

George Mason University

2020 Legislative and Budget Priorities

2020 Budget Summary

	Item -- Operating	First Year	Second Year
✓	Financial Aid	\$3.47M	\$6.94M
	Compensation	TBD – consistent with state employees	
✓	Access/Student Success	\$10M	\$12M
	Item – Capital Outlay		
✓	Arlington Innovation Dist / Amazon	\$84M Bonds/\$84M private	N/A
	Academic VIII Building	\$7.5M Planning	N/A
✓	Telcom/Network Infrastructure	\$19.95M GF / \$19.68M NGF	N/A

✓ Included in Governor’s introduced budget

✓ **Financial Aid: Provide Affordable Access for All Students**

The Governor and the General Assembly were very supportive of additional financial aid for Mason students during the 2019 legislative session. Even with the recent increase, Mason lags in the necessary funding to address the unmet need goals of the Commonwealth for our students. The challenge is made more difficult when considering that as Mason’s enrollments have increased the number of students applying and qualifying for financial aid have increased. Seven years ago, Mason had 12,785 students apply for undergraduate financial aid. In 2018-19 that number jumped to 18,182. Because more than 33% of our undergraduate students are eligible for need-based Pell Grants and 36% are the first in their family to attend college, additional financial aid funding is required to meet the unmet need goal of the Commonwealth. Mason will work with the General Assembly to maintain the funding provided in the Governor’s introduced budget.

Compensation: Support Salary Compensation Increases

George Mason University is grateful for the support of the Governor and the General Assembly for additional compensation appropriated for faculty and staff during the 2019 legislative session. Regular salary increases and competitive compensation are critical for Mason to retain and recruit talented faculty and staff. The university continues to address the challenges of being located in one of the highest cost of living regions in the United States. Mason also must continually contend with the large number of nationally ranked universities and private sector research organizations in Maryland and Washington, D.C. who are hiring away our faculty and staff. In order for our high-performing faculty to achieve the Commonwealth’s stated goal of meeting the 60th percentile in compensation with our

institutional peers, Mason would need a 24.5% increase. **2020 Request:** Mason will work with the Administration and the General Assembly to seek an overall increase of 3% for a FY21 compensation adjustment.

✓ **Access, Student Success and Enrollment Growth**

The university has been and continues to be committed to the Commonwealth's higher education goals for enrollment growth, two-year transfers and educational program development to support economic growth. Over the past decade, Mason has been a major contributor to the Commonwealth's growth of in-state enrollment. Mason's undergraduate enrollment growth has accounted for approximately 60 percent of the overall state's increase. During this period, Mason has shown that growth is compatible with improvements in quality with increases in average SAT scores and high school GPAs. In addition, Mason continues to welcome the largest transfer student body, from two-year institutions numbering more than 3,000 students per year – representing more than 25% of the total transfer population for the Commonwealth each year. Given the current enrollment levels, if Mason is to continue our trajectory of academic and research excellence, it would require a total of \$41.3M to bring Mason's per student funding for in-state students in line with the mean of the other doctoral institutions in Virginia. During the last two legislative sessions, the Governor and General Assembly provided a down payment toward the additional operating funds for Mason to address the enrollment growth funding shortfall. Mason will work with the General Assembly to maintain the next installment of funding provided in the Governor's introduced budget.

✓ **Arlington Innovation District**

George Mason University will work with the Governor and the General Assembly to seek formal authorization for the construction of academic space to house the Institute for Digital Innovation (IDIA). The facility will allow Mason to expand the number of students graduating in computing, cyber security and other related programs ensuring that the Commonwealth meets the commitment to Amazon and the business community workforce needs. The total appropriation request is \$250M which includes \$84M state revenue and \$84M non-general funds for the construction of an academic building. The remaining appropriation will be for the needed operating expenses. Mason has already committed \$7.5M in non-general funds toward the demolition of an existing structure on the Arlington Campus site. IDIA will be part of the Arlington Innovation District which will house tens of millions of dollars in tech-based research and development programs, hundreds of faculty innovators and thousands of graduate students in tech programs. In addition, it will attract high growth incubator/accelerator programs, convening and collaboration programs essential to innovation and venture capitalists, co-working spaces for start-ups and small business and corporate innovation labs. Finally, it will include public amenities and services that benefit the Arlington community and add to the vibrancy of the diverse Ballston-Virginia Square corridor. Mason will work with the General Assembly to maintain the funding provided in the Governor's introduced budget.

Academic VIII Building

Mason will seek authorization to construct the Academic VIII Building on the Science and Technology Campus (Prince William). Academic VIII supports the continuing expansion of STEM-H programs at Mason. The targeted growth in enrollment for disciplines such as science and engineering supported by this project is being coordinated with Mason's R-1 research portfolio and economic development efforts. The estimated cost for construction of the facility is \$185.6M. **2020 Request:** To secure \$7.5M NGF authorization for preliminary design/planning costs.

✓ Telecom/Network Infrastructure Phase II

The University secured authorization for Phase I of the needed telecom/network improvements during the 2019 General Assembly Session. The project is progressing on schedule. Mason will be seeking approval for Phase II of the project this year, which will allow for improvements of an aging infrastructure and to address the strain on the available bandwidth due to the large increase in students in recent years. Mason will work with the General Assembly to maintain the funding provided in the Governor's introduced budget.