

Cornell Email, "Sustaining our budget for the long term"

From: Cornell Leadership <administration@m.cornell.edu>

Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 3:05 PM

To: [many recipients]

Subject: Sustaining our budget for the long term

Dear Colleagues,

Together with all of American higher education, Cornell is entering a time of significant financial uncertainty. The potential for deep cuts in federal research funding, as well as tax legislation affecting our endowment income, has now been added to existing concerns related to rapid growth and cost escalations. It is imperative that we navigate this challenging financial landscape with a shared understanding and common purpose, to continue to advance our mission, strengthen our academic community, and deepen our impact.

To ensure that we continue to thrive in an even more complex future, we must commit, across every part of our institution, to a sustainable budget today. To that end, we are initiating strategic budgetary adjustments that preserve shared governance and accountability among our central administrative units and all colleges, schools, and divisions. Because each Cornell unit is different, we are asking all deans, vice provosts, vice presidents, and unit leaders to focus on their core strategic needs, and trim budgets through mechanisms such as strategic restructuring for efficiency and reducing expenses, including nonessential travel and discretionary spending (such as food and events). **We also ask all college, school, and administrative units to [pause starting new searches for personnel](#) until June 30 to give the university time to assess and model the financial impact of evolving federal policies. All hiring managers should coordinate with their supervisor and [HR director](#) to evaluate active searches based on unit needs and budget constraints.**

During this pause, we are directing deans, vice provosts, and vice presidents to work within their colleges, schools, and administrative units to evaluate staffing structures, job openings, and proposed hires. Those who determine they have mission-critical roles and the funding to support them can request exceptions to hire. These requests will be submitted to, and evaluated by, a new central position control committee reporting to the provost.

As a community, we have always emerged stronger from challenging periods, and we have no doubt that we can and will do so again.

In partnership,

Michael I. Kotlikoff

Interim President

Kavita Bala

Provost

Chris Cowen

Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

Christine Lovely

Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer

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