

HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY SPONSORED PROGRAMS FOUNDATION
INCENTIVES COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

March 2, 2026

9:00-10:00a.m.

ZOOM Meeting ID: 889 2033 7458

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kerry Byrne
Taylor Bloedon
Claire Till
Jason Ramos
Chrissy Holliday
Rouhollah Aghasaleh

MEMBERS ABSENT: Celena Linares

OTHERS PRESENT: Kacie Flynn, SPF
Amber Shaw, SPF
Erika Wright, SPF

I. Call to Order

Kerry Byrne called the meeting to order at 9:01 am.

II. Discuss submitted 2026 Incentive Proposals

The committee engaged in a thorough discussion regarding the merits of each application and the likelihood of successful funding for the respective proposals. The annual University Use Funds budget allocates \$40,000 for distribution each year. Due to carryforward funds from prior years, a total of \$70,000 is available for this award cycle. The full amount is not required to be distributed, and any unallocated funds may be carried forward to the next fiscal year.

III. Select Awards for Summer 2026, Fall 2026 & Spring 2027

Action Item: Claire Till m/s Taylor Bloden. “Motion to recommend awarding the following 10 faculty members a total of \$54,736 in assigned time and \$16,000 in summer salary for a total Incentives Award of \$70,736 this academic year.” Motion approved unanimously.

Pedro Peloso	Biological Sciences	Fall 2026 (4 WTU)	\$9,952
Tawanda Gara	Env Sci & Mgmt.	Fall 2026 (4 WTU)	\$9,952
Joshua Frye	Communication	Fall 2026 (3 WTU)	\$7,464
John-Pascal Berrill	Forest, Fire, Range	Spring 2027 (3 WTU)	\$7,464
Jennifer Marlow	Env Sci & Mgmt.	Spring 2027 (4 WTU)	\$9,952
Catalina Cuellar-Gempeler	Biological Sciences	Spring 2027 (4 WTU)	\$9,952
Daniel Barton	Wildlife Management	Summer Salary 2026	\$4,000
Pascal Biwole	Engineering	Summer Salary 2026	\$4,000
Joshua Zender	Business	Summer Salary 2026	\$4,000
Benjamin Anjewierden	Psychology	Summer Salary 2026	\$4,000

IV. Discuss Emerging Trends in Funding, Program Intentions, and Return on Investment

Erika Wright provided an overview of the Incentives Program, including its original intent and current challenges. The program was designed to support faculty in developing and submitting research proposals, with a focus on faculty development and scholarship.

Timeline challenges were noted, as the program operates on an annual cycle and often requires applications well in advance of external proposal submission. Shifts in funding landscapes, discontinued opportunities, and misalignment with grants requiring letters of intent (LOIs) can complicate planning. The program continues to serve as a developmental pipeline to strengthen PIs' long-term grant success.

Kerry Byrne raised questions about indirect cost (IDC) recovery and whether an IDC threshold should be considered, acknowledging the need to balance faculty support with program sustainability. Kacie emphasized that current metrics indicate the program is self-sustaining, even with some low- or no-IDC awards and highlighted broader benefits such as student involvement and PI development. This year, 12 proposals were submitted, reflecting increased interest.

Since 2011, \$551,309 has been invested in the Incentives Program, with return on investment (ROI) data reflecting a built-in 2–3 year lag between program costs and realized funding outcomes; despite this conservative view, indirect cost returns exceed 1.5 times the original investment. Although an average of one incentives-supported project is funded annually, the program also serves as a critical faculty development pipeline, strengthening long-term grant success and research capacity.

Incentives Program Return on Investment (excerpt from presentation slides):

Metric	Amount	Multiplier
Institutional Investment	\$551,309	—
External Requested	\$29,021,473	53x
External Awarded	\$3,304,937	6x
Indirect Recovered	\$869,140	1.58x cost
Direct Student Support	\$1,069,154	1.9x cost

The committee also discussed whether eligibility should be expanded to include Research Associates more broadly. Over time, use of the Research Associate designation has expanded to allow staff to serve as eligible PIs through SPF. After discussion, members reaffirmed that the program’s primary purpose is to build faculty research capacity through teaching release. Faculty eligibility currently includes lecturers, with no minimum WTU requirement. The committee elected not to recommend any program changes at this time.

V. Other

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signed by:

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Kerry Byrne