RTRF generation at the University of Hawaii Hilo and its uses in FY20

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, Dean of CAFNRM. 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 $1,803,517 of overhead in FY 2020 of which $377,972 went to the UH System for taxes and $121,251 for RCUH Management Fees. The UH System also reduced the University's allocation by $96,120 as part of a 5-year payment plan to recover declining overhead fund earnings from prior fiscal years. This brought the total revenue to $1,208,174. Carry forward and contingencies from the previous fiscal year was $143,417. UH Hilo also received an additional $100,000 from the system to support Faculty Research. This left $1,451,591 under UH Hilo control in FY20.

**2020 RTRF was distributed in the following manner:**

**VC Administrative Affairs** $200,000
These funds are used to offset the basic costs of research space on campus such as electricity, air-conditioning, maintenance, and minor remodeling (keep in mind that electricity is the single highest non-salary cost at UHH).

**TCBES Graduate Assistants** $57,500
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

**System Support for Faculty Research** $100,000
The University of Hawaii Vice President of Research Vassilis Syrmos provided RTRF funds to support faculty actively writing research grants and mentoring graduate students in research learning experiences.

**Analytical Laboratory (TCBES supported)** $60,000
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/)
Research & Community Partnerships $278,278
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 FY20 funding amount included funding to sustain operations for 4 months into FY21.

PI Support & Proposal Development $270,817
Office of Research Personnel assist PIs with a variety of services. 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. Proposal Development staff assist with editing proposals for readability and responsiveness to the RFP, offering help with developing and modifying budgets and their accompanying justifications, initiating proposals in the UH Hilo-internal myGRANT system (including the Intent to Apply form), and assisting with uploads to both Grants.gov and NSF FastLane. OR personnel work with PIs and their co-PIs to ensure such elements as BioSketches, Data Management Plans, Post-Doc Mentoring Plans, and other required elements of proposals are compliant, and that the Project Summary and Description are included and properly worded.

Research Administration & Project Development $334,122
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.
Pharmacy Research and Lab Support $50,000
Support to maintain equipment and infrastructure at the pharmacy research laboratory.

Ka Haka ‘Ula O Keʻelikōlani (KHUOK) $10,000
Support to foster research and training activities at the College of Hawaiian Language

Research Relations Fund $3,000
The UH Hilo Research Relations Fund supports selected scholarly and creative activities of faculty whose disciplines do not normally enjoy significant external funding. Such support is limited to small, relatively self-contained projects.

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.

Research Office Administration/Contingency $43,349
A reserve to help deal with unexpected research-related costs.

TOTAL RTRF DISTRIBUTED FY 2020 $1,451,591