

**Provost's Town Hall Meeting
Research Themes of the New Strategic Plan
February 11, 2015
Summary of Q&A Session**

Q. How will the strategic plan address difficulties with startup funding for research costs?

A. Startup monies can be included in the budgets associated with the proposals for strategic research themes.

Q. Are we trying to limit funding to just four research areas?

A. No, if someone is working in an area that is not one of the four areas identified, they are free to try and establish a new coalition with other faculty. Establishing the final themes will be an open competitive process.

Q. How much money will be available for this competition?

A. In the short term we've identified several million dollars. Over the longer term of plan, we do anticipate additional investments.

Q. What is the timeline for funding requests?

A. A detailed timeline hasn't been solidified yet, but we anticipate a RFI within the next month or so, with a subsequent RFP issued by the end of spring semester. (See implementation slide for overview, p. 16)

Q. Is \$100M the stated goal for a yearly sponsored research total at RIT?

A. Yes.

Q. How much additional investment will be required to raise an additional \$40M over and above the \$60M we will bring in this year?

A. Nationally, the return on institutional investment in research is approximately 4.5.

Q. What is RIT's current return?

A. RIT's current return is approximately 3.3.

Q. How do you expect the faculty to help you improve that number?

A. By submitting more proposals and better proposals. One example is to have faculty submitting more than one proposal per year. A PI needs to hedge their bets considering the average hit rates and the capriciousness that is invariably part of the review process. It is also much more efficient to submit multiple proposals where one can re-use much of the boiler plate (i.e., current and pending, facilities, CVs, etc.) that need to be pulled together for a proposal. Also, we need to revise and resubmit proposals that are not successful the first time. Hit rates go up substantially for resubmissions.

Q. As efforts to ramp up for research, is there more money in the budget to bring more faculty to teach?

A. We are utilizing more lecturers which means fewer classes to teach for tenure-track faculty and more time for research. This does not mean that researchers will not be educating our students. This has been and will remain our number one priority. However, we expect that increased research will enrich the type of educational offerings we can provide for our students.

Q. Is there an institution that you feel we are most like?

A. Carnegie Mellon serves as a good comparison; they made a concerted effort to be a leader in robotics and software development, and were successful. Dartmouth is also an institution, like RIT, that offers a limited number of Ph.D. programs.