

MUS Research and Economic Development

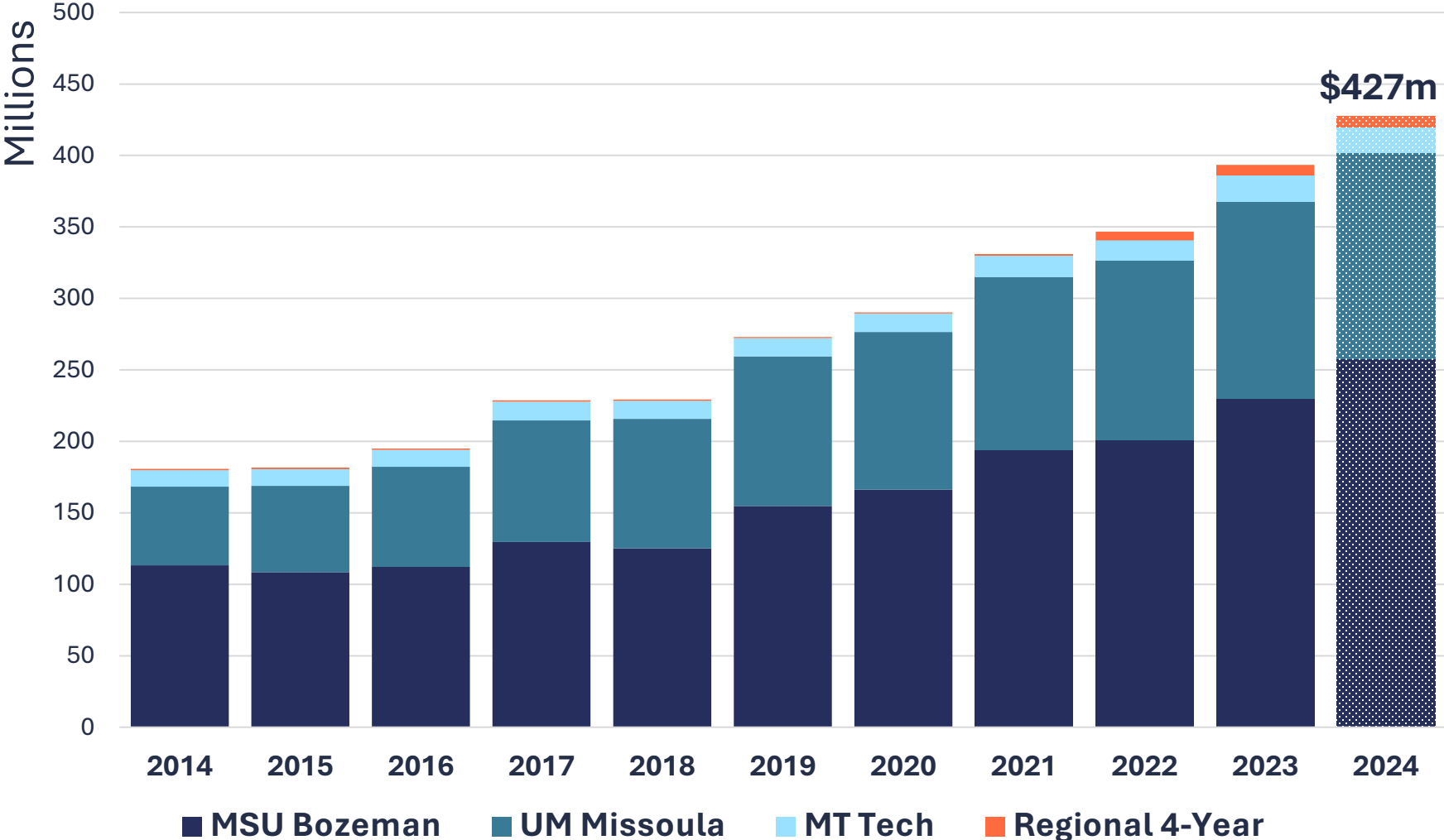
November 2024



Joseph Thiel, Deputy Commissioner Academic, Research & Student Affairs

The MUS achieved a new record for research activity in 2024

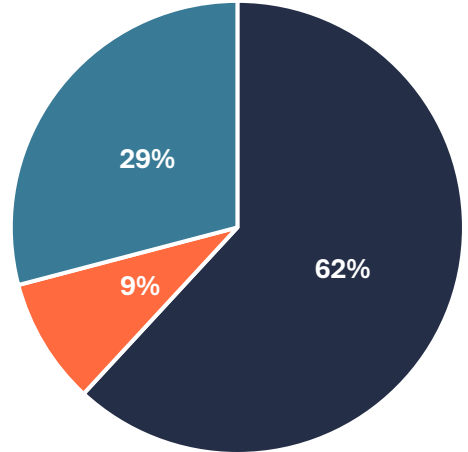
(Research expenditure totals from National Science Foundation HERD survey. values in nominal \$)



Montana ranks 5th in the nation for the growth of its university research enterprise in the most recently released national data.

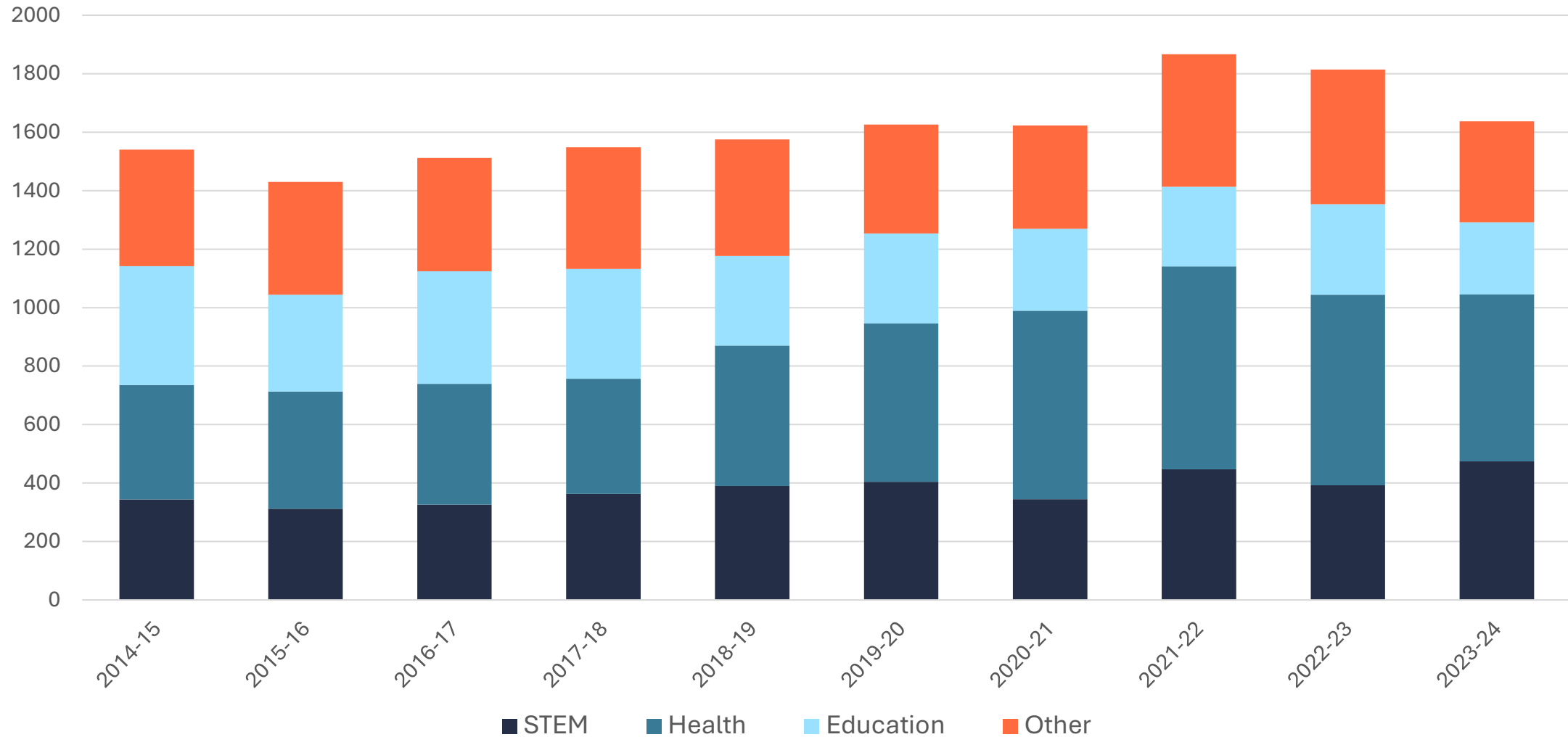
Research funding supports >2000 students employed or funded through research grants or contracts.

Expenditures by Funding Source, FY24



■ Federal ■ Non-Federal ■ Institutional

MUS graduate degrees awarded, AY 2014/15 - AY2023/24



Change 2014-2023: ■STEM ▲38% | ■Health ▲46% | ■Education ▼39% | ■Other ▼13% | **TOTAL: ▲8.6%**

UM invited to submit to NSF Innovation Engines funding round

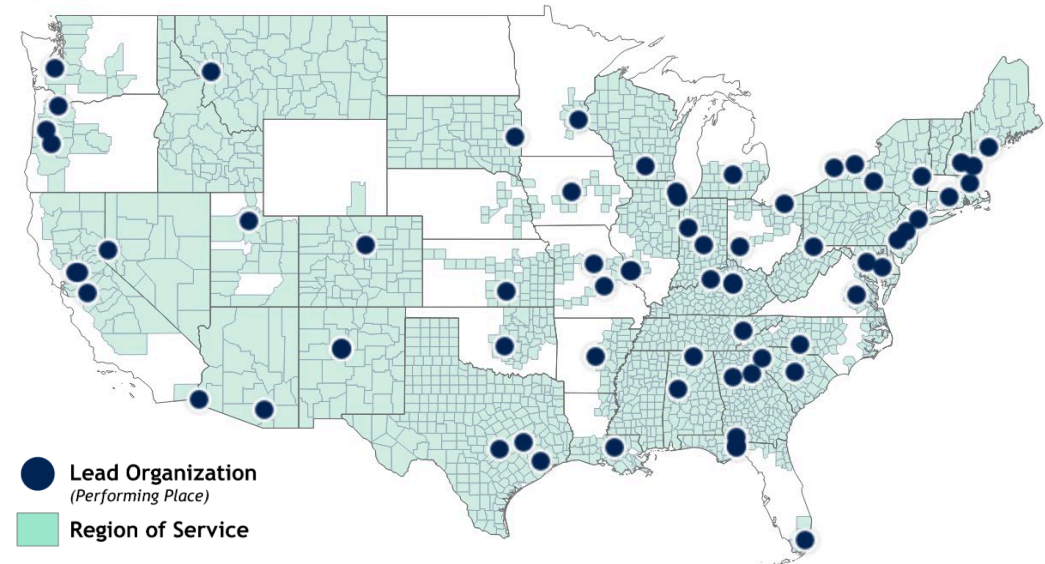


Forest and Rangeland Technology Hub for Economic Resilience

- ❖ Hub for use-inspired research, tech transfer and skilled workforce development focused on forest and rangeland management technologies
- ❖ Service focus on Montana and Idaho with national partners including the US Forest Service and BLM
- ❖ If successful, the hub will receive up to \$160m in funds over the next decade



U.S. National Science Foundation Regional Innovation Engines



PI and Award Statistics

Research and special-focus ed units: MSU-Bozeman, UM-Missoula, and Montana Tech

	FY22	FY23	FY24	% Change 1 yr
# of Proposals	1649	1508	1628	+8%
# of PIs Submitting Proposals	775	738	786	+7%
\$\$ Requested	\$701,076,471	\$975,312,367	\$926,881,353	-5%
\$\$ New Awards	\$294,250,743	\$335,247,535	\$365,753,977	+9%

Changes on the horizon and MUS strategy

- Our goal: establish Montana strengths in areas that align with federal funding priorities
 - Environmental management
 - Precision forestry & agriculture
 - Optics and photonics
 - Quantum supply chain
 - Rare earth element recovery
 - We have leveraged federal grants to make strategic faculty hires
 - Two AI/ML faculty hired via Montana's NSF Track – I “SMART FIRES” grant
 - New optics/photonics faculty made possible through Tech Hub support
 - But big changes are on the horizon that could impact research growth
 - The National Science Foundation is remaking its EPSCoR program, which has been fundamental to establishing new research strengths in Montana.
 - Programs the MUS has prioritized began with bipartisan support (EDA Tech Hubs; NSF Innovation Engines), but it is unclear if they will receive ongoing funding in the Trump administration.
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