RTRF generation at the University of Hawaii Hilo and its uses in FY23

Extramural grants received by the University of Hawaii and other research institutions generally contain overhead funds to reimburse institutions for the costs associated with research activity (utilities, renovations, data bases, scholarly journals, compliance with state and federal regulations, faculty start-up packages, administrative staff and laboratory technicians). These are general funds returned by the state to the University of Hawai’i, at the system level, to make research possible. The returned funds are called RTRF (Research, Training, and Revolving Funds) at UH, and are used to support research throughout the system.

The UH system receives 25% of the RTRF and 75% flows to the institution where the funds were generated. The UH System uses its share of RTRF to fund pre-award functions via ORS and MyGrant. The UH System discontinued their support of post-award accounting at UH Hilo (Paula Gealon’s office) in 2019, which severely impacted the budget going forward. RTRF Funds allocated to UH Hilo are generally placed in an RCUH account (Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii) and are distributed by the Chancellor through the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs (VCAA), in consultation with the Research Council. The VCAA has responsibility for research at UH Hilo but has delegated significant administrative oversight to Dr. Bruce Mathews, Acting Associate Vice Chancellor for Research. More information about Research Administration can be found at:  http://hilo.hawaii.edu/research/

The amount of RTRF generated by sponsored grant activity over the past 7 years is shown in the graph below.
Please note that RTRF comes to the UH Hilo Office of Research the year after grant funds are expended by Principal Investigators, not at the time of the original award.

UH Hilo generated $2,028,350 of overhead in FY 2023 of which $453,383 went to the UH System for taxes and $320,400 for RCUH Management Fees. Despite an increase in UH Hilo’s overall grant activity, the UH System reduced the University's allocation by $92,173 as part of a 5-year payment plan to recover declining overhead fund earnings from prior fiscal years. This brought the total revenue to $1,162,394. Carry forward and contingencies from the previous fiscal year was $90,651. This left $1,253,045 under UH Hilo control in FY23.

**2023 RTRF was distributed in the following manner:**

**TCBES Graduate Assistants** $40,898  
Teaching Graduate Assistants are assigned to the Tropical Conservation Biology and Environmental Science (TCBES) Graduate Program for 9-month appointments which begin on August 1 and start at Step 1 in the first year. The pay rate for GAs is dictated by the following:  
[http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/content/compensation-tax-withholding](http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/graduate/content/compensation-tax-withholding)

**Laboratory Instrument Support** $94,247  
Full-time Instrument specialist to maintain and calibrate UH Hilo’s research equipment and infrastructure.

**Analytical Laboratory (TCBES supported)** $109,143  
The *UH Hilo Analytical Laboratory* supports ecological research and water quality studies. The lab provides analytical services (nutrients, organic carbon, nitrogen, stable isotopes, and elemental analyses) for researchers throughout the University of Hawaii System as well as Federal and state agency research projects in the State of Hawaii.  
[Analytical Laboratory](http://hilo.hawaii.edu/~analab/)

**PI Support** $211,475  
The PI Support team assists with overall grant management and initiating procurement, personnel and travel transactions on behalf of PIs. Support is provided for single investigators who receive smaller extramural grants without administrative support, RTRF returned to PIs, Deans, Dept. Chairs, and PIs, as well as the Research Council’s grant programs.
Research & Community Partnerships    $205,118
The university utilizes this office to focus efforts closely tied to the collaboration, diversity and community goals of UH Hilo’s strategic plan. RTRF supported staff in two areas: 1) Staff to work with faculty, student groups, and community groups, to coordinate university engagement in community `aina-based efforts, including developing `aina-based service-learning opportunities for faculty and student groups with local schools, coordinating the Hawai’i Island Science Olympiad for island middle and high school students, and linking high school students to the university through summer programming, and 2) Staff to coordinate UHH’s participation in the Hawai’i Cooperative Studies Unit (HCSU), the UHH component of the Pacific Island Climate Science Center, the Hawai’i Conservation Alliance, the Pacific Island Climate Change Cooperative, the USGS Hawai’i Fishery Cooperative Research Unit and the Hawai’i - Pacific Islands Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit (HPI CESU). RTRF generated from those partnerships covered 60% of staffing. The FY21 funding amount included funding to sustain operations for 4 months into FY22.

Research Administration & Project Development    $369,831
The RAPD Office serves as the Fiscal Authority (FA) for all extramural funds received by UH Hilo. The FA assists with account establishment once the grant is awarded and is responsible for reviewing and approving procurement and payment requests and all other financial transactions involving extramural project funds.

TIG Services    $38,900
The Implementation Group (TIG) provides grant proposal review and editing services that are extremely important in supporting UH Hilo's capacity to submit competitive grant proposals.

Experimental Program to Support Competitive Research    $5,625
The National Science Foundation's (NSF) investment in EPSCoR programs in Hawai’i have catalyzed significant growth in the State’s STEM endeavor. UH Hilo provides 15% of the annual membership cost to support the EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition while the remaining dues are split between the UH System and several other UH Manoa offices.

Federal Workstudy    $19,028
Non-imposed fringe benefit costs assessed to the University for Workers’ compensation and Unemployment insurance on student salary expenses in the Federal Workstudy program.
Research Office Administration/Contingency $158,780
A reserve to help deal with unexpected research-related costs

TOTAL RTRF DISTRIBUTED

FY 2023 RTRF REVENUE (POST TAX)
$1,162,394

- TCBES, $271,821
- INBRE, $139,282
- Research & Community Partnerships, $151,510
- Imiloa, $119,971
- PACRC, $25,939
- KHUOK, $147,117
- LSAMP, $34,103
- Student Affairs, $111,720
- COBE, $126
- CAFNRM, $4,125
- VBOC, $28,943
- CCE, $4,325
- EPSCOR, ($48,698)
- CAS, $14,617
- CNHS, $98,604
- DKICoP, $58,889
FY23 - ALLOCATIONS
$1,253,045

- Research Office Contingency, $158,780
- RAPD Operations, $369,831
- EPSCoR Dues, $5,625
- TCBES Scholarships, $40,898
- TIG Services, $38,900
- Lab Instrument Support, $94,247
- PI Support, $211,475
- TCBES Lab/Research Support, $109,143
- Research & Community Partnerships, $205,118
- FED Workstudy, $19,028
- $1,253,045