Over the past decade, the Libraries have undergone a physical and technological transformation, preserving the best of our tradition and history while introducing new spaces and resources for the Duke community. In the process, we’ve become one of the most popular destinations on campus. Across our libraries, students and faculty from multiple disciplines gather to exchange ideas, explore our collections, participate in cultural events, and experiment with innovative tools that enrich teaching and learning.

Support for the Libraries through the Duke Forward campaign will help us advance the university’s highest academic priorities. New contributions will allow us to introduce new tools to support scholarly work, expand our collections in strategic ways, and digitize more of our unique resources. Duke has built one of the top research library systems in the country. As our prominence and reputation continue to grow, the whole university will benefit.
Spaces for Study and Community

Every eight seconds, someone walks into a Duke University library. Over the past decade, the Libraries have undergone a renovation and expansion that have greatly enhanced the research support and gathering space we provide for 21st-century students and scholars. The Duke Forward campaign will fuel our continued transformation through the completion of this ambitious project.

We’ll renovate the newly named David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, reimagining this important space to make it easier for faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates to use the primary resources so essential to their work. With more than half of Duke undergraduates pursuing a faculty-mentored research project, student interest in accessing the materials in our special collections has never been higher. We’ll create an expansive research room and refigure and renew spaces to facilitate both independent research and the collaborative exploration of questions and exchange of ideas. When the renovation is complete, the Rubenstein Library promises to be one of the crown jewels of Duke University.

Your gift of $25,000 or more can name a space in the Perkins, Bostock, or Rubenstein Library. A variety of spaces are available. Explore a map at dukeforward.duke.edu/libraryspaces.

A class of Duke medical students reviews early medical books on anatomy. Duke’s unique collections are an asset that boosts the work of both distinguished scholars and undergraduates exploring original materials for the first time. Our collections in medical history are one of the highlights of the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, and are a draw for scholars.
BUILDING DISTINGUISHED COLLECTIONS

The backbone of every great library is the strength of its unique collections. At Duke, the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library contains 20 centuries of history and culture, including one of the top three collections of Walt Whitman's manuscripts, distinctive holdings in the history of medicine, powerful oral histories from the Jim Crow South, and the largest collection of modern economists' papers in the world, including nine Nobel Prize winners. Collections of this caliber can transform disciplines by facilitating archival research and discovery, attract visiting scholars and top faculty whose work depends on the richness of the Libraries’ resources, and establish the university as a leader in critical fields.

Philanthropic support during the Duke Forward campaign will help us take advantage of opportunities to add primary materials and expand collections in important areas that align with Duke’s academic and research priorities. We'll also build on our historically strong foundational print collections, those unique and high-profile holdings that distinguish Duke from other research universities.

YOUR GIFT OF $50,000 OR MORE can endow a named, unrestricted collections fund, enabling the acquisition of important resources for the future, while your gift of $100,000 or more can endow a collections fund that regularly adds library resources in a particular subject or field of your choosing.

YOUR GIFT OF $100,000 OR MORE can endow a research prize for undergraduate or graduate students to recognize excellence in the use of library resources.

YOUR EXPENDABLE GIFT OF $25,000 can fund research travel grants to bring visiting scholars to Duke to use our special collections.

TECHNOLOGY FOR FASTER, EASIER, BETTER RESEARCH

Every four seconds, someone searches our online library catalog. The Internet has become the primary way people find and use information. That’s why we’re mounting a digital modernization effort that is just as significant as our brick-and-mortar renovation, and will expand our ability to accommodate the new ways our faculty and students teach and learn. Philanthropic investments in our technical infrastructure and added staff expertise can help us migrate print materials to digital formats, improve our capacity to archive and share data, and collaborate with instructors on innovative ways to achieve their teaching goals.

Developing our digital collections and services will also give us an edge in competing for modern archives in critical areas such as women’s history, advertising, and human rights. Taken together, these steps will ensure that the Duke University Libraries continue to attract pre-eminent researchers and teachers for generations to come.

YOUR GIFT OF $1 MILLION OR MORE can endow a technology innovation fund to enable investment in new technologies that fuel teaching and research.

YOUR EXPENDABLE OR ENDOWED GIFT OF $250,000 OR MORE could be used to purchase visualization equipment or streaming and digitization software.
How will you move Duke forward?

Explore dukeforward.duke.edu

Annual Support

Meeting the needs of almost 15,000 students, some 1,800 faculty, and more than 30,000 employees of a major research university is challenging work. And unlike many private research libraries, we pride ourselves on being open to the public. Your Library Annual Fund gifts help us provide the highest level of service to our students, faculty, and the many outside researchers who use our collections, advancing the university’s research and teaching missions.

Your gift of $100,000 or more can endow a fund to support public programming at the Libraries, including lecture series and other events that highlight our unique resources and collections.

Your gift of $1.5 million can endow and support the position of university archivist or special collections librarian.

Programs that educate and engage

Every year, the Libraries host more than 100 public events, including workshops, exhibits, book talks, symposia, film screenings, music performances, award ceremonies, lectures, and the largest student-organized social event at Duke—the Library Party. These events highlight our inspiring collections, showcase student and faculty creative work, and foster conversation between the academic community and the general public.

As our event and exhibition capabilities expand with the Rubenstein Library renovation, we will need to increase support for public programs and outreach activities. The result will be an even more welcoming, inviting, and stimulating library. Support for public programming will ensure that Duke’s Libraries are not only sanctuaries of quiet study and scholarly discovery, but also places of inspiration, conversation, and delight.

Supporting experts and innovators

Our librarians and skilled staff provide invaluable service to the Duke community, answering over 115,000 reference questions a year—virtually and in person—and leading more than 600 presentations and training sessions. They’re accomplished specialists versed not only in their particular academic fields, but also in how best to find, organize, preserve, and share the wealth of material available in today’s information-driven society. Our 35 research librarians, with expertise in topics ranging from astrophysics and anthropology to statistics and zoology, provide specialized research support to faculty, staff, and students. Our scholarly communications director, a renowned expert on copyright, intellectual property and scholarly publishing, advises faculty, administrators, and students about related issues and best practices. And the experts in our conservation lab, one of the best of its kind, work meticulously to extend the life of our holdings, ensuring we preserve knowledge and pass it on to the next generation.

As our collections and services grow to support Duke’s priority research areas, we’ll need to recruit and retain talented and innovative librarians, technologists, and archivists. Philanthropic investment during the Duke Forward campaign will enable us to attract and add the experts who will help our students and faculty blaze new paths in research.

Your gift of $1.5 million can endow and support the position of university archivist or special collections librarian.