EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Item Name: TRIF Supported Regents’ Community Grant: Retention and Recruitment of Public Safety Personnel

☐ Action Item

Requested Action: The board office asks the board to approve a TRIF supported Regents’ Community Grant concerning the retention and recruitment of public safety personnel.

Background

Arizona law established TRIF from Proposition 301 state sales tax revenue and gives ABOR the authority to administer the fund on universities' behalf. The board manages and administers the TRIF revenues through awarding and allocating revenues.

Discussion

Purpose

The purpose of Regents’ Community Grants is to leverage university research talent to address and deliver solutions to critical issues facing the local Arizona communities and its citizens.

In FY 2023, the board approved and budgeted $1 million in TRIF funding for Arizona public universities in the form of Regents’ Community Grants to support academic research in areas of greatest need and interest to Arizona communities.

The board office and university personnel are working with community leaders across the state to assemble prioritized problem statements impacting local communities that will serve as the basis for soliciting multi-university research proposals.

The first proposed community grant for board approval concerns research and evaluation around the retention and recruitment of Arizona’s public safety personnel. Board staff, university administrators and faculty have been working with Arizona County Supervisors Association and Arizona public safety organizations, including the Arizona Police Association, Professional Firefighters of Arizona, Arizona Fire District Association, League of Cities and Towns and county representatives from across the state.

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Challenge & Opportunity

Municipalities, counties and the state are reporting significant challenges in recruitment and retention across the public sector workforce. Members of the public safety community have also expressed concern about current staffing levels and their ability to recruit and retain public safety personnel. These workforce issues can create challenges in effectively providing services to Arizona's communities. To better define the problem, data is needed to quantify the magnitude of the problem and to identify impacts and potential recommendations.

Faculty Proposal

This tri-university proposal includes researchers from Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, and University of Arizona. The proposal focuses on the public safety professions of policing (including police, sheriffs, and highway patrol) and firefighting with a concentration on recruitment and retention of sworn personnel from entry-level to seasoned career positions. The following questions guide the proposal:

1. Is there a consistent statewide challenge in retention for policing and firefighting positions? If so, what is the magnitude of the problem?

2. Is there a consistent statewide challenge in recruitment for policing and firefighting positions? If so, what is the scope and scale of the problem?

3. What does the workforce development pipeline look like for policing and firefighting employees?

4. What are the potential underlying policy challenges for the recruitment and retention of policing and firefighting positions?

5. What are the current strategies for cities and municipalities to manage staffing shortages and what are the budgetary implications?

6. What is the statewide public opinion of policing and firefighting professions, their potential career options, and considerations for career desirability?

The research will require a multi-pronged approach using both quantitative (e.g., administrative, survey data) and qualitative data (e.g., policy review, interviews) to describe the challenges and to develop a series of recruitment and retention strategies for firefighters and police officers at different levels of decision-making (e.g., municipal, county, state). Strategies may also differ for rural and urban areas within the state.

The project will be focused on front-line, sworn personnel positions within police and fire within the state of Arizona.
The multi-university project will be led by Morrison Institute for Public Policy (MI). MI will also assist with tri-university IRB applications needed for primary data being collected, as needed. The MI team will gather updates from the three points of contact from each university and report progress on a bi-monthly basis. The MI will also gather the research products from all contributors and synthesize the findings and state-level and municipal strategies to address identified challenges.

The Research Activities

The university team members will engage in the following research activities:

Foundational Literature Review: Career Pathways and Policies;
Analysis of CSA Conducted State-Wide Survey Data;
Conduct a Statewide Poll/Survey;
Qualitative Leadership Interviews;
Qualitative Focus Groups; and
Two Experimental Studies for Municipal-level Recruitment.

Deliverables & Timeline

March 1, 2023-October 31, 2023 (8 months)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Period</th>
<th>Anticipated Deliverables</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 2023</td>
<td>Progress Report 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2023</td>
<td>Progress Report 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 2023</td>
<td>Progress Report 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2023</td>
<td>Final Report</td>
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The team plans to meet regularly (at least once per month) with Morrison Institute to discuss progress on the project.

Team Members

Project Management Lead
Andrea Whitsett, Executive Director, Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona State University

University Research Leads/Points of Contact
Shannon Portillo, Director of the School of Public Affairs, Arizona State University
Edella Schlager, Director of the School of Government & Public Policy, University of Arizona
Dierdra Bycura, Chair of the Department of Health Sciences, Northern Arizona University

**Budget**
The research activities are expected to cost approximately $800,000. A breakdown of the expected expenses for each activity is provided below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Activity</th>
<th>Expense</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statewide Poll/Survey</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership Interviews</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Management &amp; Final Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSA Survey Data Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experimental Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$800,000</strong></td>
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**Statutory/Policy Requirements**
A.R.S. §15-1626 “General Administrative Powers and Duties of Board”
ABOR Policy 3-412 Administration of Technology and Research Initiative Fund.