

**Advancing an Efficient and Effective Operational Infrastructure for  
SUNY Research and Innovation**



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## Executive Summary

In December 2017 The Research Foundation for SUNY (RF) launched an inclusive and fast-tracked process to develop a five-year Strategic Plan to support SUNY research and innovation. The RF's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan advances SUNY's goals of doubling research and promoting innovation and economic development, through a cost efficient operational infrastructure and reducing administrative burden to faculty and graduate students performing research.

The RF and SUNY have a common vision for growing research, reducing administrative burden, improving cost efficiency and effectiveness, and making SUNY a 21<sup>st</sup> century research-focused university system. The RF Strategic Plan is detailed in the sections below.

## The Strategic Planning Team

The process was driven by a Strategic Planning Team comprising each campus sector and representing all key roles performing research administration, technology transfer, and economic development at the campuses:

- Chris Ashley, RF Central Office
- Kathleen Caggiano-Siino, RF Central Office
- Jeff Cheek, RF Central Office
- Mary Beth Curtin, Binghamton University
- Jeff Dunbar, University at Buffalo
- Scott Goodman, Buffalo State College
- Venu Govindaraju, University at Buffalo
- Greg O'Connor, Farmingdale State College
- Christina Orsi, University at Buffalo
- Eileen McLoughlin, SUNY System Administration
- Joe Porter, SUNY System Administration
- Rich Reeder, Stony Brook University
- Shelia Routh, Stony Brook University
- Jennifer Rudes, Upstate Medical University
- Scott Tenenbaum, SUNY Polytechnic Institute
- Theresa Walker, University at Albany
- Grace Wang, SUNY System Administration

## Systemwide Inclusion

Over 300 RF, SUNY, and SUNY System stakeholders participated and contributed. All campus groups, Central Office departments, and the RF Board of Directors looked at the RF's operations to help guide an informed path forward with a new vision and new strategic goals.

## The RF FY2019-2023 Strategic Plan

<p><b>Vision</b></p> <p>Make SUNY the best place to research, innovate, and solve the world’s most pressing problems.</p>	<p><b>Mission</b></p> <p>The Research Foundation for SUNY provides talent, services, and technology that empower SUNY to research, innovate, and transfer discoveries that transform the world’s knowledge economy.</p>
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### RF Values

- **Service:** Our support and assistance to the SUNY community.
- **Learning:** A commitment to a pursuit of knowledge and the growth of our people, our abilities, and our business.
- **Agility:** Our ability to move quickly and adjust to changing customer needs.
- **Integrity:** Honesty, ethical behavior, and firm and committed adherence to our code of conduct.
- **Transparency:** Trust, accountability, and clear communication.
- **Diversity:** Inclusion and equity in our workforce for diversity of people, culture, thought, perspective, and background.
- **Innovation:** Creative problem solving, continuous improvement, and technological advancement.

### RF Strategic Goals FY2019 - FY2023

<p><b>Goal</b></p>	<p><b>1. Provide Superior Service:</b> We will meet principal investigator needs and exceed sponsor expectations by empowering our people, recognizing and rewarding service, and acting on input.</p>	<p><b>2. Maximize Effectiveness:</b> We will do the right work that adds value to our campuses and principal investigators, measuring RF outcomes and impact.</p>	<p><b>3. Increase Cost Efficiency:</b> We will streamline processes and cut costs, ensuring that the RF enterprise is as lean as it can be, without compromising quality.</p>
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**RF 2018 SWOT**

**Strengths:** People, knowledge, and customer service.

**Weaknesses:** Limited resources (people and money), a highly diverse system where a one-size business model does not fit all, and the RF's current financial position under a new assessment model.

**Opportunities:** New hires and champions, industry collaboration and system-scale partnerships, improved processes with New York State, and strengthening RF's technology capabilities and automation.

**Threats:** An uncertain federal funding landscape, growing regulatory environment, and staff turnover and the resultant loss of institutional knowledge.

**Objectives and Action Steps: FY2019-2021**

The following objectives and actions steps are identified for the next three years to set baseline measures for tracking progress toward our three strategic goals and to advance SUNY's goals to double research, and support innovation and economic development through partnerships. This work strives to *"Make SUNY the best place to research, innovate, and solve the world's most pressing problems."*

***Build Research and Innovation Infrastructure***

1. Create Research Operations Profiles and risk assessments for each campus (baseline efficiency metrics).
2. Build solutions from campus-specific needs identified through the Operations Profile work.
3. Advance technologies and systems that support SUNY as a leading research university system.
4. Conduct a strategic assessment of RF enterprise-wide intellectual property and explore new models.
5. Develop new methods of cost structure and communication for nonfederal sponsors.
6. Make strategic investments at targeted stages of the sponsored program and innovation lifecycle - Pre-Award and Compliance System (PACS), Technology Accelerator Fund (TAF), Express Licensing.

***Empower SUNY Researchers, Innovators and Entrepreneurs***

1. Provide system-wide learning and development opportunities.
2. Implement automated solutions to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and promote paperless transactions.
3. Evolve stakeholder groups to Communities of Practice (CoPs) across the enterprise to promote benchmarking and best practices within and across research administration communities.

***Sharpen SUNY Research and Innovation Brand***

1. Redesign the RF website and align with SUNY Research website.
2. Maximize SUNY and RF communication resources to identify new opportunities to tell the story of SUNY research and innovation impact.

***Advance SUNY Activities to Expand Funding Opportunities***

1. Support systemwide workshops and partnerships in strategic priority areas.

### Metrics

We will track RF Strategic Plan progress through the following metrics:

Goal	Measure by:
Provide Superior Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Satisfaction 5 Scale Rating (quarterly)</li> </ul>
Maximize Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return on Investment for RF programs, projects, and events (just-in-time)</li> <li>• Progress toward SUNY goals for research and innovation growth (annually - see Appendix A)</li> </ul>
Increase Cost Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Input: output ratio for sponsored programs administration by business area (annually)</li> <li>• Total cost of research administration by campus and by business area across the enterprise (annually)</li> </ul>

Refer to Appendix A for SUNY goals and metrics for research expenditures and commercialization.

### Strategies

In all our work supporting the RF Strategic Plan, we will employ four strategies:

**Empower:** Empower individuals with knowledge, authority, and tools to solve problems at the point of service.

**Build:** Build on organizational strengths: flexibility, scale, internal controls, core functions, customer service focus, and dedicated, competent people across the enterprise with deep institutional knowledge.

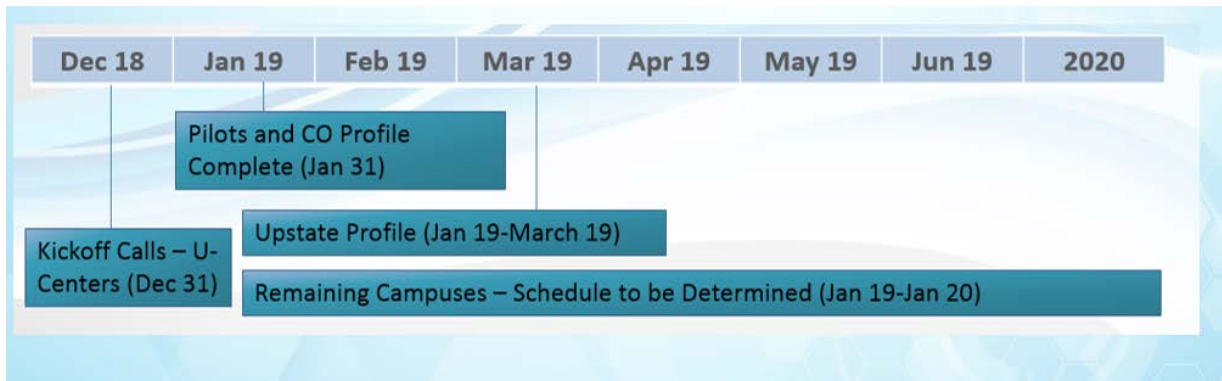
**Improve:** Remove administrative layers and barriers to principal investigator success through a discipline of measurable continuous improvement.

**Partner:** Tailor research administration processes to accommodate new and different types of partnerships, especially with industry and private foundations.

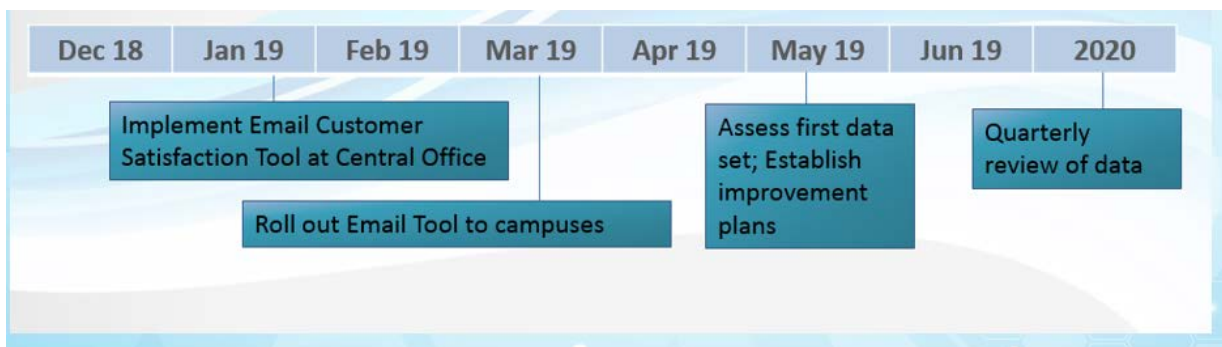
### Timelines for Foundation Projects in FY2019-FY2020

In Fiscal Year 2019 and 2020 two foundational projects are underway to establish baseline measures for efficiency, effectiveness, and service. The outcomes include additional customer-defined work to achieve our three strategic goals, which will be outlined and scheduled in each FY RF Operating Plan.

*Create a Research Operations Profile for each campus to develop baseline measures for cost efficiency*



*Implement Customer Satisfaction Tool System-wide to develop baseline measures for superior service and effectiveness*



### Additional Areas of Focus

- Data:** The Research Foundation maintains the systems that house data on SUNY research and innovation activity. We are committed to ensuring that the systems keep pace with the rapidly changing technology landscape, that one of SUNY’s critical assets – data - is protected, and that faculty researchers are empowered with the data they need.
- Next Generation Web Presence:** The RF and SUNY together work to tell the story of SUNY research and the impact it has on the world. A newly aligned web presence is planned to tell this story to our customers and the rest of the world. The alignment communicates a common vision and the power of the SUNY system supported by a cost efficient and effective Research Foundation.

## Appendix A: SUNY Goals and Where We Stand Today

SUNY Goal	Measures
Double research and promote innovation and entrepreneurship, all through a network of partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HERD Research Expenditures</li> <li>• AUTM Data on Disclosures, Licenses, Patents, and Start-up Companies (new and total operational)</li> <li>• Publications in Priority Areas (future)</li> <li>• Proposals (submitted and awarded) (future)</li> <li>• SUNY Technologies on Market (future)</li> </ul>

### Research Expenditures – FY 2017 \*

Institution	FY 2017 Expenditures
U. North Carolina	\$1.8B
U. System Ohio	\$1.7B
U. System Georgia	\$1.6B
<b>SUNY</b>	<b>\$1.6B</b>
U. Wisconsin System	\$1.3B
U. System Maryland	\$1.1B
U. Minnesota	\$948M
U. Mass	\$656M
U. Colorado System	\$506M

\* Source: NSF Higher Education Research & Development (HERD) Survey, preliminary (pre-November release) plus campus data for the four SUNY Colleges at Cornell

### Clinical Trial Expenditures – FY 2017 \*

Description	FY 2017 Expenditures
U. System Ohio	\$61M
U. Minnesota	\$40M
U. North Carolina	\$35M
U. Colorado System	\$25M
<b>SUNY</b>	<b>\$18M</b>
U. System Maryland	\$10M
U. Wisconsin System	\$9.5M
U. System Georgia	\$4M
U. Mass	\$4M

\* Source: NSF Higher Education Research & Development (HERD) Survey, preliminary (pre-November release).



*Commercialization – FY 2018 \**

Disclosures

Institution	Disclosures
U. System Ohio	723
U. System Georgia	506
U. North Carolina	505
U. Wisconsin System	444
U. Minnesota	406
U. System Maryland	331
<b>SUNY</b>	<b>259</b>
U. Mass	190
U. Colorado System	120

Licenses and Options

Institution	Licenses and Options
U. North Carolina	265
U. System Georgia	231
U. Minnesota	213
U. System Ohio	95
U. Wisconsin System	82
U. System Maryland	70
<b>SUNY</b>	<b>54</b>
U. Colorado System	48
U. Mass	37

Startups and Operating Startups

Institution	Startups Formed	Operating Startups
U. North Carolina	30	212
U. System Ohio	20	143
U. Minnesota	18	99
U. System Maryland	16	104
U. System Georgia	15	66
U. Wisconsin System	11	95
U. Mass	11	42
<b>SUNY</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>110</b>
U. Colorado System	9	8

Patents

Institution	U.S. Patent Apps. Filed	U.S. Patents Issued
U. Wisconsin System	303	203
U. North Carolina	422	132
U. System Georgia	414	131
U. System Ohio	544	126
U. System Maryland	386	90
U. Minnesota	366	84
<b>SUNY</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>59</b>
U. Mass	247	64
U. Colorado System	57	31

\* Source: AUTM 2017 Licensing Activity Survey