

UNDERGRADUATE EMMA VENARDE CONDUCTS FIELD WORK WITH THE INSTITUTE AT BROWN FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY.



A BROWN UNIVERSITY DIGITAL PUBLICATIONS PROJECT, *FURNACE AND FUGUE* BRINGS TO LIFE MATTHÄUS MERIAN, EMBLEM 29 FROM *ATALANTA FUGIENS* BY MICHAEL MAIER, 1618

Transforming Brown's Research Enterprise

By Debra Bradley Ruder '80

With its bold plan to increase major investments in research, the University aims to enhance its local and global impact.

Imagine if Brown could help the world better prepare for and respond to future pandemics. What if the University could lead in unlocking the mysteries of RNA to make giant leaps in finding therapies for disease? And if Brown could confront the drivers of economic inequality and racism? Develop energy solutions to mitigate climate change? And build a deeper understanding of the historical and cultural legacies that shape a wide range of challenging issues affecting people and communities around the globe?

Brown has bold plans to accelerate progress in all of these areas, and more, through significant new investments in research over the next five to seven years. The University's *Operational Plan for Investing in Research*,

shared with faculty and staff as a draft in June 2022 and finalized in October through an extensive community engagement process, aims to better position Brown to make a transformative impact through research conducted across all academic disciplines.

"This ambitious but achievable plan will serve as a detailed roadmap for propelling Brown's research and scholarship across all disciplines to a new level of excellence over the next five to seven years," President Christina H. Paxson and Provost Richard M. Locke said in a message to the Brown community sharing the final plan. "Deeper investment in research will reinforce innovation in classrooms, attract world-class faculty and top students to Brown, stimulate innovation and economic development in

Rhode Island, and benefit society through the creation and dissemination of knowledge."

Embracing Brown's collaborative culture, the operational plan calls for new investments in people (e.g., leading faculty, graduate students and research staff), state-of-the-art space, and administrative/support services for research and scholarship, such as library and computing resources.

The plan builds on Brown's academic strengths and aligns directly with the University's *Building on Distinction* strategic plan, launched in 2014. The University's research enterprise has surged in size, impact, productivity and external funding in recent years. That includes adding regular faculty across the disciplines (11% increase from 2013 to 2021), and a significant increase in Brown's federally sponsored research expenditures, which rose by 41% over the last five years, the highest growth rate among Brown's peer institutions.

New Building, Signature Initiatives

A critical early step involves developing a new integrated life sciences building in Providence's Jewelry District, near Brown's Warren Alpert Medical School, School of Public Health and hospital partners. A multiyear process is under way to plan the facility, which will enable investigators in biology, brain science, bioengineering, public health and other disciplines to work together on critical health-related solutions.

Dr. Mukesh K. Jain, dean of medicine and biological sciences, says that with Brown's current primary research facilities nearing capacity, "This new building will provide much-needed space for our existing research centers to grow and for new ones to flourish."

The operational plan also offers a roadmap for capital planning for other major facilities projects across the humanities, social sciences, life and medical sciences, and physical sciences. The University expects construction and renovation of research space will be the most expensive area of new investment, with estimates ranging from \$700 million to \$800 million. This will be funded over the coming decade through debt and fundraising, along with the potential for partnerships with other institutions.

Projects under consideration include a Center for Artistic Design and Production, a new home for the Carney Institute for Brain Science, and facilities for many departments to accommodate future growth in such areas as economics, physics, computer science and the School of Public Health, among many others.

Brown's research growth also will include new "Signature Research Initiatives" that hold promise for improving lives. The University is inviting faculty, staff and students to submit proposals with the potential to become innovative, world-class research programs. Among the many initial proposals are "Sequencing and Understanding RNA," "Preparing for and Responding to Pandemics," "Creating Collaborative Humanities Laboratories," "Combating Inequality" and "Detecting and Treating Alzheimer's Disease."

"The research Brown produces plays a critical role in benefiting communities locally, nationally and around the world," Paxson and Locke note. "With increased investment in research across all disciplines, Brown stands ready to make a transformative impact on the lives of individuals, families and society."



PH.D. STUDENT AIDAN STONE (BACK) AND AICHA SAMA '24 ARE DESIGNING TOUGH, BREATHABLE GRAPHENE OXIDE FILMS FOR PROTECTION AGAINST VAPOR TOXICANTS AND MOSQUITO BITES.

BROWN

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT