

UC Berkeley Emergency Research Funding Program

For investigators receiving terminations or stop work orders

Revised: 5/19/25

An Emergency Research Funding program has been developed in response to federal award terminations that impact the university's research enterprise. This process may be refined over time as the landscape changes. This version supersedes all previous drafts.

Program Background

Like all universities in the U.S., UC Berkeley has received numerous notifications of award cancellations from federal agencies, affecting people across the campus. Chancellor Lyons and EVCP Hermalin have established an Emergency Research Fund, to be administered by the Vice Chancellor for Research Office in collaboration with the deans, to assist affected investigators in mitigating the impact of these cancellations. Campus administrators are also working with Academic Senate representatives in parallel to develop plans for a longer-term contingency research fund to address possible future scenarios.

The emergency fund described here is primarily intended to provide salary continuation for affected personnel for up to three months following an abrupt termination of research funding, with the hope that a longer-term plan can be put in place. Funding requests will be submitted by the dean's office of the relevant division, school, or college (the VCRO will serve as the dean's office for its reporting units throughout this process).

Eligibility Criteria

This program supports principal investigators (PIs) who have received a termination of funding or a permanent stop-work order from a federal agency. Funding delays, unrealized no-cost extensions, and grant non-renewals are not included at this time. Funding may only be used to support UC Berkeley costs; subcontractor expenses are not currently included.

PIs should submit requests for emergency funds to their Dean and Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), along with a brief explanation of the effects of the award termination or stop-work order on research staff, students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty (see process below). PIs are encouraged to **discuss the situation with their dean's office in advance to understand if their work is eligible** to be funded through this program. PIs should not apply directly to central campus offices.

Addressing the magnitude of the current research funding crisis will require partnerships across

campus; this emergency fund is no exception. The deans will partner with the central campus on a 50/50 split to provide emergency funds. The priority for this funding is for PIs who do not have other resources available. The initial pool of central campus funds is \$2 million.

Initial Steps

PIs may receive notices of federal award termination via the UC Berkeley Sponsored Projects Office (SPO) or directly from the funding agency or sub-awarding institution. PIs who have received such a notice directly from an agency or another institution should immediately forward the notice to SPO at spoawards@berkeley.edu. SPO will work with campus counsel to evaluate the notice from a legal and contractual perspective.

At the same time, the PI should:

1. Work with their BRS Research Administrator (RA) to move personnel and expenses off the impacted award to other allowable grant or discretionary fund sources, if possible. PIs should consider the range of funding options available to them, including discretionary funds such as research gift reserves, Faculty Salary Research Exchange Program (FSREP) discretionary funds, or startup funds.
2. If funding is needed to ramp down expenses beyond the PI's resources, discuss eligibility for Emergency Fund relief with their Dean's office.

Eligible Expenses & Access Criteria

Emergency funds can be used to support salaries, benefits, and other direct expenses for employees (including graduate student researchers and postdocs) whose work cannot be reassigned to other funded projects, creating a gap in funding.

Assistant Professors are not expected to spend their startup or other discretionary funds in this way.

PIs may reserve up to \$100,000 toward ongoing research activities while they seek other funding opportunities.

Faculty who have been tentatively approved for the Negotiated Salary Program (NSP) are not eligible for these emergency funds. Eligibility of faculty participating in the Faculty Salary Research Exchange Program (FSREP) is at the discretion of their dean; as noted above, faculty may be asked to utilize FSREP funds at their discretion before receiving funding under this program.

These provisions are intended to ensure the Emergency Research Fund goes to those in greatest need.

Application Process for Eligible PIs

1. Impacted PIs should work with their BRS Research Administrator (RA) to calculate near term funding needs for personnel whose funding is impacted by the award termination notice. PIs should consider the range of funding options available to them, and confirm with their BRS RA and dean/CAO if they have questions.
2. PIs and BRS RAs should review grant termination clauses to determine if any expenses can still be billed to the grant.
3. If the PI does not have an expected source of resources beyond the emergency fund period, the RA or RA Supervisor should engage the HR Partner to advise on possible personnel options and include those costs in the emergency fund plan. The maximum duration for support is three months and may be retroactive to the date award funds were terminated.
4. Longer term, if graduate student researchers are impacted, the PI should initiate conversations with their department or graduate program leadership to develop a longer-term plan for the student(s), consulting the Graduate Division if problems arise. This planning can be done during the emergency fund period.
5. Deans will review the request and, if they approve, will work with the chair of the PI's home department to identify funds for 50% of the gap.
6. The Dean's office will submit the request to the VCRO.
7. The VCRO will review the request and, if approved, the campus Budget Office will allocate funds to the chartstring identified by the PI, with a matching amount transferred by the Dean/Department office.
8. Emergency funds that are unused after three months will be swept to be used for other PIs in need.

Please forward questions to the Vice Chancellor for Research at vcr@berkeley.edu.