RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR)

# Faculty Research Readiness and Momentum

## Research Scientist Report

Key Findings from the 2026 University-Wide Survey


**Prepared by**

Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR)

SPIE | Strategic Partnerships and Inclusive Excellence





**Survey**

Research Momentum & Readiness Survey

Closed September 4, 2026

Research scientist respondents: n = 85

Full university-wide survey: N = 1,569

November 2026

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# Executive summary

Research scientists report substantial proposal activity alongside uncertainty about funding, pressure on the time available to prepare proposals, and limited confidence about finding campus support. Their responses point to practical needs for proposal development, suitable funding options, and support that recognizes the connection between external awards and their own employment.

This report covers the 85 respondents who selected Research Scientist Track faculty in the 2026 survey. Research professors and research investigators are separate appointment categories.

## Research activity and uncertainty

More than three-quarters of respondents had submitted or helped submit a proposal in the six months before responding to the survey. About three-quarters also found it hard to judge whether proposals were worth the effort. Fewer than half reported knowing relevant alternative sponsors.

## Time, staffing and funding problems

Half selected insufficient proposal preparation time among their greatest barriers. About two in five selected fatigue, discouragement, or burnout. Written comments describe salary pressure, job insecurity, and limited funded time to develop the next proposal.

Research scientists who selected insufficient proposal preparation time as a major barrier reported submitting proposals less often: 69.4% (25/36) had submitted or helped submit a proposal in the six months before responding to the survey, compared with 86.5% (32/37) of those who did not select that barrier. University-wide, the corresponding rates were nearly identical: 69.2% (500/723) among respondents who selected insufficient time and 68.7% (410/597) among those who did not.

## Guidance from leaders and mentors

About three-quarters reported that their unit encouraged practical next steps, while one-third reported receiving guidance on sustaining or repositioning their work. Those reporting this guidance more often expressed high confidence in all five activities assessed:

- Identifying a practical action to take in the next 90 days.
- Adapting an idea for another sponsor.
- Identifying collaborators or partners.
- Making progress despite a delayed funding opportunity.
- Knowing which campus supports could help maintain momentum.

Research scientists reported receiving guidance on sustaining or repositioning their work less often than respondents in the other research appointments: 33.3% (26/78) of research scientists agreed they had received this guidance, compared with 51.1% (45/88) of research professors and 66.7% (24/36) of research investigators. The university-wide proportion was 27.1% (349/1,286).

Difficulty judging whether proposal preparation was worth the effort was also common among research scientists who reported receiving this guidance: 84.6% (22/26) agreed that this was difficult, compared with 75.0% (39/52) of those who gave a neutral or disagreeing response to the guidance question.

## Confidence and access to support

Fewer than one in ten were very or extremely confident that they knew which campus supports could help maintain momentum. About two-thirds were only slightly confident or not at all confident.

Among research scientists who were not at all or only slightly confident that they knew which campus supports could help, 74.5% (35/47) had submitted or helped submit a proposal in the six months before responding to the survey.

## Useful next steps and institutional support

Proposal refinement and sponsor identification were the most frequently selected useful next steps. Small seed or planning funds and guidance on nonfederal support were the most frequently selected institutional supports.

## External funding supports both the work and many salaries

Nine in ten described external funding as very central or essential. Among those reporting a numeric salary-share category, about two-thirds expected external funding to cover more than three-quarters of their U-M salary. Comments make the practical concern explicit: preparing the next proposal can compete with currently funded project work, while the prospect of a funding gap raises questions about continued employment.

> “Since my role is majority soft money, the pressure to find new funding is immense and does not allow time to work on things that are not funded or do not have the possibility of being funded.”

Research scientist survey comment.

## Requested assistance for future proposals and current work

Research scientists identified several forms of assistance they would find useful in pursuing future funding: salary support for dedicated proposal preparation time, help identifying suitable sponsors, small seed or planning awards, and clear guidance on eligibility and available support. Written comments also described immediate funding needs. Respondents requested temporary funding between grants, support for salaries and trainees, and funds to finish projects that had lost funding.

## What the appointment comparisons show

Among research scientists who had explored nonfederal funding in the six months before responding to the survey, more than half, 54.5% (18/33), did not agree that they knew alternative sponsors relevant to their work. Among respondents who had also explored nonfederal funding, this proportion was 34.5% (182/527) for tenure-track or tenured faculty and 28.8% (17/59) for research professors. Difficulty identifying relevant alternatives was therefore particularly evident among research scientists who were already looking beyond federal funding. See Table 3.

Low confidence about campus support was associated with less sponsor contact and team participation in several appointment groups. These differences were larger among research scientists than among tenure-track faculty or research professors. The relationship between reported guidance and confidence was broadly shared across appointment types.

## How to use the report

The report describes the research scientists who responded, their recent research and funding activities, the challenges they reported, the guidance they received, and the support they considered most useful. It also examines their confidence in taking practical steps to move their work forward. The appendices provide the detailed results behind these findings. Appendix A explains how the survey was analyzed and describes the respondents, beginning with Table A1. Appendix B shows the number and percentage of respondents selecting each answer, from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” for statements, and from “not at all confident” to “extremely confident” for activities. Appendix C gives counts and percentages for every answer choice on questions that allowed respondents to select more than one answer. Appendix D compares results among groups of research scientists, with career-stage comparisons beginning in Table D1. Appendix E examines relationships between answers to different survey questions. Appendix F provides an index to respondents’ written comments. Appendix G supplies the exact counts and percentages behind the charts comparing research scientists with other appointment types.

## Key definitions

**Table 1. Key definitions used in the report.**

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| OVPR Research Portfolios | Three analytical groupings of scholarly home: Health Sciences; Natural Sciences and Engineering; and Social Sciences, Humanities, and the Arts. See Table D4 for the scholarly-field definitions. Interdisciplinary and unclassified respondents are included in university-wide totals but not portfolio comparisons. |
| Career stage | Early-career, mid-career, or senior, as self-reported. The survey gave assistant, associate, and full professor or equivalent as examples. |
| Funding dependence | High = external funding is "very central" or "essential" to sustaining the respondent's work. Lower = "not central," "somewhat central," or "moderately central." |
| Appointment groups | Tenure-track; Clinical; Research-track (Research Professor, Research Scientist, Research Investigator); Instructional (Lecturer, Instructor); Other (Librarian/Archivist/Curator, Emeritus, other PI-eligible). |
| Agreed | On the seven-point agreement items, any level of agreement (somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree). Where a finding uses only "agree" or "strongly agree," the text says so. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| Confident | On the five-point confidence items, "very" or "extremely" confident. |
| Negatively worded items | Three statements where agreement is the unfavorable answer: "hard to tell whether pursuing proposals is worth the effort," "the dominant message in my unit is to wait," and "I have been advised to delay or avoid submissions." |
| High readiness | An average across the five Section E confidence items above "moderately confident." |
| Low awareness of campus supports | "Not at all" or "slightly" confident that one knows which campus supports can help maintain research momentum. |
| Research momentum | The ability to keep research, scholarship, or creative practice moving: identifying opportunities, adapting ideas, building teams, and making progress despite delays. |

# Who responded

The subgroup includes 85 research scientists with different fields and career stages

Research scientists account for 5.4% of the 1,569 survey records. Seventy-six completed the survey, and nine did not; valid answers from both groups are included. Depending on the question, 73 to 84 research scientists supplied usable quantitative responses. See Figure 1.

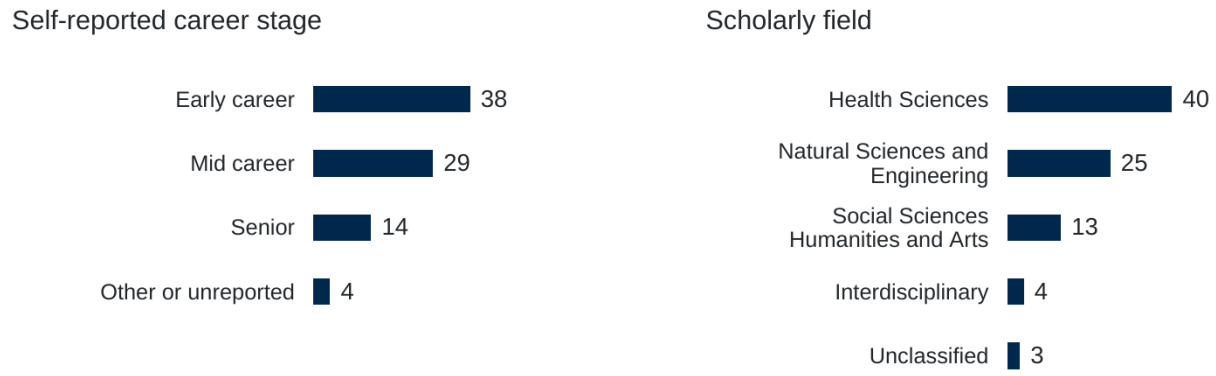


**Figure 1. Respondent career stage and scholarly field. Counts among all 85 respondents. The two panels describe the same people. Full categories and missing responses appear in Appendix A.**

External funding was very central or essential for 90.2% (74/82) of research scientists, including 61 who selected it as essential. Among 76 numeric salary-share responses, 65.8% (50/76) expected more than three-quarters of their salary from external funding; this is 58.8% (50/85) of the full subgroup. Eighteen of the 85 research scientist respondents submitted a written response to the question, “What would most help you move from uncertainty to a practical next step in your research, scholarship, or creative work?” Seventeen described needs or concerns, and one wrote “Not sure.”

Career stage is self-reported. The survey asked respondents to identify their career stage as early-career, mid-career, or senior. It gave assistant-level positions as an example of early career, associate-level positions as an example of mid-career, and full professor or equivalent positions as an example of the senior stage. The 14 senior respondents form a small comparison group. Four respondents selected other, preferred not to answer, or left the selection blank.

## Funding history is strongly connected to federal sources

In the past three years, 84.5% (71/84) had pursued or seriously considered federal agencies. Foundations were selected by 48.8% (41/84) and industry or corporate research by 27.4% (23/84).

The 76-person salary denominator excludes seven “Not sure,” one “Prefer not to answer,” and one blank response. The 82-person funding-centrality denominator excludes three blanks. Appendix A retains all original categories. Portfolio grouping uses the selected scholarly home; self-described “Other” responses remain unclassified.

# Research activity and uncertainty

Many research scientists are applying while questioning the return on their effort

During the previous six months, 78.1% (57/73) submitted or helped submit a proposal. About half joined a team or reframed an idea. Separately, 77.5% (62/80) agreed at least somewhat that it was difficult to judge whether pursuing proposals was worth the effort. See Figure 2.

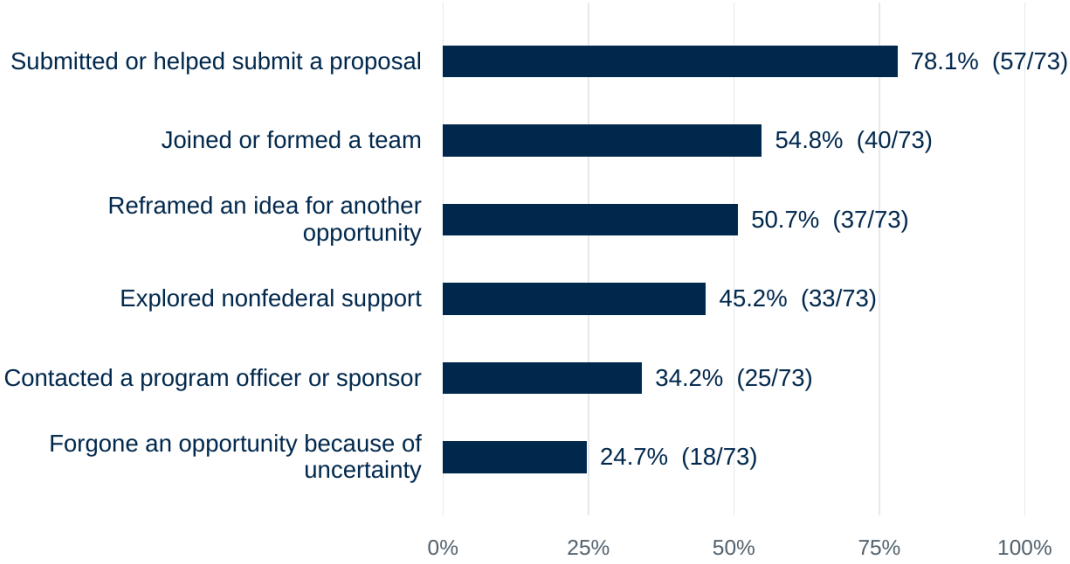


**Figure 2. Actions in the previous six months. Labels show percentage and selected/valid responses. Multiple selections allowed.**

Activity and uncertainty overlapped: 43 of the 72 research scientists answering both questions reported submitting a proposal and difficulty judging whether proposals were worth the effort. This is 59.7% of those answering both questions. Research scientists also reported less sponsor contact than the overall (university-wide) survey benchmark, 34.2% versus 48.1%. That benchmark includes research scientists.

## Fatigue and continued activity

As in the university-wide findings, many research scientists who identified fatigue, discouragement, or burnout as a major barrier still reported taking steps to pursue funding. The comparisons below distinguish respondents who selected “Fatigue, discouragement, or burnout” as one of their greatest barriers from respondents who did not select that answer. The activities occurred during the six months before respondents answered the survey. Each comparison includes only respondents who answered both the question about barriers and the question about recent activities.

Among research scientists who selected fatigue, discouragement, or burnout as a barrier, 18 of 30 respondents (60.0%) had joined or formed a team to pursue a funding opportunity. Among those who did not select that barrier, 22 of 43 respondents (51.2%) had joined or formed a team. University-wide results showed the same pattern: 252 of 401 respondents (62.8%) who selected fatigue, discouragement, or burnout reported team participation, compared with 459 of 919 respondents (49.9%) who did not select that barrier.

Contact with program officers or sponsor representatives showed a different pattern. Among research scientists who selected fatigue, discouragement, or burnout, 9 of 30 respondents (30.0%) had contacted a program officer or sponsor representative. Among those who did not select that barrier, 16 of 43 respondents (37.2%) had made such contact. Across the university as a whole, sponsor contact was more common among respondents who selected

fatigue, discouragement, or burnout: 206 of 401 respondents (51.4%) reported contact, compared with 429 of 919 respondents (46.7%) who did not select that barrier.

Respondents who did not select this barrier may also have experienced it: the survey asked respondents to select up to three of their greatest barriers; so they did not report every difficulty they experienced. The university-wide figures include research scientists. See Table E1.

# Knowledge of alternative funding sources

Research scientists reported high understanding of changes in the funding environment but comparatively limited knowledge of relevant alternative sponsors or funding pathways. Their knowledge of alternatives was lower than among tenure-track faculty, research professors, and research investigators. When asked about their belief that viable opportunities remained, research scientists were below those three groups but above clinical faculty and lecturers. See Table 2.

**Table 2. Funding awareness across appointment types**

| Appointment type | Understand funding changes | Believe viable opportunities remain | Know relevant alternatives |
|---|---|---|---|
| Research Scientist | 83.5% (66/79) | 57.5% (46/80) | 40.7% (33/81) |
| Tenure-track / tenured | 77.7% (713/918) | 64.3% (585/910) | 57.1% (523/916) |
| Research Professor | 77.4% (72/93) | 69.6% (64/92) | 63.3% (57/90) |
| Research Investigator | 84.2% (32/38) | 62.9% (22/35) | 63.9% (23/36) |
| Clinical Track | 63.6% (96/151) | 54.1% (79/146) | 49.0% (70/143) |
| Lecturer / teaching | 54.2% (26/48) | 50.0% (24/48) | 39.6% (19/48) |

Agreement includes somewhat agree, agree, and strongly agree. Each percentage uses valid answers to that item.

## Funding experience and knowledge of alternatives

The university-wide analysis found that respondents who had pursued or seriously considered three or more types of nonfederal funding more often reported being very or extremely confident in three activities than respondents who had considered or pursued only federal funding: adapting an idea for a different sponsor, identifying a practical action for the next 90 days, and making progress despite a delayed funding opportunity.

Among research scientists who had pursued or considered both federal and listed nonfederal sources of funding, 50.0% (22/44) were very or extremely confident that they could identify a practical action to move their work forward in the next 90 days. Among those who had selected federal sources but none of the listed nonfederal sources, 20.0% (4/20) reported this level of confidence.

Reported knowledge of relevant alternative sponsors differed between the two groups. Among research scientists who had pursued or considered both federal and listed nonfederal sources, 43.5% (20/46) agreed that they knew relevant alternative sponsors, compared with 39.1% (9/23) of those who had selected federal sources but none of the listed nonfederal sources, a difference of 4.4 percentage points. Fewer than half of respondents in either group agreed with this statement. Each comparison includes respondents with valid answers to both relevant questions, so the denominators differ. See Table E6.

# Exploration of nonfederal funding

Among research scientists who had explored nonfederal funding in the six months before responding to the survey, more than half, 54.5% (18/33), did not agree that they knew alternative sponsors relevant to their work. Among respondents who had also explored nonfederal funding, the corresponding proportion was 34.5% (182/527) for tenure-track or tenured faculty and 28.8% (17/59) for research professors. Research scientists therefore reported

difficulty identifying relevant alternatives, even after looking beyond federal funding. Table 3 shows this comparison across all six appointment groups.

**Table 3. Knowledge of relevant alternative sponsors among respondents who explored nonfederal funding**

| Appointment type | Did not agree they knew relevant alternative sponsors |
|---|---|
| Research Scientist | 54.5% (18/33) |
| Tenure-track / tenured | 34.5% (182/527) |
| Research Professor | 28.8% (17/59) |
| Research Investigator | 28.6% (4/14) |
| Clinical Track | 32.8% (20/61) |
| Lecturer / teaching | 55.6% (10/18) |

Each denominator includes respondents who reported exploring nonfederal funding in the six months before the survey and gave a valid answer about knowledge of relevant alternatives. “Did not agree” includes neutral and disagreeing responses.

# Time, staffing and funding problems

Proposal preparation time and fatigue are prominent concerns (Figure 3)

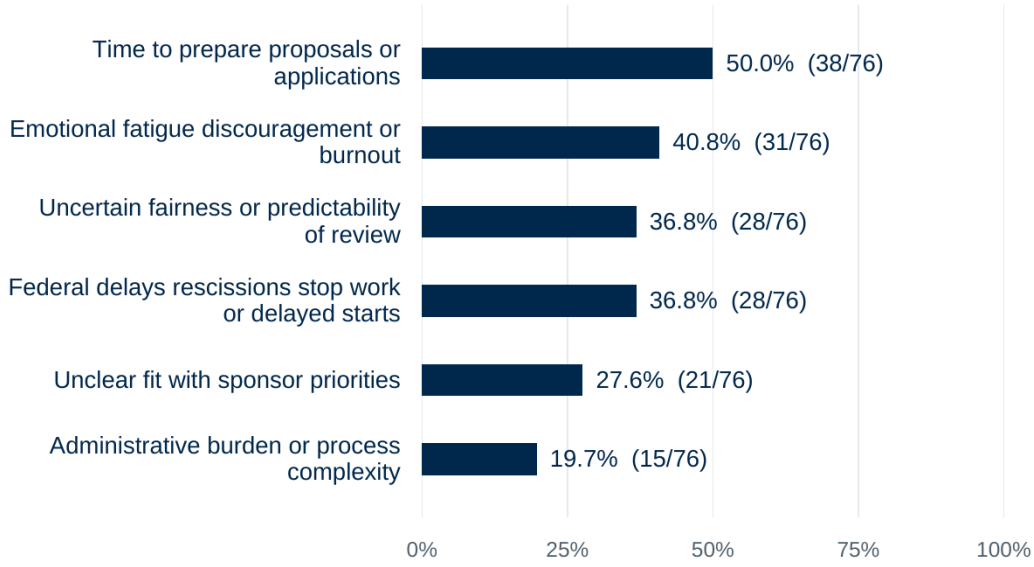


**Figure 3. The six most frequently selected barriers to maintaining momentum. Up to three selections; n=76. Federal disruption combines several types of delays and interruptions.**

Fatigue or burnout was selected by 40.8% of research scientists, compared with 29.3% in the overall survey benchmark.

> “At present, I only have 5-10% of my funded time to write proposals. The rest is tied up in project work”

Research scientist survey comment.

Time constraints were associated with lower proposal submission among research scientists

Among research scientists answering both the barrier and activity questions, 69.4% (25/36) of those selecting insufficient proposal preparation time as a major barrier had submitted or helped submit a proposal during the previous six months, compared with 86.5% (32/37) of those not selecting that barrier. University-wide, proposal submission was nearly identical between these groups: 69.2% (500/723) among respondents selecting insufficient time and 68.7% (410/597) among those not selecting it. Research scientists selecting insufficient time therefore reported approximately the same proposal submission rate as university-wide respondents selecting that barrier.

These comparisons include all levels of funding centrality. The larger difference within the research scientist group reflected the comparatively high submission rate among research scientists who did not select insufficient time.

Within the research scientist group, the difference in proposal submission was larger among mid-career and senior respondents than among early-career respondents.

**Table 4. Proposal submission by time barrier and career stage among research scientists**

| Career stage | Selected time to prepare proposals as a barrier | Did not select time to prepare proposals as a barrier |
|---|---|---|
| Early-career | 73.7% (14/19) | 78.6% (11/14) |
| Mid-career | 63.6% (7/11) | 92.9% (13/14) |
| Senior | 60.0% (3/5) | 87.5% (7/8) |

Each value is the percentage who submitted or helped submit an external proposal or application, followed by the number reporting that activity divided by the number in that comparison group. The barrier option was "Time to prepare proposals, applications, or submissions."

Decisions not to pursue an opportunity because of uncertainty showed little difference in the overall comparisons. Among research scientists, 25.0% (9/36) of those selecting insufficient time reported such a decision, compared with 24.3% (9/37) of those not selecting it. University-wide, the corresponding proportions were 20.3% (147/723) among respondents selecting insufficient time and 21.9% (131/597) among those not selecting it.

## The relationship between fatigue and proposal submission varied by career stage

Among research scientists selecting fatigue, discouragement, or burnout as a major barrier, 76.7% (23/30) had submitted or helped submit a proposal during the previous six months, compared with 79.1% (34/43) of those not selecting that barrier. University-wide, respondents selecting fatigue reported proposal submission more often: 73.8% (296/401), compared with 66.8% (614/919) among those not selecting it. Among early-career and senior research scientists, respondents selecting fatigue reported submitting proposals more often than those not selecting it. Among mid-career research scientists, respondents selecting fatigue reported proposal submission less often.

**Table 5. Proposal submission by fatigue barrier and career stage among research scientists**

| Career stage | Selected fatigue, discouragement, or burnout as a barrier | Did not select fatigue, discouragement, or burnout as a barrier |
|---|---|---|
| Early-career | 83.3% (10/12) | 71.4% (15/21) |
| Mid-career | 63.6% (7/11) | 92.9% (13/14) |
| Senior | 85.7% (6/7) | 66.7% (4/6) |

Each value is the percentage who submitted or helped submit an external proposal or application, followed by the number reporting that activity divided by the number in that comparison group. The barrier option was "Emotional fatigue, discouragement, or burnout."

The mid-career research scientist pattern differed from the university-wide mid-career comparison, where proposal submission was nearly identical among respondents selecting fatigue, 73.1% (87/119), and those not selecting it, 72.6% (135/186).

### Comments describe concerns about continued employment and the time available for research

Some research scientists explicitly linked uncertainty about external funding to concerns about keeping their jobs. One described how the effort required to seek funding, together with uncertainty about continued employment, made it harder to carry out research:

> "Confidence that my job is secure even if I am unable to secure funding for my research--with so much time and mental energy spent trying to find and apply for funding, it is difficult to actually get research done and products out. The constant stress of the uncertainty around both funding and what a lack of funding might mean for my job makes everything more difficult."

Research scientist survey comment.

Another respondent described participating in proposal development specifically to obtain salary support and remain employed. When asked about activities undertaken during the preceding six months, this respondent reported having:

> "participated in development of proposals as co-investigator (even when PIs are in other institutions) to try and cover more of my own salary so that I can keep my job at U of M"

Research scientist survey comment.

A third respondent described how dependence on external funding restricted the time available to pursue work without an identified source of support:

> "Since my role is majority soft money, the pressure to find new funding is immense and does not allow time to work on things that are not funded or do not have the possibility of being funded."

Research scientist survey comment.

These accounts describe distinct pressures: uncertainty about continued employment, participation in proposals to cover salary, and limited time for unfunded research.

## Guidance from leaders and mentors

Three-quarters of research scientists, 75.7% (56/74), agreed that faculty in their unit were encouraged to identify practical next steps despite uncertainty in the funding environment. Fewer, 52.0% (39/75), agreed that senior faculty and leaders demonstrated how to adjust research, scholarly, or creative strategies in response to changing circumstances. Research scientists therefore more often reported encouragement to act than examples from leaders of how to adapt their work. See Figure 4 and Table B2.

Guidance specifically about sustaining or repositioning their work was reported less often. One-third of research scientists, 33.3% (26/78), agreed that they had received this guidance in the current environment. More than half (52.6%; 41/78) disagreed, while 14.1% (11/78) gave a neutral response. Although only a minority of research scientists reported receiving this guidance, their proportion was higher than the university-wide result of 27.1% (349/1,286). See Tables B3 and B5.

Comparisons with the other research appointments show a different pattern. Research professors and research investigators reported unit encouragement at rates similar to research scientists: 82.4% (75/91) of research professors and 77.1% (27/35) of research investigators agreed that their unit encouraged practical next steps, compared with 75.7% (56/74) of research scientists. However, 51.1% (45/88) of research professors and 66.7% (24/36) of research investigators reported guidance on sustaining or repositioning work, compared with 33.3% (26/78) of research scientists. Research scientists and research investigators reported nearly the same level of encouragement, but research investigators were twice as likely to report receiving guidance about sustaining or redirecting their work.

About half of research scientists, 48.7% (38/78), agreed that the guidance available to them was appropriately tailored to their discipline, career stage, and dependence on external support. A similar proportion, 53.8% (42/78), agreed that they would know whom to ask for advice when deciding whether to pause, change direction, or proceed

with a proposal or other opportunity. Knowing whom to ask was reported at nearly the same rate university-wide, 53.8% (718/1,335), but more often among research professors, 70.3% (64/91). Research scientists therefore resembled respondents university-wide on this measure while reporting less access to an identifiable source of advice than research professors. See Table B3.

One research scientist identified mentoring through the current circumstances and the proposal submission process as a desired form of support:

> “Having a mentor helping with guiding through these times and submission issues”

Research scientist survey comment.

Agreement includes “somewhat agree,” “agree,” and “strongly agree.” Each percentage uses respondents who gave a valid answer to that question; university-wide figures include research scientists.

Encouragement is more common than guidance about sustaining the work (Figure 4)

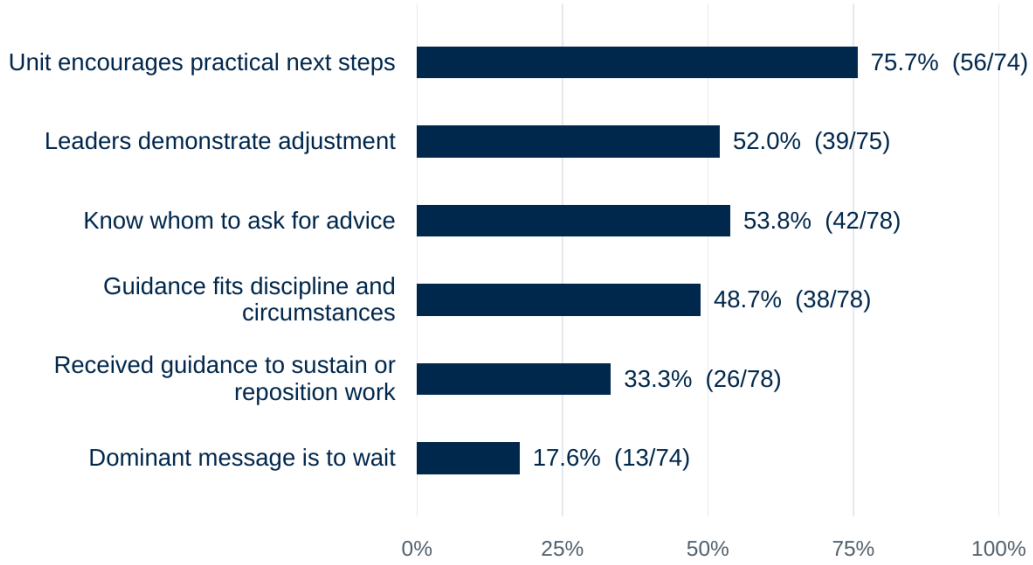


**Figure 4. Agreement about unit encouragement and research guidance. Agreement includes somewhat agree, agree, and strongly agree. Each label gives agreement count/valid item responses. A dominant message to wait is negatively worded.**

# Guidance and confidence

Research scientists who reported guidance on sustaining or repositioning their work more often expressed high confidence in all five activities assessed. For adapting an idea to another sponsor (one of the five activities assessed), the shares were 50.0% (12/24) among those agreeing they had received guidance and 20.0% (10/50) among those who did not agree. For progressing despite a delayed or uncertain opportunity, the shares were 50.0% (12/24) and 26.0% (13/50). See Figure 5.

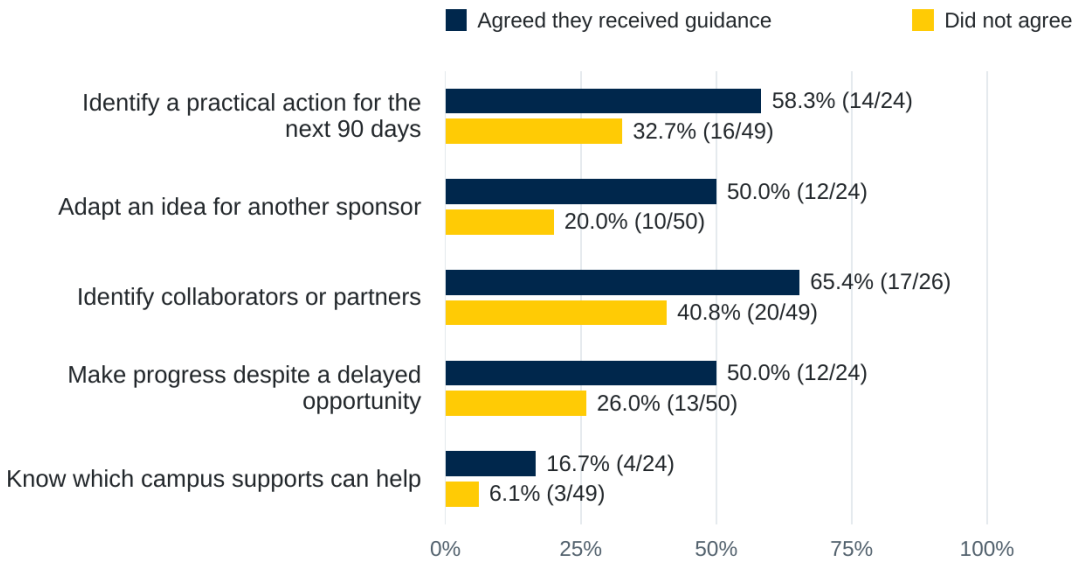


**Figure 5. High confidence by reported guidance on sustaining or repositioning work. High confidence means very or extremely confident. "Did not agree" includes neutral responses. Full counts appear in Appendix E.**

Knowing whom to ask for advice was also associated with greater confidence. High confidence in identifying a practical action for the next 90 days was 54.1% (20/37) among research scientists agreeing they knew whom to ask, compared with 25.7% (9/35) among those not agreeing. Positive differences appeared on all five activities. See Table E8.

Among research scientists, guidance tailored to their discipline and circumstances showed a less consistent relationship with confidence. Respondents who agreed that their guidance was tailored more often reported high confidence about knowing which campus supports could help. The differences in confidence about adapting ideas or identifying collaborators were small. See Table E3.

Among research scientists who agreed that they had received guidance on sustaining or repositioning their work, 84.6% (22/26) also agreed that it was difficult to judge whether preparing a proposal was worth the effort. The corresponding proportion was 75.0% (39/52) among those who gave a neutral or disagreeing response to the guidance question. Uncertainty about whether to invest time in a proposal was widespread in both groups. See Table E4.

## Guidance and confidence across appointment types

Across several appointment types, respondents who reported receiving guidance on how to sustain or redirect their work more often expressed high confidence in adapting an idea for another sponsor or making progress despite a delayed or uncertain funding opportunity. Clinical faculty showed similarly sized differences: 33.3% (14/42) versus 6.6% (5/76) for adapting an idea and 33.3% (14/42) versus 7.9% (6/76) for progressing despite a delay. Research professors showed a similar difference on the latter measure, 50.0% (22/44) versus 27.9% (12/43). Each pair compares respondents agreeing that they received guidance with those who did not agree.

The relationship between tailored guidance and confidence in adapting an idea for another sponsor differed across appointment types. Among research scientists who agreed that available guidance was appropriately tailored to their discipline, career stage, and dependence on external support, 30.6% (11/36) were very or extremely confident that they could adapt an idea for another sponsor. The corresponding proportion was 28.9% (11/38) among research scientists who gave a neutral or disagreeing response to the tailored-guidance statement. Among tenure-track or tenured faculty, high confidence was reported by 38.8% (134/345) of those agreeing that guidance was tailored and 20.4% (95/465) of those giving a neutral or disagreeing response. The difference between the two guidance groups was small among research scientists and larger among tenure-track or tenured faculty.

The relationship between guidance on sustaining or repositioning work and uncertainty about proposal preparation also differed between research scientists and tenure-track or tenured faculty. Among research scientists who agreed that they had received this guidance, 84.6% (22/26) agreed that it was difficult to judge whether preparing a proposal was worth the effort, compared with 75.0% (39/52) of those who gave a neutral or disagreeing response to the guidance statement. Among tenure-track or tenured faculty, the direction of the comparison was reversed: 69.0% (120/174) of those agreeing they had received guidance reported this difficulty, compared with 79.8% (528/662) of those giving a neutral or disagreeing response. More than two-thirds of respondents in each of the four groups reported difficulty judging whether proposal preparation was worth the effort.

Each comparison includes respondents with valid answers to both questions.

# Confidence and access to support

Knowing how to find campus help is the lowest-rated confidence item (Figure 6)

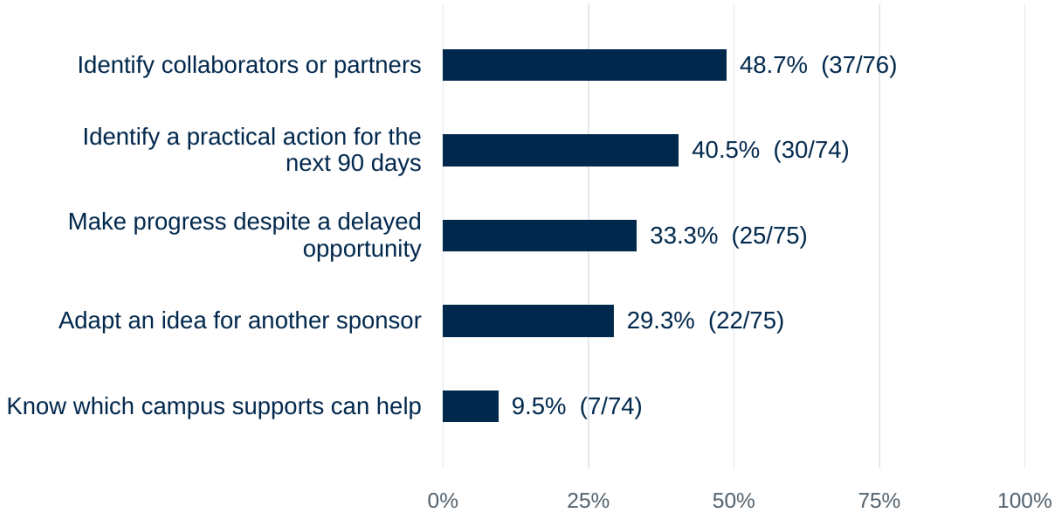


**Figure 6. High confidence in moving research forward. Very or extremely confident on each activity. Labels show count/valid responses.**

Only 7 of 74 respondents (9.5%) were very or extremely confident that they knew which campus supports could help maintain momentum. Fifty (67.6%) were only slightly confident or not at all confident; 17 (23.0%) were moderately confident. None selected extremely confident.

## Research activity among research scientists with low confidence

Research scientists who were not at all or only slightly confident that they knew which campus supports could help them move their research forward most often selected sponsor identification as a useful next step among the four options compared in Appendix E: 60.0% (27/45). Nearly two-thirds selected small seed or planning funds as a valuable form of institutional support, 63.0% (29/46). This group includes active applicants who may need help locating relevant assistance.

Uncertainty about which campus supports could help was reported by 68.6% (24/35) of early-career, 60.0% (15/25) of mid-career, and 84.6% (11/13) of senior research scientists answering that question. It was common across all three stages; the senior estimate is especially sensitive to individual answers because its base is only 13. See Table E9.

The 50 research scientists with low confidence included 26 in Health Sciences, 16 in Natural Sciences and Engineering, six in Social Sciences, Humanities, and the Arts, and two in other categories.

# Campus support and research activity across appointments

Among research scientists, low confidence about knowing helpful campus supports was associated with less sponsor contact and team participation. The observed differences were larger than those among tenure-track faculty and research professors. The figure compares respondents with low confidence and those with at least moderate confidence. See Figure 7.

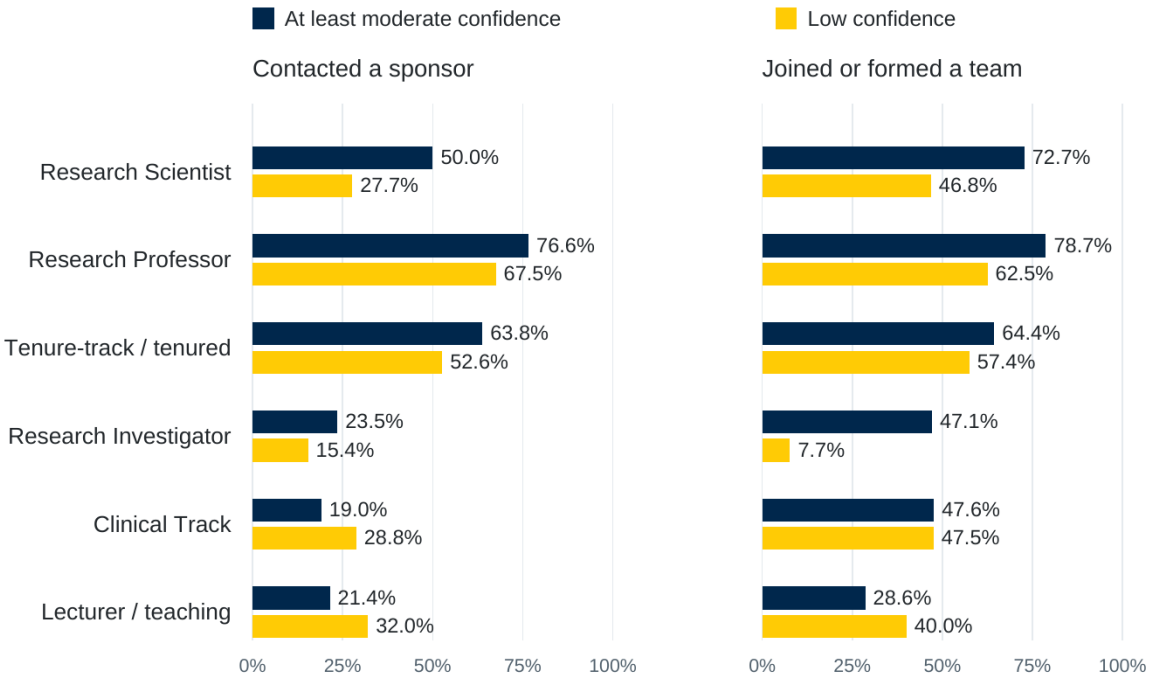


**Figure 7. Sponsor contact and team participation by campus support confidence. Blue = at least moderate confidence; maize = low confidence. Full counts and valid paired bases appear in Appendix G.**

Low confidence means not at all or slightly confident; at least moderate includes moderately, very, and extremely confident. Counts use respondents answering both questions.

Research investigators showed a larger difference in team participation than research scientists, although that comparison involved only 30 respondents. Clinical and lecturer faculty did not show the same pattern. Respondents with low confidence also reported substantial proposal activity: 72.7% (362/498) of tenure-track faculty and 90.0% (36/40) of research professors had submitted or helped submit a proposal, compared with 74.5% (35/47) of research scientists. Many respondents who were uncertain which campus supports could help still submitted proposals. Among respondents who were not at all or only slightly confident that they knew which campus supports could help maintain their research momentum, 74.5% (35/47) of research scientists, 72.7% (362/498) of tenure-track or tenured faculty, and 90.0% (36/40) of research professors had submitted or helped submit an external proposal or application during the six months before responding to the survey.

# Useful next steps and institutional support

Proposal refinement and sponsor identification lead the next steps (Figure 8)

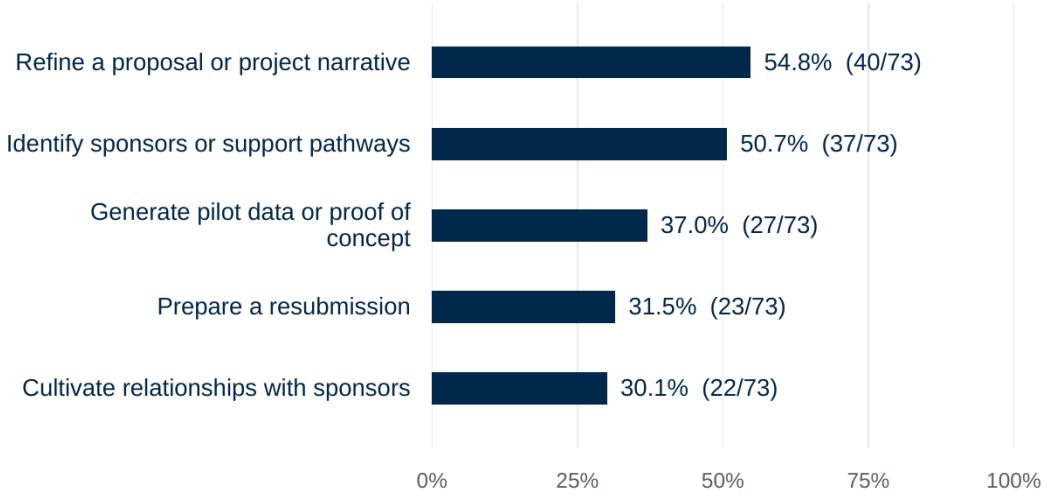


**Figure 8. Useful actions for the next 90 days. Up to three selections; n=73.**

Proposal refinement was selected as a useful next step by 54.8% (40/73) of research scientists, compared with 38.6% in the overall survey benchmark. Sponsor identification was selected by 50.7% (37/73) of research scientists. Respondents could select up to three useful actions for the next 90 days.

Among those selecting time as a barrier, 57.9% (22/38) wanted to refine a proposal, 47.4% (18/38) wanted to identify sponsors, and 36.8% (14/38) wanted pilot data or proof of concept. A single label such as “time pressure” therefore covers several different desired next steps. Written comments described several forms of assistance needed to move an idea toward a proposal, including clarification of requirements, preliminary funding, and tailored guidance:

> “What would help most is a clearer path from a promising idea to an actionable proposal: early clarification of eligibility, cost-share and matching requirements, and institutional support; small seed funding for preliminary data or proof of concept; and guidance tailored to newer or research-track faculty.”

Research scientist survey comment.

# Institutional support priorities

Small seed funds and guidance on nonfederal support are most frequently requested (Figure 9)

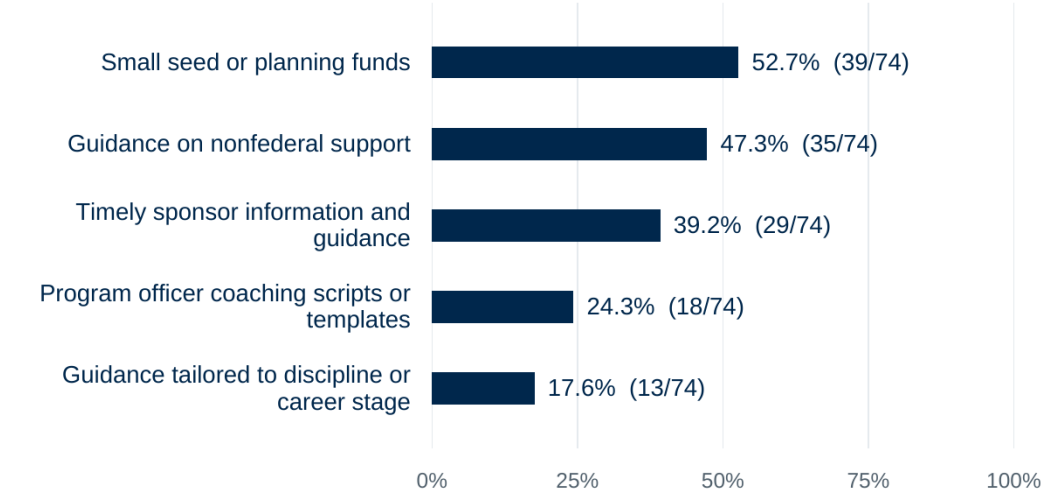


**Figure 9. Institutional supports considered most valuable for the next six months. Up to three selections; n=74.**

Small seed or planning funds were selected by 39 of 74 respondents (52.7%), followed by guidance on nonfederal support, 35 of 74 (47.3%). Timely sponsor information and guidance were selected by 29 (39.2%), and program officer

coaching, scripts, or templates by 18 (24.3%). Written comments also identified a need for temporary funding to sustain work between grants:

> "Bridge funding of a few months when the funding from one grant has finished and the other has not started yet."

Research scientist survey comment.

Others requested local opportunities to support salaries and trainees, help complete projects that lost funding, and have more funded time for proposal writing. These examples help distinguish needs that can otherwise be grouped under a general request for funding.

### Requested actions and requested supports are different questions

Twenty-three respondents selected preparing a resubmission as a useful next step (31.5% of 73), while four selected institutional help interpreting reviews and preparing resubmissions (5.4% of 74).

## Differences within the research scientist group

Career stage, field and salary circumstances add context

Appendix D compares selected measures within the research scientist subgroup. These comparisons use the same definitions as the overall subgroup results. Each cell shows its own response count, and the categories represent separate views of the same people.

### Career stage

Overall, proposal submission during the six months before responding to the survey was similar across career stages: 75.8% (25/33) of early-career, 80.0% (20/25) of mid-career, and 76.9% (10/13) of senior research scientists had submitted or helped submit an external proposal or application. These percentages combine respondents who selected time or fatigue as a major barrier with those who did not. The earlier analyses in "Time, staffing and funding problems" examine those barrier groups separately within each career stage. See Table D1.

Guidance and requested support also varied by self-reported career stage. Guidance on sustaining or repositioning work was reported by 38.9% (14/36) of early-career, 29.6% (8/27) of mid-career, and 23.1% (3/13) of senior research scientists. Guidance on nonfederal support was selected as a priority by 55.9% (19/34), 38.5% (10/26), and 33.3% (4/12), respectively. Seed or planning funds were selected by 47.1% (16/34), 57.7% (15/26), and 66.7% (8/12). See Table D1.

### Scholarly field

Federal disruption was selected by 12/22 Natural Sciences and Engineering research scientists (54.5%), 9/36 Health Sciences research scientists (25.0%), and 6/13 Social Sciences, Humanities, and the Arts research scientists (46.2%).

### Funding centrality

Research scientists who selected essential reported more proposal submission (44/53; 83.0%) than those selecting very central (7/12; 58.3%). The other two response categories contain two and six respondents.

### Salary share

Federal disruption was selected by 13/25 research scientists expecting 100% external salary support (52.0%), 8/19 expecting 76–99% (42.1%), and 0/10 expecting none. Respondents could select up to three greatest barriers.

# Appendix A Methods

## Population and response bases

The university-wide survey contains 1,569 unique survey records. This analysis selects the 85 records whose appointment is exactly Research Scientist Track faculty. All available answers are retained, including answers from nine records marked unfinished. No weighting, completion-only filter, or imputation is applied. For each quantitative item, the denominator is the number in this appointment category supplying a usable answer. Blank, not applicable, or do not know scale answers are excluded from that item's percentage. They remain visible in Appendix B.

## Agreement confidence and multiple selections

Agreement percentages combine "Somewhat agree," "Agree," and "Strongly agree" on the seven-point scale. When a result includes only "Agree" and "Strongly agree," that narrower definition is stated explicitly. High-confidence percentages combine "Very confident" and "Extremely confident" on the five-point scale. For statements about uncertainty over proposal effort, a message to wait, or advice to delay submissions, agreement indicates that the respondent reported that concern.

## Comparison methods

Appointment comparisons use the same definitions within each category. Cross-question analyses include respondents with valid answers to both questions. Percentages are unweighted, and percentage-point differences are calculated before rounding. Comparisons by career stage, field, funding centrality, and salary describe overlapping groups of respondents.

Career stage is self-reported. The survey used early-career, mid-career, and senior categories, with assistant-level, associate-level, and full professor or equivalent as examples. Four respondents without a selection in these three categories are excluded only from career-stage comparisons.

Eighteen research scientists answered the final written-comment question. Seventeen described needs or concerns, and one wrote "Not sure."

## Appendix A Complete respondent profile

Counts and percentages below use all 85 research scientist records, including missing or non-substantive categories. This denominator differs from the answered-question percentages in the main report.

**Table A1. Career stage and funding profile**

| Characteristic | Category | Count | % of 85 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Career stage | Early career | 38 | 44.7% |
| | Mid career | 29 | 34.1% |
| | Senior | 14 | 16.5% |
| | Other | 1 | 1.2% |
| | Prefer not to answer | 2 | 2.4% |
| | No response | 1 | 1.2% |
| Funding centrality | Not central | 0 | 0.0% |
| | Somewhat central | 2 | 2.4% |
| | Moderately central | 6 | 7.1% |
| | Very central | 13 | 15.3% |
| | Essential | 61 | 71.8% |
| | No response | 3 | 3.5% |
| Expected external salary share | 0% | 10 | 11.8% |

| Characteristic | Category | Count | % of 85 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1–25% | 7 | 8.2% |
| | 26–50% | 7 | 8.2% |
| | 51–75% | 2 | 2.4% |
| | 76–99% | 21 | 24.7% |
| | 100% | 29 | 34.1% |
| | Not sure | 7 | 8.2% |
| | Prefer not to answer | 1 | 1.2% |
| | No response | 1 | 1.2% |

**Table A2. Detailed scholarly home**

| Selected scholarly home | Count | % of 85 |
|---|---|---|
| Biomedical or life sciences | 30 | 35.3% |
| Clinical or health sciences | 6 | 7.1% |
| Public health | 4 | 4.7% |
| Natural sciences or mathematics | 12 | 14.1% |
| Engineering, computing, or technology | 13 | 15.3% |
| Social and behavioral sciences | 10 | 11.8% |
| Education | 2 | 2.4% |
| Business, law, or public policy | 1 | 1.2% |
| Humanities | 0 | 0.0% |
| Arts, design, and creative practice | 0 | 0.0% |
| Interdisciplinary or spanning multiple areas | 4 | 4.7% |
| Other or prefer to self-describe | 2 | 2.4% |
| Prefer not to answer | 0 | 0.0% |
| No response | 1 | 1.2% |

All categories, including zeros and missing answers, are retained. Scholarly-field group definitions appear in Appendix D.

# Appendix B Funding environment and unit culture

All agreement items are shown below. Percentages include somewhat agree, agree, and strongly agree. The mean is on the original seven-point scale, from 1 strongly disagree to 7 strongly agree. Asterisks mark negative statements. The All benchmark includes research scientists.

**Table B1. Agreement about the funding environment**

| Item and statement | Agree or highly confident | Mean | All survey benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|
| B1 Understand changes in funding | 83.5% (66/79) | 5.42 | 75.1% n=1427 |
| B2 Viable opportunities remain | 57.5% (46/80) | 4.25 | 62.8% n=1399 |
| B3 Know where to find sponsor information | 67.5% (54/80) | 4.66 | 59.5% n=1403 |
| B4 Know relevant alternative sponsors | 40.7% (33/81) | 4.01 | 54.5% n=1406 |
| B5 Hard to judge proposal effort * | 77.5% (62/80) | 5.28 | 76.3% n=1398 |

### Table B2. Agreement about university and unit culture

| Item and statement | Agree or highly confident | Mean | All survey benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|
| C1 Unit encourages practical next steps | 75.7% (56/74) | 5.15 | 69.0% n=1325 |
| C2 Leaders demonstrate adjustment | 52.0% (39/75) | 4.37 | 45.7% n=1318 |
| C3 Unit discusses changing priorities | 65.3% (49/75) | 4.75 | 58.9% n=1348 |
| C4 Shared sense effort is worthwhile | 65.4% (51/78) | 4.83 | 61.3% n=1335 |
| C5 Dominant message is to wait * | 17.6% (13/74) | 2.89 | 9.3% n=1297 |

B1 concerns changes over the past 18 months; B3 asks about timely, trustworthy sponsor information. C2 refers to senior faculty and leaders. The means for statements about uncertainty or delayed action use the original response scale.

For B5, 38 of 80 (47.5%) selected Agree or Strongly agree; the broader 77.5% additionally includes 24 who selected Somewhat agree.

## Appendix B Mentoring and confidence

### Table B3. Agreement about mentoring and research advice

| Item and statement | Agree or highly confident | Mean | All survey benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|
| D1 Guidance fits discipline and circumstances | 48.7% (38/78) | 4.10 | 45.7% n=1310 |
| D2 Advised to delay or avoid submissions * | 10.4% (8/77) | 2.32 | 7.5% n=1291 |
| D3 Know whom to ask for advice | 53.8% (42/78) | 4.40 | 53.7% n=1334 |
| D4 Received guidance to sustain or reposition work | 33.3% (26/78) | 3.53 | 27.2% n=1285 |

D1 covers tailoring to discipline, career stage, and dependence on external support. D3 asks about advice on whether to pause, pivot, or proceed. D4 asks about receiving guidance to sustain or reposition research, scholarly work, or creative practice. D2 is negatively worded. Agreement is on the seven-point scale.

### Table B4. High confidence in moving research forward

| Item and statement | Agree or highly confident | Mean | All survey benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|
| E1 Identify a practical action for the next 90 days | 40.5% (30/74) | 3.03 | 43.4% n=1283 |
| E2 Adapt an idea for another sponsor | 29.3% (22/75) | 2.81 | 28.4% n=1275 |
| E3 Identify collaborators or partners | 48.7% (37/76) | 3.36 | 47.0% n=1315 |
| E4 Make progress despite a delayed opportunity | 33.3% (25/75) | 2.88 | 29.2% n=1282 |
| E5 Know which campus supports can help | 9.5% (7/74) | 2.15 | 17.0% n=1291 |

For E1–E5, the percentage is Very or Extremely confident; the mean is on the five-point scale from 1 Not at all confident to 5 Extremely confident. These values are not agreement percentages and are not a combined readiness score.

The strongest confidence result concerns identifying collaborators or partners. Knowing campus supports is the lowest-rated item. The remaining responses include moderate and slight confidence as well as no confidence.

## Appendix B Full response distributions

Cells are counts of research scientists. Each row, including NA and blank, sums to 85. Item labels and full interpretation appear on the preceding pages. NA includes “Not applicable / I don’t know.”

### Table B5. Full agreement response distributions

| Item | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Neutral | Somewhat agree | Agree | Strongly agree | NA | Blank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B1 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 19 | 29 | 18 | 2 | 4 |
| B2 | 3 | 13 | 12 | 6 | 30 | 11 | 5 | 1 | 4 |
| B3 | 3 | 5 | 11 | 7 | 30 | 19 | 5 | 1 | 4 |
| B4 | 5 | 13 | 13 | 17 | 15 | 14 | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| B5 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 24 | 16 | 22 | 1 | 4 |
| C1 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 12 | 36 | 8 | 6 | 5 |
| C2 | 7 | 4 | 13 | 12 | 12 | 23 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| C3 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 20 | 17 | 12 | 5 | 5 |
| C4 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 13 | 18 | 24 | 9 | 2 | 5 |
| C5 | 19 | 21 | 7 | 14 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 6 |
| D1 | 7 | 12 | 10 | 11 | 16 | 19 | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| D2 | 26 | 28 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 3 | 5 |
| D3 | 3 | 12 | 9 | 12 | 15 | 23 | 4 | 2 | 5 |
| D4 | 14 | 11 | 16 | 11 | 12 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 5 |

### Table B6. Full confidence response distributions

| Item | Not at all | Slightly | Moderately | Very | Extremely | NA | Blank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| E1 | 7 | 24 | 13 | 20 | 10 | 0 | 11 |
| E2 | 9 | 21 | 23 | 19 | 3 | 0 | 10 |
| E3 | 4 | 14 | 21 | 25 | 12 | 0 | 9 |
| E4 | 10 | 19 | 21 | 20 | 5 | 0 | 10 |
| E5 | 20 | 30 | 17 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 11 |

### Table B7. Response coverage by question block

| Question block | Valid research scientist responses | Blank responses |
|---|---|---|
| Q8 funding sources | 84 | 1 |
| Q16 barriers | 76 | 9 |
| Q17 recent activity | 73 | 12 |
| Q18 useful next steps | 73 | 12 |
| Q19 institutional support | 74 | 11 |
| Q20 final open text | 18 nonblank comments | 67 |

Q20 nonblank includes one “Not sure” response. A blank multiple-selection response is missing, not a selection of “None of these.” Zero selections for a listed option are preserved in Appendix C.

# Appendix C Funding sources and recent activity

## Funding pursued or seriously considered in the past three years

Q8. Research scientist n=84. Multiple selections allowed.

### Table C1. Funding sources pursued or seriously considered

| Response option | Count | Research scientists | All % / n |
|---|---|---|---|
| Federal agencies | 71 | 84.5% | 68.5% / 1558 |
| Foundations | 41 | 48.8% | 53.5% / 1558 |
| Industry or corporate research | 23 | 27.4% | 26.5% / 1558 |
| Nonprofit organizations | 16 | 19.0% | 22.7% / 1558 |
| Philanthropy or donors | 11 | 13.1% | 20.2% / 1558 |
| State or local government | 9 | 10.7% | 10.6% / 1558 |
| Internal seed funding only | 17 | 20.2% | 26.1% / 1558 |
| No recent external funding pursuit | 6 | 7.1% | 15.9% / 1558 |
| Other | 5 | 6.0% | 2.8% / 1558 |

## Actions in the past six months

Q17. Research scientist n=73. Multiple selections allowed.

### Table C2. Activities during the past six months

| Response option | Count | Research scientists | All % / n |
|---|---|---|---|
| Submitted or helped submit a proposal | 57 | 78.1% | 69.0% / 1319 |
| Reframed an idea for another opportunity | 37 | 50.7% | 43.7% / 1319 |
| Contacted a program officer or sponsor | 25 | 34.2% | 48.1% / 1319 |
| Explored nonfederal support | 33 | 45.2% | 56.0% / 1319 |
| Joined or formed a team | 40 | 54.8% | 53.9% / 1319 |
| Developed reusable proposal assets | 24 | 32.9% | 29.8% / 1319 |
| Forgone an opportunity because of uncertainty | 18 | 24.7% | 21.0% / 1319 |
| None of these | 3 | 4.1% | 10.8% / 1319 |
| Not applicable | 0 | 0.0% | 0.0% / 1319 |
| Other | 3 | 4.1% | 2.7% / 1319 |

Labels are shortened without combining or omitting options. Nonfederal support includes foundation, industry, philanthropy, state, local, or other nonfederal sources. Reusable assets include a concept paper, aims page, team map, preliminary-data plan, partner list, or sponsor scan.

## Appendix C Barriers to maintaining momentum

Q16 asked which factors had the greatest effect on the ability to sustain research, scholarly, or creative practice momentum. Respondents could select up to three. The base is 76 research scientists.

**Table C3. Barriers to maintaining research momentum**

| Response option | Count | Research scientists | All % / n |
|---|---|---|---|
| Time to prepare proposals, applications, or submissions | 38 | 50.0% | 52.8% / 1393 |
| Administrative burden or process complexity | 15 | 19.7% | 28.9% / 1393 |
| Lack of preliminary data, pilot funding, or proof-of-concept support | 13 | 17.1% | 13.6% / 1393 |
| Unclear fit between my work and current sponsor priorities | 21 | 27.6% | 23.9% / 1393 |
| Uncertainty about whether proposals will be reviewed fairly or predictably | 28 | 36.8% | 28.4% / 1393 |
| Difficulty finding collaborators or partners | 4 | 5.3% | 4.4% / 1393 |
| Lack of School/College/Institute-level encouragement or mentoring | 7 | 9.2% | 11.5% / 1393 |
| Concern that external support efforts will not be valued unless they result in funding | 10 | 13.2% | 12.0% / 1393 |
| Emotional fatigue, discouragement, or burnout | 31 | 40.8% | 29.3% / 1393 |
| Lack of guidance appropriate to my discipline or type of scholarship | 5 | 6.6% | 10.2% / 1393 |
| Federal funding delays, rescissions, stop-work orders, or delayed award starts | 28 | 36.8% | 30.6% / 1393 |
| Other | 4 | 5.3% | 9.5% / 1393 |
| None of these | 0 | 0.0% | 5.2% / 1393 |

The All benchmark includes 1,393 valid responses from respondents with a recorded appointment.

## Other barrier responses

Four respondents wrote additional barriers: difficulties with grant administration; uncertainty about bridge support after an unsuccessful proposal; a retired respondent's limited work on legacy research; and job insecurity in the research track.

## Appendix C Useful next steps

Q18 asked which actions would be most useful during the next 90 days. Respondents could select up to three. The base is 73 research scientists.

**Table C4. Useful next steps during the next 90 days**

| Response option | Count | Research scientists | All % / n |
|---|---|---|---|
| Refine a proposal or project narrative | 40 | 54.8% | 38.6% / 1293 |
| Identify potential sponsors or support pathways | 37 | 50.7% | 44.0% / 1293 |
| Build or strengthen a team | 11 | 15.1% | 18.5% / 1293 |
| Generate pilot data or proof of concept | 27 | 37.0% | 30.2% / 1293 |
| Cultivate relationships with program officers or sponsor representatives | 22 | 30.1% | 22.1% / 1293 |
| Develop a concept paper or other reusable project asset | 14 | 19.2% | 17.2% / 1293 |
| Identify external collaborators or partners | 6 | 8.2% | 12.8% / 1293 |
| Prepare a resubmission | 23 | 31.5% | 26.5% / 1293 |
| Clarify budget, compliance, or administrative requirements | 6 | 8.2% | 8.2% / 1293 |
| Other | 3 | 4.1% | 11.1% / 1293 |

### Other next step responses

Three write-ins described different circumstances: a respondent with current team funding who preferred to concentrate on research while considering small foundation opportunities; a respondent planning retirement; and a respondent questioning whether proposal effort would sustain continued employment.

### Relationship to current barriers

The comparison by sponsor-fit concerns is substantial descriptively: 15 of 20 respondents selecting that barrier wanted sponsor identification, compared with 22 of 53 not selecting it. By contrast, research scientists citing time pressure had more varied desired next steps. Complete displayed comparisons appear in Appendix E.

### Appendix C: Valuable institutional support

Q19 asked which institutional supports would be most valuable during the next six months. Respondents could select up to three. The base is 74 research scientists.

**Table C5. Valuable institutional support during the next six months**

| Response option | Count | Research scientists | All % / n |
|---|---|---|---|
| Timely intelligence and concise guidance about sponsor priorities and funding changes | 29 | 39.2% | 43.1% / 1292 |
| A consultation to help determine whether to pause, pivot, or proceed | 7 | 9.5% | 12.8% / 1292 |
| Help reframing an idea for a different sponsor or support pathway | 10 | 13.5% | 13.3% / 1292 |
| Guidance on foundations, industry, philanthropy, state, local, or other non-federal support | 35 | 47.3% | 44.6% / 1292 |
| Program officer engagement coaching, scripts, or templates | 18 | 24.3% | 15.6% / 1292 |
| Help identifying collaborators, partners, or team-based opportunities | 9 | 12.2% | 12.6% / 1292 |
| Small seed or planning funds | 39 | 52.7% | 47.6% / 1292 |
| Help interpreting reviews and preparing resubmissions | 4 | 5.4% | 7.0% / 1292 |
| Guidance tailored to particular disciplines, funding cultures, or career stages | 13 | 17.6% | 20.7% / 1292 |
| Examples of faculty who have adapted successfully | 6 | 8.1% | 8.5% / 1292 |
| Other | 4 | 5.4% | 10.5% / 1292 |

The table includes all eleven choices, including Other.

### Other support responses

Four write-ins requested time and staff support, help establishing a different administrative structure for research effort, college support for research faculty administrative time, or no support because retirement was planned.

## Appendix D Career stage and scholarly field

Selected measures across all five themes. Each cell shows percentage (selected or agreeing / valid item n). Every respondent here is a research scientist.

**Table D1. Selected results by self-reported career stage**

| Measure | Early N=38 | Mid N=29 | Senior N=14 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Submitted or helped submit a proposal | 75.8% (25/33) | 80.0% (20/25) | 76.9% (10/13) |
| Hard to judge proposal effort | 83.3% (30/36) | 78.6% (22/28) | 71.4% (10/14) |

| Measure | Early N=38 | Mid N=29 | Senior N=14 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Time to prepare proposals or applications | 57.1% (20/35) | 46.2% (12/26) | 38.5% (5/13) |
| Emotional fatigue discouragement or burnout | 37.1% (13/35) | 42.3% (11/26) | 53.8% (7/13) |
| Federal delays rescissions stop work or delayed starts | 40.0% (14/35) | 23.1% (6/26) | 53.8% (7/13) |
| Received guidance to sustain or reposition work | 38.9% (14/36) | 29.6% (8/27) | 23.1% (3/13) |
| Know relevant alternative sponsors | 35.1% (13/37) | 46.4% (13/28) | 35.7% (5/14) |
| Know which campus supports can help | 8.6% (3/35) | 8.0% (2/25) | 15.4% (2/13) |
| Refine a proposal or project narrative | 58.8% (20/34) | 53.8% (14/26) | 45.5% (5/11) |
| Identify sponsors or support pathways | 52.9% (18/34) | 46.2% (12/26) | 63.6% (7/11) |
| Small seed or planning funds | 47.1% (16/34) | 57.7% (15/26) | 66.7% (8/12) |
| Guidance on nonfederal support | 55.9% (19/34) | 38.5% (10/26) | 33.3% (4/12) |

Four respondents with Other, Prefer not to answer, or no career-stage response are not in these columns. Their available answers remain in the overall research scientist results.

### Table D2. Selected results by scholarly field

| Measure | Health N=40 | NSE N=25 | SSHA N=13 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Submitted or helped submit a proposal | 71.4% (25/35) | 76.2% (16/21) | 91.7% (11/12) |
| Hard to judge proposal effort | 78.9% (30/38) | 73.9% (17/23) | 84.6% (11/13) |
| Time to prepare proposals or applications | 47.2% (17/36) | 63.6% (14/22) | 38.5% (5/13) |
| Emotional fatigue discouragement or burnout | 33.3% (12/36) | 40.9% (9/22) | 46.2% (6/13) |
| Federal delays rescissions stop work or delayed starts | 25.0% (9/36) | 54.5% (12/22) | 46.2% (6/13) |
| Received guidance to sustain or reposition work | 40.5% (15/37) | 17.4% (4/23) | 38.5% (5/13) |
| Know relevant alternative sponsors | 43.6% (17/39) | 30.4% (7/23) | 61.5% (8/13) |
| Know which campus supports can help | 5.7% (2/35) | 4.5% (1/22) | 23.1% (3/13) |
| Refine a proposal or project narrative | 47.2% (17/36) | 65.0% (13/20) | 58.3% (7/12) |
| Identify sponsors or support pathways | 38.9% (14/36) | 60.0% (12/20) | 75.0% (9/12) |
| Small seed or planning funds | 52.8% (19/36) | 66.7% (14/21) | 33.3% (4/12) |
| Guidance on nonfederal support | 47.2% (17/36) | 47.6% (10/21) | 41.7% (5/12) |

NSE = Natural Sciences and Engineering; SSHA = Social Sciences, Humanities, and the Arts. Four interdisciplinary and three unclassified respondents are not in these columns. All categories are retained in Appendix A.

## Appendix D: Funding centrality

Selected measures across all five themes. Cells show percentage (count/valid n).

### Table D3. Selected results by importance of external funding

| Measure | Somewhat N=2 | Moderately N=6 | Very N=13 | Essential N=61 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Submitted or helped submit a proposal | 100.0% (1/1) | 66.7% (4/6) | 58.3% (7/12) | 83.0% (44/53) |
| Hard to judge proposal effort | 50.0% (1/2) | 50.0% (3/6) | 91.7% (11/12) | 77.6% (45/58) |
| Time to prepare proposals or applications | 100.0% (2/2) | 50.0% (3/6) | 58.3% (7/12) | 46.3% (25/54) |
| Emotional fatigue discouragement or burnout | 0.0% (0/2) | 66.7% (4/6) | 50.0% (6/12) | 37.0% (20/54) |

| Measure | Somewhat N=2 | Moderately N=6 | Very N=13 | Essential N=61 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Federal delays rescissions stop work or delayed starts | 0.0% (0/2) | 33.3% (2/6) | 25.0% (3/12) | 42.6% (23/54) |
| Received guidance to sustain or reposition work | 50.0% (1/2) | 16.7% (1/6) | 25.0% (3/12) | 35.7% (20/56) |
| Know relevant alternative sponsors | 0.0% (0/2) | 66.7% (4/6) | 25.0% (3/12) | 42.4% (25/59) |
| Know which campus supports can help | 0.0% (0/2) | 25.0% (1/4) | 8.3% (1/12) | 9.3% (5/54) |
| Refine a proposal or project narrative | 50.0% (1/2) | 66.7% (4/6) | 33.3% (4/12) | 57.7% (30/52) |
| Identify sponsors or support pathways | 100.0% (2/2) | 33.3% (2/6) | 33.3% (4/12) | 55.8% (29/52) |
| Small seed or planning funds | 0.0% (0/2) | 16.7% (1/6) | 50.0% (6/12) | 60.4% (32/53) |
| Guidance on nonfederal support | 50.0% (1/2) | 66.7% (4/6) | 50.0% (6/12) | 43.4% (23/53) |

No research scientist selected Not central (N=0); no estimate is possible for that category. Three blank centrality responses are omitted from these columns but retained in the overall subgroup.

### Table D4. Scholarly field definitions

| Group | Selected scholarly homes included |
|---|---|
| Health Sciences | Biomedical or life sciences; clinical or health sciences; public health. |
| Natural Sciences and Engineering | Natural sciences or mathematics; engineering, computing, or technology. |
| Social Sciences Humanities and Arts | Social and behavioral sciences; education; business, law, or public policy; humanities; arts, design, and creative practice. |
| Interdisciplinary and unclassified | Interdisciplinary stays separate. Other and blank responses are unclassified. Other write-ins are not reclassified. |

These definitions apply to the scholarly-field comparisons throughout this report. The three main field groups account for 78 of the 85 research scientists; the remaining seven remain included in the overall subgroup results.

## Appendix D Salary share from external funding

The table retains every numeric salary-share category. Percentages are followed by count/valid item n on a second line. Very small categories can move substantially with a single answer, particularly the two research scientists in the 51–75% group.

### Table D5. Selected results by expected external salary share

| Measure | 0% N=10 | 1–25% N=7 | 26–50% N=7 | 51–75% N=2 | 76–99% N=21 | 100% N=29 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Submitted or helped submit a proposal | 66.7% 6/9 | 100.0% 5/5 | 83.3% 5/6 | 100.0% 2/2 | 78.9% 15/19 | 79.2% 19/24 |
| Hard to judge proposal effort | 90.0% 9/10 | 83.3% 5/6 | 57.1% 4/7 | 100.0% 2/2 | 85.0% 17/20 | 74.1% 20/27 |
| Time to prepare proposals or applications | 60.0% 6/10 | 33.3% 2/6 | 33.3% 2/6 | 0.0% 0/2 | 63.2% 12/19 | 36.0% 9/25 |
| Emotional fatigue discouragement or burnout | 40.0% 4/10 | 33.3% 2/6 | 83.3% 5/6 | 50.0% 1/2 | 36.8% 7/19 | 36.0% 9/25 |
| Federal delays rescissions stop work or delayed starts | 0.0% 0/10 | 33.3% 2/6 | 33.3% 2/6 | 100.0% 2/2 | 42.1% 8/19 | 52.0% 13/25 |
| Received guidance to sustain or reposition work | 10.0% 1/10 | 33.3% 2/6 | 0.0% 0/7 | 0.0% 0/2 | 47.4% 9/19 | 42.3% 11/26 |
| Know relevant alternative sponsors | 40.0% 4/10 | 33.3% 2/6 | 42.9% 3/7 | 0.0% 0/2 | 45.0% 9/20 | 42.9% 12/28 |

| Measure | 0% N=10 | 1–25% N=7 | 26–50% N=7 | 51–75% N=2 | 76–99% N=21 | 100% N=29 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Know which campus supports can help | 10.0% 1/10 | 0.0% 0/5 | 20.0% 1/5 | 0.0% 0/2 | 5.3% 1/19 | 15.4% 4/26 |
| Refine a proposal or project narrative | 80.0% 8/10 | 40.0% 2/5 | 66.7% 4/6 | 50.0% 1/2 | 57.9% 11/19 | 47.8% 11/23 |
| Identify sponsors or support pathways | 70.0% 7/10 | 40.0% 2/5 | 33.3% 2/6 | 50.0% 1/2 | 47.4% 9/19 | 60.9% 14/23 |
| Small seed or planning funds | 50.0% 5/10 | 60.0% 3/5 | 50.0% 3/6 | 100.0% 2/2 | 57.9% 11/19 | 45.8% 11/24 |
| Guidance on nonfederal support | 70.0% 7/10 | 60.0% 3/5 | 33.3% 2/6 | 50.0% 1/2 | 36.8% 7/19 | 37.5% 9/24 |

Seven Not sure, one Prefer not to answer, and one blank salary response are not in the salary columns. N denotes all records in a category; the cell denominator is the number with a valid response to that particular question.

### Reading salary differences

The largest numeric salary categories are 76–99% and 100%. Research scientists in both groups frequently reported submitting proposals and difficulty judging whether proposals were worth the effort. Federal disruption was more often selected in these groups than among research scientists expecting no external salary support.

# Appendix E Barriers and recent activity

Each comparison includes research scientists answering both the barrier and activity questions. “Selected” means the barrier was among up to three chosen; “not selected” means it was not among those choices.

**Table E1. Barriers and recent activity**

| Barrier | Action in the past six months | Selected barrier | Did not select |
|---|---|---|---|
| Time | Submitted or helped submit a proposal | 69.4% (25/36) | 86.5% (32/37) |
| Time | Forgone an opportunity because of uncertainty | 25.0% (9/36) | 24.3% (9/37) |
| Time | Contacted a program officer or sponsor | 27.8% (10/36) | 40.5% (15/37) |
| Time | Joined or formed a team | 47.2% (17/36) | 62.2% (23/37) |
| Fatigue | Submitted or helped submit a proposal | 76.7% (23/30) | 79.1% (34/43) |
| Fatigue | Forgone an opportunity because of uncertainty | 26.7% (8/30) | 23.3% (10/43) |
| Fatigue | Contacted a program officer or sponsor | 30.0% (9/30) | 37.2% (16/43) |
| Fatigue | Joined or formed a team | 60.0% (18/30) | 51.2% (22/43) |
| Review uncertainty | Submitted or helped submit a proposal | 80.8% (21/26) | 76.6% (36/47) |
| Review uncertainty | Forgone an opportunity because of uncertainty | 30.8% (8/26) | 21.3% (10/47) |
| Review uncertainty | Contacted a program officer or sponsor | 38.5% (10/26) | 31.9% (15/47) |
| Review uncertainty | Joined or formed a team | 57.7% (15/26) | 53.2% (25/47) |
| Federal disruption | Submitted or helped submit a proposal | 88.9% (24/27) | 71.7% (33/46) |
| Federal disruption | Forgone an opportunity because of uncertainty | 33.3% (9/27) | 19.6% (9/46) |
| Federal disruption | Contacted a program officer or sponsor | 37.0% (10/27) | 32.6% (15/46) |
| Federal disruption | Joined or formed a team | 59.3% (16/27) | 52.2% (24/46) |
| Sponsor fit | Submitted or helped submit a proposal | 80.0% (16/20) | 77.4% (41/53) |
| Sponsor fit | Forgone an opportunity because of uncertainty | 25.0% (5/20) | 24.5% (13/53) |

| Barrier | Action in the past six months | Selected barrier | Did not select |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sponsor fit | Contacted a program officer or sponsor | 45.0% (9/20) | 30.2% (16/53) |
| Sponsor fit | Joined or formed a team | 55.0% (11/20) | 54.7% (29/53) |

Forgone means decided not to pursue an opportunity because of uncertainty in the external environment.

## Barriers and reported activity

Time pressure is associated with lower reported submission in this subgroup, whereas fatigue is associated with broadly similar submission and somewhat more team formation. Federal disruption is associated with both more submission and more decisions not to pursue an opportunity.

## Appendix E Barriers and desired next steps

The columns compare research scientists who selected each barrier in Q16 with those who did not. Denominators vary because useful next steps and institutional supports are separate questions.

### Table E2. Barriers and desired next steps or support

| Barrier | Desired action or support | Selected barrier | Did not select |
|---|---|---|---|
| Time | Action: Refine a proposal or project narrative | 57.9% (22/38) | 51.4% (18/35) |
| Time | Action: Identify sponsors or support pathways | 47.4% (18/38) | 54.3% (19/35) |
| Time | Action: Generate pilot data or proof of concept | 36.8% (14/38) | 37.1% (13/35) |
| Time | Action: Prepare a resubmission | 28.9% (11/38) | 34.3% (12/35) |
| Time | Support: Small seed or planning funds | 50.0% (19/38) | 55.6% (20/36) |
| Time | Support: Guidance on nonfederal support | 52.6% (20/38) | 41.7% (15/36) |
| Sponsor fit | Action: Refine a proposal or project narrative | 65.0% (13/20) | 50.9% (27/53) |
| Sponsor fit | Action: Identify sponsors or support pathways | 75.0% (15/20) | 41.5% (22/53) |
| Sponsor fit | Action: Generate pilot data or proof of concept | 25.0% (5/20) | 41.5% (22/53) |
| Sponsor fit | Action: Prepare a resubmission | 30.0% (6/20) | 32.1% (17/53) |
| Sponsor fit | Support: Small seed or planning funds | 45.0% (9/20) | 55.6% (30/54) |
| Sponsor fit | Support: Guidance on nonfederal support | 55.0% (11/20) | 44.4% (24/54) |
| Fatigue | Action: Refine a proposal or project narrative | 46.7% (14/30) | 60.5% (26/43) |
| Fatigue | Action: Identify sponsors or support pathways | 63.3% (19/30) | 41.9% (18/43) |
| Fatigue | Action: Generate pilot data or proof of concept | 23.3% (7/30) | 46.5% (20/43) |
| Fatigue | Action: Prepare a resubmission | 40.0% (12/30) | 25.6% (11/43) |
| Fatigue | Support: Small seed or planning funds | 53.3% (16/30) | 52.3% (23/44) |
| Fatigue | Support: Guidance on nonfederal support | 50.0% (15/30) | 45.5% (20/44) |
| Federal disruption | Action: Refine a proposal or project narrative | 63.0% (17/27) | 50.0% (23/46) |
| Federal disruption | Action: Identify sponsors or support pathways | 55.6% (15/27) | 47.8% (22/46) |
| Federal disruption | Action: Generate pilot data or proof of concept | 33.3% (9/27) | 39.1% (18/46) |
| Federal disruption | Action: Prepare a resubmission | 37.0% (10/27) | 28.3% (13/46) |
| Federal disruption | Support: Small seed or planning funds | 48.1% (13/27) | 55.3% (26/47) |
| Federal disruption | Support: Guidance on nonfederal support | 44.4% (12/27) | 48.9% (23/47) |

Q18: next 90 days. Q19: next six months. Both permit up to three selections.

## Appendix E Guidance and confidence

Confidence outcomes are the share Very or Extremely confident. Agreement with guidance or encouragement includes Somewhat agree, Agree, and Strongly agree; the comparison group includes neutral and disagreeing respondents, with valid answers to both questions.

### Table E3. Guidance and confidence

| Reported guidance or culture | Confidence outcome | Agreed | Did not agree |
|---|---|---|---|
| Unit encouragement | Identify a practical action for the next 90 days | 46.2% (24/52) | 23.5% (4/17) |
| Unit encouragement | Adapt an idea for another sponsor | 30.2% (16/53) | 29.4% (5/17) |
| Unit encouragement | Identify collaborators or partners | 50.0% (27/54) | 47.1% (8/17) |
| Unit encouragement | Make progress despite a delayed opportunity | 37.7% (20/53) | 23.5% (4/17) |
| Unit encouragement | Know which campus supports can help | 11.3% (6/53) | 6.2% (1/16) |
| Tailored guidance | Identify a practical action for the next 90 days | 47.2% (17/36) | 35.1% (13/37) |
| Tailored guidance | Adapt an idea for another sponsor | 30.6% (11/36) | 28.9% (11/38) |
| Tailored guidance | Identify collaborators or partners | 50.0% (19/38) | 48.6% (18/37) |
| Tailored guidance | Make progress despite a delayed opportunity | 41.7% (15/36) | 26.3% (10/38) |
| Tailored guidance | Know which campus supports can help | 19.4% (7/36) | 0.0% (0/37) |
| Guidance to sustain or reposition | Identify a practical action for the next 90 days | 58.3% (14/24) | 32.7% (16/49) |
| Guidance to sustain or reposition | Adapt an idea for another sponsor | 50.0% (12/24) | 20.0% (10/50) |
| Guidance to sustain or reposition | Identify collaborators or partners | 65.4% (17/26) | 40.8% (20/49) |
| Guidance to sustain or reposition | Make progress despite a delayed opportunity | 50.0% (12/24) | 26.0% (13/50) |
| Guidance to sustain or reposition | Know which campus supports can help | 16.7% (4/24) | 6.1% (3/49) |

The valid-pair bases differ across rows. A positive relationship is not consistent across all guidance and confidence measures.

### Table E4. Guidance and uncertainty about proposal effort

| Agreed with this statement | Agreed with B5 | B5 among those not agreeing |
|---|---|---|
| Unit encouragement | 80.4% (45/56) | 77.8% (14/18) |
| Tailored guidance | 78.9% (30/38) | 76.9% (30/39) |
| Know whom to ask | 76.2% (32/42) | 80.0% (28/35) |
| Guidance to sustain or reposition | 84.6% (22/26) | 75.0% (39/52) |

B5 uses the broader agreement threshold. Uncertainty is not lower in every guidance group.

## Appendix E Campus support and funding history

## Campus support confidence and activity

Low = Not at all or Slightly confident on E5. At least moderate = Moderately, Very, or Extremely confident. There are 50 low and 24 at least moderate valid E5 respondents before other-question missingness.

### Table E5. Campus support confidence and activity or support needs

| Activity desired action or support | Low confidence | At least moderate |
|---|---|---|
| Q17 Submitted or helped submit a proposal | 74.5% (35/47) | 86.4% (19/22) |
| Q17 Contacted a program officer or sponsor | 27.7% (13/47) | 50.0% (11/22) |
| Q17 Explored nonfederal support | 42.6% (20/47) | 54.5% (12/22) |
| Q17 Joined or formed a team | 46.8% (22/47) | 72.7% (16/22) |
| Q17 Reframed an idea for another opportunity | 46.8% (22/47) | 63.6% (14/22) |
| Q18 Refine a proposal or project narrative | 48.9% (22/45) | 75.0% (18/24) |
| Q18 Identify sponsors or support pathways | 60.0% (27/45) | 41.7% (10/24) |
| Q18 Generate pilot data or proof of concept | 31.1% (14/45) | 45.8% (11/24) |
| Q18 Prepare a resubmission | 28.9% (13/45) | 37.5% (9/24) |
| Q19 Guidance on nonfederal support | 47.8% (22/46) | 45.8% (11/24) |
| Q19 Small seed or planning funds | 63.0% (29/46) | 37.5% (9/24) |

## Funding sources pursued or seriously considered

Among respondents who selected federal agencies in Q8, the first column also selected at least one of foundations, industry, nonprofits, philanthropy, or state/local government. The second selected none of those five types. Internal seed funding and Other do not determine the group.

### Table E6. Funding history and confidence

| Outcome | Federal and listed nonfederal | Federal without listed nonfederal |
|---|---|---|
| E1 Identify a practical action for the next 90 days | 50.0% (22/44) | 20.0% (4/20) |
| E2 Adapt an idea for another sponsor | 29.5% (13/44) | 23.8% (5/21) |
| E3 Identify collaborators or partners | 62.2% (28/45) | 30.0% (6/20) |
| E4 Make progress despite a delayed opportunity | 36.4% (16/44) | 28.6% (6/21) |
| E5 Know which campus supports can help | 11.6% (5/43) | 4.8% (1/21) |
| B4 Know relevant alternative sponsors | 43.5% (20/46) | 39.1% (9/23) |
| B5 Hard to judge proposal effort | 80.0% (36/45) | 69.6% (16/23) |

E items report high confidence; B items report agreement. Funding-source breadth is not consistently associated with lower uncertainty or high campus-support confidence.

## Appendix E Sponsor fit and useful next actions

These comparisons include research scientists who answered both the barrier and useful-next-action questions. Selecting unclear sponsor fit means it was among the respondent's three greatest barriers. The table includes every offered next action.

### Table E7. All useful next actions by sponsor-fit barrier

| Useful next action | Cited unclear fit | Did not cite unclear fit | Difference (points) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Refine a proposal or project narrative | 65.0% (13/20) | 50.9% (27/53) | +14.1 |
| Identify sponsors or support pathways | 75.0% (15/20) | 41.5% (22/53) | +33.5 |
| Build or strengthen a team | 20.0% (4/20) | 13.2% (7/53) | +6.8 |
| Generate pilot data or proof of concept | 25.0% (5/20) | 41.5% (22/53) | -16.5 |

| Useful next action | Cited unclear fit | Did not cite unclear fit | Difference (points) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cultivate program-officer or sponsor relationships | 45.0% (9/20) | 24.5% (13/53) | +20.5 |
| Develop a concept paper or other reusable project asset | 20.0% (4/20) | 18.9% (10/53) | +1.1 |
| Identify external collaborators or partners | 10.0% (2/20) | 7.5% (4/53) | +2.5 |
| Prepare a resubmission | 30.0% (6/20) | 32.1% (17/53) | -2.1 |
| Clarify budget, compliance, or administrative requirements | 5.0% (1/20) | 9.4% (5/53) | -4.4 |
| Other | 0.0% (0/20) | 5.7% (3/53) | -5.7 |

Cells show percentage (selected count/valid paired base). Respondents could select up to three actions. A positive difference means the action was more often selected by respondents citing unclear fit; differences use unrounded percentages.

Sponsor identification showed the largest positive difference, followed by cultivating sponsor relationships and refining a proposal.

## Appendix E Advice contacts and campus support

Knowing whom to ask refers to agreement that the respondent knows whom to ask for advice about whether to pause, pivot, or proceed with external support efforts. The outcome in each row is confidence in one specific activity.

### Table E8. Knowing whom to ask and confidence in five activities

| Confidence activity | Agreed they knew whom to ask | Did not agree | Difference (points) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Identify a practical action for the next 90 days | 54.1% (20/37) | 25.7% (9/35) | +28.3 |
| Adapt an idea for another sponsor | 36.8% (14/38) | 20.0% (7/35) | +16.8 |
| Identify collaborators or partners | 55.0% (22/40) | 41.2% (14/34) | +13.8 |
| Make progress despite a delayed opportunity | 39.5% (15/38) | 25.7% (9/35) | +13.8 |
| Know which campus supports can help | 18.4% (7/38) | 0.0% (0/35) | +18.4 |

High confidence means Very or Extremely confident. Agreement includes Somewhat agree, Agree, and Strongly agree; the comparison group includes neutral and disagreeing answers. Each row uses respondents answering both questions. Differences are percentage points calculated before rounding.

## Low confidence about campus support by career stage

Low confidence means “Not at all or Slightly confident” on E5. Each stage percentage uses respondents in that stage with a valid E5 answer. It is not the share of all respondents with low confidence.

### Table E9. Low campus-support confidence by self-reported career stage

| Self-reported stage | Low confidence | Valid answers | Low within stage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Early career | 24 | 35 | 68.6% |
| Mid-career | 15 | 25 | 60.0% |
| Senior | 11 | 13 | 84.6% |
| Other or unreported | 0 | 1 | 0.0% |
| All valid answers | 50 | 74 | 67.6% |

Career stage is self-reported. Other or unreported combines respondents who selected Other, preferred not to answer, or left career stage blank. The senior estimate is based on 13 answers.

# Appendix F Research scientist comments

The table summarizes the 18 written responses to the question, “What would most help you move from uncertainty to a practical next step in your research, scholarship, or creative work?” A comment may address more than one subject.

**Table F1. Summary of written comments**

| Comment | Q20 comment summary |
|---|---|
| 1 | Requested funding. |
| 2 | Requested a different administrative structure for research effort and criticized the flexibility of existing arrangements. |
| 3 | Requested institutional support for time to seek funding and described pressure from a role largely supported by external awards. |
| 4 | Requested more funded proposal-writing time; described only 5–10% of funded time being available for proposals. |
| 5 | Requested more administrative time support and described a perceived mismatch with proposal workload. |
| 6 | Requested stronger grant administration, clearer budget information, and small seed support to join existing projects. |
| 7 | Requested local funding usable for salary and trainee support, and support to complete projects that lost funding. |
| 8 | Requested aligned sponsor guidance and preliminary-data support to advance a health research program. |
| 9 | Described employment insecurity and funding searches consuming time and mental energy needed for research. |
| 10 | Requested mentoring through current circumstances and submission issues. |
| 11 | Requested early clarity on eligibility, cost sharing, matching requirements, institutional support, seed funding, and guidance for newer or research-track faculty. |
| 12 | Wrote “Not sure”; no specific support need was identified. |
| 13 | Requested funding. |
| 14 | Requested a few months of bridge support between grants. |
| 15 | Asked whether continued employment would be secure over the next six months. |
| 16 | Requested changes to space requirements or institutional space commitments in connection with a successful proposal. |
| 17 | Requested time. |
| 18 | Requested time and resources to develop concepts and preliminary data. |

# Appendix G Appointment comparisons

The comparison includes respondents answering both the barrier and useful-next-step questions. Selecting a barrier means it was among the respondent’s three greatest barriers.

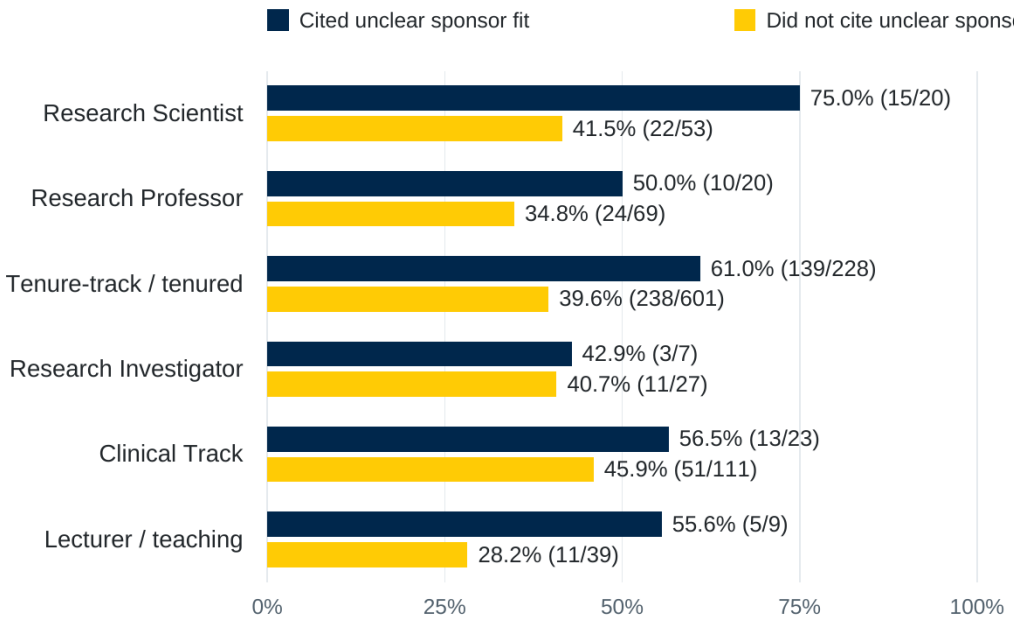


**Figure G1. Sponsor identification as a useful next step by sponsor-fit barrier. Labels show percentage (count/valid paired base). Exact differences appear in Table G1**

Percentages show selection of sponsor identification as a useful next step. Not citing sponsor fit means it was not selected among the three greatest barriers. Differences are calculated before rounding.

**Table G1. Sponsor identification by sponsor-fit barrier**

| Appointment type | Cited unclear sponsor fit | Did not cite unclear sponsor fit | Difference in percentage points |
|---|---|---|---|
| Research Scientist | 75.0% (15/20) | 41.5% (22/53) | 33.5 |
| Tenure-track / tenured | 61.0% (139/228) | 39.6% (238/601) | 21.4 |
| Research Professor | 50.0% (10/20) | 34.8% (24/69) | 15.2 |
| Research Investigator | 42.9% (3/7) | 40.7% (11/27) | 2.1 |
| Clinical Track | 56.5% (13/23) | 45.9% (51/111) | 10.6 |
| Lecturer / teaching | 55.6% (5/9) | 28.2% (11/39) | 27.4 |

Percentages show the share selecting sponsor identification as a useful next step. Differences are calculated before rounding. Comparisons use valid answers to both questions.

## Campus support confidence and activity

Low confidence means not at all or slightly confident; at least moderate includes moderately, very, and extremely confident. Each outcome uses respondents answering both questions.

### Table G2. Sponsor contact and team participation by campus support confidence

| Appointment type | Sponsor contact Low confidence | Sponsor contact At least moderate | Team participation Low confidence | Team participation At least moderate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research Scientist | 27.7% (13/47) | 50.0% (11/22) | 46.8% (22/47) | 72.7% (16/22) |
| Tenure-track / tenured | 52.6% (262/498) | 63.8% (213/334) | 57.4% (286/498) | 64.4% (215/334) |
| Research Professor | 67.5% (27/40) | 76.6% (36/47) | 62.5% (25/40) | 78.7% (37/47) |
| Research Investigator | 15.4% (2/13) | 23.5% (4/17) | 7.7% (1/13) | 47.1% (8/17) |
| Clinical Track | 28.8% (23/80) | 19.0% (8/42) | 47.5% (38/80) | 47.6% (20/42) |
| Lecturer / teaching | 32.0% (8/25) | 21.4% (3/14) | 40.0% (10/25) | 28.6% (4/14) |

Cells show percentages (count/valid paired base). Comparisons use valid answers to both questions.