



SCIENCE FOR HYPERPARTISAN TIMES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6TH, 2024

TTI VANGUARD



Jeffrey Warren, PhD
Executive Director, North Carolina Collaboratory



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

TALK SUMMARY



From left to right: Former UNC Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz, NC State Senator Gladys Robinson, NC Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Berger, Collaboratory Executive Director Jeff Warren, UNC Trustees John Preyer and David Boliek Jr. (Jon Gardiner/UNC-Chapel Hill)

1

Creating the
Collaboratory

2

Overcoming
hyperpartisan times

3

Executing the
legislative mandate

4

Eight years later

ABOUT US

Established in 2016 by the North Carolina General Assembly, the Collaboratory supports cross-sector research partnerships that seek to transform academic research into evidence-based solutions for environmental, health, and societal challenges faced by people in North Carolina.

Codified as Article 31A of NCGS 116-255



ISSUES

IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SPRING 2021

NATIONAL ACADEMIES OF
SCIENCES, ENGINEERING,
AND MEDICINE

ARIZONA STATE
UNIVERSITY

JEFFREY WARREN

Science for Hyper-Partisan Times

“ [The Collaboratory] is being used and endorsed by both sides of the political aisle, and should be a gentle reminder, in the midst of the nation’s current hyper-partisanship, that we all stand closer together than some might have us believe. –Jeffrey Warren, PhD

Views From the Inside

NUKES

THE NSF

HOSPITALS

THE COGNITIVE
ECOSYSTEM

...election began an era of especially unbridled political rancor in the United States. Republicans were ahead of the curve by November 2016, when election results awarded the Republicans the majority in both chambers of the U.S. Congress for the first time in 41 years. And as was true on the national political stage, environmental issues in North Carolina often split the Republican majority. As the new Republican majority began to develop environmental policy initiatives for issues including coastal management, on and offshore oil and gas exploration and production, onshore shale gas, and coal (to name just a few), the agenda to hyper-partisan rancor was fully developed.

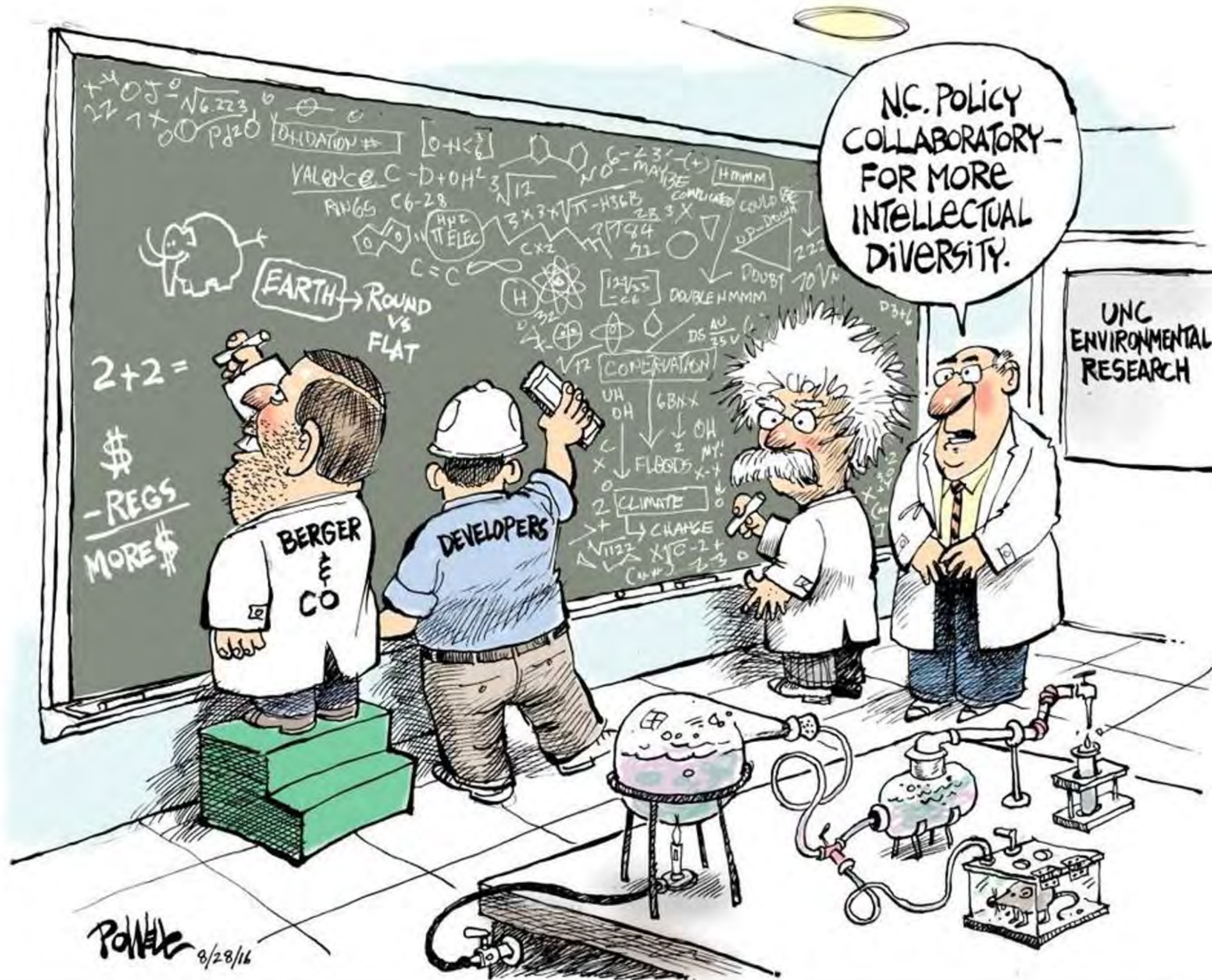
...happened. In response to public suggestions that the University of North Carolina System should be called on to help address state and local policy challenges, Berger’s goal was to “have a direct contact at UNC to answer questions and make policy recommendations.”

Headquartered at UNC Chapel Hill, the Collaboratory is a unique research-policy model able to leverage all 17 institutions of the UNC System. The Collaboratory’s stated mission is “to utilize and disseminate the research expertise across the University of North Carolina System for practical use by state and local government,” and it provides direct recommendations to the state’s General Assembly.

environmental, and water quality improvement.

At first, the instinct for political rancor held sway. Media outlets, nongovernmental organizations, UNC faculty, and Democratic legislators seized on the emergence of the Collaboratory as a partisan attempt to co-opt academic research and thereby undermine academic freedom and institutional autonomy. The title of an article from Sound Rivers, a private nonprofit focused on protecting the state’s Neuse and Tar-Pamlico River Basins, laid bare these fears: “Collaboratory: NC’s new (cleverly funded) War on Science?” The UNC Chapel Hill student newspaper published an opinion column, “Environmental policy at UNC isn’t for sale.” Although the author acknowledged the Collaboratory seemed “a surprising step toward new effective environmental policy” for a Republican-controlled legislature, the column also stated, “Unfortunately, the current vision of the Collaboratory seems to be one of partisan gamesmanship, corporate pseudoscience, and anti-academic aggression.” Faculty across the UNC System bristled at the realization the center had been established without their input and even suggested via faculty resolutions that the General Assembly had broken its own laws in doing so.

Antagonists cast their skepticism far and wide and immediately speculated that the Senate leader’s science adviser had been pre-anointed as the Collaboratory’s inaugural leader. That adviser was me. NC Policy Watch, an online news and commentary outlet of the NC Justice Center, proclaimed me “the mastermind behind the state’s bad environmental laws,” and correlated my staff role with a list of its top 15 bad environmental bills. State Representative Pricey Harrison (D-Guilford), one of the state’s fiercest and highest-profile environmental



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N.C. POLICY COLLABORATORY - FOR MORE INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY.

UNC ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

POWELL 8/28/16

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Meet Jeffrey Warren: The mastermind behind the state's bad environmental laws could get a plum job at UNC

By [Lisa Sorg](#) - 8/18/2016 - in Environment, Featured Articles [Print This Article](#)

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(photo: Lisa Sorg)

In mid-August, the high season's last hurrah, the packed beach at Nags Head is veiled with blue umbrellas that match the color of the ocean and the sky. Yet at just three feet above sea level, Nags Head is sinking, and portions of the beach are receding, both natural geologic occurrences that have shaped the coastline for thousands of years.

But what's not natural is the sea level rise that will eventually engulf the area where beach-goers relax under their umbrellas. What's also unnatural is the state legislation that jeopardizes the environmental and economic viability not only of the coast but the entire state, as well.

These laws were partially crafted by [Jeffrey Warren](#), a geologist by trade and [Senate President Pro Tem Phil Berger's](#) powerful science and energy advisor by anointment.

"I can't think of an individual whose had more of an impact on the environment in a negative way than Jeffrey Warren," said [State Rep. Pricely Harrison](#), a six-term Democratic

lawmaker from Guilford County.

Without the name recognition of a legislator, Warren has operated largely beyond the public eye. But now Warren's track record deserves scrutiny. His name has been floated as the director of the [North Carolina Policy Collaboratory](#), an environmental think tank at UNC Chapel Hill, created and in part, funded by the legislature — and the job hasn't even been posted yet.

“ I can't think of an individual whose had more of an impact on the environment in a negative way than Jeffrey Warren.

—Pricely Harrison”

News

Collaboratory's War on Science?

[Education](#), [Environmental](#), [Regulatory](#)

Posted on November 7th, 2016



Collaboratory: NC's new (cleverly funded) War on Science?

Attacks on our state's clean water protections took an interesting twist this summer. The General Assembly passed an annual budget with a unique provision included in the 209 page bill. This provision, sponsored by the Senate, supplied the University of North Carolina with \$4.5 million dollars to create a new "Collaboratory" and \$500,000 annually through 2022 to study the state's nutrient management strategies for a number of our state's rivers and lakes.

Related News

Riverkeeper hunts down potential pollution problem

February 8th 2024

Action Alert: Ellerbe Creek in jeopardy

February 8th 2024

Baseline sampling set to track LNG facility impacts

February 8th 2024

Sound Rivers wows at museum/expo

February 8th 2024

Sound Rivers in search of new trash trap location

February 1st 2024

Trash trap 'is working' on a Litter-Free Jack's Creek

February 1st 2024

“Of greatest concern by many, including UNC faculty is that... ‘The policy effort was created outside of the normal academic policies and structures.’”

OPINION

Column: Environmental policy at UNC isn't for sale

By [Alexander Peebles](#)

Published Wednesday, Aug. 24, 2016



At first glance, the recent creation of an environmental think tank on UNC's campus by the Republican-controlled North Carolina General Assembly seems to be a surprising step toward new effective environmental policy.

The North Carolina Policy Collaboratory's stated goal of providing research and policy recommendations to North Carolina officials and legislators on local environmental issues is both noble and greatly needed. As a state, we face a variety of pressing issues, from rising sea levels to polluted soil and rivers.

Unfortunately, the current vision of the Collaboratory seems to be one of partisan gamesmanship, corporate pseudoscience and anti-academic aggression.

The idea that N.C. Senate leader Phil Berger would lead the charge on promoting environmental issues — after receiving a five percent legislative rating from Environment America in 2014 and a 33 percent lifetime rating from the North Carolina League of Conservation voters that same year — is not just surprising; it is unbelievable.

His promotion of the Collaboratory indicates that the organization is more likely intended to create conservative propaganda than effective policy. This is reinforced



Unfortunately, the current vision of the Collaboratory seems to be one of partisan gamesmanship, corporate pseudoscience and anti-academic aggression.





Whereas; Session Law 2016-94, section 11.8 establishes a Policy ‘Collaboratory’ at UNC Chapel Hill in apparent violation of multiple clauses of GS 116, and established procedures for the creation of centers and institutes required by UNC Code 44.5[R], which clearly apply to this entity...



Resolution 2016-1

On the Governance Implications of North Carolina Session Law 2016-94

Approved by the UNC Faculty Assembly September 02, 2016

Whereas, NC General Statute 116-11 establishes a Board of Governors to plan and develop a coordinated system of higher education and govern the 17 constituent institutions; and

Whereas, NC General Statute 116-14 provides for the Board to elect a President of University of North Carolina to act as the chief administrative officer of the University; and

Whereas, UNC operates under a system of shared governance leveraging the collective strength of chancellors, and administrators, and honoring the traditional role of the faculty in the governance of the academy; and

Whereas; Session Law 2016-94, section 11.6 (GS 116-239.5) mandates the creation of Lab Schools on eight UNC campuses, circumventing: administrative structures and procedures established by the UNC Code, the Department of Public Instruction, local Boards of Education, and best practices of effective governance by excluding consultation with faculty and administrators of the schools of education at UNC campuses; and

Whereas; Session Law 2016-94, section 11.8 establishes a Policy “Collaboratory” at UNC Chapel Hill in apparent violation of multiple clauses of GS 116, and established procedures for the creation of centers and institutes required by UNC Code 400.5[R], which clearly apply to this entity; and

Whereas; Session Law 2016-94, section 11.9 overrides Board of Governors’ action penalizing UNC Chapel Hill in the 2015-2016 academic year for exceeding the UNC Code mandated 18% out-of-state enrollment cap, thereby undermining the lawful prerogative authority of the Board of Governors and principles of effective institutional governance;

Resolved, The UNC Faculty Assembly opposes the processes of formulating and implementing the aforementioned actions, and reiterates the Assembly’s opposition to all actions establishing restrictive precedent that binds the governance authority of the current faculty and its successors, the Executive leadership of UNC campuses and the UNC system, current and future Boards of Governors, and future representatives of the people of this State, in their efforts to promote the success of public higher education in North Carolina;

Resolved, That the NC General Assembly fully restore all prerogative authority of the Board of Governors in matters pertaining to institutional adherence to the UNC Code; and

Resolved, That the appended justification of this resolution (Appendix A) provides a narrative of developments and concerns explaining its origins.

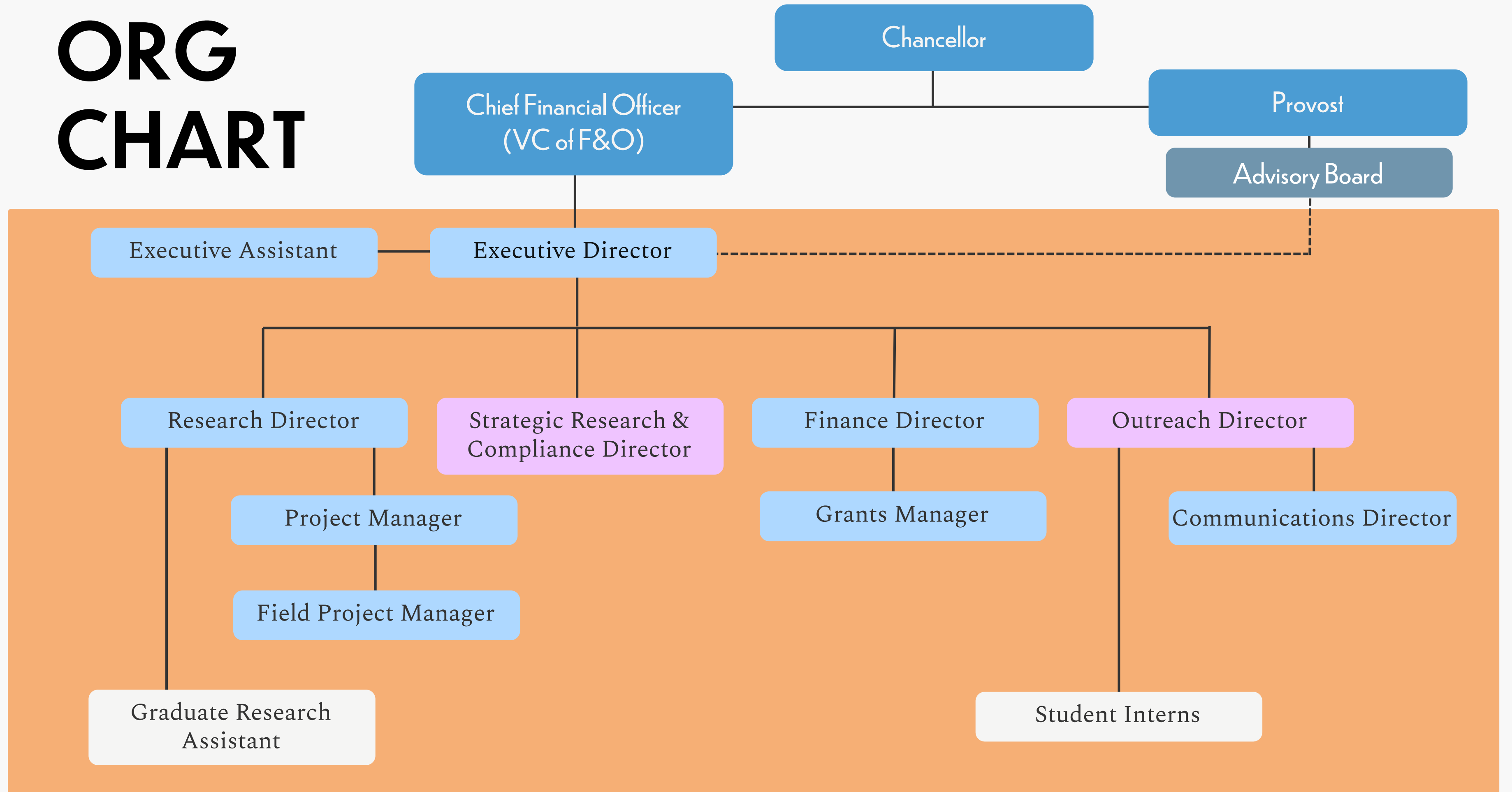


2022

UNC Trustees approved funding operations from non-State funds allowing for:

- 1 Expansion of staff (more than one FTE)
- 2 Sending the message to the NCGA that UNC-CH was willing to support this effort to ensure 100% of State funds went directly to research

ORG CHART



Article 31A.
The North Carolina Collaboratory.

§ 116-255. The North Carolina Collaboratory established.

- (a) Collaboratory Established. - There is established the North Carolina Collaboratory (Collaboratory) to facilitate the dissemination of the policy and research expertise of The University of North Carolina and other institutions of higher education within North Carolina for practical use by State and local governments. The Collaboratory shall be housed at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
- (b) Duties and Powers. - The Collaboratory shall do at least the following within the funds available:
- (1) Conduct, manage, or participate in research on natural resources management, including, but not limited to, research related to the environmental and economic components of the management of the natural resources within the State of North Carolina and of new technologies for habitat, environmental, and water quality improvements.
 - (2) Conduct, manage, or participate in other projects and opportunities, including, but not limited to, research that may be of interest to citizens and policymakers within the State.
 - (3) Support research programs at institutions of higher education, particularly institutions identified as historically minority-serving institutions, within the Collaboratory's areas of focus and expertise.
 - (4) Identify, pursue, and support research and development opportunities through technology research and development, including, but not limited to, funding opportunities and partnerships between institutions of higher education, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and both private and public businesses.
 - (5) Develop and disseminate relevant best practices to interested parties, lead or participate in projects across the State, and make policy, research, funding, and other recommendations to the General Assembly.
 - (6) Maintain an online reporting portal, in partnership with the Office of State Fire Marshal, on the storage and deployment of Aqueous Film-Forming Foams (AFFF) as required by G.S. 58-82B-10.
 - (7) Teach and train students and faculty to engage in and administer neutral and unbiased research and advice on science policy through (i) informal workshops and similar events and (ii) formal development and delivery of curriculum.
- (c) Funding Conditions and Restrictions. - The following applies to funding received by the Collaboratory:
- (1) In disseminating State funds, the Collaboratory may give funding preference to constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina, wherever possible.
 - (2) Funds appropriated by the General Assembly and used by the Collaboratory may not be used for indirect overhead costs at an institution partnering with the Collaboratory.
 - (3) For research or investigations that need to be carried out expeditiously in response to a project, opportunity, or a legislative mandate, the provisions of Articles 3, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, and 8C of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, G.S. 143-129, and G.S. 116-31.10 shall not apply to the Collaboratory for the purchase of apparatus, supplies, material, services, capital improvements, or equipment in projects addressing an emerging or immediate threat to public health, safety, or welfare. This subdivision shall apply only when at least fifty percent (50%) of the total funding for a project was provided by the Collaboratory. For each project that utilizes this exemption, the Collaboratory shall provide a justification in writing and make this document available on its website for the duration of the project.
 - (4) All units of State and local government shall cooperate and assist the Collaboratory with its research program by providing reasonable access to at least the following:
 - a. Infrastructure.
 - b. Personnel.
 - c. Data.
 - (5) The Collaboratory may allocate funds to units of State and local government, as necessary, for purposes of facilitating compliance with subdivision (4) of this subsection.
 - (6) In coordination with a constituent institution of The University of North Carolina and subject to applicable statutes and policies regarding capital improvements, the Collaboratory may allocate funds for capital improvements on or in any property owned or operated by any constituent institution necessary to carry out research and development projects in which the Collaboratory has funded completely or in part. (2021-180, s. 8.8(b); 2022-6, s. 2.16(a).)
 - (7) The Collaboratory may negotiate or impose data use, data management, and revenue sharing requirements for intellectual property developed through its research awards using State funds, including, but not limited to, contractual terms that provide for gross revenue distribution to the General Fund for future research and development projects.
 - (8) Funds appropriated by the General Assembly to the Collaboratory (i) shall not revert to the General Fund but shall remain available until expended and (ii) shall not apply to the carryforward limitation imposed on constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina by G.S. 116-30.3.



UNIQUE AUTHORITIES

The Collaboratory is granted a range of unique and exclusive privileges under the statute to support our research funding in service to the State.

No Indirect/Overhead Allowed

Prohibited from covering indirect/overhead charges on research grants.

Purchasing Exemptions

The Collaboratory may invoke purchasing exemptions if needed for urgent projects.

Blanket Non-Reversion Clause

All funds managed by the Collaboratory are now non-reverting and do not apply to existing UNC System carryforward limitations at each constituent campus.

Authority to determine:

- Revenue sharing requirements for intellectual property
- Data use and management terms





UNIQUE AUTHORITIES

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Nimble Distribution of Funds

Our projects do not flow through the Office of Sponsored Programs at UNC (funding agreements handled directly with individual units and campuses).

Non-UNC System Research

Academic research outside the System may be funded, though preference will be given to UNC System campuses wherever possible.

Capital Improvements

State funds may be used for capital improvements including analytical instrumentation and lab upgrades to conduct Collaboratory-sponsored research.





UNIQUE AUTHORITIES

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Dedicated Funding for Historically Minority-Serving Institutions:

The Collaboratory receives a recurring funding stream of \$1.5 million per year for research at The University of North Carolina's six HSMI campuses.





UNIQUE AUTHORITIES

The Collaboratory is granted a range of unique and exclusive privileges under the statute to support our research funding in service to the State.

State Cooperation and Assistance

All units of State and local government shall cooperate and assist the Collaboratory with its research program by providing reasonable access to at least the following:

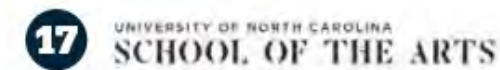
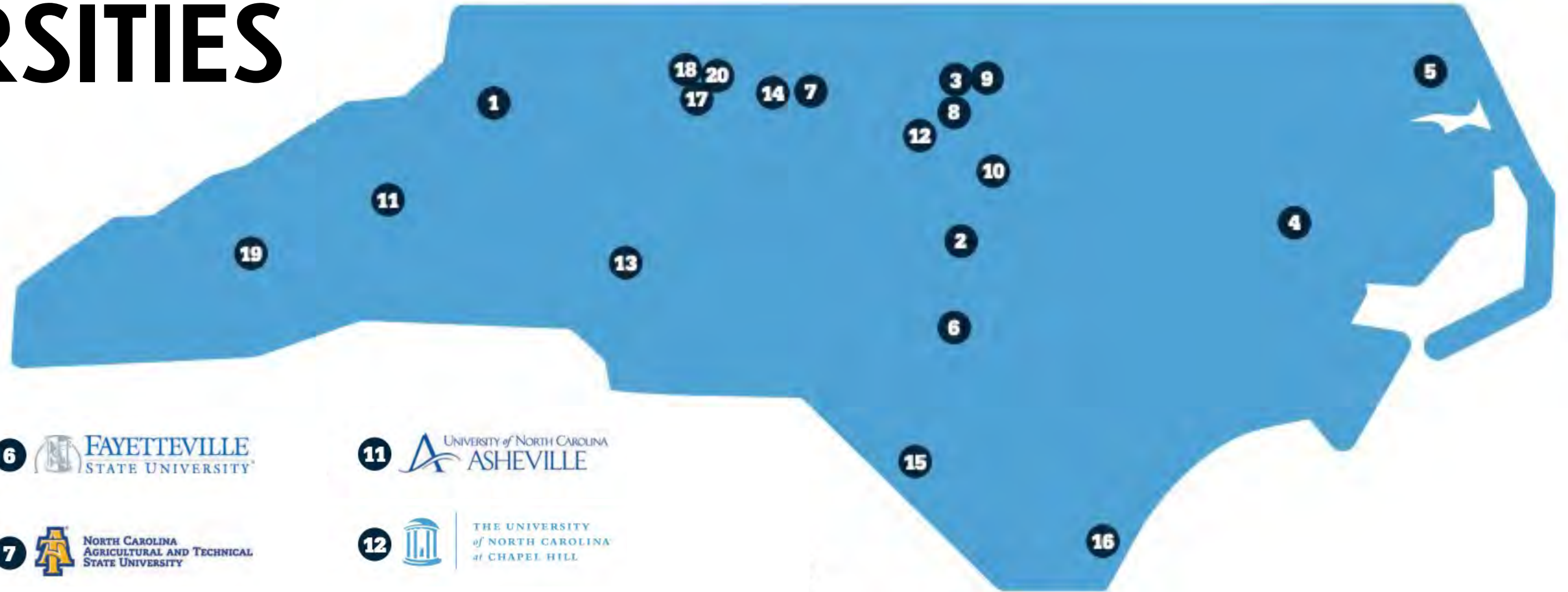
- Infrastructure
- Personnel; and,
- Data

Policy & Funding Recommendations

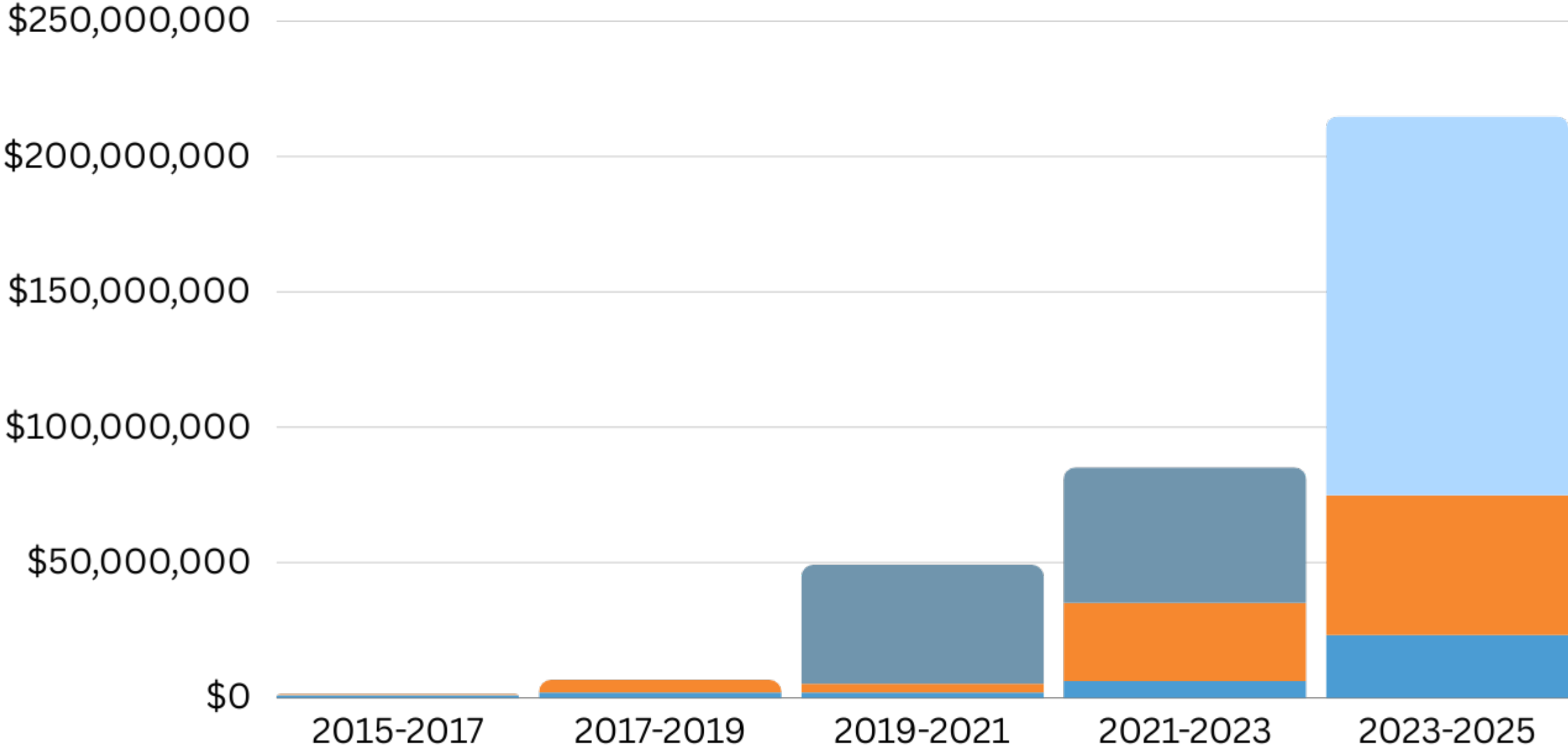
The Collaboratory may make funding and policy recommendations to the legislature to further its mission to support research that provides practical information for use by State and local governments.



PARTNER UNIVERSITIES



APPROPRIATIONS



- NC Innovation*
- Federal
- State (Non-Recurring)
- State (Recurring)

*Authorized Passthrough



PARTNERSHIP WITH NCI



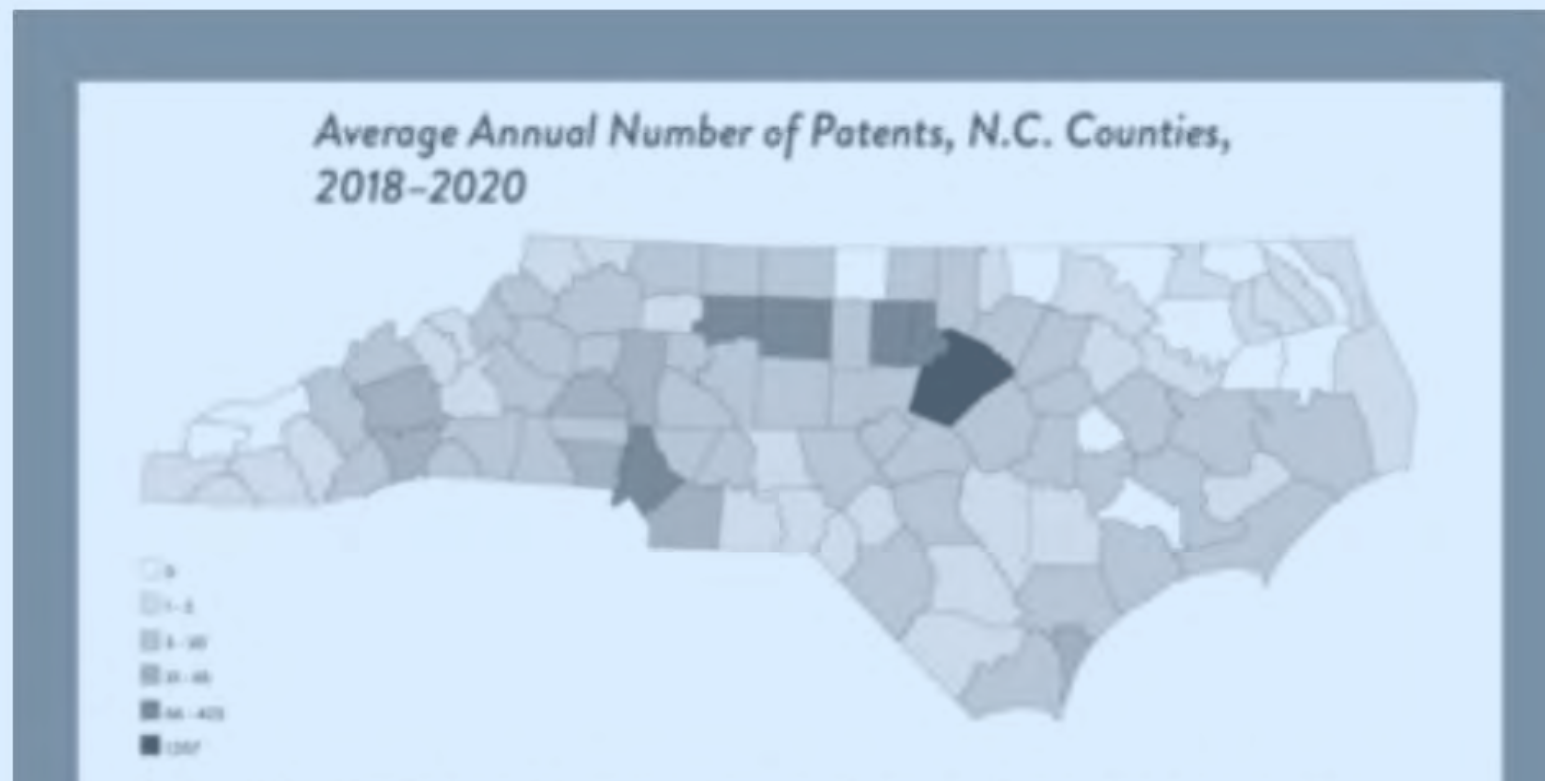
\$140 million*

*Authorized

Passthrough

The Collaboratory is statutorily responsible for managing the distribution of investment income for NC Innovation.

► NEWS



FEATURED

RTP 'doing well', but NC needs to 'spread the wealth' to improve state's No. 20 innovation ranking

North Carolina ranks No. 20 in the nation on innovation, according to Dr. John Hardin, the executive director for the...

Orlando Coronell, PhD
Frank Leibfarth, PhD



With over \$10 million in appropriations from the NCGA, the Collaboratory has supported NC Pure in developing technologies that efficiently remove PFAS from water, including the difficult-to-remove short-chain PFAS such as GenX. The funding will allow the team to scale up technology for deployment and evaluation in three sites across NC.



PFAS RESEARCH ALLIANCE



Nabarun Dasgupta, PhD

The Collaboratory received a \$1.9 million appropriation made by the NCGA, part of a \$26 billion national opioid settlement. Each of the five funded projects will focus on a topic related to preventing and addressing the misuse and abuse of opioids, treating or mitigating opioid use, or other consequences of the opioid crisis.



STREET DRUG ANALYSIS LAB



Antonia Sebastian, PhD
Greg Characklis, PhD

In 2019, the Collaboratory received \$2 million in funding from the NCGA as part of a disaster recovery package. The Collaboratory was charged with studying flood and resiliency against future storms in eastern North Carolina and developing an implementation plan with recommendations.

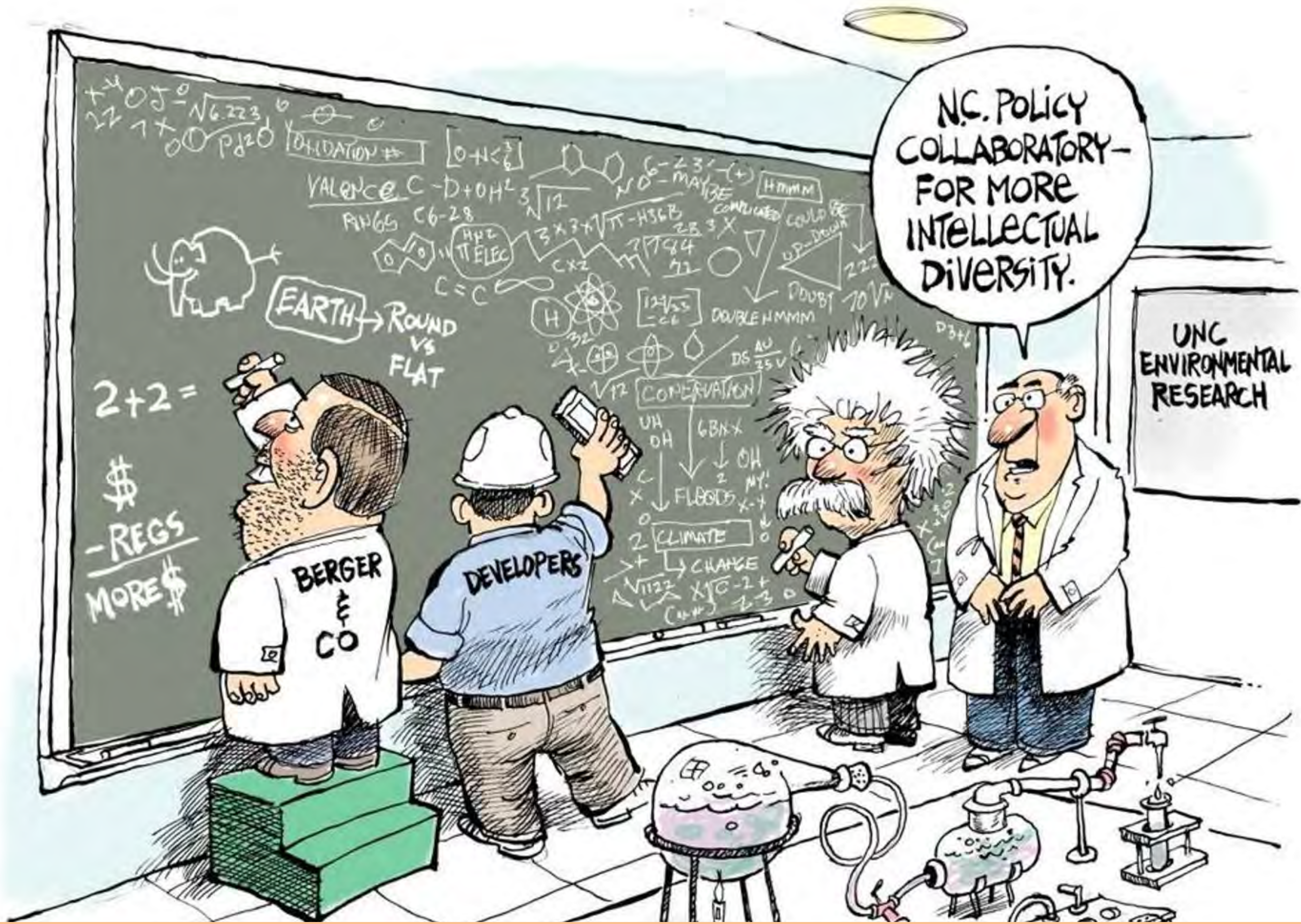


<https://researchweek.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/LunchLearn-Flooding-URW2023compress.pdf>



FLOOD RESILIENCY HUB





BEST OF LUCK WITH THIS PROJECT. I DO THINK SOMETHING GOOD WILL COME FROM IT! Duane Powell

 216

PH

Pricey >

political bias. I've worked too hard to overcome that perception for past 2.5 years to prove what an incredible research model this is for NC.

Thanks for your support, Pricey. It means a lot to me to know we are once again allies.

Thanks Jeff. I will forever regret being so suspicious of the collaboratory. You have created something special. Congratulations. We can likely revisit the Oct date if it looks unworkable right?



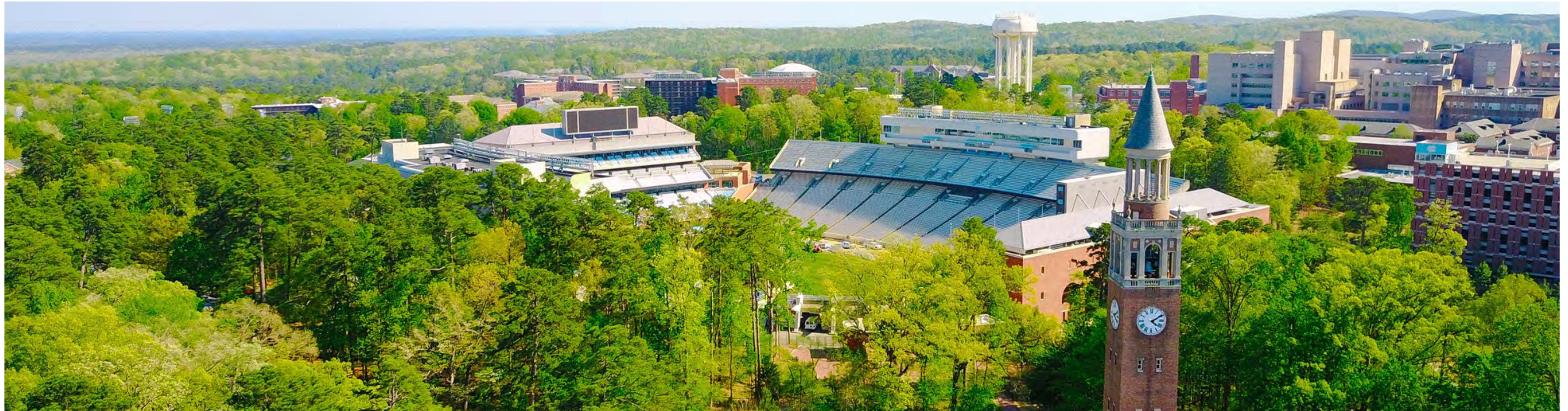
We can. I have a feeling you all will be back 18 times before then.

Delivered





iMessage





THANK YOU & QUESTIONS



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THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

Jeffrey Warren - jeff.warren@unc.edu

