



## Texas Research Incentive Program (TRIP)

### BACKGROUND:

During the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislative Session in 2009, Representative Dan Branch passed HB 51, creating the Texas Research Incentive Program (TRIP). TRIP was designed to incentivize the private sector to help Texas build more Tier One universities. TRIP was created to provide matching funding for private gifts given to enhance research activities at the state's emerging research institutions. When HB 51 was passed, the emerging research institutions included UT Arlington, UT Dallas, UT El Paso, UT San Antonio, the University of Houston, the University of North Texas and Texas Tech University. In 2012, Texas State University joined the other seven public institutions designated as emerging research institutions by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB).

Eligible institutions are entitled to receive matching funds equal to: 50 percent if a private gift or endowment is between \$100,000 and \$999,999; 75 percent if between \$1 million and \$1,999,999; and 100 percent if \$2 million or more.

For 2010-11, \$50 million in General Revenue was appropriated to the THECB to provide matching funds to the emerging research institutions that receive gifts or endowments from private sources for the purpose of enhancing research activities at the institutions. Due to mid-biennium budget cuts, these funds were reduced by 5% in FY 2011.

The 82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature appropriated only \$35.6 million to the THECB for allocation to the seven emerging research universities to match private gifts for research, a reduction of more than 25% from the prior legislative session. In the 83<sup>rd</sup> Session, the Legislature appropriated \$35.625 million in General Revenue for the 2014-15 biennium and \$34.4 million in the supplemental appropriations bill for FY 2013.

With a more robust budget to work with during the 84<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, \$138.125 million was appropriated for the Texas Research Incentive Program for the 2016-17 biennium, including \$9 million from the Emerging Technology Fund. In contrast, the appropriation was reduced to \$35 million in the 85<sup>th</sup> session, the lowest allocation in the programs history.

**The success of TRIP has been astounding.** TRIP support to the emerging research institutions has provided the additional leverage needed to assist in recruiting and retaining highly competitive faculty



and doctoral students who will generate additional research proposals and funding. TRIP has become a very attractive program for philanthropic gifts, and the program has accelerated the momentum of institutions toward becoming National Research or Tier One Universities.

## HOW HAS TRIP BENEFITED UT SYSTEM INSTITUTIONS?

Each emerging research institution in the UT System has qualified multiple gifts for TRIP matching funds. The following are examples for each institution.

### **UT ARLINGTON: *UTeach Arlington***

UT Arlington's UTeach program relies on input and analysis from its Master Teachers in its continuous efforts to revise and refine an evidence-based approach to teacher preparation. As such, Master Teachers are critical members of the UT Arlington UTeach research team.

The funded research project compared and analyzed data regarding fundamental science competencies. Graduates of the UTeach Arlington program are taking the Views of Nature of Science Questionnaire (VNOS), which is designed to measure a subject's understanding of concepts such as the tentative nature of scientific theories, the role of creativity in scientific experimental design and the effect of social and cultural values in science. Master Teachers are paired with research faculty to prepare, administer and analyze the result of the VNOS to determine if there are statistically significant differences in the understanding of the nature of science between physics, science and mathematics teachers produced by traditional programs at UT Arlington and those produced via UTeach.

This initiative was funded through a gift of \$267,000 and a 50 percent TRIP match of \$133,500.

### **UT DALLAS: *Texas Biomedical Device Center***

The Texas Biomedical Device Center (TBDC) was created in 2012 as a result of two donors and significant matching dollars. An anonymous donor contributed \$5 million, which received a \$5 million TRIP match. Texas Instruments also committed \$3 million to establish two chairs in bioengineering. These new chairs allowed UT Dallas to recruit top faculty working in the field of biomedical devices. The TI gift resulted in a \$3 million TRIP match, which was designated to support the TBDC.

The creation of the TBDC also coincides with the establishment in 2010 of the Department of Bioengineering within the university's Jonsson School of Engineering and Computer Science. This is one of the fastest growing departments at UT Dallas, driven in large part by the advanced research being



conducted through TBDC. During the spring 2014 semester, 335 students were enrolled, with 283 undergraduate, 39 Master's and 13 Ph.D. students.

***UT EL PASO: Laser Capture Microdissection (LCM) System for High Impact Life Science Research***

The University of Texas at El Paso used TRIP funds to acquire a \$300,000 Laser Capture Microdissection System, as part of the core facilities that support biomedical researchers across campus. During the past year, the National Institutes of Health has awarded nearly \$20 million of new funding to UTEP researchers. The sophisticated LCM system will increase the quality, quantity, progress and impact of UTEP's biomedical research by enabling researchers to isolate pure cell populations as small as a single cell from complex tissues for further analyses of DNA, RNA, proteins, lipids, metabolites, hormones and neurochemicals.

***UT SAN ANTONIO: Valero Energy Graduate Student Research Support***

The Valero Energy Foundation invested \$2.5 million at the University of Texas at San Antonio in fall 2009 to support graduate students in engineering and business. The gift resulted in a 100 percent TRIP match, creating a \$5 million fund that jumpstarted UTSA's first capital campaign and significantly advanced university research efforts. During the 2013-2014 academic year, 134 business and 124 engineering graduate students benefitted from the Valero gift and TRIP match; a total of more than 800 students have received support since the fund's inception. Funding provides fellowships, assistantships and support to student researchers to travel to conferences to present research papers.



## UT SYSTEM REQUEST:

As of March 27, 2018, there was an unfunded backlog of gifts made to emerging research universities eligible for a state TRIP match of more than \$150 million. The UT System asks that the Legislature provide General Revenue to clear the TRIP match backlog and an additional infusion of substantial funds to continue this very effective incentive to the private sector to support research with its philanthropic dollars.

Institution	TRIP Match Backlog
UT Arlington	\$6,025,439.42
UT Dallas	\$39,860,952.00
UT El Paso	\$3,457,155.00
UT San Antonio	\$7,580,449.22
University of Houston	\$37,243,533.69
University of North Texas	\$11,657,207.55
Texas Tech University	\$36,179,689.51
Texas State University	\$11,841,673.47
<b>UT System Total</b>	<b>\$56,923,995.64</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>\$153,846,099.86</b>

Source: THECB 03/27/2018