

NAMING OF FACILITIES, PROGRAMMATIC UNITS, OR FUNDS FOR INDIVIDUALS OR ORGANIZATIONS

POLICY SUMMARY

The NAU Foundation administers this policy, which governs the philanthropic and Honorific Naming of facilities, programmatic units, and funds after individuals or organizations. This policy outlines the types of naming opportunities available, minimum gift amounts for different types of funds, the duration of namings, and related matters. The University Naming Committee is responsible for review and recommendation of building and facility naming opportunities.

REASON FOR THIS POLICY

Clear standards for philanthropic and Honorific Naming of funds, facilities, and programmatic units for individuals and organizations help ensure consistency and cooperation across University units and promote philanthropic investments. Naming opportunities encourage private support; provide recognition to donors for their significant gifts in support of Northern Arizona University; promote parity and long-term fiscal stability across NAU's colleges, schools, and programs; and provide transparency and guidance to donors, NAU Foundation staff, and NAU staff about the desired gift amounts and impacts of naming gifts.

DEFINITIONS

Honorific Naming (without an associated gift or contribution): the naming of a facility or exterior or interior space or fixture for the purpose of bestowing distinction, commemoration, or commendation that does not result from a gift or contribution.

Irrevocable Planned Gift: a planned gift that cannot be revoked.

Memorandum of Agreement: an agreement between a donor and the NAU Foundation that provides directives regarding a donor's gift to a named current use fund, outlining how the fund is established and funded, and how the gift is distributed.

Memorandum of Understanding: an agreement between a donor and the NAU Foundation that provides directives regarding the donor's gift to a named endowment fund, outlining how the fund is established and funded, and how earnings from the fund are distributed.

Naming Opportunity: a position, project, program, capital project, facility, interior or exterior space or other item that provides an opportunity for a donor to attach a name. Philanthropic namings and Honorific Namings are governed by this policy.

Operating Budget: the annual cost to operate an administrative unit, exclusive of salaries.

Perpetuity: the length of a "Perpetuity" naming for a capital project, facility, interior or exterior space; this timeframe shall be determined by the useful life determination provided by Capital Planning and Campus Operations.

Pledge Period: the period of time in which the pledge must be satisfied. Endowment and current use fund commitments shall be paid within a maximum of five (5) years. Facility commitments shall be paid within a maximum of ten (10) years.

POLICY

A. Naming Opportunities

Northern Arizona University Foundation Executive Director (referred to hereinafter as the “Executive Director”) shall review and approve all named gifts to the NAU Foundation given for the benefit of the University. In accordance with Section B below, the University Naming Committee reviews and recommends for approval by the President all named gifts for campus facilities and other interior and exterior spaces. Philanthropic namings may be made in recognition of the donor, or in the alternative, a donor may propose that another person or organization be honored in this manner, subject to the University and ABOR policies.

B. University Naming Committee

The University Naming Committee is the entity primarily responsible for reviewing and recommending philanthropic and Honorific Naming opportunities for facilities and interior and exterior spaces in accordance with this policy. The VP Advancement chairs the Committee and nominates its members, whom the President appoints. For each Naming Opportunity under consideration, the Committee will consult as appropriate with the affected or interested parties, including without limitation the donor and/or the donor’s representative(s), administrative and academic leaders, and the University’s development officials. For particularly significant naming opportunities, the Committee may at its discretion organize campus community engagement opportunities and works to ensure in all cases that the naming of facilities, programmatic units or funds for individuals or organizations supports, reflects, and furthers the University’s mission and is consistent with ABOR policy.

C. Gift Agreements

Namings will be established via the execution of a formal gift agreement that is approved and signed by the donor, the President, and the Executive Director. Exceptions include an outright gift or bequest where the donor has no expectation of a naming or honorific namings.

D. Fund Types

The NAU Foundation manages the following types of funds:

1. Current Use Fund. These donations to the NAU Foundation are used for current operations. Named current use funds require a Memorandum of Agreement between the donor and the NAU Foundation that is developed and implemented in consultation with the University’s leadership.
2. Endowment Fund. A fund invested in the NAU Foundation that is permanently restricted by the donor in perpetuity with income to be used for the purpose designated by the donor. The purpose of the endowed fund must be clearly outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding between the donor and the NAU Foundation that is developed and implemented in consultation with the University’s leadership.
3. Expendable Fund. A fund associated with an Endowment Fund from which payouts of income earned from the Endowment Fund are made.
4. Blended Gift Fund. The pairing of current use gifts and planned gifts in order to provide a current funding stream during the donor’s lifetime that will be endowed by a planned gift.

E. Fund Purposes

1. Student Enrichment

a. Scholarships, Awards, and Research Funds. Scholarships support students by defraying educational expenses such as tuition, fees, and room and board. Scholarship funds are transferred directly to student accounts. Awards expand learning opportunities beyond the classroom through reimbursements for study abroad experiences, research, travel, professional development, etc. Merit-based awards recognize outstanding scholarship, creative artistry, and leadership with payments directly to students. Research funds support hands-on student learning experiences with laboratory or other research materials, equipment, stipends, and related expenses. The minimum funding required is as follows:

- Endowed undergraduate scholarship, award, or research fund – \$25,000
- Endowed graduate scholarship, award, or research fund – \$50,000
- Current use scholarship, award, or research fund – \$10,000

b. Graduate Fellowships. Graduate Fellowships support graduate students through funding for costs including but not limited to tuition fees, room and board, etc. The endowment or current use fund is intended to cover most of the fellowship cost. The minimum funding required is as follows:

- Endowed graduate fellowship – \$250,000
- Current use graduate fellowship – \$50,000

2. University or Program Excellence

a. Administrative Units. The intention of naming an administrative unit such as a college, school, department, center, or institute is to provide significant and sustainable operating support for the unit. The actual naming level should be based on this objective but may be adjusted based on the market rate for naming a similar school or college at NAU or peer/aspirant institutions. Naming opportunities are considered on a case-by-case basis due to the variance in size and scope of colleges, centers and institutes. In naming a college or school, the University's President, Provost, appropriate dean, VP Advancement and other administrators and advancement staff are consulted prior to finalization of a formal gift agreement with the prospective donor. The minimum funding required is as follows:

- The gift must be enough such that, if endowed, the annual payout would be at least equal to the benefiting unit's annual operating budget. The gift may be endowed, allocated for current use, or a combination of endowment and current use.

b. Programs. Named programs such as a lecture series, career services, center, or first-generation student programs bring expertise in a specialized field to campus and enhance service delivery to students by providing sustaining operating support. Naming opportunities are considered on a case-by-case basis due to the variance in size and scope of the program. The minimum funding required is as follows:

- Endowed program fund – \$50,000
- Current use program fund – \$10,000

3. Faculty Support

A named faculty endowment generally supplements a state-line or state-funded position. A faculty position is fully endowed if the gift or gifts are sufficient to fund salary, benefits, and other support or activities as applicable. Other faculty support funds provide meaningful opportunities for faculty to explore emerging research opportunities, share scholarship with students and the community, etc.

a. Academic Leadership. Endowed support for a dean, school director, or academic chair represents the highest honor the University can confer on prominent faculty members and provides annual funding to support strategic priorities for the college or academic unit. These funds may be used to

recruit and retain academic leaders, such as by serving as a significant portion of the base salary for the position. They may also support the college or academic unit's research, academic excellence, or community service activities. Named academic leadership roles represent reward, recognition, opportunity, and incentive. By providing dedicated resources for innovative research and teaching opportunities, these celebrated positions enable the most gifted faculty members, directors, and department heads to excel in their scholarly activities. Endowments for the following academic leadership positions are generally sought for academic disciplines that reflect the University's core strengths. The minimum funding required is as follows:

- Deanship or school directorship – \$2 to 3 million
 - Academic chair – \$1.5 million
- b. Distinguished Professorship. A distinguished professorship is used to honor or recruit an outstanding scholar with demonstrated potential for making exceptional contributions to their discipline. Distinguished professors are generally sought for academic disciplines that reflect the University's core or emerging strengths. The minimum funding required is \$1 million.
- c. Professorship. A professorship is used to support a gifted faculty member who shows outstanding potential. Generally, the endowment is used to supplement an existing position. The minimum funding required is \$500,000.
- d. Faculty Award. Faculty awards recognize merit and/or incentivize new work, research, and/or publication by providing support to faculty for additional work in their field of expertise, including without limitation research, creative activity, or other scholarship. The minimum funding required is \$50,000.

4. Buildings or Facilities

The desired goal for a building or facility naming gift is the cost to provide and equip the space and potentially to provide it with an operating endowment. The VP Advancement/ED NAUF in consultation with the Vice President for Capital Planning and Campus Operations, will establish the target gift amount for such namings for each project in advance of soliciting donors. Interior and exterior spaces that are part of a total building fundraising campaign should be included in initial planning efforts. The ED NAUF may recommend a threshold for naming a specific facility, taking into consideration the capacity of the prospect pool, and will generally seek to set a naming threshold that will maximize the project's fundraising potential. Minimum gift amounts will be established for spaces based upon square footage but will also reflect use, visibility, and related factors. Whenever possible, additional endowment support to provide for long-term operational costs will be encouraged. The minimum funding required is \$50,000, which may be increased to reflect the facility or space in question.

- a. Current Facilities. Previously constructed facilities, which are unnamed, may be named by a donor or a donor's representative. A reasonable fundraising objective is a contribution of fifty percent (50%) or more of the current cost to renovate or replicate the facility, as estimated by Capital Planning and Campus Operations.
- b. New Facilities. A reasonable fundraising objective is fifty percent (50%) or more of the estimated construction cost of the building is required to name capital projects funded by private or a combination of private and public funds. In general, naming criteria for funding rooms, wings, and microelements also require fifty percent (50%) of the estimated cost.
- c. Interior Spaces and Fixtures. Naming opportunities include rooms, laboratories, centers, or areas within new, existing, or renovated facilities.
- d. Exterior Spaces and Fixtures. Naming opportunities include quadrangles, gardens, recreation fields, water features, walking/biking paths, pedways, plazas, courtyards, etc.

5. Equipment, Artwork, Collections

Equipment, artwork, collections, etc. valued at a minimum of \$25,000 may be recognized with a plaque for as long as the item is deemed useful by the leader or administrator of the benefiting unit.

F. Duration of Namings

1. Student Enrichment, University or Program Excellence, and Faculty Support Funds

- a. Current use funds shall bear the name of the fund as long as donors make current gifts to the fund.
- b. Endowment funds shall bear the name of the fund in perpetuity.
- c. Blended gift funds shall bear the name of the fund as long as donors make current use gifts to the fund prior to endowment and in perpetuity after the fund is endowed.

2. Buildings or Facilities

a. Perpetuity Namings

- i. "Perpetuity" for this purpose is defined by the useful life determination provided by Capital Planning and Campus Operations. For perpetuity namings, the name will generally remain in place for the useful life of the facility, or interior or exterior space.
- ii. The naming of an administrative unit, facility, or interior or exterior space or fixture will be retained, unless:
 - A. a change is necessary to continue the appropriate recognition, such as a corporate merger or individual or family name change;
 - B. a major renovation or addition is needed, the original donor chooses not to support it, and significant support for the renovation or addition is provided by another donor;
 - C. circumstances change such that the naming could negatively impact the University's mission, values, dignity, integrity, or reputation; or
 - D. the donor fails to abide by the terms of the gift agreement.

b. Term Naming

- i. In appropriate instances, an administrative unit, facility, or interior or exterior space or fixture naming may be granted for a predetermined length of time. For such term namings, the name will at minimum remain in place for the naming term. Additionally:
 - A. The gift agreement must clearly specify the period of time for which the facility or unit will be named;
 - B. Term namings are limited to terms of no less than ten (10) and no more than twenty-five (25) years; and
 - C. The University Naming Committee may adjust the naming terms specified in Subsection B above when warranted to advance the University's best interests.

- ii. The naming of an administrative unit, facility, or interior or exterior space or fixture will be retained for its predetermined term, unless:
 - A. a change is necessary to continue the appropriate recognition, such as a corporate merger or individual or family name change;
 - B. a major renovation/addition is needed, the original donor chooses not to support it, and significant support for the renovation/addition is provided by another donor, resulting in alteration of the name;
 - C. circumstances change such that the naming could negatively impact the reputation and image of the institution;
 - D. the donor fails to live up to the terms of the agreement.

G. Naming Recognition Signage

1. Donor recognition signage costs shall be included in project budgets. For capital projects, the University Naming Committee will work with Facility Services and the affected unit's staff, the project's architect, and development and donor relations staff to determine naming recognition signage locations. Development and donor relations officials shall facilitate the final design with Facility Services and the affected unit's staff and external vendors, and shall provide the applicable content (name, other text, and images when appropriate) approved by the individual(s) or organization naming the space. This may include honorees, donors, donor representatives, or family members. Signage for a named interior feature, object, or space will not be exhibited on external building walls. Instead, the name will be located as close as practicable to (and otherwise affiliated with as appropriate) the funded feature, object, or space.
2. As modifications are made to campus property over time, situations may occur where it is in the University's best interests to relocate, modify, or reallocate a named property. When modifications to a named property are required or recommended, appropriate University, NAU Foundation, and unit leaders and administrators will be consulted to ensure that the donor's wishes are preserved to the maximum extent possible or feasible. Any such modification shall be reviewed by the University Naming Committee and approved by the VP Advancement and the President. Donated funds to support construction or renovation will be administered in accordance with this and other applicable University policies.

H. Honorific Naming

1. Decisions regarding Honorific Namings will follow the same process as for a philanthropic namings. Accordingly, any University community member or unit interested in bestowing an Honorific Naming should consult with the VP Advancement/ to discuss the matter and potential fundraising opportunities, including the possibility of third-party donors who might support the naming.
2. Honorific Namings may celebrate:
 - a. Retired or deceased faculty or staff members who have provided distinctive service to the University and a) have been deceased for one year or longer and/or have been retired, resigned, or otherwise separated from the University for not less than one year; b) exemplified the University's values throughout a long and illustrious career; and c) brought great credit to the University through major scholarly, professional, or public service achievements.
 - b. Other individuals such as alumni, community partners, government officials and other champions of the University's mission or programs who have brought great credit to or support for the University.

I. Irrevocable Planned Gift Naming

An Irrevocable Planned Gift may generate a current building or facility naming if current cash flow considerations are not an issue for the requesting administrative unit, facility, or interior or exterior space. The nature of the Irrevocable Planned Gift will be documented in the naming gift agreement. These gifts will be credited at their present value and particular emphasis will be given to the predictability of the long-term value of the Irrevocable Planned Gift. Planned gifts to endowment funds paired with current use gifts are documented with a blended gift endowment Memorandum of Agreement.

RESPONSIBILITIES

NAU Foundation: coordinates the University's activities related to all gift soliciting, receiving, recording, receipting, acknowledging; manages all gift funds and disbursements.

University Naming Committee: serves as the University's primary entity that reviews and recommends philanthropic and Honorific Naming opportunities; consults as appropriate with all affected parties and the University community at large regarding naming proposals and related matters.

Cross-References

[NAU Foundation Policies](#)

Sources

[Arizona Board of Regents Guidelines for Assigning the Names of Individuals, Families or Organizations to Campus Facilities or Programmatic Units](#)

[Arizona Board of Regents Policy 1-117](#)

*Disclaimer: all documents, links, or other materials included in this policy's appendix are provided solely for the user's convenience and are not part of official University policy.