

Research Council Minutes

February 4th, 2026
3:30pm – 5:00pm

Research Alliance- 3rd Floor Library

VOTING:

Alison Harmon

Mary Miles

Mary Cloninger

Ron June

Darin Boss

Sarah Church

Molly Secor Turner

Maritza Espina

Doralyn Rossmann

Monica Skewes

Anja Kunze

Sreekala Bajwa

Anna Tuttle

Nicole Tuss

Jeff Heys

Blake Wiedenheft

Eric Sproles

Maksym Makarchuk

Tracy Gatlin

James Park

Mary Alice Carlson

David Nelson

NON-VOTING:

Deborah Haynes

Steve Swinford/Michael Ouert

Terry Leist

Robert Mokwa

Durward Sobek

Ryan Knutson/

Coltran Hophan-Nichols

Becca Belou

Carl Yeoman

Kirk Lubick

Quinton King

Aidan Peers

Welcome and Introductions:

MSU Research Information Items:

- February 1 State of Research and Forecast—Alison Harmon
 - Quarter 2: Research expenditure increased by 20% compared to last year
 - Proposal submissions decreased by 23%; submissions are encouraged.
 - \$25M worth of new awards in January.
 - Restart the IRD program and the Scholarship & Creativity grants
- Research Impacts—Mike Veselik
 - Put out another call for research impact stories that resonate with the community and highlight real-world benefits.
 - Encourage faculty and researchers to contribute.
 - Need the Research Council to identify three to five stories to push forward.
- Make it Better project—Michael Mortier

- Spent 60 days collecting feedback on how to support researchers
- Feedback is uniform and compelling
- Using the functional process improvement called Lean Six Sigma for the next step
- Then prioritizing the area and producing a set of recommendations to leadership for some solutions to implement

Discussion Topic:

- Demonstration and uses of ScholarNode -- Jason Clark, John Sheppard & Md Asaduzzaman Noor
 - Md Asaduzzaman Noor, a PhD student, demonstrated the ScholarNode, which aims to enhance interdisciplinary collaboration by utilizing publication data for researcher networking
- Finding collaborators at MSU -- Nicole Motzer
 - Grant Forward is an online resource for award search and active funding opportunity search.
 - Asking for ideas to build more collaborative communities
 - Consider implementing a collaboration hour once a month for faculty to discuss proposals and seek collaborators.
 - Ideas suggested to have structured sessions for different collaboration needs and topics.

Research Policies and Procedures:

- Human participant database update –
 - Brenna Schott updated the MSU research participant database- improved recruitment for research participation across Montana.
 - The database currently has 458 participants, enhancing engagement in local research studies.
- Laser Safety Program Update
 - Nick Childs highlighted the importance of laser safety awareness and compliance across campus facilities.
 - Ensure that new faculty onboarding includes information about safety programs and protocols related to lasers.
 - Encourage departments to reach out to Nick regarding laser safety and training.

Announcements from RED:

- Research Development
 - Collaboration Hour in the Research Alliance
 - NEW: Working with ORD is required when working on a limited submission proposal, and institutional proposal, or when institutional support is being requested. (see full text below)
 - Scholarship & Creativity Award applications due March 1
- Sponsored Programs
 - OSP Roundtable, Procrastinator Theater, 10:00 March 24th, 2026
- Research Integrity & Compliance
 - Green Lab Certification – Kickoff in February
- Research Security
 - Updated Research Security Training webpage with instructions to complete training: <https://www.montana.edu/research/research-security/researchsecuritytraining.html>
 - Currently required by DoE, NSF, & USDA *prior* to proposal submission; NIH to require in May of 2026.
- Economic Development
- Undergraduate Research
 - The USP is going through a revamp process with a committee of faculty, department heads, and deans, plus a student survey, to re-establish policies and proposal decision points and to assess how the USP fits into the UR landscape as it turns 32 years old.
 - Reach out to Anna Tuttle for feedback regarding the USP revamp.
 - Encourage new faculty and postdocs to become USP reviewers, especially in physics, chemistry, and microbiology.
 - Aidan Peers is the new Undergraduate Research Ambassador.
 - 19 students accepted to NCUR; Jess Carroll (Writing Center Director) will lead the trip.
 - Colin Shaw is back to work on a new UR project at MSU.
 - USP summer proposals are due Feb. 15th.

Other Announcements from Council members

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Research Events:

MSU RESEARCH CENTERS & INSTITUTES DAY: March 23, 11am-3pm, SUB Ballrooms B,C,&D

MSU End of Year Research Celebration: March 23, 3:30-5:30pm, SUB Ballrooms B,C,& D. **Nominate your Everyday**

Heroes! https://www.montana.edu/research/celebrating_research.html

ART+SCIENCE Event: April 7, 3-6pm; QCORE in EngineWorks, Innovation Campus.

TBI presents ‘Yellowstone Wild Through Time’ docufilm world premiere. April 22nd 2pm Hager Auditorium. <https://www.yellowstonewildthroughtime.com/about-5-1>

The USP will host the Spring Research Celebration on Friday, May 1st, from 10-3 in the SUB Ballrooms.

2nd MSU-UM Joint Proposal Writing Retreat: May 11-14, 2026, Homestake

Lodge: <https://montana.infoready4.com/#freeformCompetitionDetail/2005527>

[COMING EVENTS: 994 Journeys - Office of Research & Economic Development | Montana State University](#)

- Catherine Kirkland, Monday February 9, 4pm; SUB 233
- Jason Bolte, Monday March 30, 4pm; SUB 233

Full Text: ARE YOU REQUESTING INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR A PROPOSAL? -- WORKING WITH THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT IS NOW REQUIRED

Effective immediately, Research and Economic Development (RED) will require MSU principal investigators (PIs) to work with the Office of Research Development (ORD) during application development in the following cases:

- When planning to submit requests for RED cost-share or other institutional support for external funding proposals;
- When leading major institutional-level proposals, such as for large research centers or research trainee programs;
- When approved to move forward for a competitive limited submission funding opportunity following an internal competition.

Partnership with ORD is intended to ensure RED supports the most competitive and institutionally advantageous proposals possible while facilitating communication and coordination of commitments. Partnering with ORD outside of these scenarios remains at the discretion of the PI.

PIs approved for limited submission opportunities will receive guidance from ORD at time of decision. Limited submission approval will remain conditional on the basis of sufficient ORD involvement. Outside of limited submissions, PIs can request proposal development support from ORD directly from their [website](#). Support should be requested as soon as possible, but no later than 6 weeks out from the sponsor's deadline.

Any requests for RED institutional support made without ORD's involvement in the application will be returned. Moreover, requests made outside of RED's official request channels will also be returned and redirected to InfoReady (request RED [cost-share here](#) and other [institutional support here](#)). PIs are reminded to discuss potential requests of RED with their respective Deans and/or Associate Deans of Research prior to initiating these processes.