



Fall Business Meeting

September 18, 2025

Steve Lommel
agInnovation Chair

Time	Item #	Topic	Presenter	Action Requested
8:30 am	1.0	Chair's Welcome Approval of the agenda Approval of 7/15/25 meeting minutes NRSP vote outcome Honoring agInnovation Colleagues	Steve Lommel	None Approval by Acclamation Approval by Acclamation For information For information
8:40 am	2.0	FANR Update	Doug Steele	For information
8:50 am	3.0	MAHA – Research Opportunities?	Elizabeth Stulberg	For information
9:00 am	4.0	STC Awards Proposal	Nathan Slaton	Straw vote
9:10 am	5.0	TD Wealth Investment Account	Rick Rhodes	For information
9:20 am	6.0	CY2026 Budget Recommendations	George Smith	For information
9:40 am	7.0	Pursue Effective Collaborations: 1862 and 1890 Research Insights	John Green	For information
<i>10:00 am – Break</i>				
10:15 am	8.0	Chair Reflections	Steve Lommel	For information
10:30 am	9.0	Incoming Chair's Initiatives	Chandra Reddy	Discussion
10:45 am	10.0	agInnovation Chair-elect vote and 2026 meeting announcement	Steve Lommel	Vote
10:50 am	11.0	Welcoming New agInnovation Leadership: Chandra Reddy, agInnovation Chair	Steve Lommel	For information
<i>11:00 am - Adjourn</i>				

NRSP Vote Recap



NRSP4 *Facilitating Registration of Pest Management Technology for Specialty Crops and Specialty Uses*

- Recommendation: renew with a budget of \$409,005 per year
- agInnovation Vote: approved the recommendation (36 approve, 4 do not approve)

NRSP9 *National Animal Nutrition Program*

- Recommendation: renew with the proposed budget
- agInnovation vote: approved the recommendation (39 approve, 1 do not approve)

NRSP_temp13 *Artificial Intelligence for Agricultural Autonomy*

- Recommendation: fund NRSP_tem13 with the proposed budget
- agInnovation vote: approved the recommendation (38 approve, 2 do not approve)



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Honoring Those Who Served

Retirements, New Positions, New Directors



Shirley Hymon-Parker
NC A&T State University



Vernon Jones
Langston University



Ernie Minton
Kansas State University



Steve Lommel
NC State University



Margaret Smith
Cornell University



Craig Beyrouty
University of Maryland



John Kirby
University of Rhode Island



George Criner
University of Maine



Anita Oberbauer
UC-Davis



Jan Leach
Colorado State University



Walter Bowen
University of Hawai'i



Eric Webster
University of Wyoming

Accepted New Positions

Douglas D. LaVergne	Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Alabama A&M University
Robert Corley III	Senior Advisor to the President, Virginia State University
Derrick C. Scott	Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Fort Valley University
Johnnie Westbrook	Dean, College of Agriculture, Environmental and Human Sciences, Lincoln University
Kang Xia	Associate Director of MSU AgBioResearch, Michigan State University
Michael Toews	Associate Dean for Extension, University of Georgia
David Monks	Associate Dean & Director of Extension/Vice Provost for Outreach and Engagement, NC State
Indrajeet Chaubey	Provost, University of Arkansas
Wendie Cohick	Vice Provost for Research, Rutgers University
Blair Siegfried	Professor of Entomology, Penn State University
Shane Burgess	Professor, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, University of Arizona
Greg Cuomo	Director, Ag and Biotech Initiatives, Research & Innovation Office, University of Minnesota
Leslie Edgar	Dean, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, University of Idaho
Wendy Powers	Dean and Director, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Maryland
Ken White	Professor, Animal, Dairy and Veterinary Sciences, Utah State University



THANK YOU



FANR Update

Doug Steele

Vice President, Food
Agriculture, & Natural
Resources, APLU





Office of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR)

Douglas L Steele, PhD.

Vice President, Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

Suzette Robinson, Special Assistant





Academic Programs Section

Wendy Fink, Executive Director APS and Associate VP
FANR

Sophia Baker, Associate





AgNGINE - Agriculture National Graduate Institutional Name Exchange

Purpose: Enhance graduate student recruitment through shared data

Sponsors: agInnovation and Academic Programs Section

Status: Year 3 of 3-year proposal

	2023	2024	Change (%)
# of Institutions	25	45	80%
Students Recruited	1838	2727	48%

Recruitment Initiative

- Science Societies, Universities, Industry, Government, and Agricultural NGOs pulling together to create a national recruitment effort for the food, agricultural, and natural resources sciences.
- Three-part initiative
 1. Form an organization that can champion this effort
 2. Conduct a landscape analysis of: the actual needs in various disciplines (how many needed and at what level of education); understanding what attracts students into these fields and what barriers exist for students to pursue education in these areas.
 3. Recruitment campaign that would attract student, parent, and advisor attention to these general fields and then direct them to campaigns specific to institutions or disciplines.
- Timeline – starting launch of organization formation and landscape analysis now. Hope to have this up and running in a year or year and a half.





Board on Health and Human Sciences

Kelly Dalton, Executive Director BHHS
Susan Thomas, Senior Associate



Board on Health and Human Sciences

- **BHHS Vision:** Holistically advance human development, health, and economic vitality to achieve a healthy, resilient, equitable, and sustainable world.
- BHHS is **reimagining** the role of health and human sciences within the broader public and land-grant mission. Our work intersects directly with agriculture through nutrition, family and community wellbeing, and workforce development.
- **Regional Strategy** launched in 2024 to better position our institutions as responsive, community-embedded, and policy-relevant.



MAHA Report

The recently released **Making Our Children Healthy Again (Assessment)** outlines the Administration's perspective on rising rates of chronic disease in American children and proposes a shift in national priorities toward prevention, food systems, and environmental health.

The MAHA report outlines four primary root causes:

- **Poor Diet:** Widespread consumption of ultra-processed foods and limited access to whole, nutrient-rich options.
- **Environmental Chemicals:** Exposure to substances such as pesticides, microplastics, and industrial chemicals.
- **Physical Inactivity and Chronic Stress:** Trends in sedentary behavior and increasing psychosocial stress among children and adolescents.
- **Overmedication:** Rising use of pharmaceuticals to address chronic and behavioral health conditions in children.





Cooperative Extension & ECOP

Bill Hoffman, Executive Director, Assistant
VP FANR
Maria Marzullo, Senior Associate



Cooperative Extension & ECOP



- SNAP-Education Reconciliation Process
- Keeping Extension Section Informed on DC Happenings
- Working Together to Increase the Prominence of AI (Youth & Adult)
- Opportunities Ahead to “Make America Healthy Again”
- Continuing Work with Centers for Disease Control (Small Flock Survey)
- 2025-2035 Roadmap with agInnovation
- Defend and Grow Capacity Funding



Council for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching

Marcus Glassman, Executive Director and
Director Government Affairs, Agriculture and
International Development

Flannery Bethel, Manager CARET



CARET



- CARET's annual meeting hosted more than 300 attendees in Washington, DC in February, with delegates attending from coast-to-coast and U.S. territories; House and Senate leadership as well as representatives from the new Trump administration joined as well
- CARET delegates received warm welcomes from their Congressional delegations, and canvassed Capitol Hill sharing the value of capacity funding and the BAA's unified FY26 appropriations asks
- House Majority Chairman G.T. Thompson was among those who welcomed CARET to Capitol Hill
- In May, the Southern CARET Region elected Rodd Mosel to serve as national secretary
- Planning is underway for the 2026 Washington DC conference and Save the Date notices have been sent out across the system.

CGA Agriculture Teams



- APLU's Council on Governmental Affairs, or CGA, is a coordinated working group comprised of the government relations professionals and lobbyists representing APLU's member institutions
- On Agriculture, the CGA has two teams: one focused on agricultural appropriations, and another focused on agricultural authorizations.
- The CGA Agriculture Teams are among our frontline outreach teams in promoting the BAA unified appropriations ask on Capitol Hill
- The Teams have additionally worked in tandem with the BAA on reconciliation, the Farm Bill, and FY26 appropriations
 - Marker bills were introduced this week in the House and Senate calling for \$2.5 billion and \$5 billion, respectively for the Research Facilities Act
 - House reconciliation bill language provides \$1.25 billion for Research Facilities Act



Communications & Marketing Committee

Andrea Putman, Assistant VP FANR

Kim Scotto, Manager



Communications & Marketing Committee - Voting Members

Incoming Chair: James Pritchett, Colorado State University

Regional Communications Representatives

Jennifer Alexander, Oregon State University

Latasha Ford, Fort Valley State University

Michelle Enger, University of Missouri

Frankie Gould, Louisiana State University

Stacey Stearns, University of Connecticut



Academic Programs Section: Dan Moser, Kansas State University

Council on Governmental Affairs: Anne Megaro, University of California

Association for Communication Excellence: John Hawley, Montana State University



National Land-Grant Impacts Database (NIDB)



AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS

Increasing profitability and productivity for farmers, ranchers, and sustainable food and fiber production systems by using innovative and time-tested methods.



ENERGY AND BIOPRODUCTS

Leading the way in energy technologies such as bioproducts, biofuels, biomass, and other energy technologies and techniques for a cleaner energy future.



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Building a sustainable future for people and the natural environment through stewardship of the ecosystem, energy conservation, and water management.



Iowa researchers find method to speed up new plant breeding techniques

[Food Security, Story](#)
[Advanced Breeding/Genomics, Crop Management, Food Security, Iowa, Iowa State University, North Central, Research](#)

Some of the newer techniques to speed up plant breeding, have challenges such as leaving some varieties sterile. At **Iowa State University**, researchers made a breakthrough that overcomes a major hurdle of these new techniques by restoring fertility to certain plant species.

The breeding tool known as doubled haploid technology is a faster way to breed plants but often fails. Researchers found a genetic mutation in the plant *Arabidopsis* that affects cell division. By using that mutation to modify a portion of the plant reproductive phase, they showed that fertility could be restored to the plants.

Increasing the success of this technology will increase the development of crops with beneficial traits such as higher yields and increased resilience.

[View the full statement on the NIDB.](#)

Project supported by non-profit grants and AFRI funds.



FOOD SECURITY

Ensuring that everyone has safe, ample, affordable, accessible, and nutritious food.



NUTRITION AND HEALTH


Strengthening public health by advancing and promoting nutrition, genomics, physical activity, wellness, and disease management.



YOUTH, FAMILY AND COMMUNITIES

Creating engaged citizens for our future through economic and community development, leadership, and youth development opportunities.

Positioning LGU's For Long-Term Advocacy Success



Much of our work spans a huge breadth of significant subjects that do not change drastically year to year;

Our top-level federal funding priorities, i.e., advocacy asks, do need to be annually revised to address new funding opportunities and address research and programmatic priorities;

Creation of an advocacy message that remains true to our work but that is also flexible enough to support changing BAA advocacy goals and compelling enough to justify the significance of our impacts and goals;

Develop a unified document that no matter what our new goals or asks may be, our ***message*** stays consistent;

Identify and support the development of long-term federal funding priorities that can not be addressed in a single year's appropriation.



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MAHA

Research Opportunities?

Elizabeth Stulberg

Principle, Lewis-Burke Associates

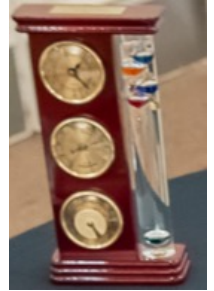


STC 2025 REPORT

2025 AGINNOVATION BUSINESS MEETING

Nathan Slaton

PROPOSED CHANGES TO AWARDS



Two New Categories for Excellence in Agricultural Research Innovation

Early Career Scientists

Assistant Professional Rank

<5-6 years

Mid-career Scientists

Associate Professional Rank

up to 10 years post-promotion

PROPOSED CHANGES TO AWARDS BUDGET

Current Award Expenses	Current Budget	New Award Expenses	Proposed Budget	Change in Budget
Regional winners cash	\$2,500	Regional winners cash	\$7,500	\$5,000
National winner cash	\$500	National winners cash	\$1,500	\$1,000
Silver-level AAAS Membership	\$1,680	Silver-level AAAS Memberships	\$5,040	\$3,360
National winner plaque	\$100	National winners' plaques	\$300	\$200
All winners travel	\$12,500	National winners' travel	\$7,500	(\$5,000)
Totals	\$17,280		\$21,840	\$4,560

PROPOSED CHANGES TO AWARDS SCORING METRICS

Rating Category/Subcategory		Original Weighting	Proposed Weighting
Demonstrated high impact of research, ...		50%	60%
	Relevance to one or more of the Grand Challenges	20%	--*
	Explain the translation, adoption, and/or impact (or potential impact on policy, environment, economic benefits, productivity and/or efficiency) ...	20%	30%
	Effective collaborations	10%	20%
	Mentoring & development of students and other scientists		10%
Recognized excellence in one's field of expertise		40%	40%
	Grant funding history including the nominee's specific role in each project (e.g., principal investigator, co-PI, collaborator)	--	15%
	Publication record and invitations to publish	--	10%
	Contributions as a scientific expert on panels or committees and invitations to present research at national and international conferences	--	10%
	Recognition through professional awards and notable achievements	--	5%
Demonstration of cultural sensitivity and ... inclusivity		10%	--*

W525: Evaluation of Outcomes-Driven, Aspirational Goals to Achieve National Food Security

"Achieve national and local food security by producing 95% of our food domestically, increasing local and regional farm net incomes by 20%, and reducing food waste by 50%."

Call to Action: Enlist experts to

- validate the outcome goal
- evaluate research strategies
- demonstrate public value and ROI





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THANK YOU

[HTTPS://WWW.AGINNOVATION.INFO/](https://www.aginnovation.info/)



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TD Wealth Investment Account

Rick Rhodes





agInnovation Financial Primer

- Finance Committee and agInnovation 501(c)(3) “manage” three accounts
 - 5800 Account – held by the APLU
 - Chase for Business – held by 501(c)(3)
 - TD Wealth Account – held by the APLU
- Funding sources (intent)
 - 5800 Account – assessment (operating)
 - Chase for Business – transfers from 5800 (operating)
 - TD Wealth Account – carry forward from pre-2019 (endowment)



Endowment goals

agInnovation investment goals:

- Seek 6% return
- 4% annual drawdown
- Preserve corpus
- Access to account assets



Current Challenges with TD Wealth

- agInnovation is not a signatory of the TD Account
- Cash liquidity and access to assets (turn around on withdrawal, up to a month)
- Banking laws don't allow transfer of funds from TD Wealth to Chase for Business
- agInnovation management of account is limited
- TD manages fund passively (moderately conservative)



What We've Done

- Initiated conversations with Chase (the bank of the non-profit)
- Chase (consumer and commercial banking subsid of JP Morgan Chase & Co) introduced us to JP Morgan (investment banking, corporate banking, asset management, and private banking services)
- Non-profit engaged in several conversations with a JP Morgan advisor



Case for transferring assets: TD to JP Morgan

- Key takeaways
- Similar:
 - Fees: ~1.0%
 - Neither guarantees returns (Our goal: 6% with 4% annual drawdown)
- Different:
 - Investment strategy
 - JP Morgan
 - Robust platform
 - Dynamic, active: guided by real time global research
 - Access to a wide range of asset classes
 - Dedicated trust and philanthropy services



Case for transferring assets: TD to JP Morgan

- Different:
 - High touch relationship
 - JP Morgan
 - Dedicated relationship manager
 - Periodic strategy reviews and rebalancing
 - Ease of access
 - JP Morgan
 - agInnovation owns the account
 - 3-day liquidity, single institution (JP Morgan Chase & Co)
 - Local support



Action Plan

- Socialize idea
 - Internal with agInnovation 501(c)(3)
 - agInnovation Finance Committee
 - agInnovation Executive Committee/agInnovation standing committee chairs (BAA Summer Leadership Meeting)
 - APLU
 - agInnovation (2025 agInnovation/CES-NEDA Meeting)
- agInnovation vote for approval
 - 30-day notice
 - electronic referendum
 - Passes with 2/3 majority



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CY2026 Budget Recommendations

Chandra Reddy



Governance and Approval Process

- Gather input on budget and budget narrative
- Send edited budget and budget narrative followed by a 30-day evaluation period
- Electronic ballot
 - Assessment (\$100,000) – needs 2/3 majority
 - Budget – simple majority



Income and Expenses

- Income (\$224,000)
 - Assessment: \$100,000 (same as CY 2025)
 - Cash Carryover: ~\$100,000 from CY 2025
 - TD Wealth Draw: \$24,000 (4% annual draw)
- Expenses (\$192,000)
- Projected balance (\$32,000)

Proposed Calendar Year 2026 Budget

		CY26 Proposed	CY25 Approved	CY25 Actual/Encum
INCOME				
	Previous CY Carryover (estimate)	\$100,000	\$149,223	\$114,126
	agInnovation Assessment	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
	Other	\$24,000	\$24,000	\$24,000
	TOTAL INCOME	\$224,000	\$273,223	\$238,126
EXPENSES				
Eliminated Budget Lines	Strategic Advocacy--Facilitator	\$0	\$2,500	\$0
	Roundtables with Stakeholders	\$0	\$35,000	\$0
	AG-NGINE	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
Unchanged Budget Lines	NCFAR Membership	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
	NRSP RC Stakeholder (travel)	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$540
	agInnovation 501(c)(3)	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$2,284
	agInnovation Awards	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$1,195
	Communications and Advocacy	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$57,250
Funding Line Increases	agInnovation Committee Meetings	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$6,293
	Meeting Support (Annual Meeting)	\$20,000	\$15,000	\$8,149
	Website (agInnovation and ESCOP)	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$5,770
	Promotion (chair travel, printing, promo materials)	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$610
	Professional Development	\$30,000	\$15,000	\$3,920
New Funding Line	Operating	\$1,500	\$0	\$590
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$192,000	\$238,000	\$137,601
	PROJECTED BALANCE-END OF CY	\$32,000	\$35,223	\$100,000



Summary

- The CY 2026 budget
 - Maintains the assessment at \$100,000
 - Introduces new and expanded lines to strengthen communications, professional development, promotion, and digital outreach
 - Eliminates completed initiatives
 - Leaves a modest \$32,000 carryover balance



Pursue Effective Collaborations: 1862 and 1890 Research Insights

John Green

Director, Southern Rural
Development Center



Pursue Effective Collaborations: 1862 and 1890 Research Insights

John J. Green and Grace Langford

Southern Rural Development Center, Mississippi State University

Conducted in collaboration with

Alton Thompson, Association of 1890 Research Directors

Gary Thompson, agInnovation South



Presented at the Fall 2025 agInnovation Business Meeting, St. Louis, Missouri

Focus and Purpose

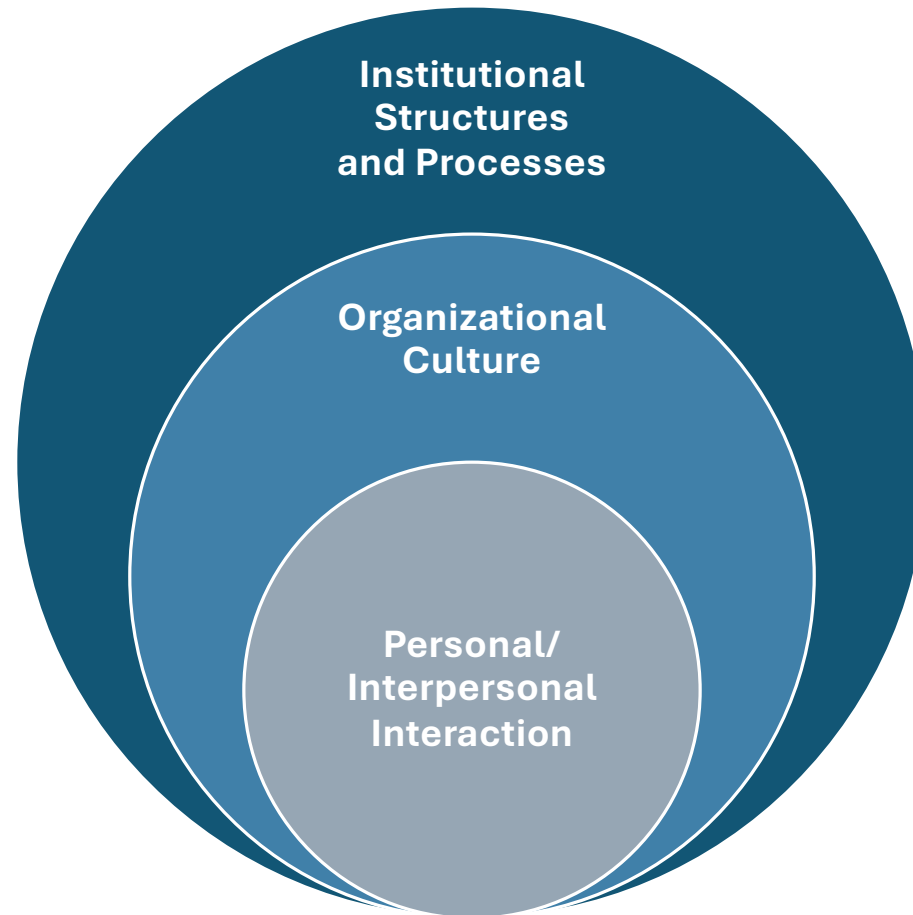
- Assess and pursue improvement of research collaborations between 1890 and 1862 Land-Grant Universities
 - Understand how researchers interact, communicate, and work together
 - Identify what is working well and what needs improvement
 - Identify the barriers to effective collaboration, enabling targeted actions to enhance overall collaboration
 - Inform action



Partnerships in Pursuit of Collaboration

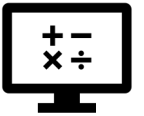
- There are different kinds of interorganizational relationships, including (Castañer & Oliveira, 2020):
 - Coordination – jointly determining goals
 - Cooperation – making efforts in support of goals
 - Collaboration – helping each other in implementing goals
- Exploring collaboration through complexity and systems thinking, it is helpful to conceptualize “partnership” as the action to achieve a particular relationship (Fransman et al., 2021).
- Collaborative partnerships (i.e., collaboratives) have life stages that include birth, growth, maintenance, decline, adaptation, and even death. Adaptive capacity is thus important for the long run (Getha-Taylor, 2019).

Organizational Ecology of Collaboration



Methods

- Applied research project informed by previous studies of multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary research initiatives (Arnold et al., 2021) and interorganizational Extension collaborations (Green, Welborn, & Eley, 2024)
- Current study involved multiple methods
 - Survey of research administrative leaders
 - ✓ Open ended (write-in response) and closed (set response) questions
 - ✓ 1890 and 1862 institutions (13 states in the Southern region and 3 states in the Northeast and 2 in the North Central regions, and 1 university each in the territories Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands)
 - ✓ N=39: 1890 respondents=19, 1862 respondents=20



**Note: Conducted with assistance from Camica Sanderson (doctoral student) and Camille Taylor (undergraduate student) at Mississippi State University.*

Methods (continued)

- Interviews with researchers
 - ✓ Open ended, discussion-oriented questions
 - ✓ Conducted over Zoom and audio-recorded
 - ✓ Working from transcripts, the team developed thematic lists with a focus on achieving a balance between saturation and meaningful categorization of content
 - ✓ N=19: 1890 participants=9, 1862 participants=10
 - ✓ 14 interviewees were connected to 1 other interviewee through collaborative projects
 - ✓ 8 states represented
 - ✓ Numerous fields and disciplines were represented, such as agricultural leadership, biosystems, demography, engineering, entomology, and food science



**Note: Conducted with assistance from Camica Sanderson (doctoral student) and Camille Taylor (undergraduate student) at Mississippi State University.*

Findings



+

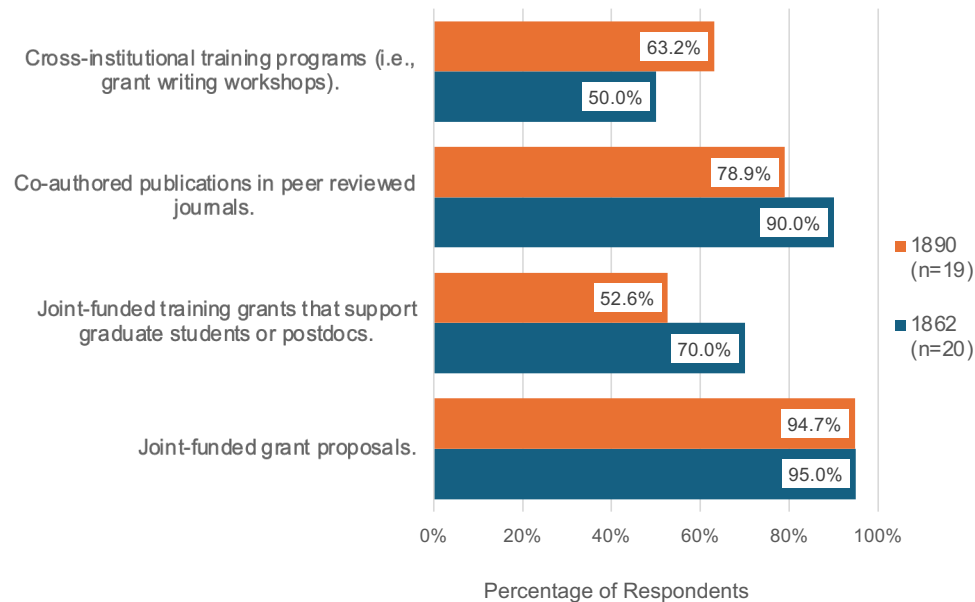
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Indicators of Successful Collaboration – Administrative Leaders



Aspects of Research Productivity Indicating Successful
Collaboration Between 1862 and 1890 Institutions



- Joint publications, presentations, and popular press articles
- Funding/funded collaborations
- Equitable funding distribution and output expectations
- Successful and timely project execution
- Student engagement and matriculation
- Sharing labs and farm facilities
- Attendance at collaborative meetings
- Institutional administrative support and encouragement
- Demonstrate diversity in types of collaborations

Indicators of Successful Collaboration – Researchers



- Completion of goals and objectives
- Effective teamwork and mutual support across institutions
- Strong leadership and clear communication
- Collaborative structures that enable outcomes otherwise unattainable
- Opportunities for student and staff exchanges
- Audience/stakeholder engagement
- University–community partnerships
- New programs, knowledge, and technologies to inform stakeholders, extension, and policy leaders
- Dissemination through publications, trainings, and other avenues

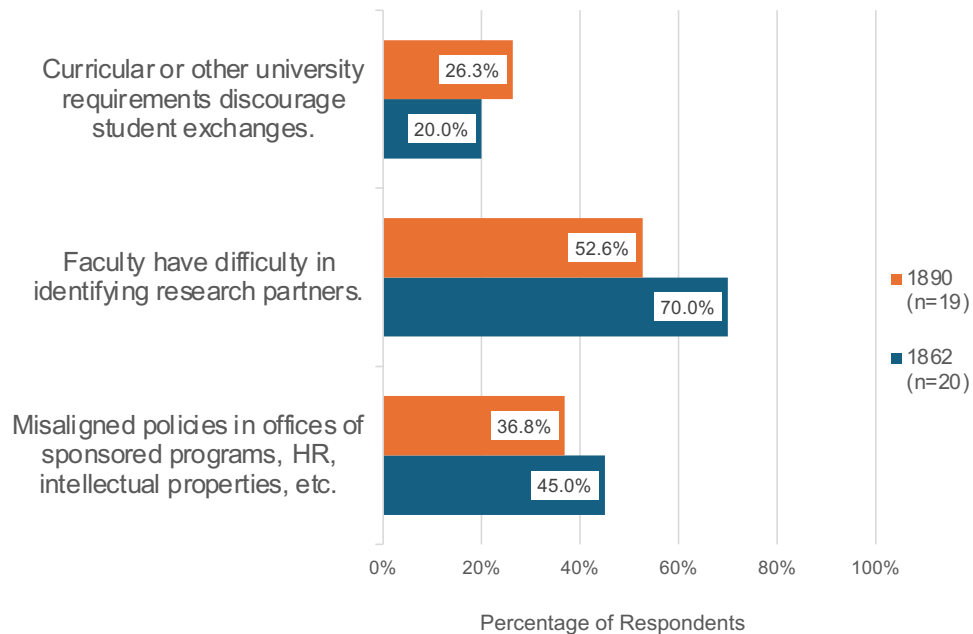
“No one in the world can solve all issues by himself or herself. No institution can solve all issues by itself. So, this is why we have to put our hands together and work in collaboration...”

--Interviewee

Challenges to Collaboration – Administrative Leaders



Roadblocks or Challenges that Hinder Collaboration Between
1862 and 1890 Institutions



- Not enough time spent thinking about and maximizing collaboration
- Teaching responsibilities
- Organizational and cultural misalignments
- Limited organizational mechanisms for interaction and collaboration
- Limited resources and capacities (e.g., office/lab space and grant offices)
- Administrative (OSP) barriers are beyond research and academic administrators' control
- Physical distance between institutions
- Lack of funding

Challenges to Collaboration – Researchers



- Limits of self-confidence
- Scheduling and time demands
- Capacity and operational differences between types of universities
- Differences based on location and commodity focus
- Differences in how academia and private sector work
- Inadequate infrastructure
- Limited funds for travel to multistate project meetings
- Termination/fear of termination of grants
 - Impact on researchers and universities
 - Impact on producers
- Key partners taking other positions or retiring

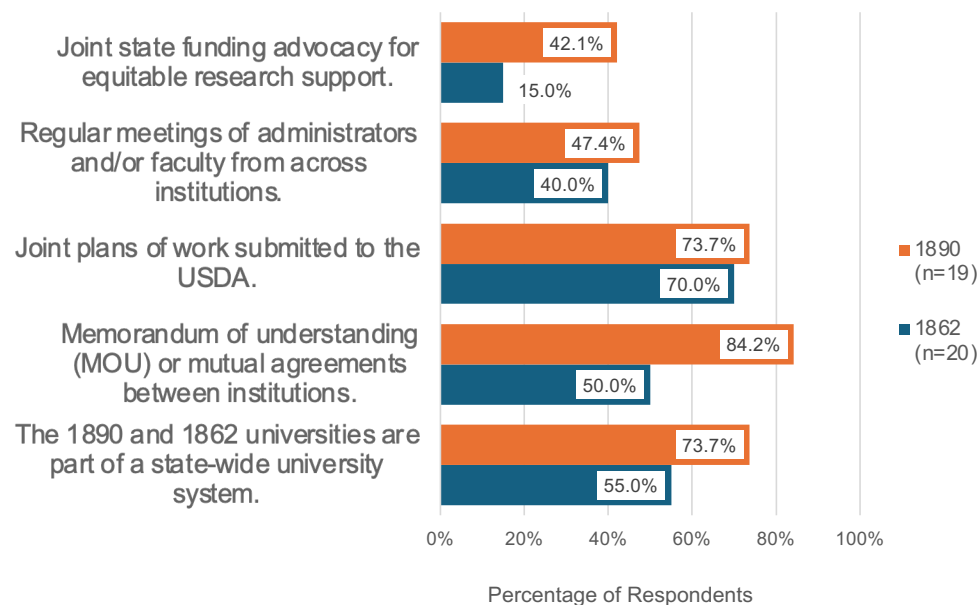
“We are building the plane as we fly it.”

--Interviewee

Ways to Pursue Collaboration – Administrative Leaders



Administrative Structures or Programs that Promote or Enable
Collaboration Between 1862 and 1890 Institutions



- Act as a joint system
- Hold regular meetings with administrators and researchers
- Develop administrative programs for collaboration

Ways to Pursue Collaboration – Administrative Leaders (cont'd)



- Personal/Interpersonal Interaction
 - Be open-minded
 - Take advantage of exchange opportunities
 - Involve each other early on in project development and grant applications
- Organizational Culture
 - Acknowledge and incentivize collaborative activities (tenure and promotion guidelines)
 - Cultivate interest in and leadership for collaboration
 - Unify vision and leadership team
 - Provide mentoring and training for grant writing and administration
- Organizational Culture (cont'd)
 - Strengthen offices of sponsored programs, including compliance
 - Recruit faculty interested in collaboration
 - Advertise collaborative capacity

Ways to Pursue Collaboration – Administrative Leaders (cont'd)



- Institutional Structures and Processes

- Change position appointments (include joint appointments)
- Reduce three-way appointments and teaching loads
- Expand plans of work to incorporate collaboration
- Establish MOUs for collaboration
- Provide more administrative support
- Identify and expand resources to support collaborative research
- Pursue state funding together
- Push for equitable funding
- Advance collaborative multistate research projects/programs



Ways to Pursue Collaboration – Researchers

- Personal/Interpersonal Interaction
 - Develop soft skills
 - Build relationships
 - Don't take problems personally
 - Be patient
 - Don't be too pushy
 - Be proactive in reaching out to researchers from other institutions
 - Seek partners committed to team approach
 - Make time
- Organizational Culture
 - Open communication
 - Value the group that's already operating
 - Bring together people with diverse expertise
 - Appreciate differences between organizations (resources, operations, expectations)
 - Take an organic developmental approach
 - Pivot as the situation changes
 - Focus collaborations on common interests and pressing issues

“Know your history and know how it lives every day in your work.”

--Interviewee



Ways to Pursue Collaboration – Researchers

- Institutional Structures and Processes
 - Pursue bottom up over top-down efforts
 - Offer workshops and networking opportunities that bring people together around common topics
 - Provide training for how researchers can partner on grants and contracts
 - Commit to student development
 - Provide more support for 1890 capacity

Takeaways and Next Steps



Takeaways and Next Steps

- Administrative leaders and researchers provided numerous insights on their perspectives of partnerships for 1890 and 1862 collaboration, ranging from indicators of success to challenges and recommendations
- Recommendations for strengthening collaboration may be categorized using three major dimensions
 - Personal/interpersonal interaction
 - Organizational cultures
 - Institutional structures and processes
- Next steps for advancing collaboration should include discussion of what can be done...
 - Within and between universities
 - Across universities through the regional associations and funders (acknowledging other actors in these complex systems)
 - To create places and times for 1890 and 1862 researchers and research leaders to come together to build relationships
 - To build adaptive capacity for the relationships to advance over the long run

References

- Arnold, A., Cafer, A., Green, J., Haines, S., Mann, G., & Rosenthal, M. (2021). Perspectives promoting and fostering multidisciplinary research in universities. *Research Policy*, 50, 104334. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2021.104334>
- Castañer, X., & Oliveira, N. (2020). Collaboration, coordination, and cooperation among organizations: Establishing the distinctive meanings of these terms through a systematic literature review. *Journal of Management*, 46(6), 965-1001. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0149206320901565>
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- Green, J., Welborn, R., & Eley, M. (2024). Collaborations that work: Analysis of successful Extension efforts between 1890 and 1862 Land-Grant institutions. Mississippi State, MS: Southern Rural Development Center. https://srdc.msstate.edu/sites/default/files/2024-02/Collaborations-that-Work-Report-Final-2024_0.pdf

Funding and Acknowledgements

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- The analysis and opinions shared in this presentation are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the partner organizations
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- Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and should not be construed to represent any official USDA or U.S. Government determination or policy.



National Institute of Food and Agriculture

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



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Chair Reflections

Steve Lommel

**Associate Dean CALS & Director NCAR
North Carolina State University**



Incoming Chair Initiatives

Chandra Reddy

Dean & Director,
Tennessee State University

2025 - 2026 agInnovation Priorities

1. Enhance Funding for Agricultural Research:

- Advocate for increased appropriations for USDA-NIFA to boost capacity program funding.
- Engage relevant federal funding agencies and organizations to diversify and expand the competitive research funding portfolio.

2. Address Critical Infrastructure Needs:

- Identify and implement both short- and long-term strategies to increase funding for the Research Facilities Act.
- Provide guidance on the Research Facilities Act implementation to meet the infrastructure needs of colleges of agriculture at Land-grant universities, small to large.

3. Increase Organizational Visibility and Impact:

- Strategically enhance external communications, marketing, brand recognition, and public relations efforts to elevate the visibility and impact of the organization.
- Expand partnerships and engagement within the Land-grant University community and with federal agencies, industry, and foundations to support collaborative initiatives.

4. Intensify Strategic Actions to Position Food Security as a Cornerstone of National Security:

- Demonstrate how a stable food supply underpins economic growth and plays a critical role in reducing poverty.
- Emphasize the importance of a well-nourished population in sustaining a productive workforce and maintaining national defense readiness.
- Highlight the role of national security in ensuring resilience to food supply disruptions caused by natural disasters, pandemics, or cyber threats.
- Underscore the strategic importance of protecting agricultural infrastructure and food distribution systems to safeguard national interests.



2025 - 2026 agInnovation Chair's Initiatives

1. Build a Healthier Nation Through Prevention Research and Innovation

- Role of diet in preventing chronic diseases (MAHA Report)
- Ensuring a safe and nutritious food supply
 - Innovations in low/minimum processed foods
 - Innovations in minimizing chemicals/food additives
 - Extending shelf life through natural/alternate means

2. Transform Agriculture Production System through new Technologies

- Labor Shortages & Rising Costs
 - AI, automation, and robotics address persistent labor shortages and reduce reliance on manual labor, which is becoming more expensive and scarcer.
- Precision Agriculture using sensors, drones, and AI
 - Low and precise application of farm inputs and optimization of planting, irrigation, and harvesting to improve farm profitability and soil health.

3. Finalize the Roadmap

4. Create a formal framework to facilitate research collaboration between 1862 and 1994 Land-grant universities with 1890 Centers of Excellence

- Use the multistate project portfolio as a tool to facilitate research collaborations across the land-grant system, institutional relationships among all LGUs.
- Leverage 1890 Centers of Excellence as platforms to foster systemwide collaboration across the land-grant system.





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agInnovation Chair-elect Vote



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Passing of the Gavel

Steve Lommel
Past Chair

Chandra Reddy
Chair



THANK YOU