116.6 million over FY2025. External funding also increased by $11.62 million, reaching $71.85 million. In FY2026, UNCG received external funding from a broad range of sources. North Carolina state government accounted for the largest share at approximately $36.4 million, followed by federal agencies ($12.9 million), nonprofit organizations ($6.0 million), North Carolina local governments ($5.3 million), and business and industry ($4.3 million). Additional funding came from state and local governments outside North Carolina ($3.1 million), institutions of higher education ($2.7 million), foundations ($880,000), and other domestic and international sponsors. These awards highlight the importance of UNCG's partnerships with government agencies, industry, and nonprofit organizations.

The funding supports research, education, and other sponsored programs across the University and reflects the range of activities through which UNCG contributes to North Carolina and beyond. These results are particularly noteworthy given the challenges affecting federal research funding, including changes in agency priorities, delays in funding decisions, and uncertainty surrounding federal research investments.

The growth in proposal activity reflects the continued engagement and competitiveness of UNCG's research community. It also coincides with deliberate efforts by the Division of Research and Engagement to strengthen institutional research development capacity. Through the Office of Strategic Initiatives and Research Development (OSIRD), the Division has expanded its ability to identify funding opportunities, monitor agency priorities, provide strategic funding intelligence, and support the development of competitive proposals. These efforts are intended to provide more coordinated support to researchers and strengthen the University's ability to pursue larger and more complex funding opportunities.

UNCG's FY2026 performance provides a strong foundation for continued research growth. Sustaining this progress will require ongoing support for research development, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the infrastructure needed to manage an expanding portfolio of externally funded projects. These priorities remain central to the University's progress toward R1 classification.

2. Technology Transfer and Innovation

UNCG experienced significant growth in intellectual property activity during FY2026, with substantial increases in invention disclosures, patent and trademark applications, and patents granted. These results reflect increased activity in identifying and protecting intellectual property generated through the University's research enterprise.

Table 2. FY2025–FY2026 Intellectual Property Performance

Intellectual Property Activity	FY2025	FY2026	Change
Invention Disclosures Received	3	16	+433.3%
New Patent/Trademark Applications	8	18	+125.0%
Patents/Trademarks Granted	3	5	+66.7%

Note: Intellectual property figures reflect FY2025 and FY2026 technology transfer activity reported to the UNC System by the Division of Research and Engagement.

Invention disclosures increased from three in FY2025 to 16 in FY2026, while new patent and trademark applications more than doubled from eight to 18. The University also received five patents during FY2026, compared with three in the previous year. These developments are particularly encouraging as UNCG works to expand its technology transfer activities and strengthen connections between research and innovation.

The five patents granted during FY2026 represent advances in biomedical technologies, advanced materials, chemistry, and human movement science.

Table 3. Patents Granted During FY2026

Technology	Inventor(s)	Date Granted
Methods and Systems for Early Detection of Viral Diseases	Tetyana Ignatova	February 24, 2026
Synthesis of Nanoporous Polyphenol-Based Coordination Polymer Frameworks and Methods of Use Thereof	Hemali Rathnayake	November 7, 2025
Semi-Synthetic Analogues of Epipolythiodioxopiperazine Alkaloids	Nicholas Oberlies, Chiraz Amrine, Huzefa Raja, Cedric Pearce	October 21, 2025
Compositions and Methods for Enhancing Electrocatalytic Efficiencies	Jianjun Wei	February 24, 2026
Multi-Axial Joint Laxity Testing Apparatus and Method	Sandra Shultz, Randy Schmitz (NC A&T)	April 14, 2026

To build on this progress, the Division of Research and Engagement is transitioning Innovate UNCG to the *Office of Technology Transfer and Innovation (OTTI)*. This change is intended to strengthen intellectual property management, support for inventors, and opportunities to move research discoveries toward commercial applications and industry partnerships.

This direction aligns with North Carolina's emphasis on innovation and technology commercialization as contributors to economic competitiveness. Strengthening UNCG's technology transfer capabilities will create new opportunities to work with industry, support business development, and contribute to the state's growing innovation economy.

3. Major Awards and Strategic Investments in FY2027

UNCG has begun FY2027 with significant new external funding that builds on the University's established strengths and supports the development of new institutional capabilities. These investments span academic capacity, national defense, and biomedical research, highlighting UNCG's research and sponsored programs portfolio.

a. $3 Million Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) Award

UNCG received a $3 million award through the U.S. Department of Labor's Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP). Led by Dr. Regina McCoy, the five-year initiative will support efforts to strengthen the University's academic programs and institutional capacity. The SIP award represents an important federal investment in UNCG's ability to improve educational outcomes and support student success. It also demonstrates the University's capacity to secure competitive funding that advances its academic mission and strengthens the institutional infrastructure needed for long-term success.

b. $5 Million Right-to-Repair Initiative: Advancing Defense-Related Research and Technical Capabilities

UNCG is advancing a $5 million Right-to-Repair initiative through its partnership with the Civil-Military Innovation Institute (CMI2), supporting research and technical capabilities relevant to U.S. military equipment maintenance and sustainment. The initiative focuses on developing approaches that can improve access to the technical information, tools, and expertise needed to maintain and repair military equipment. This work addresses an important national defense priority: strengthening maintenance capabilities, reducing dependence on external repair services, and improving the operational readiness of military systems. The project also represents an expansion of UNCG's defense-related research activities and its partnerships with organizations supporting military innovation. It provides opportunities to apply the University's research expertise to technical challenges of national importance while building capacity for future defense research and development.

c. NIH Research Awards: Strengthening Biomedical and Health Research

During the first quarter of FY2027, UNCG received approximately $2.37 million in funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). These awards support research across several disciplines, including biomedical sciences, nutrition, human development, and kinesiology. Funded projects address important health challenges, including liver disease, childhood obesity, infectious disease, and the relationship between physical health and cognitive function. This funding demonstrates the continued competitiveness of UNCG researchers in securing federal support for biomedical and health-related research and reflects the breadth of expertise across the University's research enterprise.

UNCG's FY2026 results demonstrate continued growth in research activity, external funding, and intellectual property development. These accomplishments reflect the contributions of researchers across the University and the institutional efforts underway to strengthen research development and technology transfer. As national research priorities continue to evolve, the Division of Research and Engagement remains focused on building the capacity needed to pursue competitive funding opportunities, support interdisciplinary research, and expand partnerships that contribute to North Carolina's economic development and innovation priorities.

AAC – 2.1 Update on Research and Engagement PowerPoint



J. Alan Boyette
Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor

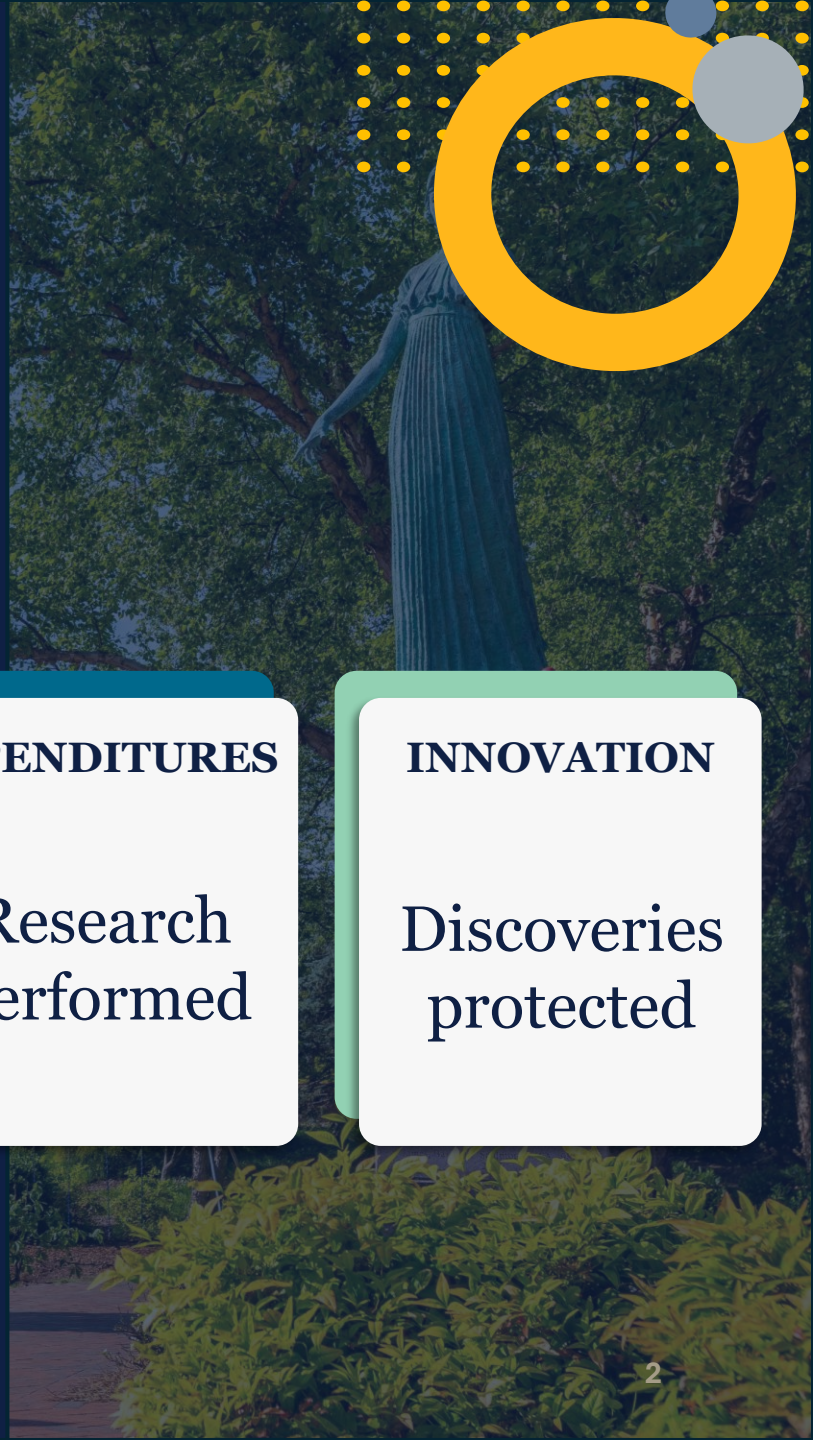
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UNCG Research and Engagement

Research Enterprise Update: Performance, Priorities, and Opportunities

November 10, 2026

HOW DO WE MEASURE A RESEARCH ENTERPRISE?



PROPOSALS

Funding pursued

AWARDS

External support secured

EXPENDITURES

Research performed

INNOVATION

Discoveries protected

A Changing National Research Funding Environment



Agency priorities

Changing program priorities and evolving funding opportunities.

Funding decisions

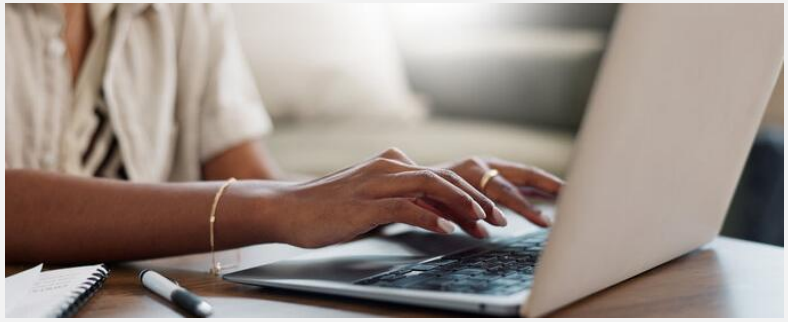
Delays and uncertainty affecting review and award timelines.

Proposal complexity

Greater need for early planning, partnerships, and coordinated development.

Strengthening UNCG's Research Development Infrastructure

Identify new funding opportunities, develop competitive proposals, and position UNCG for continued success.



Research Intelligence

- ✓ Monitor agency priorities
- ✓ Identify opportunities
- ✓ Match opportunities with UNCG expertise



Coordinated proposal support

- ✓ Support interdisciplinary teams
- ✓ Assist proposal development
- ✓ Coordinate complex opportunities

Supporting faculty, research scholars, and teams across academic departments, centers, and institutes.



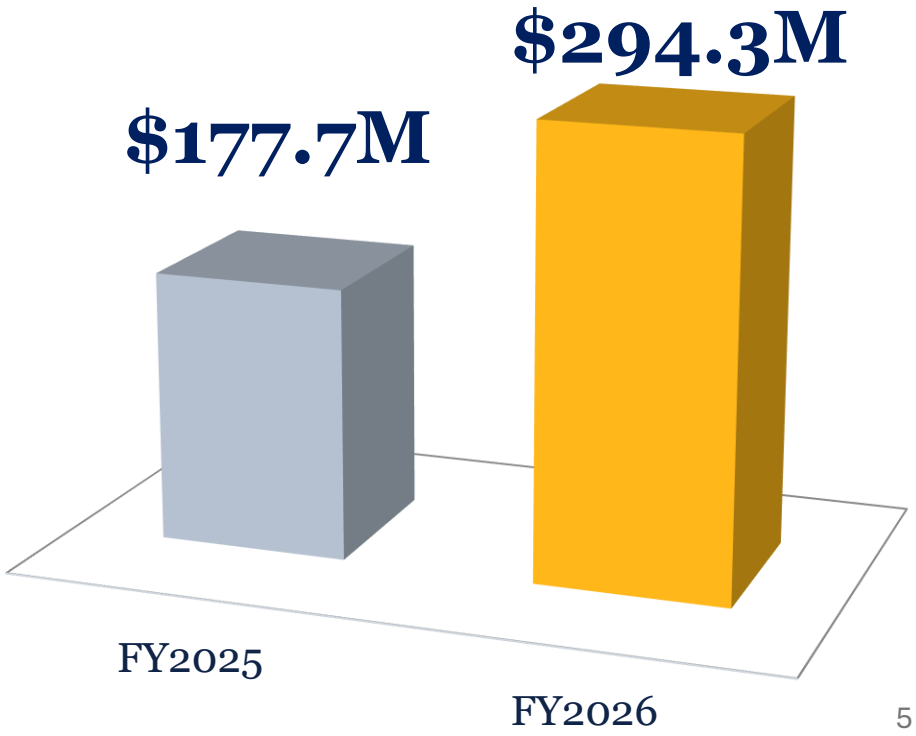
Research Proposal Submissions and Institutional Competitiveness

+65.6%

FY2025-FY2026 proposal submission increase

+$116.6M

additional funding pursued





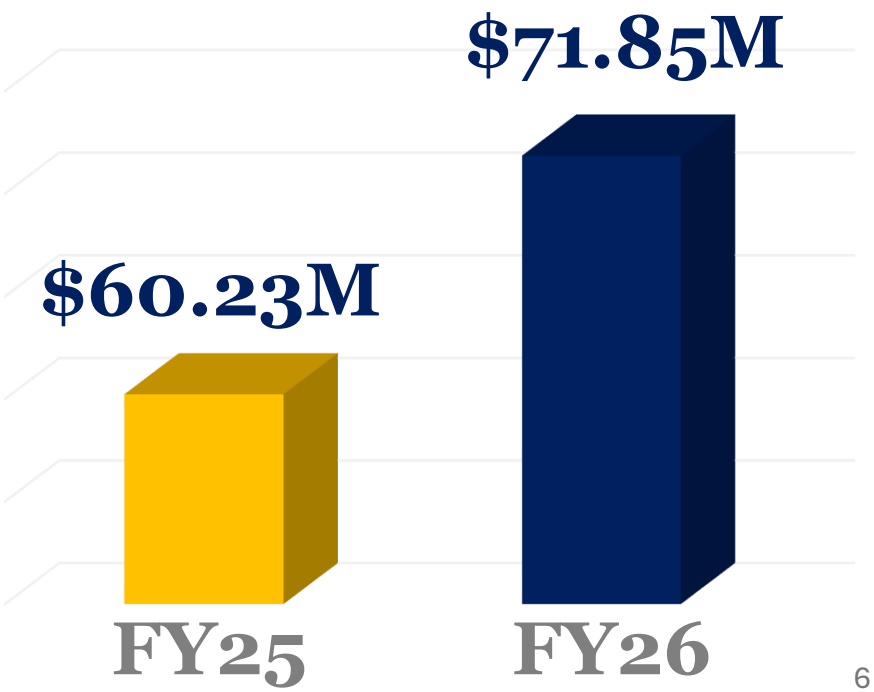
External Research Funding: FY2025–FY2026 Performance

+19.3%

FY2025-FY2026 external funding increase

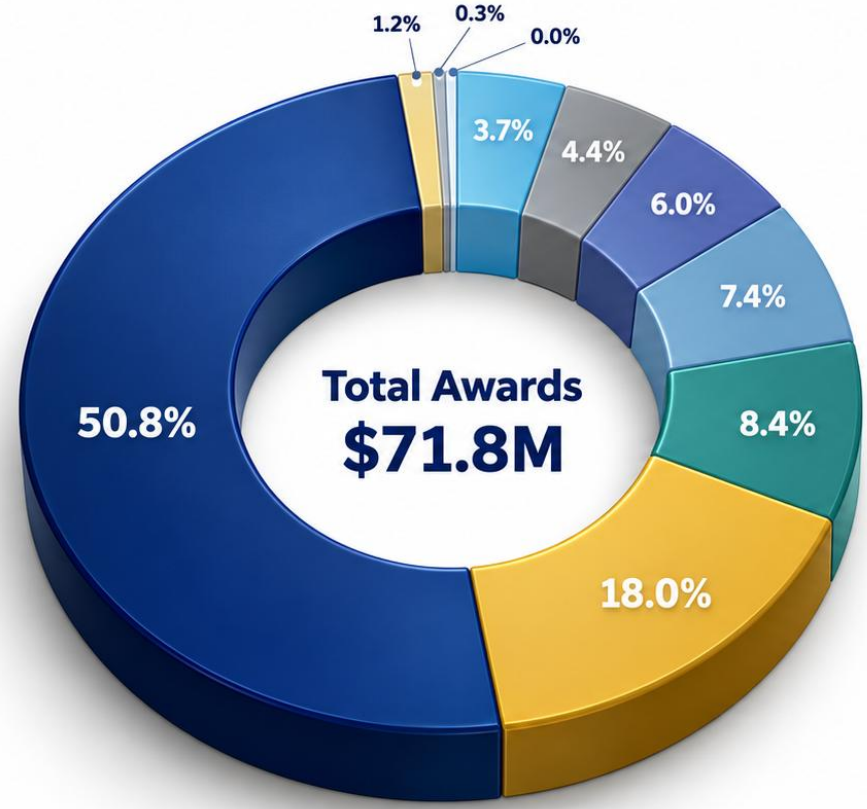
+$11.62M

additional external funding awarded





Distribution of Awards by Sponsor Type



- State Government (NC) — $36.4M (50.8%)
- Federal — $12.9M (18.0%)
- Nonprofit — $6.0M (8.4%)
- Local Government (NC) — $5.3M (7.4%)
- Business and Industry — $4.3M (6.0%)
- Local/State Government (Non NC) — $3.1M (4.4%)
- Institution of Higher Education — $2.7M (3.7%)
- Foundation — $880,231 (1.2%)
- Other Sponsor — $185,338 (0.3%)
- International — $5,000 (0.0%)



Research Expenditures and National Standing

$77.4M

Latest official HERD released (FY2024)
Measures R&D performed.

#199

National ranking
The HERD survey provides a consistent benchmark for comparing UNCG's research activity with other U.S. universities.

Strengthening UNCG's Technology Transfer and Innovation Infrastructure

Research performance extends beyond external funding and includes the development and protection of intellectual property.

Innovation

- ✓ Innovation is an important dimension of university research performance.
- ✓ Research discoveries can create opportunities for new technologies, industry collaboration, and economic development.



UNCG's Strategic Response

Building a robust

Office of Technology Transfer and Innovation

Strengthening support for invention disclosures, intellectual property evaluation and protection, and potential commercialization.

Intellectual Property Performance

FY2025–FY2026: GROWTH ACROSS DISCLOSURES, APPLICATIONS AND GRANTS

Invention disclosures

+433.3%



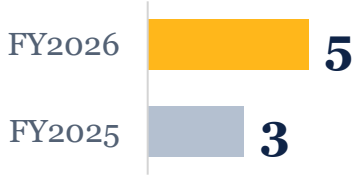
Patent / trademark applications

+125.0%



Patents / trademarks granted

+66.7%



Five patents granted in FY2026

Research Discoveries Across Health And Advanced Materials

01 **Early viral disease detection**
Tetyana Ignatova

02 **Nanoporous polyphenol frameworks**
Hemali Rathnayake

03 **Semi-synthetic alkaloid analogues**
Nicholas Oberlies, Chiraz Amrine, Huzefa Raja, Cedric Pearce

04 **Improved electrocatalytic efficiency**
Jianjun Wei

05 **Multi-axial joint laxity testing**
Sandra Shultz; Randy Schmitz (NC A&T)

OTTI: strengthening intellectual property management, inventor support, and commercialization pathways.

MAJOR NEW FY2027 AWARDS

$3M

Strengthening Institutions Program

Institutional capacity, academic quality, and student success.

$5M

Right-to-Repair

Military equipment maintenance and sustainment.

$2.37 M

Biomedical and health research

National Institutes of Health awards to UNCG researchers.

Sustaining Research Growth And Advancing Toward R1

Aligning research with national priorities and North Carolina's economic future

DEVELOP
Interdisciplinary teams and external partnerships

COMPETE
Research intelligence and strong proposal development

TRANSLATE
Intellectual property and pathways to application



UNCG Research and Innovation: A Foundation for Continued Growth



PROPOSALS

Funding pursued

$294.3M

FY2026

AWARDS

External support secured

$71.85M

FY2026

EXPENDITURES

Research performed

$77.4M

FY2024 HERD

INNOVATION

Discoveries protected

16 disclosures

FY2026

THANK YOU

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Research *and* Engagement