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SMITH COLLEGE LIBRARIES

Inside the New Neilson
Programming Initiatives & Services

Main Hall, first floor



“When Neilson reopens in 2020, it will be responsive and nimble to new ways of teaching, learning and connecting. It will be a library that celebrates what Smith does best—educate women for leadership.”
—Kathleen McCartney, president of Smith College



Lead designer Maya Lin and President McCartney

The New Neilson

A Library Leader in Learning and Innovation



Smith College Libraries are the intellectual crossroads of our campus. For many students, faculty and alumnae, the libraries are an important touchstone for their intellectual development—places that inspire exploration, creativity, collaboration and community.

With the reimagining of Neilson Library and Alumnae Gym, we have a historic opportunity to shape the future of Smith scholarship and set a course for exploring new ways of teaching, learning and researching. That means

better showcasing the books and special collections Smith is known for as well as developing exciting new ways to access our vast resources. It means providing state-of-the-art services that teach data visualization and spatial literacy. It means paying attention to the complete user experience so that students, in particular, have the tools and training they need to succeed at Smith—and beyond. And it means collaborating with colleagues across academic disciplines to ensure that students incorporate diverse perspectives into their studies, acquiring the skills and curiosity of mind they need to address the complex issues of the day.

“The libraries are an important touchstone for intellectual development—places that inspire exploration, creativity, collaboration and community.”

Our plans are ambitious. It is my belief that the array of programs and services we have in store for the new Neilson will delight and engage the Smith community as much as I am sure the building’s physical transformation will. As we relaunch Neilson, both inside and out, I hope you will partner with us to support our dreams for creating a destination library that will serve Smith for its next century.

Susan Fliss
Dean of Libraries

An Opportunity to Shape Smith’s Future

Smith is seeking endowed funds to advance teaching and learning, encourage the discovery of knowledge and explore emerging technologies in the new Neilson. Smith’s endowment is one of the smartest investments because it has such powerful returns: lives changed through education. Gifts to the endowment provide long-term sources of funding and are critical to sustaining the strength, quality and success of Smith College.

Four Essential Roles of the New Neilson

1

Facilitating Knowledge Creation

The libraries support research and the creation of knowledge, and preserve scholarship for the future.

2

Providing World-Class Resources

The new Neilson will be home to an incredible array of resources, including books, periodicals, journals, the College Archives, the Mortimer Rare Book Collection and the Sophia Smith Collection of Women’s History. Digital resources expand the collection by millions of items.

3

Sparkling Innovation

Technology-infused spaces and digital tools will enable exploration, discovery and new ways of expressing knowledge. Areas such as the Jill Ker Conway Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center, the learning commons and a digital media hub will provide innovative programming to enhance the educational experience.

4

Integrating Collaboration and Learning Support

Spaces designed specifically for collaboration will make it simple for faculty, staff and students to share moments of discovery. The building will also provide easy access to student support services, including tutoring, writing assistance, quantitative learning workshops and disability services.

Innovation & Technology

Fostering a Culture of Exploration and Experimentation

GIVING OPPORTUNITY

Libraries Innovation Fund

Named, endowed innovation funds at a variety of gift levels will allow the leadership of the libraries to support priorities as they arise and respond to the needs of the college, such as:

- Fostering a culture of exploration and experimentation by providing staff with the resources to investigate new tools and ideas in collections and services as well as by hosting experts.
- Being a national leader in developing student digital literacy.
- Supporting student-driven research, including expanding open educational resources (OERs)—materials that are open to all as alternatives to textbooks—as well as other forms of digital scholarship.

Innovation Is at Neilson's Core

From pioneering technology to expanded digital resources, the new Neilson will be a model for libraries of the future. Here are several initiatives that will promote a culture of intellectual experimentation throughout the library.

- **Digital Media Hub** – a center to support text analysis, multimedia composition, data visualization, game design, website production and interactive exhibitions.
- **UX (User Experience) Lab** – a staffed location for teaching about, conducting and analyzing user studies the Smith community can apply to projects ranging from classroom research to website design to new business pitches.
- **Spatial Analysis Lab** – a space that promotes understanding of spatial patterns and mapping through the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and related technologies such as drones and Global Positioning Systems (GPS).
- **Smith Story Wall** – a place where students can create, publish and share their stories and research using large-screen projection technology.
- **Special Collections Digitization Lab** – an area that allows staff to save irreplaceable historical materials from permanent loss and to make them accessible to the world in digital form.



Did you know?

Through Smith College Libraries you can:

- Use a drone for geomapping.
- Access a financial services database with a Bloomberg Terminal.
- Try out a 3D virtual reality headset.

GIVING OPPORTUNITY

Libraries Technology Fund

Today's sheer volume of digital information combined with emerging technologies and software make it critical for library staff to respond quickly to student and faculty technology needs. Endowed or current-use gifts will allow Smith College Libraries to:

- Test and implement emerging tech-based learning and research tools such as those used in data visualization, aerial imagery, text mining, immersive media, virtual reality and augmented reality.
- Provide state-of-the-art infrastructure for storing, accessing and preserving digital educational resources.
- Ensure equitable access to collections and services for those with learning, visual, hearing, physical and other disabilities through assistive technology.

GIVING OPPORTUNITY

Libraries Exhibition Fund

Exhibitions highlight important and sometimes hidden elements of the libraries' collections; provide a showcase for student and faculty research; and provide an opportunity to highlight topics of critical interest to students and the public, such as race relations and refugee rights. Named, endowed gifts will provide the libraries with resources to:

- Curate and host digital, physical and hybrid exhibits.
- Train staff and students in exhibition design, creation and promotion.
- Provide cutting-edge exhibit equipment, including technology for interactive exhibits, exhibit cases and catalogs.

A gift of \$5 million to endow the full program would also underwrite the salary and benefits of an exhibits designer as well as fund student interns and graphic designers.



Special Collections

Archives, Rare Books and Women's History for All

Smith's Special Collections—which include the Sophia Smith Collection of Women's History, Mortimer Rare Book Collection and Smith College Archives—are among the most significant repositories at any liberal arts college in the country. Used by more than 200 classes each year, Special Collections provide high-caliber teaching, learning and experiential engagement with rare and unique materials. Special Collections and all staff will be housed in the south wing of the new Neilson.

GIVING OPPORTUNITY

Access to Collections Fund

Every month, students, faculty and researchers consult thousands of the physical and digital resources in Smith College's Special Collections. This fund will ensure those resources are available now as well as far into the future. A fully endowed fund of \$2 million will support staffing and ongoing collection management needs, including:

- Digitization, which provides broad access and protects fragile original documents from overuse.
- Conservation, preservation, collection arrangement and description.
- Outreach and promotion to raise collection visibility and use.

GIVING OPPORTUNITY

Women's History Acquisitions Fund

In order to acquire women's archival and manuscript collections that add valuable research opportunities and prestige to the college, Special Collections must have the ability to compete with comparable institutions. This fund will support:

- Fair compensation for donors, particularly those who have dedicated their lives to activism on behalf of women.
- The growth of Special Collections to include more materials from traditionally marginalized voices.
- The purchase of sought-after collections that enhance existing collection themes.



Did you know?

Smith's most heavily used archival collections are papers from Alison Bechdel, Sylvia Plath '55 and Gloria Steinem '56.

GIVING OPPORTUNITY

Community Engagement Archivist Fund

Outreach is an essential part of connecting people to the extraordinary materials in Special Collections. A fund of \$2 million will support the salary, benefits and professional development for a community engagement archivist who will:

- Coordinate educational programming with a focus on attracting more users from underrepresented communities and organizations.
- Develop workshops for donors and activists and training for researchers working with the collections.
- Expand the capacity for faculty and staff to incorporate critical new materials into the curriculum.
- Explore how collection materials can be used in projects that engender a more just world.

GIVING OPPORTUNITY

Madeleine L'Engle Research Travel Fellowships Fund

Even with the expansion of online archival materials, scholars still need to visit the archives in person. Researcher demand for travel support to visit Special Collections outstrips available funds by a ratio of 10 to one. Annual returns from a named endowment will:

- Enable research.
- Promote the collections.
- Foster junior academics during a critical time in their careers.

Special Collections Grand Reading Room, 3rd floor, south wing



Scholarship & Leadership

Supporting Current and Future Library Leaders

GIVING OPPORTUNITY

Libraries Post-baccalaureate Fund

Post-baccalaureate fellowships provide opportunities for recent graduates, especially Smith alumnae, to gain experience in libraries and special collections; generate scholarship that improves library services and collection management scalable to other institutions; and encourage interest in library/IT/archival careers among underrepresented populations. Fellows also bring new ideas and experiences that enhance the college’s pedagogy. A gift of \$1.5 million will fully endow a post-baccalaureate fellowship, underwriting the salary, benefits and professional development for the position. Alternately, a gift of \$75,000 will support the position for one year. Areas of focus include:

- Digital humanities, social sciences and sciences
- User experience (UX)
- Spatial analysis and aerial imagery
- Special collections

GIVING OPPORTUNITY

Dean of Libraries Fund

Establishing a named, endowed Dean of Libraries Fund will provide the dean with the discretionary resources to ensure the libraries remain flexible, responsive and at the forefront of technological and other best practices, including:

- Offering staff ongoing professional development opportunities to cultivate leadership capacities, deepen expertise and engage specialists in change management, team building and design-thinking applications.
- Supporting best practices in preservation and curation of data as well as faculty and student scholarship.
- Hosting faculty workshops on such topics as using primary resources in teaching, creating open educational resources (OERs) and exploring how faculty can transform research findings into online learning experiences for their students.



Did you know?
There are more than 8 million books
in the Five Colleges libraries.
Five Colleges Library Annex

How to Make a Difference

Named Fund Opportunities

Endowed Fund: A gift of \$250,000 or more will generate income toward the designated libraries fund and place the donor’s choice of name on that endowment in perpetuity.

Annual Giving: Gifts of any amount can support the libraries through The Smith Fund’s Resourceful Smith designation. Certain programs can be supported directly by gifts of \$50,000 or more.

Planned Gifts: These gifts include those created through a will, living trust, retirement plan or life insurance policy. Planned gifts also include such giving tools as charitable trusts and gift annuities that provide an income stream to the donor or a designee. Funds start at \$250,000. Please inquire.

Summary of Funds

Libraries Giving Opportunities	Page	Endowed Fund	Current Use
Libraries Innovation Fund	4	Funds start at \$250,000	Please inquire
Libraries Technology Fund	5	Funds start at \$250,000	Please inquire
Libraries Exhibition Fund	5	\$5 million to fully fund annual expenses; funds to partially support expenses start at \$250,000	Please inquire
Libraries Post-baccalaureate Fund	8	\$1.5 million to fully fund annual expenses; funds to partially support positions start at \$250,000	\$75,000 to fully fund annual expenses for one year
Dean of Libraries Fund	8	Funds start at \$250,000	Please inquire

Special Collections Giving Opportunities	Page	Endowed Fund	Current Use
Access to Collections Fund	6	\$2 million to fully fund annual expenses; funds to partially support expenses start at \$250,000	Unrestricted gifts of any size may be made to the “Access to Collections Fund”
Women’s History Acquisitions Fund	6	Funds start at \$250,000	Please inquire
Community Engagement Archivist	7	\$2 million to fully fund annual expenses; funds to partially support position start at \$250,000	N/A
Madeleine L’Engle Research Travel Fellowships Fund	7	Funds start at \$250,000	Please inquire