



2025 Strategic Plan

**FUTURE
BREAKTHROUGHS AND
INNOVATION**



MOVING FORWARD OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

I. Executive Summary

The Life Sciences Research Foundation (LSRF) has a 40-year legacy of identifying and supporting the world's most promising postdoctoral researchers. However, the current model creates volatility in funding and leaves critical fields of basic science underfunded. This strategic plan outlines a dual approach: stabilizing the fellowship pipeline through expanded development and establishing new opportunities for funding "at-risk" fundamental research.

II. Strategic Goal 1: Scalability & Stability

Goal: Increase the annual cohort from 20 to 30 fellows to expand LSRF's impact.

1. Network-Driven Corporate & Foundation Relations

- **Board Strategy:** Provide additional encouragement to the Board to expand their tasks of identifying and introducing potential corporate or private foundation sponsors.
- **Sponsor Success Program:** Continue to provide regular reporting for current sponsors, providing them with updates on their fellows' progress to increase multi-year retention rates.
- **Sponsor Referral:** Identify new potential sponsors through the network of existing sponsors.

2. The Alumni Engagement Initiative

- **Tiered Giving Circles:** Create specific giving tiers for the 800+ LSRF alumni.
- **Mentor Connections:** Launch a campaign targeting current and former mentors of LSRF fellows. These individuals have seen the value of LSRF firsthand.
- **Alumni Networking Platform:** Expand the use of social media (i.e. LinkedIn, Facebook, BlueSky, etc.) to facilitate connections with and among alumni, making them more likely to assist in fundraising.

3. Board Expansion & Diversification

- **Strategic Recruitment:** Recruit 3–5 new board members from the commercial sector. These individuals bring networks outside of traditional academia and can bridge the gap between "basic science" and "long-term investment."

III. Strategic Goal 2: Protecting the Breadth of Science

Goal: Ensure that high-impact but "non-trendy" fields receive consistent funding via unrestricted funds.

1. Launch of New Funds

- **The Gap-Fund Model:** Instead of relying solely on our current model in which sponsors choose scientists and research that align with their interests, LSRF will create an **Unrestricted Fund**. This fund will be used to support the top-ranked scientists whose work falls in these important but less-funded areas of interest.

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- **Category Funds:** Create niche funds based upon broader scientific categories of interest to enable pooling of donations to sponsor category-specific fellowships. Using examples of discoveries in diverse fields that have advanced basic understanding of the life sciences and have tremendous impact on human health, LSRF will emphasize that today's basic science discovery leads to tomorrow's medical or environmental breakthrough application.

2. The Scientific Future Fund Concept

- **Pitch to High-Net-Worth Individuals (HNWIs):** Market the unrestricted fund as a "diversified portfolio of intellectual capital." By donating to the general fund, a donor supports a broad spectrum of high-risk, high-reward science.

3. Advocacy for Fundamental Research

- **Impact White Papers:** Produce annual "State of Basic Research" briefs for donors that explain why fields like plant biology are critical for mitigating climate change and food security challenges, or how investigating toxins leads to non-addictive pain medicines. This educates donors *before* they choose a specific fellow.

IV. Operational Improvements (The "How")

1. Professionalized Development Operations

- **LSRF Newsletter:** Create a semi-annual newsletter for alumni, sponsors, awardees, mentors, and prospective sponsors to maintain awareness and name recognition.
- **Virtual Scientific Updates:** Host periodic online events in which current and former fellows present Life Sciences updates and interact with potential sponsors and donors.

2. Diversified Revenue Streams

- **Legacy Giving:** Start a planned giving program for senior alumni and retiring faculty to leave a portion of their estate to the LSRF endowment.

V. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- **Yield Rate:** Increase the percentage of finalists funded from 40% to 60% over 5 years.
- **Unrestricted Ratio:** Growth of unrestricted funds to 30% of the total budget.
- **Alumni Participation:** Reach 25% alumni giving participation within 3 years.
- **Sponsor Retention:** Maintain a 90% year-over-year retention rate for corporate and family sponsors.