## AT A GLANCE

### Locations
(Total c. 500,000 sq. ft.)
- John D. Rockefeller, Jr.  humanities and social sciences
- John Hay  special collections and archives
- Sciences  sciences + Friedman Study Center
- Orwig  music
- Annmary Brown  art and artifact gallery
- Annex  high-density offsite storage

*BUL also supports the Champlin Memorial Medical Library at the Warren Alpert Medical School*

### Budget
- $25+ million
  - $12+ million for collections
  - $12 million for staff

### Endowment
- $80 million
  - 350+ individual funds

### People
- 125 employees
- c. 150 student workers

### Materials
- 6.8 million volumes
- 800,000 subscriptions (electronic + print)
- Resource-sharing partnerships (access to 90 million titles)

### Visitors to Rockefeller and Sciences Libraries
- 1 million visits per year
- 97% of undergraduates
- 74% of PhD and master’s students
- 62% of medical students

### Access to Resources
- Items checked out: 111,000 items + 16,000 reserves
- Interlibrary loans: 35,000 lent; 36,000 borrowed
- Electronic resource downloads: 2 million+
- BUL homepage visits: 700,000 from 112 countries

### Teaching and Learning
- 200 class sessions, workshops, etc. taught by Library staff
  - 3,700 participants
  - 4,700 research consultations
1. **Introduction**

The Brown University Library is a dynamic physical, virtual, and intellectual hub for Brown and a vital partner in furthering the University’s global mission of educational leadership, academic excellence, and diversity and inclusion. The Library is a place of invention and an engine of collaboration where faculty, staff, and students explore the past, seek to understand the present, and innovate for the future. As Brown University continues along its trajectory of growing institutional scope, complexity, and impact, the need for expert delivery, management, and navigation of information in all its proliferating varieties has never been more critical and never more challenging. This plan charts a course for how the Library, as a vital part of Brown’s academic core, can rise to these challenges and ensure that Brown’s faculty, students, and staff have the tools, materials, and support they need to make breakthroughs in education and scholarship that transform our world for the better.

2. **Background**

The Library is a pillar of Brown’s academic mission that has been valued on campus, especially for its user-centered focus and the responsiveness of staff throughout the Library to student and faculty needs. Both on campus and beyond, the Library has also gained visibility in a number of areas, including digital scholarship, the use of special collections in teaching, and more recently high-quality collection-based exhibitions. In recent years, the Library has been transformed through reimagining and renewing many of its spaces while also repositioning collections and services around rapid advances in the digital knowledge infrastructure.

Over the last decade or so, these developments have significantly strengthened the Library’s role in teaching, learning, and research at Brown. While the Library has been on a strong positive trajectory in a number of critical respects, there is also abundant opportunity for it to have far greater impact, both on campus and beyond. In 2017, the Library underwent its first external review since 2004. The visiting committee pointed in particular to four areas of underinvestment that need to be addressed in order for the Library to achieve the level of excellence required for “meeting the responsibilities of an enterprise seeking to align itself with the expectations of the University”: 
• **Collections**: Brown has been able to sustain a modest and balanced acquisitions program including significant migration to digital resources and participation in resource-sharing consortia. The Library is, however, approaching a tipping point in its ability not only to support local needs as Brown's mission grows beyond its collegiate core, but also to participate in the national system of research libraries through building and maintaining distinctive collections. The website and other information tools for exploring and accessing Library materials require significant improvement. Brown's annual budget process does not deliver reliable inflationary increases for maintaining the current level of Library resources for the campus. Stronger donor support is essential for growing and preserving collections to meet Brown's mission.

• **Workplace**: Although the Library leadership had made significant advances in services and spaces to meet campus needs, and notwithstanding the overall quality and commitment of Library staff, significant improvements are needed in organizational development, staff planning, workplace policies and procedures, labor-management relations, and communication.

• **Diversity and Inclusion**: Libraries like Brown's have tended to diversify slowly. Consistent with Brown's *Pathways to Diversity and Inclusion* action plan (2015) and its own subsequent departmental goals, the Library needs to move forward with promoting diversity and inclusion through professional pipeline programs, recruitment and hiring practices, community engagement, and staff development.

• **Strategic Planning and Assessment**: While Brown University has significantly raised its ambitions as a world-class research university through its strategic plan, *Building on Distinction* (2013–23), the Library’s gains have not been closely tied to the University’s strategic goals. The Library did not have a clear roadmap for setting priorities and guiding the allocation of its resources. Developing and implementing a plan needs to be accompanied by more effective practices of measurement and assessment.

Accordingly, this strategic plan looks not only to how the Library can be a more effective organization and resource to the campus, but also how it can do more to help realize key University goals and making greater outward contributions to Brown's distinction in the wider scholarly world. For example, the bold focus on building the Library as, effectively, Brown's core facility for digital scholarship over the past decade was important for raising the Library's visibility on campus and more broadly within the academic community. But as technology and scholarship advance, we need to bring support for digital scholarship at Brown to the next level. Meanwhile, development in other areas central to the mission and identity of a first-rate research University such as special collections has been uneven. New vision and emphases across all of the Library's major functional
areas is essential for meeting Brown’s requirements for *Building on Distinction* and the *Pathways to Diversity and Inclusion* action plan.

More generally, the Library’s strategy has been developed, and will be implemented, within a context of rapid ongoing change in the technology and economics of scholarly communications. Questions of how we think strategically about access to the record of scholarship and support for the work of students and scholars are very much bound up with ongoing debates and practices around the reduction of financial and technological barriers to scholarly work, educational resources, and research data — typically encapsulated in the term “open access.” In 2017, the review committee’s report expressed surprise at “the low level of innovation, participation, policy development and programs in the area of open access at Brown.” And the scholarly communications environment has continued to evolve rapidly since then. As matters of academic values and standards relating to scholarly communications, setting policies is the purview of the University’s faculty. But, as demonstrated elsewhere, the Library is the locus of expert knowledge for these questions on campus and must be proactive in enabling these essential campus discussions so that Brown can benefit from the policies and practices that make sense for its institutional mission and values.

The Library’s strategic plan has been formulated with input from faculty, students, alumni, University leadership, and all Library staff. The plan comes at a moment of significant organizational change. The Library leadership team is almost entirely new, though also includes some longer-serving members elevated to new leadership roles. Generational turnover is taking place throughout the organization in both professional and support positions. The nature of academic libraries’ role and, correspondingly, the nature of library work, are evolving rapidly, as is the broader system in which scholarly information is produced and disseminated. Brown itself is experiencing significant change resulting from *Building on Distinction* and *Pathways to Diversity and Inclusion*, and the University is advancing within a larger complex of questions around the future shape of American and global higher education. The confluence of all these forces creates enormous opportunity and exciting possibilities for bringing new thought and vision to strategic objectives for the Brown University Library.

3. **Mission**

Through its resources and services, the Library seeks to activate and guide intellectual exploration and creativity that knows no boundaries, while also playing a central role in realizing the ideal of collaborative partnership that is central to the University’s mission. The Library also extends this vision beyond campus to the broader academy and worldwide scholarly community as well as regionally to Providence and Rhode Island. Indeed, the Library’s core functions today are embedded within the University’s mission statement: “discovering,
communicating, and preserving knowledge and understanding in a spirit of free inquiry.” Accordingly, the Library has adopted the following mission statement:

*The Brown University Library advances instruction, learning, and research in the University by providing critical expertise, curated collections, and responsive technology and spaces in an environment of creativity and inclusivity. Partnering with students, faculty, staff, and members of the global scholarly community, we foster and guide the creation, acquisition, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge at Brown and beyond in a spirit of free and open inquiry.*

4. **Strategic Vision**

Brown University’s goal is to be a higher-impact, world-class research university. As stated in the introduction to the University’s strategic plan, *Building on Distinction: A New Plan for Brown*: “We will pursue Brown's mission to discover, communicate, and preserve knowledge and understanding at an even higher level of distinction. We will raise Brown's stature as a leading university that unites innovative teaching and outstanding research.” World-class research universities require — and should expect to have — world-class research libraries. For Brown to realize its ambitious goals as a university, the Brown University Library needs to carry out its mission at a higher level, equivalent to that of the strongest academic and other departments on campus.

As a research library, the Brown University Library’s core business is to connect learners and investigators to the documents, data, and tools they require for discovering, creating, and sharing knowledge. Library experts are the key partners who facilitate exploring, locating, and managing the information that users both seek and generate. As a teaching and research facility in which students, scholars, practitioners, and staff specialists collaborate in developing new forms of inquiry and new methods of investigation, the Library is and must be an active center of intellectual innovation in its own right.

The Library’s work is essential for realizing the University’s commitment to cultivating an open intellectual environment for deep inquiry and free expression while also ensuring that all individuals, and the wide range of experiences and views they represent, are valued and treated with respect. Moreover, the Library has a unique and deeper contribution to make toward, in the words of the *Pathways to Diversity and Inclusion* action plan (DIAP), “breaking down historic structures that impede all of this, and creating new ones that make a better future possible. It means advancing teaching and scholarship about power, privilege, and justice in contemporary and historical contexts, so that the injustices of the past do not continue to shape our lives.” The development, practices, and structures of research libraries reflect those of higher education — and of the organization of Western knowledge generally — in their
failure to be fully inclusive. As a core facility for the discovery, communication, and preservation of knowledge and understanding at Brown, the Library has a major responsibility for confronting and working to overcome the legacies of marginalization or exclusion on campus and beyond.

5. Core Values

In seeking to achieve greater excellence in order to advance the University’s strategic goals, the Brown University Library staff is guided by the following values:

- We affirm and support Brown University’s mission to serve the community, the nation, and the world by discovering, communicating, and preserving knowledge and understanding in a spirit of free inquiry.
- We value and encourage a diverse community that includes a full range of perspectives and cultures.
- We uphold the principles of free speech, open inquiry, and open access.
- We aim to provide the highest quality service to our academic community.
- We work together as a team for the benefit of the University.
- We value innovation and flexibility in finding creative ways to support and engage with the Brown community.
- We create and maintain spaces in which academic activities and community life may be freely pursued in a climate of mutual respect, tolerance, and understanding.

6. Strategic Objectives

The Library’s strategy is built around four core objectives:

- **Academic Integration**: The Library will strengthen the alignment of collections, resources, staff expertise, and programs with Brown’s strategic commitments under Building on Distinction to enhance excellence in research and education. The Library’s work will be essential to the success of the University’s strategic academic goals.
- **Knowledge Generation**: The Library will grow as a center for research and learning in which Brown faculty and students collaborate with specialist Library staff to advance knowledge. Both on-site and virtual access to the Library’s collections will make Brown a destination research and learning site for scholars.
- **Innovative Practice**: The Library will be known as an innovative leader in its field, developing creative solutions for producing and delivering knowledge to the world. Within the University, the Library will provide leadership,
expertise, and partnership on issues relating to the rapidly evolving information environment.

- **Organizational Investment**: The Library will become a more effective organization through ensuring that all staff have the training, tools, and support they require to make outstanding contributions to Brown's academic community. As a learning organization, the Library will strengthen departmental structures, create cross-departmental teams, and update technological capabilities to meet the operational requirements for achieving our strategic goals.

All four of these objectives are responsive to and strengthened by Library-wide goals that act upon the University's commitment to **diversity and inclusion** as reflected in the backgrounds and experiences of our people as well as our approaches to the materials, methods, and accessibility of scholarship. Similarly, we want to find new ways for scholarship and practice at the Library to have a positive impact on the wider **community** in Providence and beyond. As reflected in our objectives, the Library should not only be responding to the legacies of historic inequity and injustice, but also taking action through its work and expertise to overcome them.

**Strategic Objective: Academic Integration**

Brown's academic strategy focuses on integrative scholarship through strengthening schools, institutes, and centers in ways that have a distinctive impact on their fields and enhance excellence within the core disciplinary departments. It also commits to ensuring that we remain innovators in undergraduate education and enhancing graduate and medical education. In addition to integrative scholarship and educational leadership, Brown's strategy emphasizes building capacity for sustaining academic excellence through diversity and inclusion, and by providing faculty, students, and staff with the physical, digital, and financial research infrastructure necessary for achieving the University's goals.

The Library is essential for realizing Brown's educational and research mission. It is the centralized agent for acquiring, curating, and facilitating access to the information resources and tools that are needed in the classroom, the study, the lab, clinical settings, and beyond. It is also a creative contributing partner in education and research through the work of specialist staff who guide students and assist faculty with navigating the information environment in their fields, provide instruction in tools and methods that are needed for teaching and research today, and support the ongoing management and accessibility of the new knowledge that faculty, students, and staff create.
While the Library must serve a broad array of core functions for every individual on campus, priorities for staffing needs, collections, services, and programs must respond to and reinforce the areas defined by the University as most critical for Brown's overall academic excellence. Through consultation with leaders of the key integrative scholarship initiatives, deans of all academic units responsible for faculty and educational programs, directors of institutes and major centers, and department chairs, we are forging stronger connections and bringing greater focus to the ways that the Library can have a direct impact on their ability to achieve their own strategic goals. Enhancing integration with academic programs will also require more intentional interoperation across Library departments.

Some key areas for strengthening the Library's academic alignment that have emerged from these discussions are:

- **Strategic Collection Building**: Collections must grow and be developed on an integrated basis across general, special, and digital materials so that they are keeping pace with University priorities and meeting program needs for new or enhanced resources for teaching and research. For example:
  - Building new research and teaching collections is central to the academic goals of some initiatives prioritized under Building on Distinction, including the Brown Arts Initiative, the Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice, the Data Science Initiative, and the Swearer Center for Public Engagement.
  - Developing programs like Native American and Indigenous Studies, or growing cross-departmental interests such as East Asian studies, are also likely to require new or enhanced collection-building for research and teaching.
  - At the departmental level, strategic growth and disciplinary evolution may also give priority to new areas that will require targeted investments in new subscriptions and materials acquisition.

- **Research Support**: The Library must strengthen its technological infrastructure and augment staff expertise to meet academic needs driven by Brown's priorities and the evolving scholarly landscape, including:
  - Position the Brown Digital Repository and related metadata services as a central function for meeting the University’s growing needs to maintain, discover, access, and disseminate creative work, scholarly outputs, and research data generated by faculty, students, and staff—not least in response to emerging norms and new imperatives for open access data management.
  - Advance the capabilities of the Center for Digital Scholarship to support the growing number of scholars from across the University using or
seeking to learn advanced digital methods for the development and presentation of their research.

- Expand staffing capabilities to provide more effective support for clinical research, practice, and education, and to address strategic opportunities for partnerships with the Brown Center for Biomedical Informatics.

- **Knowledge Support**: The Library’s role as an education provider through workshops, course sessions, consultations, and other activities to advance knowledge and skills in information management tools, research methods, software carpentry, digital literacy, and information literacy more broadly should be more closely connected with curricular and program needs. This will involve collaborating with the relevant schools, institutes, centers, departments, and academic support units to reach audiences at scale and at the appropriate junctures in their educational or research process.

- **Diversity and Inclusion**: The information resources that the Library furnishes to support teaching and research at Brown must be fully consistent with the University’s commitment to diversity and inclusion while also serving to advance our institutional goals in this area, including:
  - Collections priorities should emphasize, as the DIAP calls for, “scholarly resources to support education and leading-edge research on issues of race, ethnicity, inequality, and justice around the globe.”
  - The Library should incorporate and advance new inclusive methods for conceptualizing and describing existing and new resources that bring diverse content to the fore and help repair historic inequities.
  - Library study spaces and digital information tools should be accessible and responsive to diverse needs of the campus community.

- **Co-Curricular Student Employment**: With around 150 student employees each year, the Library is the fourth largest employer of students at the University. At its best, work in the Library provides students with new ways of understanding the knowledge systems that underlie teaching and scholarship. All work in the Library should be an educational opportunity as well as a pecuniary one, and we should consciously design student employment with co-curricular goals in mind.

- **Community Engagement**: The Library can play a greater role in the University’s work to make Providence and Rhode Island more culturally, academically, and economically vibrant. This includes thinking more systematically and strategically about the information needs of faculty, students, and staff practicing engaged scholarship and public scholarship; our existing partnerships and activities around exhibits, K-12 education, and civic education; and how we can forge stronger professional connections with area libraries and local organization archives.
**Strategic Objective: Knowledge Generation**

In addition to supporting excellence and innovation in academic programs, the Library is also an active site of integrative scholarship itself and can further strengthen its role and identity as an incubator for new knowledge. Whereas the previous objective, Academic Integration, focuses on how the Library should reach outward to build more intentional and systematic linkages with campus teaching and research programs, the objective of Knowledge Generation is to activate more scholarly activity within the Library:

- **Destination Research**: World-class research libraries are magnets for researchers from around the globe, particularly when their scholarship draws upon rare and unique materials that the libraries have expertly collected, preserved, and curated over time. Today, distinguished collections can be virtual as well as physical destinations. In addition to targeted investment in new special collections to support and strengthen Brown's academic mission, we need to look afresh at the extraordinary array of materials already at the John Hay Library, identify the fields in which these collections constitute a national or international-level resource for deep study, and make these strengths more visible and accessible to the world through prioritized digitization, enhanced description, innovative curation, processing important collections that are still inaccessible to researchers, and funding opportunities for scholars whose work necessitates on-site consultation. (Currently, the Hay has only one endowed fund to support visiting scholars, the S. T. Joshi Fellowship for research on H. P. Lovecraft.)

- **Faculty Residencies**: Enhancing faculty time available for scholarship is one of the strategic goals for academic excellence identified in Building on Distinction. Faculty already collaborate with Library experts and make intensive use of Library resources in many ways, and the Library should offer even greater support for faculty work.
  - A first step, now underway, is creating an open and transparent system for allocating 35 faculty study rooms in the Rockefeller Library based on a clear set of criteria for sustained and intensive use of Library resources, research collaborations, and other important scholarly uses.
  - Beyond offering valuable space for scholarly activity, a program of funded residencies would also support the time faculty need at critical junctures in their work, such as advancing digital scholarship projects; pursuing research data management questions; making intensive use of special materials for research, exhibitions, or other projects; developing and teaching new experimental courses; and providing intellectual leadership to strategic collection-building and description work (digital or physical).
• **Graduate Fellowships**: As Brown’s recent accreditation review affirmed, it is essential for Brown to build stronger graduate programs if the University is to realize its academic ambitions. Many graduate students are already involved with the Library’s services and programs, applying their skills and gaining new scholarly knowledge through working on digital projects, contributing to specialized cataloging, learning to teach with special collections, and other key activities. The Library should expand opportunities for graduate students to learn from staff’s considerable expertise in a broad array of scholarly tools, methods, skills, and materials in ways that augment and complement the disciplinary training that graduate programs provide.

• Currently, the Library hosts PhD fellowships or proctorships in the Center for Digital Scholarship, the Digital Publications Project, and (jointly with the Center for the Study of the Early Modern World) the John Hay Library. Such opportunities serve not only to advance students’ own research, but also cultivate important scholarly skills that are beneficial for their job prospects and careers. The Library should expand the array of doctoral research fellowships it can offer.

• The Library is also a frequent training site for master’s students in Public Humanities. This important relationship could be strengthened, particularly in light of the Library’s resources for digital scholarship and recently enhanced capacity for mounting outstanding exhibitions.

• Consistent with the University’s goals in the creative arts, we should also explore new opportunities for graduate students in arts programs to engage with and draw inspiration from Library materials.

• Library staff currently contribute to training students in the Doctoral Certificate in Spatial Analysis, and our distinctive capabilities and expertise can play a greater role in addressing graduate students’ interest in specialized qualifications. In particular, based on the Center for Digital Scholarship’s extensive work with graduate students over the years as well as general trends across other institutions, the Library should work with the Graduate School and partner academic units to explore developing and supporting a Doctoral Certificate in Digital Scholarship.

• **Undergraduate Research**: Brown was an early leader in undergraduate research, and the Library has long served as a site for students to encounter and investigate source materials of many kinds.

• We should pursue ways to strengthen our current participation in UTRAs and other campus programs promoting undergraduate research.

• We can create other kinds of opportunities to engage undergraduates in the possibilities of Library-based research. One model being piloted in the summer of 2019 is a fellowship program for original undergraduate
research using the collections at the John Hay Library. Over ten weeks, with guidance from curatorial staff, a cohort of students will build research skills using primary sources to develop an original project based on substantive use of the rare books, manuscripts, artwork and/or other objects at the Library.

- The Library should provide a more systematic and widely accessible platform for hosting and preserving students’ completed research such as theses, journals, digital projects, and other work.
- A postbaccalaureate training fellowship would create an opportunity for recent Brown graduates to explore a career in library and information science and related areas. In addition to strengthening fellows’ preparation for top library and information schools, such a program could also be geared toward diversifying the library profession.

- **Diversity and Community:** In conjunction with approaches described above under the Academic Integration objective (e.g., strategic collection-building), enhancing the Library’s role as a center of scholarship through new kinds of affiliations for visitors, faculty, and students can advance Library and University goals for increasing “scholarly resources to support education and leading-edge research on issues of race, ethnicity, inequality, and justice around the globe” (DIAP) — especially if fellowship and research opportunities give priority to those topics. Stronger connection with community partners should include exploration of supporting their research needs, including the possibility of Community Research Fellowships.

**Strategic Objective: Innovative Practice**

Brown’s leadership in research and education lies in its distinctive character, or “the Brown difference.” The Library not only facilitates and participates in Brown’s ethos of creative problem solving, intellectual entrepreneurship, and collaboration across the campus community, it strives to exemplify those values in addressing the challenges of scholarly information management and service delivery in the 21st century. Brown aspires to have all its departments be leaders in their fields, and the Library can be no exception. Particular areas of professional practice where there is continuing or emerging focus include:

- **Healthy Collections Ecosystem:** Building and supporting library collections that are equal to the University’s goals for academic excellence requires sustained, deliberate stewardship. A continuous program of collection assessment involving faculty, students, and staff is necessary to maintain a dynamic collection. Beyond questions of resource acquisition, we must also develop innovative approaches to managing the physical collection within
the available library spaces and providing materials with sustainable care. Key initiatives include:

- The Library needs a more proactive and regularized program as well as transparent criteria for managing the organization of materials in the Rockefeller Library book stacks, including improved workflows for weeding, shifting, and relocating items to the Annex. Such a program should not only ensure full navigability of the collection, but also account for service and preservation needs. Achieving this goal will be a major organizational endeavor and a labor-intensive undertaking.

- Although a significant quantity of material from the Orwig Music Library has, in recent years, been identified as suitable for the Annex and relocated there, the extremely limited physical space for collections in the building poses a constant challenge that must be balanced with program needs in music teaching and research, particularly in light of the strategic investments in performing arts at Brown. Accelerating creation of records and metadata is key to managing Orwig's space, increasing the accessibility of music research materials, and creating a comprehensive plan for music collecting.

- In the Sciences Library, the rapid shift to the use of digital resources in the sciences allowed us to downsize physical collections and partner with the University to open up space important for advancing a number of Brown's priorities. The remaining SciLi collections need to be as coherent as possible and should be continually evaluated in relation to program needs. More broadly, the location of educational resource offices and programs in the SciLi creates a new set of conditions for thinking about the vision and identity of the Library spaces and functions that remain. The Library should collaborate with the Dean of the College and other stakeholders to consider what kinds of new and generative opportunities for Library services and initiatives can emerge beyond mere physical colocation.

- In conjunction with strategic goals for identifying the areas where our special collections have greatest scholarly impact and building new special collections strengths in partnership with Building on Distinction initiatives, the John Hay Library needs more robust and regularized collection management practices to ensure not only the physical, but also the intellectual sustainability of its unique and rare materials. The project currently underway to conduct a comprehensive survey of the Hay collections is a first step. Going forward, the Hay will need stronger and more focused oversight for the physical arrangement, conservation, care, and description of rare books, manuscripts, and other special collections items, as well as more regularized practices for collection inventory, appraisal, backlog reduction, rehousing, and where
appropriate deaccession. And while the public spaces of the Hay have been handsomely renovated and are now among Brown's most attractive physical assets, there are persistent issues in the Hay stacks that without remediation will continue to limit our ability to care properly for our unique and rare materials.

- Alongside the needs for enhanced care and management of our physical collections and associated spaces, we also need to ensure that the ecosystem of our digital collections and infrastructure is similarly healthy. Working with partners across campus, including the Office of University Communications and Computing and Information Services, we have the opportunity and responsibility to strengthen our digital infrastructure through strategic partnerships and initiatives. The new University website is a significant opportunity for us to align the Library web presence and functionality within a state-of-the-art information platform. Similarly, we should work with partners such as the Dean of the College's office, the Graduate School, and the Office of the Vice President for Research, as well as partners and communities of best practice outside the University, to reimagine the Brown Digital Repository, VIVO, and other systems as central applications in a robust and extensible platform for the preservation and dissemination of research. Other initiatives include our continued participation in the Ivy Plus Libraries Confederation Web Collection Program and the creation of a state-wide hub for the Digital Public Library of America.

- The sustainability of a healthy collection ecosystem must be consistent with Brown's net-zero goals for greenhouse gas emissions. Holistic planning should factor in environmental impacts and tradeoffs, including transportation of materials, heating/cooling demands of both physical and digital storage, and print-driven deforestation.

- **Resource Partnerships:** While there are clear needs to continue targeted investment in building Brown's collections locally, the networked environment also creates new opportunities for providing users easier access to a much broader range of physical and digital materials beyond our owned materials and subscriptions.

- In recent years, Brown's Library has contributed intellectual leadership to the development of resource sharing partnerships that help us transcend the limitations on what we can acquire and support locally. In particular, the Borrow Direct network of Ivy Plus Libraries makes some 90 million items available to Brown users, and new shared investments in discovery tools will make this wealth of material much more readily accessible across the partnership. Strategic partnerships of this kind are critical for
meeting the needs of world-class research and teaching, and we need to continue exploring innovative ways of making content available to our users.

- More broadly, Library staff will have to continue evolving the methodologies for identifying, describing, locating, curating, and guiding users to the information they most require as we strive to make more material and more data more easily available to individuals anywhere.

- **Digital Scholarship**: The Library has a long history of fostering innovation in the application of digital methods to address scholarly questions, and it continues to give leadership in this burgeoning area of theory and practice.

  - The Center for Digital Scholarship (CDS) brings together a range of services, expertise, and training activities in digital humanities, social science data, scientific data, data visualization, and other methods. As interest in digital scholarship becomes more widespread among faculty, students, and staff, CDS must evolve its vision and intellectual direction through more direct involvement by faculty, consolidating its intellectual and programmatic role as the University's digital scholarship hub in relation to other activities on campus, and strengthening the programmatic use of the Center's spaces and facilities.

  - Partnering with the Dean of the Faculty and university presses, the Library oversees a pioneering project to develop high-impact born-digital scholarly publications. This successful pilot is a prime example of field-changing, library-based innovation that will continue to be advanced in the coming years.

- **Diversity and Community**: The research library sector is collectively grappling with effective ways to build greater diversity and stronger community engagement practices. Consistent with Brown's mission, history, and values, the Library has opportunities to develop novel approaches to promoting greater diversity alongside and in conjunction with enhanced community engagement. This will involve building new capacity and expertise for diversity, equity, and inclusion in the content of the Library's work and professional profile, including collection acquisitions, description, and curation as well as building diverse professional networks and diversity-focused institutional partnerships. Some of those collections, network, and partnership opportunities will come from more intentional engagement with community organizations (such as those that partner with the Swearer Center and work with our students), local libraries, and regional educational institutions.
Strategic Objective: Organizational Investment

Staff are the Library’s greatest source of strength. Library staff are also distinguished by their spirit of workplace community and high degree of commitment to the Library’s mission within the University. Driven by the University’s priorities, the evolving role of research libraries, and the number of long-serving staff approaching retirement, the Library is in a period of both organizational change and staff renewal. This impending loss of deep institutional knowledge in particular underscores the Library’s need to position itself as a learning organization — one that continuously gathers and assesses data, adapts, and improves. We need to ensure that our staff not only have the knowledge, skills, and structures that are needed to achieve our strategic objectives, but also benefit from an organizational culture that continues to build staff capabilities for operational excellence.

The Library will embrace a culture of continuous learning for building capacity and creating new approaches to meet the changing needs of the scholarly environment and attaining our strategic objectives. Central themes for building our learning organization include:

- **Expertise as Leadership**: Library staff’s specialized skills and training are essential for guiding students in their educational pursuits and enabling faculty to realize their scholarship. As Brown seeks to recruit the most promising students and outstanding faculty, it is critical for the Library to invest in staff capabilities in order to reach our objectives and fulfill our mission at the highest possible level. Our goals for Academic Integration, Knowledge Generation, and Innovative Practice will shape the evolution of Library departments and individual staff roles. Similarly, these objectives will drive the creation of cross-departmental teams that bring together multiple areas of knowledge and practice around institutional priorities. For all these reasons, it is especially important to ensure that we prioritize the knowledge, skills, and practices necessary for highly effective collaboration.

- **Organizational Development**: To support this effort, organizational development has been made a central function of the Library’s human resources office, and important groundwork has been laid for strengthening our partnership with University Human Resources, including the Center for Learning and Professional Development.

- **Communication**: Strong communication is essential for being an effective organization of any kind, but especially so for a learning organization.
  - Within the Library, improved communications are needed to create greater organizational cohesion and accountability through fostering shared awareness across all departments, improved collaboration across the Library, and greater transparency around key decisions and initiatives.
• Improved communication with stakeholders on campus and beyond is also a critical set of investments to raise the visibility of the Library’s expertise, resources, and programs. In particular, the Library website as point of entry and essential information tool must be upgraded to improve user navigability, provide better support for staff’s work, and give a better representation of the Library’s scholarly resources. The Library also requires stronger vision and organization around social media as an essential tool in reaching students, promoting scholarly activities and programs, and engaging a wide range of external audiences (including alumni and scholars elsewhere) in our work.

• **Diversity and Community**: The Library will become a more diverse and inclusive learning organization through actively recruiting, developing, retaining, and supporting staff with a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives that enrich our collective capability to serve the campus as conductors, creators, and caretakers of knowledge. Staff should be more broadly representative of diverse backgrounds, knowledge, and experiences. The Library needs to build more diverse employment pipelines and professional pathways. This includes developing stronger community-facing practices in Providence and the region.

7. **Conclusion**

With a clear vision of its mission, values, and strategic goals, the Brown University Library is poised to make significant advances as an energetic contributor to excellence in education and scholarship at Brown. The high level priorities identified in this plan call upon the talents, ingenuity, and dedication of all Library staff across all departments: Academic Engagement, Access Services, Collections Management, Digital Scholarship, Digital Technologies, and Special Collections as well as Library-wide administration (communications, facilities, finance, human resources, and planning).

Our goals are entirely attainable, although accomplishing them will require human, technological, and financial resources as well as active partnership both within and beyond the campus. Achieving our goals requires developing appropriate benchmarks and metrics for success, strong assessment tools, and a culture of continuous improvement to ensure that we keep up with Brown’s academic growth and the dynamic environment for scholarly information.

Setting these priorities will both demand and enable us to achieve new levels of effectiveness in our organizational and financial management. In all these respects, we look forward to distinguishing ourselves as a major, high-performing, and highly valued asset for Brown University, and a recognized leader in the library field.