



OKLAHOMA

Center for the
Advancement of
Science and
Technology

Oklahoma Center of the Advancement of Science and Technology

FY 2027 Budget Hearing Presentation

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Executive Director



The Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science & Technology (OCAST) serves as Oklahoma's statewide engine for turning innovation into economic growth. State statute directs OCAST to "grow and diversify Oklahoma's economy and provide new and higher quality jobs" by supporting the "development of new products, new processes, and whole new industries in Oklahoma." (O.S. 74, Sections 5061a and 50602A)

OCAST fulfills this mission by helping Oklahoma innovators turn ideas into real companies, supports technologies that solve real-world problems, and accelerates business growth in sectors where Oklahoma can lead. This work builds the high-wage, future-focused industries; such as aerospace, biotechnology, defense, advanced manufacturing, and energy innovation, that give Oklahoma a competitive edge.

Established in 1987, the agency now encompasses the following divisions:

Administration and Finance

- Administration
- Human Resources
- Finance
- Oklahoma Capital Investment Board

Programs

- Industry Innovation Programs
- STEM Internship Pipeline Program
- Innovation Assistance: Moving Ideas from Concept to Customer
- Capital Access Programs
- Oklahoma Commercialization Network
- Inventors Assistance Services
- Small Business Research Assistance
- Manufacturing Assistance
- Investment & Business Readiness Assistance (Legal, Financial, Accounting)
- Oklahoma Accelerator Program

Office of Science and Innovation

- Marketing and Communications
- Government Affairs
- Data team to help guide performance, improve Oklahoma's rankings in innovation reports

Agency Vision, Mission and Core Values

Vision: We fuel bold ideas that become scalable companies and technologies—so innovators, businesses, and communities can grow Oklahoma’s economy and quality of life together.

Mission: To foster innovation in startup and existing businesses by supporting basic and applied research; facilitating technology transfer between research laboratories and businesses; providing seed capital for innovative firms in the development of new products or services; and helping Oklahoma’s small and medium-sized manufacturing firms become more competitive through increased productivity and modernization (O.S. 74, Section 5060.3).

Core Values: *Innovation that Delivers:* We champion bold ideas that solve real challenges, driving science and technology, into solutions that create jobs, grow industries, and strengthen communities.

Collaboration that Multiplies Impact: We unite teams, sectors, and regions so that we can break down silos so innovators and partners achieve more together than any could alone.

Accountability with Results: We measure what matters. With jobs created, startups launched, technologies brought to market, and returns on investments. We own our outcomes and earn trust through transparency and results taxpayers can see.

Partnerships with Purpose: We co-create with industry, education, and communities to align resources, amplify investments, and deliver lasting economic impact.

Service to Every Oklahoman: We reach all 77 counties, ensuring that rural and urban innovators alike have access to programs that unlock opportunity and growth.



Accomplishments

Top accomplishments for FY 2025 – FY 2026

Driving Statewide Economic Impact

- 2,024 direct jobs and 5,060 indirect jobs created or retained in FY24
- Average salary of OCAST-supported jobs: \$83,196
- 43 new companies launched
- \$139M in follow-on private capital attracted

Expanding Access to Capital with High ROI

- Secured and deployed the second U.S. Treasury State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) tranche; on track for tranche three
- Leveraged \$22.6M in private capital through U.S. Treasury SSBCI
- Achieved a 5:1 return on the state's investment in Generation Food Rural Partners, supporting rural innovation

Modernizing Oklahoma's Innovation Infrastructure

- Launched statewide CRM for referrals, partner tracking, and legacy data migration
- Transitioned the Intern Partnership Program to year-round access; expanded to CareerTech
- Completed external program evaluations for Inventors Assistance Service and Industrial Extension Service and implemented improvements.
- Implemented process to regularly evaluate internal and external programs to increase impact and address gaps.

Strengthening Applied R&D and Industry-Led Innovation

- Industry Innovation Program submissions reached a record ~70 applications
- Redirected funds from lower-performing programs to increase FY25 Industry Innovation funding to \$7.17M
- Industry Innovation Special Projects secured a 12:1 return on match for the U.S. Treasury SSBCI Small Business Opportunity Program (SBOP) award

Growing a Stronger Statewide Innovation Ecosystem

- Collaboratively worked to support the Oklahoma Farm Bureau in launching regional innovation conferences to expand opportunities to all Oklahomans.
- Expanded the Oklahoma Commercialization Network with Gradient, REI Oklahoma, and Verge OKC
- Grew Innovation Day into the Innovation Conference & Expo with 150 attendees, 54 exhibitors, and 300+ guests



Analysis of Agency Challenges

	Challenge Description	Current Actions (Briefly describe how the agency is currently addressing the challenge.)	Planned Actions (Briefly describe how the agency plans to address the challenge going forward.)
1	OCAST continues to face inadequate recurring appropriations to meet the growing demand for Industry Innovation, commercialization support, and capital access programs. Without sufficient baseline funding, the agency must turn away high-quality projects, delaying economic impact and weakening Oklahoma's competitiveness in technology-based economic development.	OCAST is maximizing existing funding by prioritizing highest-impact projects, referring businesses to partner programs when internal funding is unavailable, and leveraging SSBCI, ARPA, and federal match opportunities where possible. These actions help extend support even when program demand exceeds state resources.	OCAST request increased recurring appropriations in FY27 to expand funding for Industry Innovation, internships, and capital access programs. Additionally, the agency will seek federal, corporate, and philanthropic partnerships to diversify funding streams and mitigate volatility in year-to-year appropriations.
2	OCAST faces increasing operational costs due to inflation, rising technology expenses, and statewide cost-of-business increases. In addition, the agency must prepare for a potential office relocation in early 2027, which will require both transition planning and one-time expenditures. Without adequate operational flexibility, these cost pressures may impact program delivery and administrative efficiency.	OCAST is managing expenses through internal cost controls, leveraging the new CRM to streamline processes, and prioritizing essential operational needs. The agency is also proactively planning the logistics of an eventual office relocation to minimize disruption to services and ensure continuity.	OCAST request increased operational funding in FY27 specifically to cover inflationary costs, technology needs, and relocation-related expenses. The agency will also seek cost-saving opportunities and efficiencies through partner collaborations to responsibly manage the transition and maintain high-quality service delivery.



Analysis of Agency Challenges

	Challenge Description	Current Actions (Briefly describe how the agency is currently addressing the challenge.)	Planned Actions (Briefly describe how the agency plans to address the challenge going forward.)
3	OCAST requires accurate, comprehensive data to assess program outcomes, guide decision-making, and demonstrate return on investment. As programs expand, inconsistent or incomplete data, particularly from legacy systems or external partners, limits the agency's ability to fully quantify economic impact and meet federal reporting requirements.	OCAST has centralized data management within the agency, implemented new CRM tracking, and begun streamlining data inputs, standards, and reporting across programs and partners.	Beginning in FY27, OCAST will launch longitudinal impact studies and integrate national benchmarking datasets. The agency will also enhance federal and state reporting systems, adopt shared data standards across partners, and use data analytics staffing to support more sophisticated evaluation and economic modeling.
4	Several high-impact OCAST programs are supported by time-limited awards. As these federal and state-restricted funds wind down, OCAST must secure alternative revenue sources to sustain critical statewide services such as technical assistance, startup accelerators, rural entrepreneurship support, and commercialization activities.	OCAST is maximizing the use of remaining ARPA and SSBCI funds, ensuring compliance, and engaging partners to identify sustainability strategies. The agency is also strengthening its internal tracking and reporting systems to better demonstrate ROI to future funders.	OCAST will actively pursue non-state, non-federal funding, including philanthropic grants, corporate partnerships, foundation collaborations, and competitive national innovation programs. These efforts aim to diversify OCAST's funding base, reduce reliance on one-time awards, and ensure continuity of high-impact initiatives once temporary funding streams expire.



Analysis of Agency Challenges

	Challenge Description	Current Actions (Briefly describe how the agency is currently addressing the challenge.)	Planned Actions (Briefly describe how the agency plans to address the challenge going forward.)
5	<p>Oklahoma must operate as a coordinated and unified innovation system to stay competitive. With a population of four million, the state competes against metropolitan regions that have far greater access to capital, talent, and specialized infrastructure. To bridge that gap, Oklahoma needs strong leadership to align the efforts of universities, industry, CareerTech, accelerators, tribal partners, and regional developers. Emerging sectors such as biotechnology, autonomous systems, defense, energy technology, and advanced manufacturing require deep technical expertise and targeted support, not broad services that are typically associated with traditional economic development strategies. Without flexible funding sources and a coordinated statewide strategy focused on innovation, Oklahoma risks fragmented efforts, duplicated services, and the loss of its competitive position in these high-growth industries.</p>	<p>OCAST was intentionally designed by the Legislature with capabilities that no other agency possesses. As the only statewide entity empowered to help launch and grow technology-based startups, OCAST coordinates the Oklahoma Commercialization Network, connects innovators with capital and commercialization support, and helps companies move ideas from concept to customer. The agency brings together universities, industry, accelerators, tribal partners, and regional developers to build new industries and high-wage jobs. This work complements traditional economic development strategies, which focus on business recruitment and expansion, by providing services that help Oklahoma companies create entirely new technologies and markets. OCAST is also integrating partner and program data through its CRM to strengthen alignment, reduce duplication, and ensure services effectively support emerging technology companies.</p>	<p>To strengthen statewide competitiveness, OCAST will expand efforts to align key stakeholders around shared innovation priorities, unified messaging, and coordinated service delivery. The agency will pursue flexible funding sources, including philanthropic, corporate, and foundation partnerships, to build the specialized technical expertise required for high-growth sectors such as aerospace, biotechnology, autonomous systems, defense, energy innovation, and advanced manufacturing. These resources will enable OCAST to continue operating as the state's strategic hub for technology-driven economic growth. This work is distinct from traditional economic development strategies and ensures Oklahoma can compete with innovation economies that are many times larger than our state.</p>



Savings & Efficiencies (Current or Planned)

Savings or Efficiency Name	Brief description of how savings were achieved	Savings in Unit of Measurement*	FY 2025 (Actual \$ Savings)	FY 2026 (Projected \$ Savings)	FY 2027 (Projected \$ Savings)
New CRM Tool	OCAST transitioned to a single CRM and data capture platform. While transition costs were higher, the new tool allows for increased automatization, data capture, and flexibility to grow along with annual cost savings.	Dollars	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
Additional Return to State	Increased appropriation requests for STEM Intern, Industry Innovation, and Capital Access require a dollar-for-dollar match prior to funding and will generate immediate return for Oklahoma. Additionally, these increases cannot be used for agency operations or program management thus ensuring Oklahoma receives increased benefit at zero extra administrative/operational expense to the state. This savings is only realized if appropriation requests are funded.	Dollars matched at funding			\$9,139,080

* Hours, FTE, square feet, etc.



Agency Goals and Key Performance Metrics

*Based on FY24 Actuals, FY25 is under review and will be finalized and available by budget hearings.

Goal		Metric	FY 25 Target	FY 25 Actuals	FY 26 Target
1	Build upon the success of the Oklahoma Innovation Partners Program	Number of new partners	25	25	30
2	Increase the number of high-quality applications across all OCAST programs by implementing a unified, business-focused framework that closes startup and innovation gaps and expands the statewide pipeline of investable companies. (Intern Program and R&D Attraction will remain as separate programs)	Applications to programs (Industry Innovation only)	75	74	80
3	Increase the number of jobs created and retained by applying a consistent, business-speed program framework that accelerates company growth and ensures innovators and employers receive the support needed to scale in Oklahoma.	Jobs created/retained	1500	2024*	2000
4	Increase the amount of follow-on capital secured by OCAST-supported companies by using a coordinated, market-driven program framework that strengthens investment readiness and helps Oklahoma companies compete for private, philanthropic, and federal dollars.	Follow-on capital	\$150,000,000	\$139,980,463*	\$150,000,000
5	Maximize capital funding opportunities	Companies formed	15	43*	20
6	Become a data driven organization	Impact survey response rate	85%	87%*	80%
7	Provide necessary resources for success	Staff turnover	2	1	2



Projects for FY 2026

- 1) **Statewide CRM Integration & Innovation Partner Network:** OCAST is fully deploying a new statewide CRM system that integrates referrals, client services, R&D partnerships, and program data across all major service providers. This project builds the "shared infrastructure" needed for Oklahoma to operate as a unified innovation ecosystem across all 77 counties.
- 2) **Launch and Scale of the Oklahoma Research & Development Attraction Program:** FY26 marks the formal launch of the R&D Attraction Program focused on bringing high-impact, industry-led R&D activity into Oklahoma's priority sectors. This project provides matching funds to companies collaborating with universities and research institutions, directly advancing OCAST's mission to increase applied research and technology translation.
- 3) **Capital Access Gap Assessment & Planning for Seed Capital Program Redesign:** OCAST is conducting a comprehensive assessment of Oklahoma's early-stage capital gaps to inform a redesign of the Seed Capital Program and the development of new pre-seed and early-stage investment models. Because the Legislature funded only the first year of what was planned as a three-year pilot, OCAST is strategically determining how to deploy the single-year funds to achieve the greatest long-term impact. Findings from this assessment will guide FY27 implementation of updated investment strategies and ensure Oklahoma founders have access to targeted capital solutions that align with market needs and statewide growth priorities.
- 4) **Statewide Technical Assistance Expansion via the SSBCI Small Business Opportunity Program (SBOP):** SBOP project expands legal, financial, accounting, and capital-readiness support statewide. This project strengthens the innovation pipeline by ensuring more companies are prepared for OCAST programs, accelerators, and private investment.
- 5) **Comprehensive Modernization of the Intern Partnership Program:** OCAST transitioned its Intern Partnerships Program to year-round availability and expanded eligibility to CareerTech students. This project directly addresses Oklahoma's STEM workforce needs by aligning student talent with high-growth industries, increasing retention of young professionals, and improving long-term talent capacity in innovation sectors.



Projects for FY 2027

- 1) **Statewide Innovation Alignment & Partnership Expansion:** In FY27, OCAST will lead a coordinated statewide initiative to align innovation priorities across industry, higher education, CareerTech, accelerators, investment and loan organizations, and economic development organizations. This includes convenings, shared messaging, statewide innovation mapping updates, and targeted sector-specific advisory work. With Oklahoma competing against metropolitan regions significantly larger than the entire state, this project ensures cohesion, reduces duplication, and positions Oklahoma to operate as a unified innovation engine.
- 2) **Capital Access Gap Analysis & FY27 Seed Capital Program Redesign:** OCAST will utilize our FY26 findings to launch a redesign of the Seed Capital Program. This project will also determine how to strategically deploy the single year of funding originally intended for a three-year pilot. The redesign will support new FY27 investment strategies that better match Oklahoma's market realities and ecosystem needs.
- 3) **Innovation Data & Statewide Metrics Integration:** In FY27, OCAST will build a more robust statewide innovation data system by expanding CRM capabilities, integrating additional partner datasets, launching longitudinal program tracking, and developing new visualization tools for legislators, partners, and the public. This project positions OCAST as a strategic intelligence hub for Oklahoma's innovation economy, merging workforce, commercialization, capital, and R&D data into actionable insights.
- 4) **Commercialization Network Enhancement & Sector-Specific Service:** OCAST will enhance the Oklahoma Commercialization Network (OCN) by deepening sector-specific expertise in high-growth industries such as biotechnology, aerospace, defense, energy technology, advanced manufacturing, and autonomous systems. This includes coordinated service delivery, improved intake and referral systems through the CRM, and expanding subject-matter expertise through new partnerships, philanthropic sources, and professional services.
- 5) **FY27 Office Relocation & Operational Modernization Project:** OCAST will undertake a structured, agency-wide project to prepare for the planned relocation in early 2027. This includes space needs planning, department assessment and reformulation, job description redesign, and modernization of workspace.

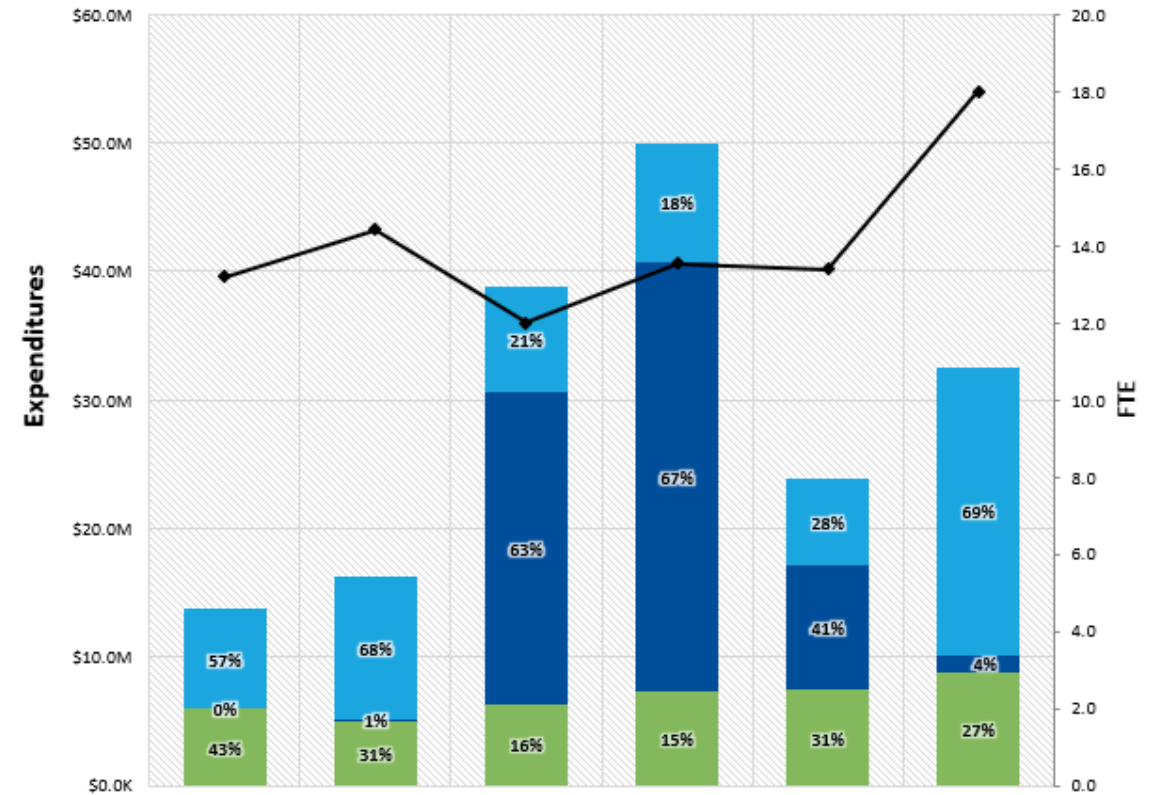


Total Historic Actual Expenditures (FY 2021-25) and Current Year Budget (FY 2026)

Explanation of Changes and Trends

- FY26 revolving fund increases reflect multi-year R&D obligations, redesigned Seed Capital Fund reserves, R&D Attraction launch funds, and remaining Accelerator Program funds.
- Federal funding decreases reflect natural ARPA wind-down and obligated-but-not-yet-expended SSBCI and SBOP funds.
- Appropriated funding remains stable while demand grows, increasing reliance on revolving and federal sources.
- Increase to 18 FTE reflects federally funded SSBCI positions, not state-funded expansion.

Historic Actual Expenditures and Current Year Budget



	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026 Current Budget
Appropriated	\$6.0M	\$5.0M	\$6.4M	\$7.4M	\$7.5M	\$8.7M
Revolving	\$7.8M	\$11.0M	\$8.2M	\$9.1M	\$6.8M	\$22.4M
Federal	\$0.0K	\$149.9K	\$24.3M	\$33.4M	\$9.7M	\$1.4M
Total	\$13.7M	\$16.2M	\$38.8M	\$49.9M	\$23.9M	\$32.6M
FTE	13.2	14.4	12.0	13.5	13.4	18



FY 2026 Budgeted Full Time Equivalents (FTE)

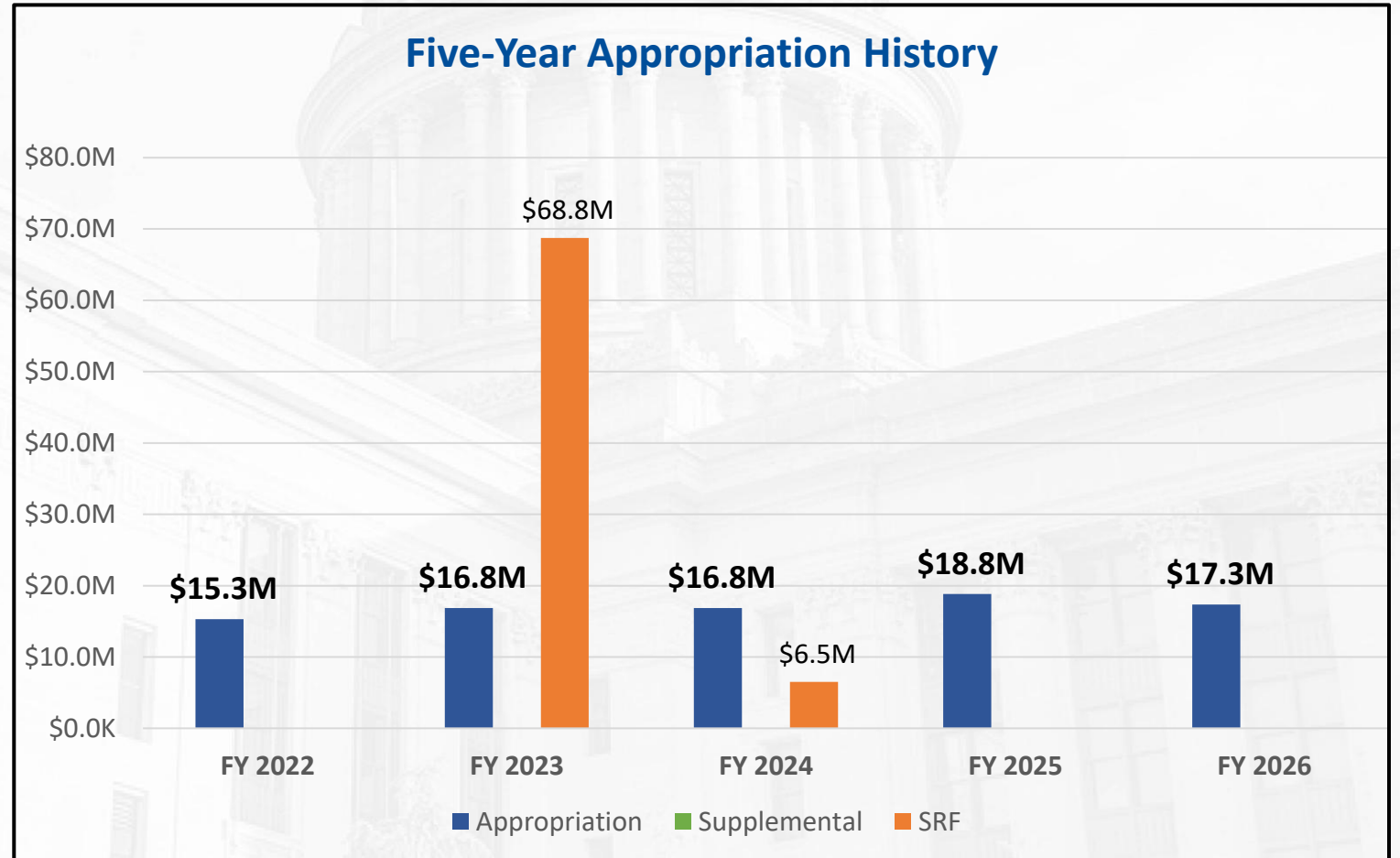


	FY 2026 Budgeted FTE
Total FTE	18*
Supervisor FTE	4
Supervisors to Total FTE Ratio (%)	22.2%
Current Budgeted but Unfilled FTE	1

* This includes three positions fully funded through the U.S. Treasury State Small Business Credit Initiative Small Business Opportunity Program funding.

Appropriation History

Fiscal Year	Legislated Appropriation (\$) (Includes supplementals and SRF/ARPA.)
FY 2022	\$15,296,542
FY 2023	\$16,846,542 ARPA \$68,750,000
FY 2024	\$16,846,542 ARPA \$6,500,000
FY 2025	\$18,846,542
FY 2026	\$17,346,542



**Includes Supplemental and Statewide Recovery Fund (ARPA) appropriations.*



Financial Resource Analysis

Carryover	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Total appropriated carryover amount expended (\$)	\$270,564	\$153,516	\$248,772	\$306,063

Historical Cash Balances	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Year End Revolving Fund Cash Balances <i>(All Revolving Funds)</i>	\$8,826,344	\$36,449,035	\$31,366,189	\$46,488,954

Revolving Class Fund # <i>(Unrestricted only)</i>	Revolving Class Fund Name <i>(Unrestricted only)</i>	Current cash balance (\$)	Projected FY 2026 year-end cash balance (\$)
19511	General Revenue Fund Carryover	\$803,034	\$0
200	Research & Support	\$13,777,786	\$8,000,000
#		\$	\$
#		\$	\$
#		\$	\$
#		\$	\$
Total Unrestricted Revolving Fund Cash balance:		\$14,580,820	\$



Unrestricted funds are those that are not limited by state or federal law, rule, regulation, other legally binding method, or donor restriction.

FY 2024 – 2025 Appropriation Change Review

<i>Purpose of appropriation increase or decrease</i>	<i>Amount FY 2024</i>	<i>Amount FY 2025</i>	<i>Total amount received FY 2024 - 25</i>	<i>Total amount expended by 11/1/2025</i>	<i>Included in FY 2026 approp? (Yes/No)</i>	<i>If not expended fully, please explain.</i>
Pilot addressing gaps and access to capital	\$0	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$	No	
Oklahoma Research Attraction Act	\$0	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$	Yes	OCAST launching program in FY26 and needed time to develop rules and implement review and evaluation process.
Totals	\$0	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$		



**Do not include SRF / ARPA appropriation increases.*

FY 2026 Appropriation Change Review

<i>Purpose of appropriation increase or decrease</i>	<i>Amount of increase or decrease (\$)</i>	<i>Does this need to be included in your FY 2027 appropriation? (Yes/No)</i>	<i>If yes, included in appropriation for same purpose? (Yes/No)</i>	<i>If not included for same purpose, please explain.</i>
Pilot addressing gaps and access to capital	-\$1,500,000	Yes	Yes	
Total adjustment	\$			



**Do not include SRF / ARPA appropriation increases.*

Incremental & Supplemental Request Summary

Request Name		FY 2027 Incremental Appropriation Request Amount (\$) <i>{or FY 2026 for Supplementals}</i>	Type of Request: Recurring, One-time, or Supplemental
1	Fund STEM Intern Industry Partnership Program	\$2,500,000	Recurring
2	Increase in Industry Innovation funding to maximize impact on Oklahoma's economy	\$5,139,080	Recurring
3	Agency relocation and space improvements	\$100,000	One-time
4	Resume funding for year two of the Capital Gaps pilot program	\$1,500,000	One-time (2 years remaining of 3-year pilot program)
5	Increase to address inflation costs to agency operations	\$85,686	Recurring



(1) Incremental Budget Request

Name of Request Fund STEM Intern Industry Partnership Program	
Type: Recurring	\$ 2,500,000 Incremental Amount Requested for FY 2027
<p>The STEM Intern Partnership Program has never received direct legislative funding and has instead been sustained through deobligated dollars from other OCAST programs and limited agency operational funds. Rising operational costs due to inflation and increased demand for OCAST’s other core programs have now placed the agency at the point where it can no longer sustain the program without dedicated appropriations. Without stable funding, Oklahoma risks losing one of its most effective tools for connecting students to industry, strengthening the state’s STEM workforce pipeline, and building capacity of startups and new innovations in the states tech industry.</p> <p>Recent expansions have broadened eligibility to include CareerTech students, creating even greater opportunities for impact across all 77 counties. With proper support, the program can fund 83–250 projects per year, serving 166–500 students and providing direct innovation value to Oklahoma companies of all sizes. Students gain meaningful, career-relevant experience while businesses advance real technical projects. With a proven record of placing STEM students into high-wage Oklahoma jobs, this program remains essential to meeting workforce demands and sustaining long-term economic growth.</p>	



(2) Incremental Budget Request

Name of Request Increase in Industry Innovation funding to maximize impact on Oklahoma's economy	
Type: Recurring	\$5,139,080 Increase Amount Requested for FY 2027
<p>OCAST is requesting an increase in funding for the Industry Innovation Program to meet growing demand from high-potential projects across the state. This program consistently receives more quality applications than available funding, and without additional resources, Oklahoma risks losing promising technologies and companies to out-of-state programs that can offer support. In FY26, 14 highly competitive projects fell below the funding line. These projects represent \$9,557,583 in immediate matching funds, an estimated \$436 million in follow-on investment, 49 high-wage jobs paying \$4.8 million annually, and more than \$3 billion in projected sales that Oklahoma will forfeit if these opportunities move elsewhere.</p> <p>With increased funding, OCAST can ensure that these innovation-driven projects are developed in Oklahoma, creating jobs, attracting private investment, and strengthening the state's technology-based economy. Failure to support these opportunities now will make it far more difficult and costly to recruit these companies or technologies back to Oklahoma in the future.</p>	



(3) Incremental Budget Request

Name of Request Agency relocation and space improvements	
Type: One-Time	\$100,000 Incremental Amount Requested for FY 2027
<p>OCAST is requesting one-time funding to support the relocation of the agency to a more modern, cost-effective, and functional facility. The agency has operated in its current location for 20 years, during which operating costs have increased without corresponding improvements to the space. The current facility now presents ongoing challenges that hinder staff productivity and limit the agency’s ability to effectively host partners, applicants, and stakeholders. A relocation will improve operational efficiency, enhance the professional environment for visitors, and better position OCAST to fulfill its mission of advancing Oklahoma’s innovation economy. The requested amount includes the costs for packing and moving the office, relocating all IT infrastructure, limited new furniture or fixtures as needed, and a contingency to account for potential cost fluctuations.</p>	



(4) Incremental Budget Request

Name of Request Resume funding for year two of the Capital Gaps pilot program	
Type: One-Time	\$1,500,000 Incremental Amount Requested for FY 2027
<p>OCAST is requesting funding to resume the second year of the three-year Capital Gaps Pilot Program, which was created to address critical gaps in early-stage capital access for Oklahoma entrepreneurs and innovators. Because year two funding was not provided, the program was paused, and OCAST is now reassessing how it can scale back and still meet the most urgent needs identified through the initial year of work. Restoring this funding will allow OCAST to pilot new and more targeted capital models and to use these dollars as matching funds for private, philanthropic, and federal opportunities that can significantly expand Oklahoma’s overall capital landscape.</p>	



(5) Incremental Budget Request

Name of Request Increase to address inflation costs to agency operations	
Type: Recurring	\$85,686 Increase Amount Requested for FY 2027
<p>OCAST is requesting a 2.9% increase in agency operational funds to address rising costs caused by inflation. The agency has not received additional operational support in several years and has already implemented all feasible efficiencies. This increase will ensure that higher operating costs do not reduce available program funding and will allow for modest staff compensation adjustments to bring several positions closer to current market rates. The requested funds will also cover unavoidable expense increases such as office lease costs, which have risen 33% since 2020 without corresponding improvements to the facility.</p>	





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Appendix

Innovation: The Key to Competitiveness

Oklahoma Must Compete in a Future Economy That Is Moving Faster Than Ever

- Oklahoma population: 4 million
- Competing regions (Austin, Dallas, Denver, Atlanta): 8–10 million
- These markets are rapidly investing in AI, biotech, advanced manufacturing, and autonomous systems.
- To secure Oklahoma's future economy, the state must match the innovation capacity of regions twice its size.

High-Value Future Industries at Risk Without Additional Investment

- For a single program, in FY26, 14 high-potential projects fell below the funding line.
- Lost opportunities include:
 - \$9,557,583 in immediate matching funds
 - \$436,000,000 in future follow-on investment
 - 49 high-wage STEM jobs that would pay \$4.8M in total annual salaries
 - \$3 billion in projected future sales

Innovation Investment Today Builds Oklahoma's Economic Base for the Next Decade

- FY24 impact demonstrates the power of long-term investment:
 - 2,024 direct jobs, 5,060 indirect jobs
 - Average salary: \$83,196 (future-ready, STEM-driven wages)
 - \$139 million in follow-on capital
 - 43 new companies emerging across key future sectors



OCAST: Building Oklahoma's Future

OCAST Is the Only Agency Positioned to Build Oklahoma's Future-Focused Innovation Pipeline

- Connects applied research to commercialization, turning future technologies into Oklahoma companies.
- Bridges industry, startups, universities, CareerTech, tribes, and investors into one statewide innovation system.
- Provides both technical expertise and capital access, accelerating future-ready companies from concept to customer.
- Strengthens next-generation industry sectors: biotech, aerospace, autonomous systems, energy innovation, advanced manufacturing, and AI-driven technologies.

Why OCAST Is Essential for the State's Long-Term Competitiveness

- No other entity combines R&D funding, commercialization services, technical support, and seed capital in one coordinated strategy.
- OCAST ensures that Oklahoma can compete with large metro economies by leveraging statewide collaboration rather than population size.
- OCAST is coordinating the building of talent, technology, and capital infrastructure needed to support future industry clusters.

OCAST is not just meeting today's needs.

We are building the statewide innovation engine that Oklahoma will rely on for the next generation of jobs, industries, and economic growth.

