



# Increasing Grant Capacity at Smaller Institutions through Innovative Services

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## Overview

Oklahoma State University (OSU) and four other institutions are part of the same system. Langston University is an 1890 land-grant and HBCU, Oklahoma Panhandle State University (OPSU) is the State's only Hispanic-Serving Institution, and Northeastern Oklahoma A&M (NEO) and Connors State College are both two-year Native American Serving Non-tribal Institutions (NASNTI). As part of the same system, these institutions benefit from shared services. Presidents of the institutions agreed that they individually lacked the funds to staff a position dedicated to grant writing with the skills and experience necessary to secure external grants and generate a high enough return on investment to sustain the position. In 2018, the position of System Shared Services Grant Writer was created and supported financially by OSU.

The Oklahoma A&M System supports many underrepresented students, who are often less aware of research opportunities and lab culture (Bowen, 1993). While studies indicate that undergraduate research increases understanding, confidence, and awareness with the strongest effects among underrepresented students (Russell et al., 2007; Warner et al., 2016; Spronken-Smith et al., 2014), these opportunities are limited, especially at two-year schools and primarily undergraduate institutions.

## Objectives

1. Assist the schools with programmatic and institutional level grants (i.e. no primarily research grants)
2. Increase the collaboration among the five institutions
3. Increase graduation rates and persistence rates to the baccalaureate
4. Realize a return on investment at least equal to the cost of the position annually (\$55,000 + fringe = \$76,290 annually or \$305,106 over 4 years)

## Innovations and Novelty

To the best of our knowledge, OSU is the only R1 land-grant institution employing a grant writer dedicated to assisting other institutions in the system. This position is different than other systems that have a common shared Director of Sponsored Programs that focuses on compliance, fiscal matters, and sometimes submissions procedures. Instead, this position is dedicated solely to prospecting, developing, and writing grants. The position is able to assess the landscape beyond the silos of each institutions.

## Financial Results

Within the first six months, grants worth \$1.7M were submitted and \$10,000 was awarded. To date, the position has assisted in grant applications that resulted in over \$12M in awarded funds. This represents a conservative ROI of 3,000%. In some cases, the success of the position resulted in the elimination of outside consultancy for grant writing.

## Impact

Approximately 8,000 students, 2,275 community members, and 200 faculty members across the five institutions have directly benefitted from the awarded programs. The programs have assisted in creating pipelines for students and bridge programs. By creating these pipelines, we help ensure the baccalaureate population reflects the diverse communities found in Oklahoma while developing the support structures that mitigate attainment barriers. Oklahoma has 39 sovereign nations within its borders and has one of the fastest growing Mexican-born populations in the country (Pew Hispanic Center, 2019).

Additionally, awarded programs have led to faculty training in Course-based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs) at two-year and primarily undergraduate institutions and culturally-inclusive mentoring and teaching.

Retention programs were created through student research and supports such as new TRiO programs and programs for student parents. Programs equipped scholars with the awareness of research benefits and cultural norms associated with research and broke barriers such as paid summer research. This is important as undergraduates who directly participate in the research are more likely to continue in that particular field and think about furthering their education at a higher level (Russell et al., 2007). Funding has resulted in hiring additional staff dedicated to supporting Hispanic students at OPSU.

Programs have increased high school students' access to concurrent education through equipment grants and provided support to underrepresented farmers through technical assistance. The system has increased outreach to communities through programs such as agricultural outreach to underrepresented communities, education for K12, opioid prevention programs that are culturally inclusive, training for rural veterinarians and pairing veterinary students with rural veterinarians, and training first responders on protocols for animal disease outbreaks.

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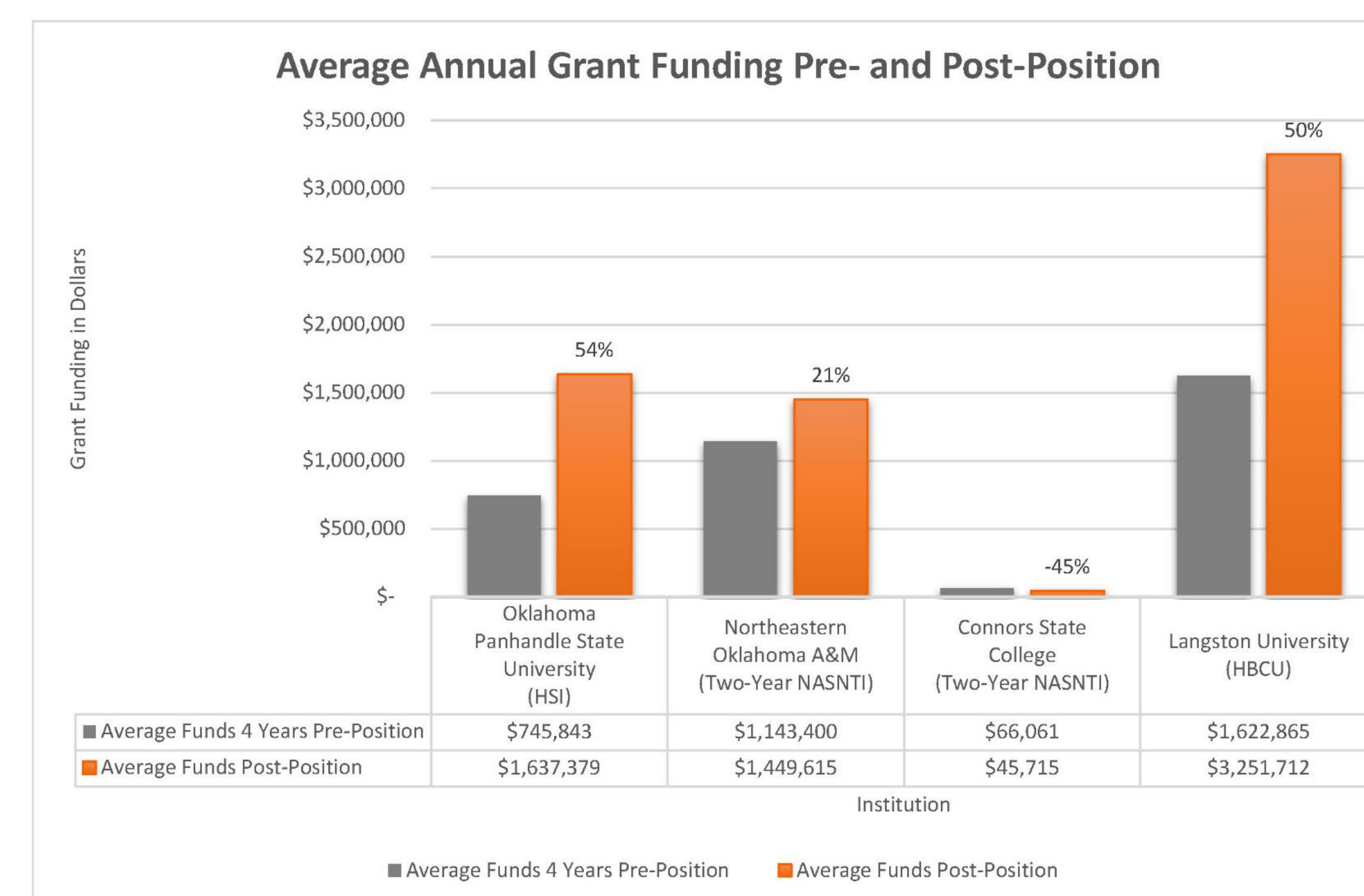
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Bridge programs were created allowing students to conduct research while at NEO and then transfer to OSU where they earn two bachelors.

## Impact Continued

There was one system-wide award to reduce sexual assault that is student led and inclusive of underrepresented students.

As part of the program, staff and faculty at the institutions have gained greater understanding of successful grant writing resulting in greater capacity beyond that of the one position.



*The institutions that engaged with the position saw an increase in non-research grant funding. This excludes standard Department of Education formula funding and COVID related funding.*

## Acknowledgements

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## Housing Co-Hort Application

Qualification Criteria:

- \* Identify as Hispanic
- \* Low-Income
- \* First generation college student (your guardian(s) did not complete college)

The program will cover the cost of housing per semester. Participants must reside in the Holter Hall Dorms and will be paired with 1 other participant roommate. Limited scholarship opportunities available.

*OPSU was awarded a grant to expand supports to its Hispanic and Latinx students including cohort housing for students who traditionally live with their parents.*

## REFERENCES

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*Langston University received funding to provide scholarships to Agriculture students.*