



Item: AS: A-1

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

**SUBJECT: CENTER FOR AUTISM AND RELATED DISABILITIES (CARD) APPLICATION
FOR STATE RECOGNITION AS A CENTER ESTABLISHED BY THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE**

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

In accordance with Florida Regulation 10.015, The Florida Atlantic University Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (FAU CARD) is applying for state recognition for its center. The application package provided has been approved by the Provost and the Vice President for Research. We are now seeking board approval to forward the proposal onto the Board of Governors.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

FAU CARD was established as a regional autism center under Florida Statute 1004.55 and has been receiving annual awards from the Florida Department of Education. The center is now seeking approval to be officially recognized with an established ID number from the Board of Governors as a Center established by the Florida Legislature.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN/DATE

The Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at Florida Atlantic University (FAU CARD) provides essential services that significantly benefit the state of Florida. From the day of diagnosis and throughout the lifespan, FAU CARD offers free, evidence-based support tailored to the unique needs of individuals with autism and their families. The center plays a critical role in enhancing autism expertise among professionals and across the community through comprehensive training and consultation, thereby improving the quality of services and support available. Furthermore, FAU CARD establishes a vital safety net for families, professionals, and communities by fostering supportive practices and promoting long-term support systems across the region they serve.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

FAU CARD is awarded an annual legislative appropriation of \$1,386,508. Ninety-five percent of the legislative budget is spent on personnel, with the balance supporting travel and operational expenses. In addition, the center receives funding from the Florida Autism License Plate Program and various foundations. A 3-year budget is included in the proposal package.

I'd like to introduce Dr. Jennifer Percival, the Director of CARD, to offer a short presentation to the Board.

Supporting Documentation: Florida State Regulation 10.015, Proposal to establish a state of Florida Institute or Center, CARD proposed Budget.

Presented by: Lynn Asseff, Associate Vice President of Financial Management,
Division of Research

Phone: 772-242-2395

Five Year Evaluation of Institute and Centers
Review Period: FY2021-FY2025

Institute/Center Name: Center of Excellence in Biomedical and Marine Biotechnology

Center Code: 50.0510

Committee Review Topics

1. A determination of the institute or center's progress against defined goals and objectives within the context of the institute or center's mission pertinent to FAU's mission and the BOG's Strategic Plan.

Committee Response:

The mission of the Center of Excellence in Biomedical and Marine Biotechnology is to "establish a coordinated program involving academia and industry aimed at developing Florida's marine biota as a pharmaceutical resource." During the review period FY 2021 – 2025, the Center demonstrated progress in this mission; relevant progress aligned with FAU's mission and the BOG's Strategic Plan includes:

- Evidence of scholarship – 16 manuscripts published in high impact journals, with two additional in press, along with numerous presentations.
- Research supported through external funding - \$4.8 million obtained in external funding from sponsors such as the HBOI Foundation, NOAA, the Florida Department of Health, NSF and NIH. Contributed to a semifinalist NSF Regional Innovation Engines proposal, demonstrating the center's capacity to contribute to both research and workforce initiatives.
- Intellectual property pursuits with commercial potential – two patent disclosures, one patent application in preparation, and discovery of biological activity for over 35 marine natural products.
- Undergraduate and graduate participation in research - four graduate students and thirteen undergraduate students were mentored.
- Community engagement - educational materials developed for K-12 students, and leadership positions held in key national and international organizations.

The Center's research, academic, intellectual property and community engagement accomplishments during the review period demonstrate its alignment with and support of FAU's mission and the BOG's stated goals of excellence, productivity, and strategic priorities.

2. Assessment of Return on Investment of State dollars, if applicable. (ROI calculated on Total Cumulative Non-State Legislature Revenues divided by Total Cumulative State Legislature Funding received)

- Total Cumulative State Legislature Funding Received: \$10,000,000.00 (per FY24 report submitted to BOG)
- Cumulative Non-State Revenues received through FY23: \$7,179,017.00; and Per 5-year report: revenues FY24: 1,238,890 and FY25: 996,382, for a total of \$9,414,289

- ROI: 94.14%

Committee Response:

The ROI indicated above reflects a solid return on the investment of state dollars, as indicated by a near 1-1 investment/return ratio.

3. The need for continuation of the Institute/Center based on above answers, Center activities, services, financial performance and achievements.

Committee Response:

The Center should continue its work, based on goals achieved during the review period and the therapeutic potential of its research to diseases such as cancer and Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, conditions particularly relevant to Florida's population. The Center also maintains strong collaborations, reflecting growth and sustainability potential.

4. Possible changes in mission or organizational structure

Committee Response:

No recommendations for changes in mission or organizational structure.

5. Recommendation for budget reduction or expansion

Committee Response:

There are no recommendations for budget reduction or expansion. However, it is the committee's recommendation that, as an expectation for the next phase of the center, it leverage HBOI Foundation funding as a catalyst to pursue further external federal funding. Moreover, the committee encourages the center to establish additional commercial collaborations to explore generating revenue from its natural products library, as well as consider broader applications of its research in addition to drug discovery.

6. Recommendations for change of classification (State of Florida or University institute or center), if applicable.

- This is a Center of Excellence established by the Florida Legislature. No changes are recommended.

Committee Response:

No changes are recommended

7. This center is currently in active status. Please explain any recommendations for change of status to inactive or terminated.

Committee Response:

No recommendations to change the Center's current active status.

VPR COMMENTS AND APPROVAL:

1.Evaluation Summary

VPR Response:

I concur with the recommendations of no changes and to retain the Center's active status.

Five Year Evaluation of Institute and Centers
Review Period: FY2021-FY2025

Institute/Center Name: Southeast National Marine Renewable Energy Center

Center Code: 50.0600

Committee Review Topics

1. A determination of the institute or center's progress against defined goals and objectives within the context of the institute or center's mission pertinent to FAU's mission and the BOG's Strategic Plan.

Committee Response:

The mission of the Southeast National Marine Renewable Energy Center (SNMREC) is to advance "the science and technology of recovering energy from the oceans' renewable resources," in particular from southeastern US ocean currents and offshore thermal resources. During the review period FY 2021 – 2025, the Center demonstrated progress in this mission; relevant progress aligned with FAU's mission and the BOG's Strategic Plan includes:

- Research supported through external funding – \$8.3 million obtained in external funding (with SNMREC either as prime or subcontract) from funders such as the US Department of Energy, NOAA, NSF, and several companies.
- Activities with commercial potential – the Center was a founding member of US DOE's TEAMER network, which offers testing and expertise to the marine energy industry, and helped support private sector marine energy industry projects to build and/or test novel electricity-generating equipment, contributing to the advancement of Florida's blue economy.
- Undergraduate and graduate participation in research - more than 150 graduate and undergraduate students have been involved in the Center's research efforts over its lifetime, and more than 200 teachers were trained to introduce curriculum developed by the Center into high school science classrooms.
- Community engagement – the Center has partnered with the City of Lake Worth Beach, Florida to lay the foundation for a future electrical connection of offshore equipment to the city's municipal grid. The Center has also partnered with international stakeholders to develop marine energy standards.

The Center's research, academic, commercial and community engagement accomplishments during the review period demonstrate its alignment with and support of FAU's mission and the BOG's stated goals of excellence, productivity, and strategic priorities.

The committee would like to recommend, for future reports, additional information on publications generated by the Center during the review period.

2. Assessment of Return on Investment of State dollars, if applicable. (ROI calculated on Total Cumulative Non-State Legislature Revenues divided by Total Cumulative State Legislature Funding received)

- Total Cumulative State Legislature Funding Received: \$13,750,000.00 (per FY24 report submitted to BOG)
- Total Cumulative Non-State Legislature Revenues Per 5-year Report FY21–FY25 and cumulative revenues reported annually in FY23 and FY24: \$18,549,556.4
- ROI: 134.91%

Committee Response:

The ROI listed above is impressive, indicating an excellent return on investment of state dollars, exceeding a 1-1 ratio.

3. The need for continuation of the Institute/Center based on above answers, Center activities, services, financial performance and achievements.

Committee Response:

Given the performance of the Center during the review period, its notable ROI, and promise for future growth, as demonstrated by efforts to connect offshore energy equipment to a municipal grid, and plans to install a third coastal radar site, in addition to its collaborations with other universities and institutes, the Center should continue to perform its mission.

4. Possible changes in mission or organizational structure

Committee Response:

No changes in Center mission are recommended. In terms of organizational structure, as noted above, the Center has performed well and obtained external research funding over the life of the center, with a strong ROI on state funds. Based on the Center's portfolio of funded projects and strong engagement of engineering faculty, FAU's College of Engineering and Computer Science (COECS) may be a natural home for expanding the center's mission. The COECS would be able to provide extensive administrative support in pre- and post-award management of funded projects, as well as access to relevant infrastructure and robust opportunities for collaboration. Further, leadership who are members of FAU's graduate faculty would be able to provide the most comprehensive guidance to students conducting research through the center.

5. Recommendation for budget reduction or expansion

Committee Response:

No recommendations for either budget reduction or expansion.

6. Recommendations for change of classification (State of Florida or University institute or center), if applicable.

- This is a Center of Excellence established by the Florida Legislature. No changes are recommended.

Committee Response:

No changes are recommended.

7. This center is currently in active status. Please explain any recommendations for change of status to inactive or terminated.

Committee Response:

Recommend to maintain the Center's current active status.

VPR COMMENTS AND APPROVAL:

1.Evaluation Summary

VPR Response:

I concur with the recommendations of no changes and to retain the Center's active status. Meetings to discuss changes in the organizational structure, specifically the role of the COECS, have taken place. Further involvement of the COECS in SNMREC is recommended.

Gregg Fields



DIVISION OF RESEARCH
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Division of Research, Florida Atlantic University

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MEMORANDUM

Date: October 8, 2025

To: FAU Board of Trustees

From: Gregg B. Fields, Ph.D., Vice President for Research

Re: Proposal from FAU CARD to be recognized as a Center established by the Florida Legislature per Florida Regulation 10.015

Since Fiscal Year 2011 the FAU Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD) has been receiving annual awards from the Florida Department of Education to provide essential services to individuals with autism and their families.

Last year, with changes made in the annual report template, the BOG included this center in its request, though the center has not gone through the official process to be declared a state center established by the Florida legislature and does not have a designated ID number for such reporting.

After the recent update to Florida Regulation 10.015, the Division of Research created a new proposal template and asked CARD to officially request the designation of being a Center established by the Florida Legislature by the BOG. That proposal is attached hereto for your consideration. The proposal includes a 3-year budget reflecting that in addition to the state appropriation, the center expects to receive funding from the Florida Autism License Plate Program, and various foundations.

CARD is housed in the College of Education but is not seeking any university budget to carry out operations. Budgets for FY26, FY27, and FY28 are respectively ~\$1.9M, ~\$2M, and ~\$2M.

The center performs a critical role in providing expertise among professionals and across our community through training and consultation, which is improving the quality of support and services needed.

We seek your approval to move this proposal forward to the BOG and welcome any questions or comments.

Thank you.

cc: Russ L. Ivy, Ph.D., Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Iselgis Garcia, Associate Vice President, Academic Finance and Administration

encl: [Application to establish center_FAU CARD_2025_final.pdf](#)
[CARD Budget Information for Center Application.xlsx](#)

Proposal to establish a state of Florida Institute or Center

Date July 30, 2025

College or University Vice President area requesting College of Education

Contact name Dr. Jack Scott, Executive Director

Contact e-mail address jscott@fau.edu

Institute or Center Director Name Dr. Jennifer Percival

Institute or Center Director e-mail address jpollack@fau.edu

Proposed Name of institute or center Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD)

Mission (limit 150 words)

FAU CARD provides expert consulting, training and support, at no charge, for all people with autism and related disabilities, their families, employers, the professionals and community and governmental agencies serving them. FAU CARD is the first step after an individual gets diagnosed with autism or after an individual has been determined eligible with the school district, helping bridge needs with resources and services for individuals with ASD.

Benefit to State (limit 150 words)

The Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at Florida Atlantic University (FAU CARD) provides essential services that significantly benefit the state of Florida. From the day of diagnosis and throughout the lifespan, FAU CARD offers free, evidence-based support tailored to the unique needs of individuals with autism and their families. The center plays a critical role in enhancing autism expertise among professionals and across the community through comprehensive training and consultation, thereby improving the quality of services and supports available. Furthermore, FAU CARD establishes a vital safety net for families, professionals, and communities by fostering supportive practices and promoting long-term support systems across the region they serve.

Explain how the proposed institute or center supports the Board of Governors' strategic plan <https://www.flbog.edu/strategic-plan/> (limit 150 words)

In accordance with Section 1004.55, Florida Statutes, and Rule 6A-7.0335, Florida Administrative Code, Florida Atlantic University Center for Autism and Related

Disabilities (FAU CARD) provides nonresidential resource and training services for persons of all ages and of all levels of intellectual functioning who have autism, a pervasive developmental disorder that is not otherwise specified, an autistic-like disability, a dual sensory impairment, or a sensory impairment with other disabling condition. FAU CARD will provide services within the five-county region of Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee. Service delivery will be consistent with the other six statewide Center for Autism and Related Disability (CARD) centers. FAU CARD along with the other CARD centers, will coordinate services between state and local agencies and school districts, but will not duplicate services provided by those agencies and school districts. FAU CARD will work closely with its partner agencies across the State of Florida to ensure high quality and equitable local, regional, and statewide service provision in accordance with Florida Rule 6A.7.0335 and consistent with long standing mission and values of the Florida Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities.

Names of participating universities and lead contact person and e-mail address for each (if more than 3 partners, please attach additional list):

Host University name (if FAU is the host, please enter N/A): N/A

Host University lead contact name and e-mail address:

University 1 name:

University 1 lead contact name and e-mail address:

University 2 name:

University 2 lead contact name and e-mail address:

University 3 name:

University 3 lead contact name and e-mail address:

Guidelines for appointment, funding, supervising, and evaluating the director of the institute or center by the college or VP area (limit 200 words)

FAU CARD is funded through the Florida Department of Education (DOE) and operates under an annual agreement outlining required services, deliverables, and use of funds. DOE monitors FAU CARD through quarterly performance and financial reports, and reviews to ensure compliance with state statute and contractual obligations. Data from FAU CARD is included in statewide reporting to the Legislature to demonstrate that CARD is meeting their mission and service commitments.

The CARD Executive Director is Faculty in the Department of Special Education. Tenured faculty undergo a periodic comprehensive review, which evaluates their performance utilizing departmental expectations and university standards. This structured approach reinforces accountability, supports professional development, and ensures that tenured faculty continue to contribute meaningfully to the university's mission.

The CARD Director is an AMP FAU employee and falls under the FAU performance appraisal system, which includes annual reviews by supervisors, goal setting, and ongoing feedback to ensure accountability, professional development, and alignment with university standards.

Attach 3-year excel operating budget and budget justification identifying all sources of funding and proposed expenses, including any administrative and logistical support. Please include budget for any internal services (i.e. Cores, Information Technology, etc) the Institute or Center requires for operations on a separate line and provide quotes from university service centers. Criteria for appointments to the institute or center's advisory board, including terms, roles and authority (limit 200 words)

Please see attached budget.

FL Statute 1004.55 Regional autism centers: (2) There is established for each center a constituency board, which shall work collaboratively with the center. Each board shall consist of no fewer than six members, each of whom is either an individual who has a disability that is described in subsection (1) or is a member of a family that includes a person who has such a disability, who are selected by each university president from a list that has been developed by the Autism Society of Florida and other relevant constituency groups that represent persons who have sensory impairments as described in subsection (1). As representatives of the center's constituencies, these boards shall meet quarterly with the staff of each of the centers to provide advice on policies, priorities, and activities. Each board shall submit to the university president and to the Department of Education an annual report that evaluates the activities and accomplishments of its center during the year. The board for each center should raise funds equivalent to 2 percent of the total funds allocated to that center in each fiscal year.

Processing contract and grant awards and return of overhead funds:

All proposals for sponsored funding are to route through the Sponsored Programs internal routing software, and all awards will be assigned an award number from Research Accounting. Any budget changes recommended will be subject to terms set out in the sponsored research agreement.

Providing there is a sufficient overhead balance after paying all Division of Research operational costs, as required by FS1004.22, the Division of Research will distribute up to

15% of Indirect Costs generated, back to the college (or unit, if under the Division of Research) associated with the award. It is suggested that the colleges and unit share that distribution with the individual principal investigators.

Reporting and Reviews

State Institutes and Centers are required to participate in FAU's annual report submitted to the Board of Governors, which includes at a minimum the amount and source of funds supporting the institute or center, expenditures, a brief description of the mission and purpose of the institute or center, and a certification, signed by the Institute or Center Director, and the Dean or VP, that the institute or center is following all applicable state laws and Board of Governors regulations.

State Institutes and Centers will be evaluated and reviewed at least every five (5) years. At a minimum, all evaluations and reviews shall include those items listed in BOG Regulation 10.015, as well as the following:

- (1) A determination of the institute or center's progress against defined goals and objectives within the context of the institute or center's mission, the participating university mission(s), and the current BOG's Strategic Plan;**
- (2) An assessment of the return on investment of state dollars, if applicable;**
- (3) The need for continuation of the institute or center;**
- (4) Possible changes in mission or organizational structure;**
- (5) Budget reduction or expansion;**
- (6) Recommendations for change of classification (State of Florida or University institute or center), if applicable; and**
- (7) Recommendations for status change (active, inactive, terminated), if applicable.**

Upon completion of the evaluation, review and recommendations, the Vice President of Research, in consultation with the Provost or applicable unit Vice President, may require that a university institute or center be disbanded, suspended or take remedial or other action that best benefits the university institute or center or the university as a whole. If a university institute or center is suspended, the suspension shall include a plan for re-activation or termination.

In applying for the state designation of an institute or center, the undersigned ensures compliance with state laws and Board of Governors regulations.

Dr. Jennifer Percival

Signature

Dr. Jennifer Percival, Director

Printed Name of Proposed Institute/Center Director

8/13/2025

Date

Jack Scott

Signature

Dr. Jack Scott, Executive Director

Printed Name of Proposed Institute/Center Director

8/13/2025

Date

Approved by:

Charles Dukes Signature

Charles Dukes Printed Name of Dean or VP

8/14/2025 Date

Russell Ivy

Provost Signature (if proposed institute or center is under a college)

Russell Ivy Printed Name of Provost

8/14/2025 Date

Gregg Fields

Vice President for Research (VPR) Signature

Gregg Fields Printed Name of Vice President for Research (VPR)

8/14/2025 Date

Upon approval of VPR, this proposal will be submitted to the Board of Trustees (BOT). If approved by the BOT, the proposal, along with a Memorandum of understanding (MOU) is sent to the Board of Governors for consideration.