

FY 2025 NERA Budget Narrative and Budget

Background: During the [NERA business meeting on June 5](#), the Association discussed the NERA budget for the upcoming fiscal year. To set a context for the FY 2025 NERA budget, we share these observations:

- Since taking on the leadership role of NERA in 2016, there have been no increases in the annual assessment to institutions.
- Benefits have increased during the past 8 years.
- The salaries and associated fringe of the Executive Director and Coordinator are expected to increase this year by 2.5% as part of a University of Rhode Island “across the board” salary adjustment.
- As a means of “level setting”, the Hatch multistate research funds have increased by 8% during the period from 2016-2024.
- Today’s prices are 1.3 times higher than in 2016.
- The Executive Director is suggesting a 4% increase in the institutional assessment to ensure fiscal health of the Association.

While the business meeting was convened with a quorum, the members in attendance proposed sending to all directors the FY25 budget narrative and budget with a link to cast an electronic ballot. Voting on the budget will close on June 28, 2024. A 2/3 majority of those voting is required for passage of the budget.

Explanation:

Income, \$582,659 – Income to NERA comes from two sources, assessments to institutions and carry forward from the preceding year.

Proposed Revenues in FY2025, \$399,666: This includes assessments from institutions. (An explanation of how the [institutional assessments](#) is calculated can be found on the NERA website.)

Carry-Forward into FY2025, \$182,994: This year the Association anticipates a healthy carry-forward, a reflection of not having significant expenditures in the Planning Grant/Workshops line and having income from FY23 hitting our accounts in FY24. (Final accounting on carry-forward will come from the University in the fall.)

Expenditures, \$463,101 – The two broad categories for expenditures include Personnel (salary and fringe) and Operating.

Personnel, \$374,441: We’re anticipating a 2.5% increase in salaries as part of a University of Rhode Island “across the board” adjustment. As salaries increase, fringe follows.

Operating, \$88,660:

Planning Grants/Workshops, \$0: We propose zeroing this line and re-dedicating the funds to allow for NERA investment in other initiatives. NERA has received few requests for mini-grants during the past three years.

NERA Initiatives/Workshops, \$31,000: We suggest expanding the potential scope of projects, initiatives, and workshops that NERA could support in the upcoming year. Items that are up for consideration include implementation of the Northeast Agenda, NERA re-naming/rebranding, and co-hosting projects with the Northeast Extension Directors (NEED).

Northeast Communications Project, \$10,000: Support of the Northeast communications team in development of collateral materials in support of the “regional voice”. This line also supports the development and distribution of NERA promotional materials.

NERA OED Travel, \$30,000: This line covers the travel of both the Executive Director and Coordinator. These funds are important for NERA to serve as a representative for the Association at regional and national levels.

Professional Development/Meeting Support, \$10,000: As meeting costs increase, we propose retaining a sum to help keep the registration cost of regional meetings affordable. Likewise, this line also creates opportunities for NERA to provide support for external speakers to regional meetings.

Telephone/Teleconference, \$1,000: NERA pays for telephone and teleconferencing (Zoom). This line has not changed in the past 8 years.

Printing/Award Services, \$2,000: NERA contracts award certificate printing, award engraving, and printing of NERA public relations and marketing materials.

Office Expenses, \$2,000: This line supports purchase of NERA office supplies.

Website/SurveyMonkey/Domain Hosting, \$1,000: This line supports the backbone of the NERA website, the capacity to do large-scale surveys, and production of the biweekly newsletter.

Memberships/Sponsorships, \$1,160: NERA is a member of the National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research (NCFAR, \$500) and the Association for Communications Excellence (ACE, \$160). NERA routinely sponsors a session at the annual meeting of the ACE (Friends of ACE sponsorship, \$500).

Net Balance, \$119,559 – The net balance or carry-forward is expected to approximate \$119,559 or 25.8% of our annual expenditures. This carry-forward balance is consistent with the recommendation of the NERA directors and is a common practice to ensure financial stability and fund management.

NERA FY25 Proposed Budget

	FY24 Approved Budget	FY24 Projected Final	FY25 Projected (4% assessment increase)
Income			
Revenues (Assessments and NEED contributions to joint work)	\$384,294	\$387,294	\$399,666
Carry-Forward	\$181,444	\$219,978	\$182,994
Total Income	\$565,738	\$607,272	\$582,659
Expenditures			
Personnel			
Salary-Executive Director (Rick Rhodes)	\$205,921		\$211,069
Salary-Coordinator (David Leibovitz)	\$68,982		\$70,706
Subtotal Salary	\$274,903		\$281,775
Fringe-Executive Director (Rick Rhodes)	\$65,405		\$67,040
Fringe-Coordinator (David Leibovitz)	\$25,000		\$25,625
Subtotal Benefits	\$90,405		\$92,665
Personnel (Salary and Fringe for ED and Coordinator)	\$365,308	\$365,308	\$374,441
Operating			
Planning Grants / Workshops	\$31,000	\$1,000	
NERA Initiatives / Workshops			\$31,000
Northeast Communications Project	\$10,000	\$6,000	\$10,000
NERA OED Travel	\$25,000	\$34,295	\$30,000
Professional Development / Meeting Support	\$5,000	\$12,681	\$10,000
Telephone / Teleconferencing	\$1,000	\$537	\$1,000
Printing / Award Services	\$2,000	\$1,440	\$2,000
Office Expenses	\$2,500	\$1,125	\$2,500
Website / SurveyMonkey / Domain Hosting	\$1,000	\$732	\$1,000
Memberships / Sponsorships	\$500	\$1,160	\$1,160
Total Operating	\$78,000	\$58,971	\$88,660
Total Expenditures	\$443,308	\$424,279	\$463,101
Net Balance	\$122,430	\$182,993	\$119,559