

Article 31A.

The North Carolina Collaboratory.

§ 116-255. The North Carolina Collaboratory established.

(a) Collaboratory Established. – There is established the North Carolina Collaboratory (Collaboratory) to facilitate the dissemination of the policy and research expertise of The University of North Carolina and other institutions of higher education within North Carolina for practical use by State and local governments. The Collaboratory shall be housed at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

(b) Duties and Powers. – The Collaboratory shall do at least the following within the funds available:

- (1) Conduct, manage, or participate in research on natural resources management, including, but not limited to, research related to the environmental and economic components of the management of the natural resources within the State of North Carolina and of new technologies for habitat, environmental, and water quality improvements.
- (2) Conduct, manage, or participate in other projects and opportunities, including, but not limited to, research that may be of interest to citizens and policymakers within the State.
- (3) Support research programs at institutions of higher education, particularly institutions identified as historically minority-serving institutions, within the Collaboratory's areas of focus and expertise.
- (4) Identify, pursue, and support research and development opportunities through technology research and development, including, but not limited to, funding opportunities and partnerships between institutions of higher education, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and both private and public businesses.
- (5) Develop and disseminate relevant best practices to interested parties, lead or participate in projects across the State, and make policy, research, funding, and other recommendations to the General Assembly.
- (6) Maintain an online reporting portal, in partnership with the Office of State Fire Marshal, on the storage and deployment of Aqueous Film-Forming Foams (AFFF) as required by G.S. 58-82B-10.
- (7) Teach and train students and faculty to engage in and administer neutral and unbiased research and advice on science policy through (i) informal workshops and similar events and (ii) formal development and delivery of curriculum.

(c) Funding Conditions and Restrictions. – The following applies to funding received by the Collaboratory:

- (1) In disseminating State funds, the Collaboratory may give funding preference to constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina, wherever possible.
- (2) Funds appropriated by the General Assembly and used by the Collaboratory may not be used for indirect overhead costs at an institution partnering with the Collaboratory.
- (3) For research or investigations that need to be carried out expeditiously in response to a project, opportunity, or a legislative mandate, the provisions of Articles 3, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, and 8C of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, G.S. 143-129, and G.S. 116-31.10 shall not apply to the Collaboratory for the purchase of apparatus, supplies, material, services, capital improvements, or equipment in projects addressing an emerging or immediate threat to public

health, safety, or welfare. This subdivision shall apply only when at least fifty percent (50%) of the total funding for a project was provided by the Collaboratory. For each project that utilizes this exemption, the Collaboratory shall provide a justification in writing and make this document available on its website for the duration of the project.

- (4) All units of State and local government shall cooperate and assist the Collaboratory with its research program by providing reasonable access to at least the following:
 - a. Infrastructure.
 - b. Personnel.
 - c. Data.
- (5) The Collaboratory may allocate funds to units of State and local government, as necessary, for purposes of facilitating compliance with subdivision (4) of this subsection.
- (6) In coordination with a constituent institution of The University of North Carolina and subject to applicable statutes and policies regarding capital improvements, the Collaboratory may allocate funds for capital improvements on or in any property owned or operated by any constituent institution necessary to carry out research and development projects in which the Collaboratory has funded completely or in part. (2021-180, s. 8.8(b); 2022-6, s. 2.16(a).)