University of Nevada, Reno Endowment FAQs

Establishing an endowment at the University of Nevada, Reno creates a legacy with the power to change lives. When you create an endowment, you build a permanent resource that makes a difference now and for generations to come.

What is an endowment?

An endowment is a permanent fund established for a specific purpose. You may designate the fund in your own name, as a tribute to a friend or loved one, or to honor a professor or mentor. You can establish an endowment with cash, securities, real estate, or through a bequest. The choice is up to you. Gifts to endowments are invested to create a lasting resource that grows in perpetuity.

Why are endowments important?

Endowed funds are the bulwark for everything the University must do: recruit the best students and faculty, generate trailblazing research, and work for a better world. By generating a steady stream of income while leaving the principal untouched, endowment earnings make it possible for the University to respond to unforeseen opportunities and weather the ebb and flow of state funding, tuition income, and federal government grant making. Whatever your interest in supporting faculty and academic programs, there is most likely an area on campus that can benefit through a faculty endowment.

How much do I need to give to establish an endowment?

It depends. A scholarship reaches the minimum endowment level at $10,000, while endowed professorships and department chairs require a minimum of $500,000 to $2.5 million.

All endowments require a fully signed gift agreement developed by the University of Nevada, Reno Foundation and approved by the appropriate university representative(s). The gift agreement will outline the mutually agreed upon terms and may contain biographical information about the donor or donors as well as the donor's motivation for creation of the endowment.

Endowments may be established over a one- to five-year period with a one-time gift or a multiple year pledged commitment. Once the appropriate minimum endowment level is reached, and a gift agreement is complete, funds are invested on a prescribed cycle and the first payout date is dependent upon when funds are added to the endowment.

How does a permanent endowment work?

Endowed funds are permanently held by the University of Nevada, Reno Foundation and prudently managed and invested by its Investment Committee, which receives independent professional investment advice from Wilshire Associates.

The University of Nevada, Reno Foundation's pooled endowment consists of more than 850 individual named endowment funds. The value of the Foundation's endowment, as of June 30, 2015 was $169.4 million.

The Foundation's payout policy for endowments allows for 4.5 percent (4.5%) of the 12-quarter
average market value for distribution purposes. The management fee allows for an annual 0.75 percent (0.75%) fee to be assessed on the endowment in each fiscal year for administrative expenses associated with managing the endowment funds. Payout amount is determined based on the June 30th market value of the fund.

What kind of endowments can I support or create?

General

Earnings from the general endowment of the University provide a solid foundation and assure an annual income that benefits scholarships, professorships, research funds, book funds, and other designations. Gifts of any size can be made to the University's existing general endowment.

Student Scholarships

Endowed scholarships make a difference in the University's ability to attract and retain the best and brightest students, many of whom without financial aid would be unable to pursue their educational goals. The minimum gift to establish an endowed scholarship is $10,000; however, to generate an annual payout that meets the university's minimum annual scholarship award amount of $1,000, an endowment of $25,000 is required. It should be noted that existing endowed scholarships accept gifts from anyone who would like to support deserving students.

Graduate Fellowships

The strength of the University's graduate programs is reflected by the number that are nationally ranked in their fields. Graduate students play a critical role in fulfilling the University of Nevada, Reno's instructional and research missions. Endowed graduate fellowships can provide tuition, books, and research and living expenses, helping the University to attract outstanding students from across the United States and beyond. Fellowship support is often a deciding factor for students in determining where they will pursue their graduate studies. The minimum gift is $10,000.

Dean's Chair

A dean's chair will provide a holder of the deanship with the resources necessary to continue and further the college's contributions to teaching, research, and public service. Fund will be used for such purposes as salary supplements, graduate assistant stipends, administrative assistance, travel expenses, and other college requirements. The minimum gift is $5,000,000.

Chair

A chair will provide a distinguished scholar the opportunity to advance his/her research, teaching, and public service through salary supplement and program support. The minimum gift is $2,500,000.
Distinguished Professorship

This professorship is intended to supplement salary and research expenses for distinguished scholars with significant research qualifications and research projects. The minimum gift is $1,000,000.

Professorship

A professorship recognizes and supports the teaching, research, and service activities of distinguished teaching scholars whose research is emerging. The minimum gift is $500,000.

Distinguished Visiting Scholar

The distinguished scholar endowment is intended to fund a visiting eminent scholar. The minimum gift is $300,000.

What services does the Foundation provide to endowment donors?

For endowed funds, all donors receive an annual endowment report on the financial status of their fund. In addition, there is peace of mind that the fund will provide perpetual support according to the intended purpose.

All endowments are noted in the Nevada Silver & Blue magazine Spring Donor Issue.

Donor profiles may, with the approval of donor, be developed for issues of Nevada Silver & Blue magazine or other University, school/college publications or online outlets.

Foundation and development staff are always available to answer questions about your endowment.

Are gifts made to and endowment fund tax-deductible?

Yes, all gifts made for the purpose of establishing an endowment or to an existing endowment are deductible for income tax purpose to the extent provided by law.

Gifts made by employees or spouses of employees who work for, or who retired from corporations that match charitable gifts, may be eligible to receive matching gifts.

Who are current endowed professors?

The faculty who have been brought to campus to teach our students and to perform high-impact research through the generosity of our donors can be found at http://www.unr.edu/giving/endowed-faculty-positions.

If you have any questions, email us at giving@unr.edu or call us at (775) 784-1587.