

Dear Mines Faculty,

Mines will hold a virtual Research Town Hall on **Monday May 19<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon**. The session will be hosted by the Office of Research and Technology Transfer (RTT) and the Office of Research Administration (ORA) in an opportunity to keep you informed, discuss the most recent federal updates and their impacts on Mines research, and for RTT and ORA to be available answer your questions.

### **Mines Research Town Hall Agenda**

Welcome and Overview – Changing federal science and technology landscape  
Current Federal Updates, Mines Impacts and Actions  
Beyond Mines@150 Strategic Research Initiatives  
Questions & Answers / Discussion

I also wanted to provide a few updates relevant to our research community and to our upcoming Town Hall.

### **NSF Indirect Cost Cap**

Last week, the National Science Foundation (NSF) [announced a new policy capping indirect costs \(IDC\)](#) on new research awards to institutions of higher education at 15 percent. The new policy applies to awards and funding opportunities issued after May 5, 2025, and does not apply retroactively to existing, continuing grant awards in existence prior to May 5, 2025.

The federal government has issued similar policies capping IDC rates at 15 percent for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Department of Energy (DOE). Both previous policies have been blocked by the courts as the cases and appeals work through the judicial system, and additional legal action has been similarly taken related to the NSF cap.

As I have shared previously, Mines currently receives about \$20 million annually in indirect costs, which support essential research infrastructure and services—including lab overhead, data processing, facility maintenance, and compliance with federal requirements like national security, radiation safety, and hazardous waste management. If upheld and expanded, the NSF's policy could reduce Mines' indirect cost recovery by approximately \$10 million annually, significantly impacting our ability to support research across campus.

### **The President's FY 26 Budget**

On May 2, 2025, the Trump Administration released an initial [FY 26 budget proposal](#), which includes significant proposed cuts to research and higher education programs. The Administration's budget is a reflection of its priorities and ultimately the U.S. Congress, in negotiations with the Administration, will determine final funding levels. Mines continues to engage with our congressional delegation and policy makers to support the Mines research enterprise.

The administration has indicated its plans to make additional grant cancellations. If you receive a notice or have questions about your specific projects, please contact the Office of Research Administration at [ora@mines.edu](mailto:ora@mines.edu).

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

As a reminder, an FAQ has been developed to provide additional updates regarding executive orders and policy changes affecting federal funding for research. You can access the website <https://research.mines.edu/federal-funding/> using the password **FedFunding2025**.

### **Strategic Research Initiatives Process**

As most of you are aware, the Research and Technology Transfer Office has been engaged with the Mines community in a planning process to advance our research portfolio as we move Beyond Mines@150. This effort is intentional and strategic and has been a partnership between Mines leadership and our faculty, including voices from across campus as we map the future of research at Mines.

We began with the creation of the Mines **Pillars of Research** that capture the spectrum of research at Mines and are showcased on the new research.mines.edu website. We also engaged with campus to identify the **Mines Distinctive Research Themes** – five areas that represent our legacy strengths across earth, energy, environment, and materials, quantum technologies, and space resources & system, recognizing the high-tech sectors where Mines must continue to differentiate and invest to grow and lead. To bolster these theme areas, we worked with the Research Advisory Board to develop a process to select and support **Strategic Research Initiatives**.

Lastly, we developed a new model for distributing indirect cost (IDC) return that will support our research mission, including the **Strategic Research Initiatives**, and foster a transparent and collaborative budget management approach within our academic departments. It has been developed with campus inputs and vetted with the deans, department heads, and center directors/leads, and the intent was to implement it on July 1. However, given the recent attempts by funding agencies including NIH, DOE, and NSF to limit the standard indirect cost rate to 15%, the Mines executive team has decided that it would be prudent to postpone the implementation of the new IDC return distribution model until we have greater clarity at a future date. Thanks to the many Mines faculty who have contributed to these preparations.

We continue to work toward developing and supporting strategic research initiatives that help Mines research continue to thrive in these uncertain times. We will keep the campus community informed of these research efforts, recognizing that strategic action at the institutional level is even more important during this period of uncertainty.

In closing, we hope that you will join us for the **Mines Research Town Hall** via Zoom on **Monday May 19<sup>th</sup> Noon-1:00 PM**. The session will be recorded, and due to the rapidly changing federal landscape, will be available for reference until June 9<sup>th</sup>. Please register here: (<https://research.mines.edu/events/>) for the Town Hall and to submit a question you'd like to have addressed.

See you there!

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