



SCIENCE FOR THE BENEFIT OF HUMANITY

## News Release

### ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY RECEIVES A \$75 MILLION GRANT FROM THE STAVROS NIARCHOS FOUNDATION TO ESTABLISH AN INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL INFECTIOUS DISEASE RESEARCH

**NEW YORK, NY, September 29, 2022** — The Rockefeller University is pleased to announce the launch of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) Institute for Global Infectious Disease Research. Made possible by a \$75 million grant from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF), the new institute will accelerate the development of innovative therapies for emerging pathogens, such as novel coronaviruses, as well as endemic microbes, like tuberculosis, that threaten global health.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the critical need for investment in infectious disease research to understand the biology of pathogens and their interactions with host species and to enable the development of broadly effective and durable vaccines and therapeutics,” said **Richard P. Lifton**, the university’s president. “The SNF Institute for Global Infectious Disease Research will accelerate biomedical innovation, provide scientific education, and raise public awareness in the global community.”

SNF is a longstanding partner of The Rockefeller University. The Foundation helped fund a major campus expansion, which opened in 2019, and in March 2020, SNF was one of the earliest funders of Rockefeller’s COVID-19 research program. The SNF Institute for Global Infectious Disease Research at Rockefeller grew from that early program.

“To rise to the health challenges we face today, our approach must be unified across disciplines and borders,” said SNF Co-President **Andreas Dracopoulos**. “The new institute will not only lay the scientific foundation for better prevention and treatment of infectious diseases but will also help to ensure that those treatments are made available globally and equitably.”

While coronaviruses will be a strong focus, the new institute will also support research on other pathogens that pose a challenge to world health. Tick-borne encephalitis is one example. The disease is on the rise in Europe due in part to warming temperatures that help to expand the range of ticks carrying the virus. A collaboration between Rockefeller investigators and other scientists in the United States, Switzerland, and the Czech Republic is showing promising results for an effective vaccine.

The institute will be led by **Charles Rice**, Rockefeller’s Maurice R. and Corinne P. Greenberg Professor in Virology. Dr. Rice shared the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in 2020 for foundational research that led to the development of a therapeutic for Hepatitis C. “Emerging

pathogens will keep coming. We need coordinated, intensive research in order to be prepared,” Rice says. “The new institute will provide us with the means to encourage global collaborations, and a capability to support everything from basic infectious disease research to clinical development.” Dr. Rice chaired the New York State’s COVID-19 Clinical Advisory Task Force during the pandemic.

**Michel Nussenzweig**, a physician-scientist and head of Rockefeller’s Laboratory of Molecular Immunology, will serve as co-director, guiding immunological studies. **Barry Collier**, Physician-in-Chief of The Rockefeller University Hospital, will act as co-director for clinical studies.

Dozens of Rockefeller laboratories will contribute to the institute’s efforts to characterize pathogens, understand the human body’s immune response, and develop vaccines and therapeutics. Participating scientists include virologists, immunologists, structural biologists, geneticists, and physician-scientists.

“We are a global community when it comes to infectious diseases,” Rice says. “We have to be willing to tackle global challenges and encourage research collaboration around the world.”

### **About The Rockefeller University**

The Rockefeller University is one of the world’s leading biomedical research universities and is dedicated to conducting innovative, high-quality research to improve the understanding of life for the benefit of humanity. Rockefeller’s 70 laboratories conduct research in neuroscience, immunology, biochemistry, genomics, and many other areas, and a community of more than 2,000 faculty, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, technicians, clinicians, and administrative personnel work on the university’s 16-acre Manhattan campus. Rockefeller’s unique approach to science has led to some of the world’s most revolutionary and transformative contributions to biology and medicine. During Rockefeller’s 120-year history, 26 Rockefeller scientists have won Nobel Prizes, 25 have received Albert Lasker Medical Research Awards, and 20 have garnered the National Medal of Science, the highest science award given by the United States.

### **About the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF)**

The Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) is one of the world’s leading private, international philanthropic organizations, making grants to nonprofit organizations in the areas of arts and culture, education, health and sports, and social welfare. SNF funds organizations and projects worldwide that aim to achieve a broad, lasting, and positive impact for society at large, and exhibit strong leadership and sound management. The Foundation also supports projects that facilitate the formation of public-private partnerships as an effective means for serving public welfare.

Since 1996, the Foundation has committed more than \$3.4 billion through over 5,100 grants to nonprofit organizations in more than 135 countries around the world.

Learn more at [SNF.org](https://www.snf.org).