

Understanding the State Budgeting Process and Variability of General Funds

General Fund Dollars

General Fund (GF) dollars are **the primary state fund from which the ongoing expenses of state government are paid**. These funds are highly competitive and hard to access.



What is the Decision-Making process for General Funds.

There are various gatekeepers in the process who need to be convinced of the value of the work in relation to other demands for funds (e.g., support to UC/UC ANR versus addressing social issues of homelessness or resilience, etc. etc.). In making funding decisions, the gatekeepers consider:

1. Are there other appropriate funding sources?
2. Does the activity address priority state initiatives or programs and serve public interests (e.g., address poverty or serve marginalized communities or, etc..)?
3. Are there competing needs worthier of statewide taxpayer funding?

The GF and UC

Although only around 8.5% of the total UC expenditures in 2020-2021, General Fund (GF) dollars are immensely important to the UC system.

While often seen as stable, GF dollars often go up and down from year to year.

The UC ANR role in securing GF support. Individually and as a UC unit, UC ANR - like all the UC campuses - **cannot** approach the state for General Fund State support. The “ask” for UC ANR comes through and as part of the UC system. Neither can we ask others to petition on our behalf. If others do ask, then that is their right – but we cannot ask them to do so.

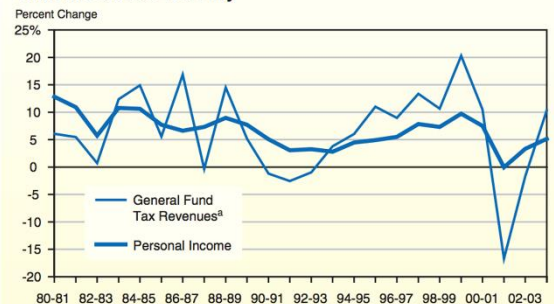
Contracting with State Departments

Increasingly being accessed by UC ANR, contracts with State Departments (e.g., CDFR, Dept of Conservation, CalFire, etc.) offer much promise for growth. In implementing, we provide a unique program implementation network across all counties. These funds are:

1. Good for 3-5 years and less likely to be cut should the state budget fall.
2. Easier to access, as
 - o you just have to convince the agency that we can address some of their priorities. An important point here is that we address Department priorities that match our priorities. As such, we need talk more about the impact we can make made and less about the activities we will do.

Figure 1
Recent History of California's Revenue Fluctuations

California's Tax Revenues Have Been More Volatile Than the State's Economy



There are two main sources for State support. 1) The General Fund dollars – which are highly competitive and can vary year to year, and 2) Contracts with State agencies – which offer promising and often more stable opportunities for support.