



# EMPOWERING STUDENTS, MOVING OREGON FORWARD

## 2025 STATE BUDGET AND LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

### INVESTING IN AFFORDABLE EDUCATION FOR OREGON'S FUTURE

#### PUBLIC UNIVERSITY SUPPORT FUND

The Public University Support Fund (PUSF) is the primary source of state funding for Oregon's public universities, supporting core operations and vital student services. Yet decades of underfunding have left Oregon's universities with far less state funding per student than their counterparts in neighboring states and most of the nation, shifting higher tuition costs onto students and families to cover the gap.

To address this, **Oregon's public universities are requesting a \$275 million increase to the PUSF in 2025-27.** While this won't fully close the large funding gap between Oregon and our neighbors, it's a critical step to stabilize universities, ease financial burdens on students, and ensure they have the resources to succeed and contribute to Oregon's economy.

#### OREGON OPPORTUNITY GRANT

The Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) is the state's largest and only need-based financial aid program for public university students, helping more than 30,000 students annually, including over 3,000 at the UO, afford the cost of higher education. By making college more accessible, the OOG enables thousands of lower-income students to graduate and enter the workforce, strengthening Oregon's economy. Yet, many students are still being left behind. **A \$150 million increase to the OOG is a critical step toward meeting the needs of lower- and middle-income students,** ensuring every Oregonian has the opportunity to earn a degree and achieve their potential.

### ADDRESSING STUDENT AND STATE NEEDS THROUGH STRATEGIC CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

#### CHILD BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BUILDING

The top-ranked public university capital project by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, **the University of Oregon is asking the state to contribute \$53.25 million in state bonding toward a \$71 million, 54,000-square-foot Child Behavioral Health Building on the UO Portland Campus.** This investment will expand Oregon's capacity to deliver evidence-based care, train a new generation of youth behavioral health professionals, and improve access to mental health services for children and families statewide.

#### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT & RENEWAL

Capital Improvement and Renewal (CI&R) funds address critical maintenance, safety, and accessibility needs at Oregon's public universities. **Oregon's public universities are requesting \$120 million in state bonding for CI&R** during the 2025-27 biennium to maintain state-funded assets and create safe and supportive learning environments.

# UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

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### INVESTING IN STUDENT SUCCESS

#### STRONG START

Initially a response to pandemic learning loss, Strong Start allows universities to offer comprehensive services including summer bridge programs, community-building cohorts, academic skill-building, and ongoing wraparound support. At the UO, the Summer Bridge program provides targeted programs and care to students who need it the most when they first walk onto campus. This state investment has led to greater retention rates, higher GPAs, and increased credit hour completion for participating students, compared to their peers. **Renewing this funding with \$7-10 million will expand a proven, sustainable model that improves academic success and closes equity gaps**, ensuring more Oregon students thrive in college and graduate on time.

#### STUDENT BASIC NEEDS PACKAGE

Oregon's public universities join college and university students in requesting a **\$22 million Student Basic Needs Package** to help students overcome barriers like food insecurity, housing instability, and textbook costs, including:

- \$10 million to expand student basic needs support programs, infrastructure, and personnel.
- \$6.5 million for student housing and rental assistance.
- \$5.2 million to expand the Open Oregon Educational Resources program, which offers no- and low-cost textbooks and course materials to students.

#### BENEFITS NAVIGATORS

Benefits Navigators provide essential support for students at Oregon's 7 public universities and 17 community colleges, connecting thousands each year with critical resources like SNAP food benefits, the Oregon Health Plan, housing assistance, and other basic needs services. State funding ensures every campus has a dedicated Navigator to help students overcome financial barriers and focus on their education. **Continuing funding for this program will keep these vital services in place, supporting student success and helping more Oregonians graduate.**

#### TRIBAL STUDENT GRANTS

The Oregon Tribal Student Grant provides eligible members of Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes with financial support to cover the full cost of attendance—including tuition, housing, and books—at Oregon colleges and universities. This program aims to remove financial barriers, supporting tribal students in pursuing higher education and achieving their academic goals. **Continued funding is essential to uphold Oregon's commitment to educational equity and to support the success of tribal students statewide.**



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### BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

#### STATE SERVICE PROGRAMS

State service programs at Oregon's public universities contribute to local communities in all 36 Oregon counties. Programs that receive state funding at the UO include the Labor Education Research Center, the TallWood Design Institute, Resolution Oregon, the Clinical Legal Education Program, and signature research centers like the Oregon Nanoscience and MicroTechnologies Institute (ONAMI) and the Oregon Translational Research and Development Institute (OTRADI). **A 9.4 percent funding increase for State Programs will cover the necessary increase in costs for the 2025-27 biennium.**

#### ADVANCING MARINE SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

The Oregon Institute of Marine Biology (OIMB) tackles key challenges like climate change, ocean health, and resource sustainability while training the next generation of marine scientists. **The UO is requesting \$110,000 in one-time funding for infrastructure upgrades and \$306,000 in ongoing funding to integrate OIMB into the Oceangoing Research Vessel Program.** These investments will enhance research capabilities and ensure Oregon leads in marine science.

#### THE OREGON HAZARDS LAB

The Oregon Hazards Lab (OHAZ) operates wildfire detection cameras, earthquake early warning systems, and environmental sensors critical for disaster response across Oregon. These tools save lives, protect infrastructure, and help communities statewide prepare for and respond to emergencies. **The UO is requesting that OHAZ be established as a state program with ongoing funding to stabilize operations and expand this life-saving network.** This investment will build a safer, more resilient Oregon for all its residents.

#### PROMOTING WATER EQUITY AND RESILIENCE

The UO's Climate Solutions Center (formerly the Just Futures Institute) tackles Oregon's most pressing climate and water equity challenges by empowering communities with research-driven solutions. Past funding has supported tribal and community-led projects addressing water needs and building local capacity. **The UO is requesting ongoing funding to support research, public education, and policy development that ensure sustainable water access statewide.**



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### EXPANDING ACCESS TO JUSTICE THROUGH PUBLIC DEFENSE CLINICS

Oregon's public defense system remains in crisis, with too few public defenders to meet the legal needs of Oregonians. Many defendants, especially in misdemeanor cases, go unrepresented, undermining access to justice statewide. Public defense clinics at UO, Willamette, and Lewis & Clark train law students to address this urgent need while gaining critical experience. **The three universities are requesting \$3.6 million in ongoing state program funding to sustain and expand these clinics**, providing legal services for unrepresented defendants and strengthening the state's public defense workforce.



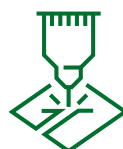
### SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES THROUGH THE SUSTAINABLE CITY YEAR PROGRAM

The Sustainable City Year Program (SCYP) partners students and faculty with Oregon communities to tackle local challenges in areas like household affordability, sustainability, economic development, and quality of life. For over a decade, SCYP has helped cities across the state achieve their goals while preparing students to join Oregon's workforce. **Ongoing state funding will reduce costs for smaller communities, expand access to SCYP's resources, and connect more students with hands-on learning opportunities that benefit communities statewide.**



### SUPPORTING STUDENTS THROUGH SPORTS LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIPS

Sports Lottery scholarships support approximately 2,500 students each year at Oregon's public universities by funding intercollegiate athletics and graduate academic scholarships. These scholarships enhance enrollment, retention, and diversity help universities meet Title IX requirements to equitably fund women's athletics. **The UO joins Oregon's other public universities in requesting continued support for the Sports Lottery, which will provide an estimated \$20.6 million in 2025-27 to expand opportunities for students.**



### ACCELERATING INNOVATION THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY INNOVATION RESEARCH FUND

The University Innovation Research Fund (UIRF) helps Oregon universities secure competitive federal grants that support cutting-edge research and drive economic growth. **The UO joins Oregon's other public universities in requesting \$30 million in the UIRF for the 2025-27 biennium to advance research, develop new technologies, and create jobs.** This funding ensures Oregon remains competitive in securing federal dollars while turning discoveries into solutions that benefit communities and industries statewide.

For more information, contact Trent Lutz, AVP of State Affairs, at [talutz@uoregon.edu](mailto:talutz@uoregon.edu).

