

Lincoln University
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
2026-2027 Operational Budget Request

President's Statement



Lincoln University is the first degree granting historically Black College in this nation, founded in 1854, a full decade before the emancipation of the race. More audacious than its founding was its mission to offer a rigorous classical education to men of African descent. The very idea that Black people have the intellectual capacity to engage the arts and sciences was very bold for its time, but the founders knew the best way to develop Black intellectual leadership was through the liberal arts. They believed that such leadership was essential to solving the race problem in America.

Many Lincoln graduates have gone on to literally change the courses of societies by, for example, defending Black freedom as soldiers in the Civil War, founding other Black Colleges, liberating African nations and dismantling school segregation. One hundred and seventy-one years later, Lincoln University remains a viable contributing higher education institution in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, with continued commitment to the liberal arts as it prepares students to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

Lincoln University is the largest employer in our area and in fact had a \$134.2 million economic impact on the region in 2024. The University created 1,054 jobs and generated \$1.70 in local and regional economic benefit for every dollar spent by our institution and our students. Indeed, it is factual to say that Lincoln not only graduates individuals who positively impact the region, state and the world but is also a place that serves as a significant economic engine for the Commonwealth.

We are very grateful to the Commonwealth for the generous support offered over the past years. Recent increases in our appropriation have made it possible for us to operate uninterrupted by current threats to higher education, most notable being declines in enrollment nationally. Moreover, the additional funding received from the Commonwealth made it possible for the University to help our Pennsylvania residents navigate the already stressful process of determining how they and their families would be able to fund their pursuit of a higher education degree. We cannot overstate the significance of the support exhibited by your action and we remain grateful.

More than 90% of Lincoln University students are the first in their families to go to college with nearly 70% identified as Pell-eligible. Nevertheless, Lincoln University ranks among the top 50% of institutions nationwide for social mobility. Indeed, a 2017 study exploring social mobility differences among Pennsylvania higher education institutions found Lincoln to be number one in the state for moving individuals from the bottom to the top of the socioeconomic ladder. These data reveal that it is not where you start that determines how far you can succeed but rather the education and nurturing along the way that matters. The transformative power of Lincoln University has been proven



for more than two centuries and as such, we are again asking the Commonwealth to further increase the University's level of support so that we can continue to change the lives of the students we serve.



Historically 70% of our operating dollars are derived from student tuition and fees. Unfortunately, Lincoln has experienced a 24% decline in enrollment since the pandemic, which has greatly impacted the University's cash flow and ability to fully cover the marginal costs associated with offering a high-quality education. Lincoln offers a tuition freeze policy that maintains a student's tuition at the same level for a four-year period and allows families to better plan for educational expenses. However, we continue to

experience increases in utilities, health insurance and other fixed costs associated with operating a campus.

Still further, dollars needed to support educational goals, and auxiliary functions are outpacing Lincoln's levels of revenue. Some of this lack is the result of recent executive orders for corporations and universities to dismantle diversity, equity and inclusion programs. These programs provided invaluable opportunities for the type of students served at Lincoln University. Through corporate and university partnerships, Lincoln students were able to access internships and research opportunities that surely enhanced their educational experience and post-graduation success. Although the White House has issued an Executive Order supporting Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and encouraging states, foundations and corporations to invest in our institutions, many remain confused about the difference between the ban on diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives and White House support for HBCU. As a result, programs that supported experiential learning for Lincoln students have been cancelled or stalled leaving the University to discern how to keep these important educational programs functioning.

Two-thirds of our appropriation is used to support the overall operating budget including scholarships, salaries and educational opportunities. Given growing inflation, equity confusion and escalating costs, an increase in Lincoln's Commonwealth funding is crucial to achieving major objectives to ensure the continuing success of the University and its students. Specifically, your support greatly impacts our efforts to:



- Ensure that our students are able to complete their higher education. This continues to be one of the greatest needs and priorities for Lincoln University if we are to continue to be a viable contributing higher education institution in the Commonwealth and enrich the lives of our young people
- Increase the sizes of our faculty and staff so that we may better achieve our educational goals

- Support co-curricular opportunities such as internships, undergraduate research and study abroad as important aspects of a 21st century education
- Invest in faculty and staff development towards best practices for developing and honing essential skills
- Build and sustain ubiquitous information technology on our campus to provide a vibrant educational environment.

Lincoln University has been transforming the lives of individuals from vulnerable communities especially Black students since 1854. This is a distinction held only by the State of Pennsylvania. The University has benefited greatly from the Commonwealth's support for many years. We appreciate the funding and hope that the State considers increasing its investment.



Sincerely,

Brenda A. Allen
President

Lincoln University
of the Commonwealth System of Higher Education
2026-2027 Operational Budget Request

2026-2027 Budget Request 10% Increase

\$22,928,400



The state appropriation helps Lincoln University keep its tuition and fees competitive, thereby reducing barriers to access and opportunity. Moreover, this fund helps to support several aspects that directly impact the quality of education offered by the institution.

The funding will help Lincoln:

Provide tuition and fee support in the form of tuition discounts and scholarships for Pennsylvania residents.	\$8,000,000
Support Faculty Salaries	\$4,500,000
Support Staff Salaries	\$2,000,000
Increase funding for Co-Curricular activities (Internship, Undergraduate Research, Study Abroad)	\$1,500,000
Increase funding to support faculty development specifically in areas of teaching related to 21st century skill development	\$2,000,000
Provide support for other faculty and staff development.	\$ 500,000
Modernize the technology infrastructure (complete campus network wiring and switch upgrades in buildings; acquire technology consulting/staffing to support new technologies; complete the installation of wireless capability for entire campus.	\$2,500,000
Support progress towards the replacement and upgrading of the administrative software systems.	\$ 500,000
Deploy upgraded modern computer systems and software for our students to increase their preparedness and competitiveness in a highly technology driven 21 st century.	\$ 900,000
Provide upgraded and modernized computer systems and software for our faculty and staff and provide increased professional development opportunities utilizing modern technologies.	\$ 500,000

**HISTORY OF COMMONWEALTH
FUNDING
2021- 2025**

	Actual 2021-2022	Actual 2022-2023	Actual 2023-2024	Actual 2024-2025	Estimated 2025-2026	Requested 2026-2027
Commonwealth Appropriation	15,166,000	15,166,000	18,401,000	20,848,000	21,890,000	22,928,400

For Lincoln University's 2026-2027 Operating Budget, we are requesting \$22,928,400 from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to continue providing a positive educational environment as we seek to Advance Lincoln University's Legacy of Excellence. This represents a \$10% increase to our base appropriation, an additional investment that will help to support our campus and our state.

