FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Jenny Poast, Associate Director of Advancement
College of Arts & Sciences
jpoast@uw.edu | (206) 685-2259

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE LIFE SCIENCES COMPLEX

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY
Why is UW Biology so important?

UW Biology faculty and students are discovering the innermost workings of the living world. We conduct research on major societal issues, tackling questions such as:

- How do brains function?
- What are the evolutionary and cellular mechanisms underlying human diseases, such as cancer?
- How will we protect biodiversity in a rapidly changing world?
- How can living systems inspire design innovation in computers, aircraft, and medical devices?

A UW Biology degree is in high demand as a portal to careers in the health care professions, allied health sciences, biotechnology, bioenergy, environmental sciences, and biology teaching.

- Many of CNN Money’s “Top 10 highest-paying jobs” require biology education.
- The Washington Employment Security Department projects a 21% growth in biology-related occupations by 2019, to more than 300,000 jobs statewide.

UW Biology’s undergraduate teaching has enormous impact.

- Nearly half of all incoming UW freshmen will take at least one biology course.
- Biology is the most popular major at the University of Washington, with more than 600 bachelor’s degrees awarded annually.
- More than 40% of UW Biology majors are engaged in research, mentored by world-class faculty — the ultimate capstone experience for students in science.

UW Biology serves as a global hub of fundamental life sciences research, with research and educational collaborations at more than 50 universities, nonprofits, and businesses worldwide.

What new opportunities will the Life Sciences Building and Biology Greenhouse provide?

The discipline of biology is changing. New facilities will ensure that UW Biology continues to lead the transformation in how biology is practiced.

- Biology research has become increasingly collaborative and interdisciplinary. Biologists partner with physicians, engineers, computer scientists, and mathematicians to tackle the grand challenges posed by the complexity of living systems.
- UW Biology is a leader in developing team approaches to biological research, with one-third of our faculty holding appointments in other departments and colleges.
- UW Biology is one of very few departments nationally that is integrated across the breadth of biodiversity (viruses, bacteria, fungi, plants, animals — even digital organisms), levels of organization (molecules, cells, organisms, ecosystems), and lengths of evolutionary time (from the origin of life billions of years ago to the future of life in response to changing environments).

The design of the new facilities will foster collaboration, enabling UW Biology to attract and retain the most talented teams of scientists.

- This new era in collaborative, multidisciplinary, integrative biology research drives the need for a new kind of research building — a building specifically designed to foster team-oriented science.
- The five-floor, 169,000 square foot Life Sciences Building will have large open laboratory spaces, shared state-of-the-art equipment and other research infrastructure, common-use meeting/funcl rooms, and high-density open offices designed to catalyze unexpected synergies that arise from spontaneous interactions among faculty, postdocs, students, and staff.

New facilities will create a rich learning environment for thousands of students.

- The entire first floor of the Life Sciences Building will be dedicated to research-intensive laboratory courses for undergraduates.
- All biology majors will have an authentic hands-on experience by working in collaboration with physicians, engineers, computer scientists, and mathematicians to tackle the grand challenges posed by the complexity of living systems.
- UW Biology is a leader in developing team approaches to biological research, with one-third of our faculty holding appointments in other departments and colleges.

The new Biology Greenhouse will advance plant science research, teaching, and public outreach.

- The Life Sciences Building will be constructed adjacent to Biology’s Kincaid Hall, on the site now occupied by the 65-year-old Greenhouse. A new energy-efficient 20,000 square foot Biology Greenhouse with modern lighting, irrigation, and temperature controls will be built just east of the Life Sciences Building.
- Half of the Greenhouse space will be devoted to UW Biology’s teaching collection. Each year, 5,000 undergraduates study the collection’s 3,400 species of plants to acquire knowledge of global plant diversity.
- The Greenhouse advances plant research on many issues, including evolution, biodiversity, physiology and climate change.
- The Greenhouse serves as one of Biology’s principal means of public outreach, with 4,000 visitors - mostly K-12 students and their teachers - touring the facility each year.

The Life Sciences Complex will be finished in the summer of 2018.

Why should I invest in this initiative?

The return on investment for this initiative is tremendous. The College of Arts & Sciences, in combination with a request for $40 million in capital funds from the State Legislature, has allocated resources to construct the five-floor shell of the Life Sciences Building and to build-out the lower four floors. The College is also committed to paying up to 75% of the costs for the new Greenhouse, allowing unprecedented leverage for private gifts.

What is the fundraising goal, and how will private support be used?

Our goal is to raise $54 million in private support to build out, equip, and populate the Life Sciences Building with world-class researchers. Private support will fund:

- completion of the fifth floor of the building;
- remaining costs of the Biology Greenhouse;
- an entrepreneurial model of recruiting and hiring world-class faculty, bringing the size of the UW Biology faculty in line with the magnitude of its research and teaching missions.