

## **FY20 non-federal research funding overview**

The close to \$67 million in external non-federal research funding Iowa State received during the 2020 fiscal year is a five-year low, and \$12.9 million or 16.1% below last year's record tally of \$79.8 million.

[Click here](#) for more details on non-federal research funding Iowa State received during the 2020 fiscal year.

The sustained softening of the agricultural economy is likely a key reason for the overall diminished investment in research by non-federal sponsors. This is reflected in two critical, and traditionally strong, sponsor categories – commodity groups and industry/corporate sponsors. Funding from commodity groups closed the fiscal year at \$4.3 million, which is \$2.8 million or 39.4% below the FY19 total of \$7 million. The \$19.3 million in funding from industry and corporate sources is \$3.7 million or 16% below the \$23 million received in FY19.

On a positive note, funding from various state-of-Iowa governmental agencies was slightly higher for the 2020 fiscal year. The \$19.3 million Iowa State received in FY20 from Iowa government sponsors was an increase of \$116,000 or 0.6% compared to FY19 and the highest total of the past three fiscal years.

Iowa State continues to be viewed as a strong research partner by its peers in higher education. The \$14.4 million in funding Iowa State received in FY20 is just slightly below (1.2%) the five-year high of \$14.6 million of FY19.

Non-federally funded projects worth noting for FY20 include:

- Steve W. Martin, Anson Marston Distinguished Professor of Engineering, received an award of \$480,000 from the Iowa Energy Center – administered by the Iowa Economic Development Authority – to research and develop new solid-state sodium batteries for wind energy storage. Solid-state sodium batteries can provide a range of benefits from increasing the safety and energy density of batteries to lowering electricity costs paid by consumers and contributing to a cleaner environment.
- Simon Laflamme, Waldo W. Wegner Professor in Civil Engineering, received an Iowa Department of Transportation award of \$540,000. Laflamme and his team are undertaking a three-phase project that will explore the large-scale deployment of a novel wireless sensing technology known as soft elastomeric capacitor (SEC) as a highly accurate and cost-efficient monitoring system for detecting and localizing potentially damaging and costly fatigue cracks in bridges.
- Eric Cochran, professor, Chemical and Biological Engineering, received an award of \$458,000 from the United Soybean Board. Cochran and his team will use the funds to support the commercial-scale production and sale of up to 2 million pounds of BioMAG, a high-oleic soybean oil (HOSO)-based polymer modifier for asphalt that has a 300-million-pound annual market potential. Cochran's ongoing work with HOSO-based compounds is a stellar example of the valuable contributions Iowa State is making to the state of Iowa's bioscience-based economic development initiatives.