



More than \$9M in research grants awarded to UC campuses to address California's critical issues

UC Office of the President
Monday, December 17, 2018

According to researchers, a deadly disease affecting citrus trees, known as "citrus greening," is spreading westward across the country, and California may soon face the same impacts as Florida: the loss of more than \$1 billion annually in crops and revenue and nearly 8,000 jobs to date. With a \$1.1 million grant from the University of California's Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives (MRPI), a team of experts from the UC Riverside, Berkeley, Davis and San Diego campuses will explore effective management strategies to try to save the citrus industry here and around the world.

This is just one of the 16 newly awarded innovative collaborative research projects of varying sizes across UC, thanks to more than \$9 million in grant monies from the university's systemwide Office of the President.

Awarded every two years, the highly competitive program seeks to leverage the world-renowned research capabilities of the UC system to develop real world solutions to significant problems facing our state and world. This year's competition garnered 179 proposals that spanned the breadth of UC's expertise in the humanities, arts, engineering, public policy, and biological, health, environmental, natural and social sciences. The awards were selected based on their compelling approaches to advancing research areas that are important to UC and the state, increasing the university's ability to attract the brightest faculty and student talent, and supporting innovative graduate and undergraduate student research.

"By drawing upon the expertise of collaborating scholars across the UC system, these projects demonstrate UC's collective excellence and unparalleled strength as the world's premier public research institution," said Arthur Ellis, UC's vice president for Research and Graduate Studies. "From agriculture to immigration, and from health to homelessness, these

issues touch our lives, as can the practical knowledge and solutions developed by these UC MRPI projects.”

Among UC’s 2019 grants:

- **California Policy Lab: Studying Inequality and Homelessness (\$1.25 million):** Researchers’ focus will be addressing homelessness and designing education and training to enable these unsheltered individuals to join the workforce. The team will partner closely with government agencies to serve the state’s research needs, ensuring that research results influence policymaking. The researchers will also evaluate the impact of vocational education and workforce training programs. The project is being led by UC Berkeley researchers, in collaboration with faculty at the UC Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles and San Francisco campuses.
- **Critical Mission Studies at California’s Crossroads (\$1.03 million):** California’s 21 missions have played a significant role in the state’s history. UC researchers will pursue research to create a new, multi-dimensional narrative of California history that includes the voices and perspectives of not only California settlers, but also the Native American and Mexican American communities that helped lay the foundation for the state’s development. Led by UCLA experts, researchers at the UC Riverside, Santa Cruz and San Diego campuses are also involved in the project.
- **Developing a New Paradigm for Natural Product Drug Discovery (\$540,000):** A team led by UC San Diego researchers, and including UC Santa Cruz and San Francisco campus colleagues, will use newly developed methods and analytical techniques to transform traditional approaches to drug discovery, reducing the time to discovery and increasing the effectiveness of the process. The research aims to create commercially viable technologies that can create jobs and expand the biotechnology industry in California.
- **UC Collaborative to Promote Immigrant and Student Equity (\$270,000):** Led by UC Irvine faculty, this project will address the significant academic, financial and social-emotional strains on the UC system’s immigrant students. The project’s goal is to reduce inequalities and guide policy across the UC system and beyond. UC Irvine researchers will be joined by colleagues from the UC Berkeley, Los Angeles, Merced and Riverside campuses.
- **UC Network on Child Health, Poverty and Public Policy (\$150,000):** UC Davis scholars are leading a team of experts from UC Berkeley, Irvine, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and San Francisco campuses to shift from fragmented, discipline-specific approaches of studying childhood disparities to a multidisciplinary, comprehensive

examination of the issue. The project goal is to understand how health and nutrition programs affect the health and development of disadvantaged children, as well as build relationships with policymakers.

More on UC's Multicampus Research Programs and Initiatives and the 2019 awardees can be found at <https://www.ucop.edu/research-initiatives/programs/mrpi/2019-awards.html>.