

Keeping Research Universities Strong

For most of the 20th century, the partnership that existed between the federal government, state governments and research universities across the United States meant that support for research universities, both in dollars and in policy, remained solid.

The economic challenges and shifting alliances of the 21st century, however, have challenged that partnership. In response, the National Academy of Sciences convened a Committee on Research Universities and asked the group of government, university and business leaders to determine how to revitalize and strengthen the bond that must exist between these entities.

The resulting report, “Research Universities and the Future of America,” offers 10 strategic actions that will help to accomplish three critical objectives:

- Revitalize the partnership,
- Strengthen institutions, and
- Build talent.

Revitalize, Strengthen, Build

The 10 strategic actions are based on several guiding principles, as noted in the executive summary of the report:

- Each of the partners involved in the endeavor to safeguard America's research institutions must agree to accept a leadership role in our knowledge- and innovation-based culture and economy. Policy should be progressive, operating practices should be efficient, and investments should be strategic.
- Each of the entities involved in revitalization efforts should be required to seek matching funds for new initiatives. Such a requirement provides a strong incentive for full participation by each partner.
- Universities and their stakeholders have unique characteristics. Any effort to support America’s research universities must respect that diversity
- Partners in renewal should be in it for the long haul—for at least 10 years. During that time, partners should be willing to address challenges and take advantage of opportunities as they arise.
- In safeguarding America’s research institutions, it is important to recognize that such institutions are comprehensive and offer a wide array of academic and professional disciplines. From the sciences to engineering to the arts and humanities—these fields of study provide students with many options for research and education which, in turn, will provide a solid grounding in the knowledge and skills that are vital for continued innovation and growth in a global economy.

These principles, and the action steps that derive from them, will help to reaffirm and revitalize the essential partnership that has long existed among research universities and

federal and state governments. It's important to act decisively to enact these actions, stated Chad Holliday, Chair of the Committee on Research Universities in testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives. The "fair and balanced" approach recommended by members of the Committee, will result in an improved capacity for innovation, especially in science and engineering. Such innovation, in turn, will result in a stronger America.

Follow this link to read the Executive Summary of [*Research Universities and the Future of America: Ten Breakthrough Actions Vital to our Nation's Prosperity and Security*](#).