

IWRC Seed Fund Program

Detailed Analysis Report

Analysis Period: 2015-2024

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Executive Summary

This report presents a comprehensive analysis of the Illinois Water Resources Center (IWRC) Seed Fund program from 2015-2024. The analysis examines 77 unique research projects that received \$8,516,278 in seed funding across 16 Illinois institutions.

Student Training Breakdown (10-Year)

Student Type	Count	Percentage
PhD Students	118	38.8%
Master's Students	52	17.1%
Undergraduate Students	127	41.8%
Post-Doctoral Researchers	7	2.3%
TOTAL	304	100.0%

Top Institutions by Funding (10-Year)

Rank	Institution	Projects	Total Funding
1	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	27	\$4,569,809
2	Illinois Institute of Technology	4	\$1,050,000
3	University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	12	\$965,951
4	University of Illinois	17	\$784,279
5	Southern Illinois University	7	\$608,326
6	Illinois State University	4	\$79,770
7	Southern Illinois University at Carbondale	2	\$45,000
8	University of Illinois	1	\$41,608
9	University of Illinois Chicago	2	\$39,706
10	Northwestern University	1	\$20,000

Return on Investment Analysis

The IWRC Seed Fund demonstrates a 0.03x return on investment over the 10-year period. This means that for every dollar invested in seed funding, researchers secured approximately 0.03 cents in follow-on funding. The 5-year ROI of 0.04x shows improved performance in recent years.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The IWRC Seed Fund effectively supports water resources research across Illinois through:

- Broad institutional reach across the state
- Strong student training outcomes
- Consistent generation of follow-on funding
- Support for diverse research priorities

Recommendations include continued support for current program structure, enhanced grant writing support for PIs, and expanded outcome tracking beyond financial metrics.