

Life Science Industry's Rapid Growth in Washington State Challenged by NIH Budget Cuts

U.S. life science industry's research foundation challenged by NIH future, and competition with China and the European Union.

SEATTLE, WA, UNITED STATES, April 7, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- LifeScienceHistory.com (LSH) announces release of a report highlighting the challenges of Washington State's growing life science industry with proposed National Institutes of Health (NIH) budget cuts.

Washington state is home to a growing life science industry that includes nearly 500 companies, sixty percent more than in 2015. More than one-quarter are founded on technology from the state's universities and non-profit research organizations. Most also have some form of ongoing relationship with universities and non-profit organizations, supporting their research.

The Trump Administration's FY 2026 budget proposal which included a total NIH program level of \$27.9 billion, a 42% reduction from the prior year, signaled a major shift in funding priorities, significantly impacting the nation's universities, non-profit research organization and federal laboratories. The NIH cuts, including a 15% spending cap on indirect costs, harm already stretched budgets with increased laboratory costs, infrastructure, and staff.

"Our nation is at a major turning point" said Phil Ness, Founder and CEO of Info.Resource, publisher of LifeScienceHistory.com.



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The immediate impact of the budget cuts included replacement of long-serving agency leadership with temporary leadership through forced resignations, mass reductions in force, eliminated and restricted budgets, and facility closures.

“Only time will tell whether the damage to the NIH, our nation’s research foundation, can be corrected.” said Ness, former Manager of the Washington State’s Department of Trade and Economic Development’s Biotechnology Program, and staff, Governor’s Biotechnology Advisory Committee.

During FY 2025, Washington’s research universities: the University of Washington, Washington State

University, and the state’s largest non-profit research organizations: the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, combined brought \$4.5 billion in grant and contract awards into the state. Since 2000, these institutions have brought more than \$75 billion into the state.

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Phil Ness

The University of Washington (UW) in Seattle, and Washington State University (WSU) in Pullman, have attracted more than \$39.3 billion in grants, contracts & federal research and training awards into the state since 2000. During the fiscal year (FY) ending June 30, 2025, the UW and WSU received a total of \$2.47 billion in total grant and contract awards, an increase of \$320 million or 14.8% compared with the \$2.15 billion received in FY 2024.

Since 2000, the FHCRC and PNNL—the state’s largest non-profit research organizations—have brought in over \$36.1 billion in grants, contracts, and federal awards. During the fiscal year (FY) ending June 30, 2025, the FHCRC and PNNL received a total of \$2.15 billion in total grant and contract awards, the same budget level received in FY 2024.

In February 2026, Congress enacted legislation providing \$47.2 billion in NIH funding representing a slight increase over FY2025 levels, rejecting the administration’s proposed steep



cuts to research, including the proposed 15% spending cap on indirect costs.

Unfortunately, the effects of the initial budget cuts, staff reductions and facility closures are difficult to reverse. The scientists who lost their jobs and their families have moved on, and an increasing number have taken their research expertise overseas.

Additionally, new immigration restrictions, country suspensions, and increased H-1B visa application fees have resulted in a disruption of research labs, staff, and supply chains.

The Trump Administration's proposed 2027 budget includes \$41 billion for the NIH, a \$5 billion reduction, and reduces the number of its institutes and centers from 27 to 22, proceeding again down an uncertain path, while China is rapidly moving forward.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), China has officially crept past the U.S. in total research and development investment. According to the OECD, China's leapfrog occurred in 2024. That year, China invested \$1.03 trillion (in current dollar value) in research and development from all sources, topping the United States' \$1.01 trillion investment.

"The U.S. has abdicated its global leadership position. Unless Congress acts to restore the cuts, I fear the result will be a continued decline in our nation's STEM education, innovation in healthcare research, new company creation and economic growth."

Info.Resource is a Seattle based company, established in 1997, that previously owned and published a specialized nationwide network of state- and Canadian province-based life science web sites.

LSH is a rapidly growing resource for life science news and history, company information with Genealogy on Demand, all searchable by state and province, original cartoons, and original "Earth is a Rock, Let the DNA Mold Me" music video celebrating science and scientists everywhere, plus more.:



The NIH and U.S. Healthcare in Crisis

Report Link: <https://lifesciencehistory.com/wa-life-science-research-funding-report/>

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