Office of The Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Research and Academic Affairs

2020 Portfolio
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table of Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACADEMIC AFFAIRS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting Priorities for Undergraduate Academics at Rutgers–New Brunswick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering Faculty Excellence and Advancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Technologies and Academic Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH AFFAIRS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Centers and Academic Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Research, Innovation, and Experiential Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential Learning: Byrne First Year Seminars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEM and Diversity Initiatives for Academics and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESEARCH AFFAIRS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrative Research in the Humanities and Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing Rutgers–New Brunswick’s Research Portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening Strategic Research Initiatives at Rutgers–New Brunswick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing Research Strengths and Opportunities at Rutgers–New Brunswick</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Provost leads the academic and research enterprises of the flagship campus at Rutgers—New Brunswick.

As the chief academic and research officer of Rutgers–New Brunswick, the Provost is responsible for setting the priorities for and leading the academic and research operations of the institution. This includes advancing outstanding faculty, promoting academic initiatives and experiential learning, and fostering a collaborative culture of ideation and intellectual inquiry where convergent research can flourish at the AAU campus.

In July 2019, Prabhas V. Moghe was appointed Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Research and Academic Affairs. As a Distinguished Professor in the School of Engineering who has been on the faculty at Rutgers for 25 years, Dr. Moghe has brought his interdisciplinary acumen as an educator, scholar, and innovator to define the portfolio in the newly configured Provost office. Previously, he was appointed as the inaugural Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation (VCRI), a new role created for the campus to establish institutional initiatives and partnerships and nurture and expand research collaborations across a broad spectrum of fields.

The combined academic and research portfolio of the Provost Office allows for unique synergies that allow collaborative academic projects to scale across the campus and to bring greater priority to emergent research initiatives. The Provost works closely with key constituents across the campus and university to advance strategic priorities including the Chancellor’s Cabinet, Academic Deans, and the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Under Dr. Moghe’s leadership, the strategic priorities of the office have expanded significantly in alignment with the broader mission of the campus and university. The Provost convenes the research deans at RU-NB and oversees several academic units and leading interdisciplinary research centers and institutes including the Honors College, Douglass Residential College, the Institute for Women’s Leadership, the Eagleton Institute of Politics, the Human Genetics Institute, the Waksman Institute of Microbiology, the Institute of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences, and the Rutgers Energy Institute.

Key academic priorities for the office in 2019-2020 are to enhance the academic climate on the campus, establish robust experiential learning opportunities for students, and identify and pursue strategic academic initiatives that enhance the academic strengths, research assets, and diversity of the institution. Through a campus climate survey conducted last year in partnership with Harvard’s Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE), faculty views on a range of important areas critical to faculty success were assessed and parsed. The Provost team has engaged in a transparent process to evaluate and share the results of the survey, which will serve as a guide for setting future priorities and initiatives. A parallel goal is the strategic focus on recruiting, retaining, and supporting an excellent and diverse faculty. The Office of the Provost is responsible for administering the president’s Faculty Diversity Hiring Initiative, through which we encourage the decanal units to consider diversity as a means to excellence and require strategic data-driven recruitment plans to this end.

Over the past few months, the Provost has collaborated efforts across the campus and University to identify academic solutions to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Provost is the key driver of a number of response measures including changes to student grading policies, instructional portfolio planning, critical research preservation, and contingency planning for the fall semester. The Provost office has also become a leadership node for agile and strategic decision making in a time of crisis, coordinating the decisions from the President’s office and Chancellor’s executive team to the Deans, faculty, and students at Rutgers-New Brunswick.
Ben. Sifuentes-Jáuregui began his role as the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education in July 2019 after serving as the Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Academic Affairs for four years. A faculty member at Rutgers since 1997, Professor Sifuentes was previously Chair of American Studies in the School of Arts and Sciences, where he also served as Undergraduate Director in Comparative Literature. His research interests include 20th-Century Latin American Literature and Cultural Studies, Latinx Literature and Culture, gender theory and sexuality studies, as well as psychoanalysis. Even while holding this administrative position, Prof. Sifuentes continues teaching undergraduate courses on literary and cultural studies in the Americas, performance theory, and cultural practices. Prof. Sifuentes has been the recipient of a number of high honors and awards, including the Warren I. Susman Award for Excellence in Teaching and the School of Arts and Sciences Award for Distinguished Contributions to Undergraduate Education.

As Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Professor Sifuentes-Jáuregui is responsible for ensuring that Rutgers–New Brunswick maintains its strength in traditional undergraduate education, while developing new models that integrate classroom education with experiential learning, and that anticipate and prepare students for the world to come. He currently oversees an office that provides educational programming and support to more than 36,500 undergraduates across 13 schools in New Brunswick. He has experience supervising a range of academic programs including first-year seminars, research mentorship opportunities, access programs for first-generation, low-income, and minority students, along with other academic units such as the Office for Transfer and Non-traditional Students and the Rutgers Learning Centers. His responsibility for these programs includes participating in their curricular design and content. Additionally, he works closely with Deans at the different schools and collaborates with vice chancellors in enrollment management, diversity and inclusion, and student affairs.

He is most proud of his work of coordinating and leading the Undergraduate Education Council. The UEC addresses undergraduate matters related to a wide set of topics: pedagogy, curriculum development and assessment, as well as access and affordability. These conversations set up an important agenda such as fostering faculty excellence, interdisciplinarity and inclusivity, attention to the needs of a diverse student population, enhancing best practices in student success, as well as advocating for diverse leadership that can share multiple perspectives on matters related to higher education.

Professor Sifuentes has worked hard to promote access for all students, in particular to first-generation students (representing nearly 30 percent of the undergraduate student body), non-traditional and transfer students. His definition of Rutgers as a public institution is refined as a “university of many publics.” Remaining attentive to the needs and concerns of those many “publics” regulates his approach to his role as Vice Provost. Bringing academic colleagues together to address urgent academic issues is one of his strengths. He is excited to work and to collaborate with a team of talented professionals in the Provost’s office to move forward the University’s academic agenda and future strategic plans.
The Office of the Provost coordinates campus efforts in academic program review and faculty development. We promote academic excellence by recruiting and retaining the best individuals, supporting them for success, and creating a culture that rewards faculty productivity and faculty recognition.

Dr. James Swenson is the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and an associate professor of French and Comparative Literature. Prior to joining the Provost’s office, he served as chair of French and as Dean of Humanities in the School of Arts and Sciences. As Dean of Humanities he oversaw the work of a variety of vibrant centers and programs and sixteen academic departments, including several of the University’s most distinguished units, and gained a wealth of knowledge in building academic excellence and recruiting and supporting diverse and ambitious faculty. A specialist of eighteenth-century literature and intellectual history, Dr. Swenson recently completed the first complete critical edition of the earliest surviving drafts of Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Emile* (forthcoming from Classiques Garnier). He earned an A.B. in Semiotics from Brown University and a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Yale University.

As Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Dr. Swenson is responsible for supporting the provost in all areas related to academic affairs and innovation including academic program development, approval, and review; development and oversight of academic policies and procedures in collaboration with the Provost and Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs; and building the academic infrastructure at Rutgers–New Brunswick to support academic excellence across all academic units and research centers at Rutgers-New Brunswick.

The Provost’s Office coordinates and supplements faculty development opportunities offered by the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement, and the various schools. We support faculty in their ambitions to improve their teaching and scholarship and to win recognition and advancement for their accomplishments. Our data-driven approach seeks to identify gaps in current offerings, provide scalable solutions, and address the full range of issues faculty face over the course of their careers. Dr. Swenson is leading current efforts to develop programming targeted to address issues faced by associate professors and by non-tenure track teaching faculty, as these are groups that have been under-emphasized by existing programs.

Dr. Swenson also spearheads our faculty recognition programs. Faculty at Rutgers-New Brunswick are innovative researchers and scholars, inspiring teachers, and dedicated members of our various communities. The Office of the Provost works to publicize their efforts and achievements, and give them the confidence and resources to continue to take on new challenges.
The Office of the Provost is dedicated to providing our faculty and students with state-of-the-art learning environments, cutting-edge academic technologies, and rich training resources to support teaching and learning in the digital age.

Dr. Paul D. Hammond, Associate Vice Chancellor for Technology and Instruction, oversees and manages the general purpose instructional space on the New Brunswick/Piscataway campuses, which includes overseeing their design, construction, and renovation. He provides leadership, vision, and strategic direction for University-wide service units that support instructional space, including the Office of Scheduling and Space Management and Digital Classroom Services, which have a combined staff of 27 full-time, 12 part-time, and 55 student employees. He works closely with the Office of Information Technology (OIT), Institutional Planning and Operations (IP&O), and University academic leadership to ensure that learning environments both meet current technology needs and adapt to emerging pedagogical trends. Dr. Hammond remains abreast of current pedagogical principles and trends across the disciplines, with a focus on technology and curriculum integration and in discipline- and/or subject-appropriate teaching. He helps assess the feasibility of implementing instructional technology and instructional space design in a consistent, coherent, and scalable fashion, and he has overseen the proposal, design, and implementation of the University’s most innovative teaching and learning projects, including state-of-the-art active learning classrooms and our nationally recognized immersive synchronous lecture halls.

Dr. Hammond has been centrally involved in critical University-wide planning efforts. He managed the drafting of the University Strategic Plan, and he was on the steering committee for Rutgers 2030, the University’s Physical Master Plan. After both of these efforts highlighted the critical need to coordinate the interrelated business processes of our housing, scheduling, registration, and transportation offices to reduce unnecessary course-related student bus travel and student time-to-degree, Dr. Hammond was appointed to the President’s logistics task force, which was charged with identifying actionable solutions to address the systemic stresses on our transportation system and to optimize our related scheduling processes. He oversaw the selection/design, implementation, and use of advanced scheduling software in order to address the University’s strategic vision to enhance course scheduling to reduce student inter-campus bus travel and to help ensure students can register for the courses they need to progress through their degree programs. The software, along with associated changes in business practices, will help facilitate closer coordination between class scheduling, student registration, student housing, and transportation. Dr. Hammond has been overseeing data modeling efforts and working with IP&O on instructional space campus planning and forecasting classroom needs using data on course scheduling, current classroom stock, and anticipated demand, information that will inform the renovation and construction of instructional space, as well as potential decommissioning when appropriate.
The Office of the Provost supports the Learning Centers, a student-centered academic support organization that offers small-group and individualized learning opportunities to all students.

Stacey Blackwell is the Senior Director of the Learning Centers (LCs). With over fifteen years of experience in academic support, learning assistance, and teaching in higher education, she now oversees the development and operations of our core academic support programs, four LC locations, and campus collaborations. With an EdM in the Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education, as well as a Masters in English, she has served in her current position for six years and earned Level 3 Learning Center Leadership Certification through the National College Learning Center Association (NCLCA). She also serves on multiple campus-wide committees, is part of the coordinating team for the Active Learning Community, and co-chairs the Student Success Steering Committee. Ms. Blackwell serves on the editorial board of The Learning Assistance Review. Her current research and publications focus on the learning gains and competency development of students serving in academic peer leadership positions, as well as the physical design of learning center spaces. Under her direction, the LCs designed two state-of-the-art centers and won the national Frank L. Christ Outstanding Learning Center Award.

Stacey Blackwell advocates for collaborative, active learning experiences that create communities of learners supporting one another in their shared pursuit of academic success. She envisions academic support as a core function of the university and a strategic, impactful agent for equity in higher education.

She provides leadership for the LCs’ core programs, which offer services to all RU students and provide tailored support for specific populations and courses. These programs include tutoring, coaching in writing and academic skills, peer leader training, and the Learning Assistant Program.

With the ever-changing needs of students in higher education and the evolution of pedagogies, technologies, and competencies necessary for academic and professional success, students need a supportive network of peers and professionals. Peer learning programs such as the Learning Assistant Program offer an opportunity for successful students to support their peers’ learning, build community, develop professional competencies, and engage meaningfully in on-campus work that transforms the student experience for both the Learning Assistants and the students they serve.
The Office of the Provost supports a wide range of initiatives for students to pursue creative and intellectual pathways that lead to transformative new innovations and expressions through collaboration with faculty, industry, and non-profit partners.

Dr. Sunita Kramer is the inaugural Assistant Vice Provost for Undergraduate Research and Experiential Education and brings to the position a unique combination of experience in basic research, academic affairs, and the creation of innovative campus-level initiatives. Dr. Kramer joined the Office of the Provost after serving as the founding Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the Honors College where she created and implemented the core academic vision of the college. Before joining the Honors College, Dr. Kramer was an Associate Professor at Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School where her laboratory focused on the role of cell guidance molecules during early heart development. In 2005, she was awarded the Compact for Faculty Diversity Mentor of the Year Award for her commitment to diversity education and mentorship. Dr. Kramer earned a B.A. in biology from Franklin and Marshall College and a Ph.D. in molecular and cellular biology from Stony Brook University.

Dr. Kramer is a champion for the design of inclusive learning ecosystems that bring together students, faculty, alumni and external university partners to encourage creative inquiry, collaboration and problem-solving to prepare students to be leaders in the future workforce.

She provides leadership for the Aresty Research Center and oversight for campus undergraduate-level research and innovation activities across New Brunswick. She works with academic units to coordinate and develop new avenues for undergraduate research, including the incorporation of experiential research activities into the academic curriculum (for example through the Byrne First-Year Seminars), developing grant proposals, and working with corporate partners.

Dr. Kramer also provides leadership and oversight for IDEA (Innovation, Design, Entrepreneurship Academy). A new initiative with our first cohort of students arriving this fall, IDEA embeds innovation, design and entrepreneurial thinking into the undergraduate student experience by giving students access to cross-discipline research opportunities and project-based learning cohorts organized around real-world challenges.

Ideally situated in the office of the Provost, IDEA is expressly designed to stimulate creative inquiry and innovation at a foundational, pre-disciplinary level, focusing on problems that cut across majors and departments. IDEA is based on the premise that the most transformative innovations emerge at the convergence of disciplines and involve project-based collaborations between students, faculty, alumni entrepreneurs, and industry partners. IDEA will leverage Rutgers’ faculty research strengths and signature innovative and entrepreneurial programs across Rutgers-New Brunswick together with New Jersey’s rising innovation ecosystem to frame the curriculum and activities in tangible real-world concerns.
Mark Robson became the Faculty Director for the Byrne Seminar Program in fall 2019. He is a Board of Governors Distinguished Service Professor and Professor of Plant Biology. He is a toxicologist and public health scientist who has spent his entire career at the university, earning his BS, MS, PhD, and MPH at Rutgers. His research focus is global agricultural health. He is currently the Principal Investigator on the Rutgers portion of the NIH-funded SE Asian GEOHealth Hub project and have had funding for international research and training from NIH, RWJF and USAID. In addition to his role as faculty director and teaching his own Byrne Seminar on Global Health, Dr. Robson teaches Global Health Perspectives; Plants and People; Agroecology; Risk, Health and Safety; and a Summer Service-Learning Course in Thailand.

The First-Year Seminars were launched in fall 2007 at Rutgers-New Brunswick. They were renamed the Byrne First-Year Seminars in fall 2008 to honor a generous donation by Mr. and Mrs. John Byrne. Mr. Byrne graduated from Rutgers College in 1954. The vision that inspired the family’s gift was to introduce Rutgers students, at the outset of their academic journey, to research faculty in small seminar settings.

Byrne Seminars are one-credit courses offered only to first-year students at Rutgers-New Brunswick, in addition to their standard 12-15 credit course load, with class size limited to 20 students, taught by senior faculty who come from departments and professional schools across the university. Byrne Seminars offer students the opportunity to experience the excitement of original research as faculty members share their curiosity, intellectual passion, and methodology for developing new ideas and fields of knowledge. Byrne Seminars typically meet for 10 weeks, starting in the first week of each semester, and are graded Pass/No Credit, with no formal exams.

Byrne Seminars have allowed first-year students to explore unique research and academic subjects other than their intended major. For example, in 2019, Rutgers marked the 100th anniversary of the graduation of Paul Robeson, one of the university’s most distinguished alumni. A special Byrne Seminar, The Undiscovered Paul Robeson, was offered to examine Robeson’s life and legacy as part of the university celebration of this anniversary. Byrne Seminars contribute to student success in numerous ways. In addition to providing valuable experiences outside the classroom, through research field trips and visits to museums, theaters, and concert halls, each course helps students to develop as critical thinkers and communicators by providing a network of support that introduces them to senior faculty, mentors, and advisors.

The Byrne Seminars Program offers more than 100 courses annually. Since 2007, over 26,000 students have participated in the more than 1,800 seminars offered across a diverse array of research disciplines. In addition to learning from our distinguished faculty, students often hear from experts in the field. These guest speakers have included major artists, journalists, politicians, and physicians. The Byrne Seminars Program recently partnered with the RU-1st initiative in order to provide enhanced access to the Seminars for first-generation students.
Chelsie Riche is the Senior Program Coordinator for the Office of Undergraduate Research, Innovation and Experiential Education (UREE), and the Office of Research and Innovation-Humanities and Arts. Chelsie earned her B.A. in Africana studies and history from Rutgers University and her Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in African Studies from the University of Cambridge, UK, as a Gates Cambridge Scholar.

Chelsie is an experienced program coordinator/developer with a demonstrated history of working in higher education. Prior to returning to Rutgers for her professional career, Chelsie served as a part-time lecturer at Newham College-University of Cambridge where she taught Afro-diasporic history and politics. She served as an alumni consultant to the University of Cambridge—liaising between the Vice Chancellor’s office, the Center for Curricula Teaching and Learning, and Human Resources—on matters of student diversity and equity, and decolonized curricula. In 2019, she was invited as an event-speaker for the University on a series of global campaign efforts to fundraise over £2 billion for university research and student support initiatives.

At Rutgers-New Brunswick, Chelsie leads the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) program. A National Science Foundation (NSF) sponsored program, LSAMP’s mission is to increase the interest, retention, graduation and success of students from racial and ethnic groups that are historically underrepresented in non-medical Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields. The LSAMP program at Rutgers-New Brunswick is one of nine members of the Garden State Louise Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (GS-LSAMP). Other members include Essex County College, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Kean University, Montclair State University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Rutgers-Newark, and William Paterson University.

Now in its final stage of funding (2019-2024), the primary focus is to promote undergraduate research and post-baccalaureate studies in STEM fields. LSAMP supports its students by providing funding for STEM research-assistantship programs (including travel stipends for national and international experiences), and offering academic support (i.e tutoring services, and GRE-prep courses), professional development and leadership training. Successful graduates of LSAMP are eligible to participate in the NSF funded Bridge to the Doctorate program (B2D)- which cover all fees and living expenses for a student’s full time doctoral studies at a B2D participating university.

At Rutgers-New Brunswick, LSAMP works with various STEM faculty, departments and external partners in the New Brunswick area including the Aresty Research Center for Undergraduates, the Office of Academic Success in the Sciences (ODASIS), Douglass Residential College, DIMACS, Johnson & Johnson and more to provide research and internship opportunities for undergraduates.
Research Affairs

Integrative Research in the Humanities and Arts

The Associate Vice Chancellor for Research in the Humanities and Arts fosters interdisciplinary initiatives that build on existing and emerging strengths at Rutgers, opening new areas of research across schools and aligning with new sources of funding.

Dr. Henry S. Turner is the inaugural Associate Vice Chancellor for Research in the Humanities and Arts. In this half-time role, he brings more than two decades of commitment to humanities scholarship that weaves together the enduring questions of literature, art, history, and philosophy with the conceptual richness of science, technology, and mathematics. Dr. Turner joined the Office of Research and Innovation in the Office of the Provost after serving as the Director of the Center for Cultural Analysis, the leading interdisciplinary humanities center at Rutgers, New Brunswick. Dr. Turner also serves half-time as Professor of English, specializing in Renaissance literature and intellectual history. He is the author or editor of five books and the recipient of multiple prizes and fellowships, including the Elizabeth Dietz Prize, a Fellowship for University Teachers from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the M. H. Abrams Fellowship from the National Humanities Center, and a Frederick Burkhardt Fellowship from the American Council for Learned Societies, taken in residency at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University. He received his BA in English from Wesleyan University, an MA in English and Critical Theory from the University of Sussex, and an MA, MPhil, and PhD in English Literature from Columbia University.

Dr. Turner works closely with the Rutgers Foundation, Deans, chairs, center directors, and the faculty to join the nationally-ranked humanities departments of the School of Arts and Sciences with the Dance, Music, and Art and Design faculties of the Mason Gross School of the Arts and the value-driven, qualitative research of the social, natural, and medical sciences, communications and journalism, public policy, education, and social work fields. Working with Chelsie Riche (RU ’17; Gates Scholar ’17; MPhil, Cambridge ’18), Dr. Turner coordinates prize and fellowship nominations in the humanities, arts, and social sciences; designs forums, workshops, and collaborative research prototypes; leads strategic planning around extramural humanities and social-science funding, both federal and philanthropic; acts as liaison to major humanities foundations such as ACLS, NEH, and NEA; and conducts data-tracking and communications for humanities and arts research.

The Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research in the Humanities and Arts coordinates major campus-wide initiatives on Environmental Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities, on Arts Integrated Research, on Race and Region, and on Community-Engaged Scholarship and the Public Humanities. These initiatives guide research activity, design innovative curriculum, develop grant funding, explore innovative forms of publication, and coordinate public events that can address the urgent problems of yesterday, today, and tomorrow and bring Rutgers’s expertise to the ever-widening communities that encapsulate the world of the university.
Enhancing Rutgers–New Brunswick’s Research Portfolio

The Office of Research and Innovation, within the Office of the Provost, is a campus-wide entity that serves to coordinate research administrative practices and policies across schools, assess research strengths, strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration across the institution, and help faculty pursue strategic research funding opportunities.

Dr. Marika Dunn is the Office of Research and Innovation’s Senior Program Director for Research Ideation and Innovation. Bringing with her a deep background in fostering interdisciplinary research collaborations, Dr. Dunn came to Rutgers in August 2018 after several years at the Social Science Research Council, where she oversaw the Dissertation Proposal Development Program, directing its national fellowship competition and proposal development workshops. At SSRC, she was the primary liaison to faculty and university administrators involved with the DPD Program’s University Initiative. Previously, she managed legal advocacy programs at the American Association of University Women. Dr. Dunn holds a B.A. from Hampshire College and a Ph.D. in political science from Rutgers–New Brunswick, with a research background in political representation and constituent services.

Dr. Dunn directs strategic research assessments and multidisciplinary STEM initiatives at Rutgers-New Brunswick, developing ideation programming, workshops, and seed funding opportunities to facilitate new collaborations among faculty across disciplines and schools. She also coordinates communication among senior research administrators at Rutgers-New Brunswick and across the institution, and is the office’s primary liaison to Lewis-Burke Associates and other federal business development firms.

Dr. Dunn coordinates all aspects of the Office’s signature initiatives for incubating interdisciplinary STEM research, its Research Ideation Forums and accompanying Team Proposal Development Grants. The Forums are events for incubating providing a venue for gathering peer feedback to improve new research projects in emerging themes – ones that capitalize on faculty research strengths, funder priorities, and Rutgers competitive advantages. Recent themes have included Microbiome and Human Health; Data Sciences; Synthetic Biology & Biomedical Devices; Planetary Stewardship; and Sustainable Urban Systems.

Research teams presenting at a Forum are eligible to apply for Team Proposal Development Grants through the Office of Research and Innovation for proof-of-concept funding. These efforts have resulted in multi-PI submissions to the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, DARPA, Simons Foundation, and others. Additionally, connections from the Forums have also contributed to ongoing working groups Dr. Dunn helps facilitate, including Digital Agriculture and Smart Cities (the latter a multi-university effort among New Jersey institutions bringing together academic, industry, and government stakeholders).
Cecilia S. Gal is Senior Grants Specialist in the Office of Research and Innovation and brings to the position fourteen years of experience in research development with expertise in project management, research grant administration, strategic planning, as well as grant writing and editing.

Ms. Gal joined the Office of Research and Innovation in 2020 after being a proposal manager at Arizona State University. Before joining ASU’s central research development office she provided grant support for the faculty at the Rutgers School of Communication and Information where she helped faculty submit over $55 million of proposals during her tenure. In 2009, Ms. Gal was a Co-PI on a multi-year NSF grant on the adoption of computer-assisted health technologies by patients with implantable cardioverter-defibrillators, and received NSF REU funding to train undergraduate researchers. She has managed a research lab bringing her varied knowledge of research management logistics to her support of center grant proposals.

Ms. Gal earned a B.A. in psychology from Wellesley College, and Ed.M and C.A.S. degrees in human development and psychology from Harvard University, and has worked and published in the area of substance abuse prevention in communities, cybersecurity, and the adoption of computer assisted health technologies.

Ms. Gal provides guidance and direct project management support for large-team cross-disciplinary partnerships to facilitate more compelling multi-million dollar proposals. She connects teams to internal and external collaborators leading to more comprehensive and competitive teams for large grant initiatives.

She spearheads the implementation of industry-standard best research development practices into both individual and large scale external funding pursuits, and for research administrative practices and policies at ORI and across schools.

She, with her colleagues at ORI, provides forums and workshops to expand research capability for both large teams and for early career faculty in New Brunswick, and provides strategic planning for increasing extramural STEM funding.
**Suhaiylah Williams** is a Senior Program Coordinator in the Office of Research and Innovation, providing support for faculty research at Rutgers University, New Brunswick. Ms. Williams has recently joined the Office of Research and Innovation after serving as a program coordinator at both the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai’s Tisch Cancer Institute and Emory University School of Medicine. Prior to her time at Emory University, Ms. Williams was a research analyst with the Institute for Health Policy at the University of California, San Francisco, where she assisted with multiple public health research initiatives with emphasis on occupational health improvement. She studied at Temple University in her hometown of Philadelphia, PA, and earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Health with focus on Community Health Programming.

Ms. Williams has embraced the unique opportunity to collaborate on research projects within ORI, which include collecting, extrapolating and coding data that contributes to data analysis and improving support for faculty research initiatives. She has worked closely with faculty and other professionals to develop complex research projects and prepare project proposals. Her skills in project development and data organization help researchers and institutions with strategic planning.

Ms. Williams plays a key role in managing research analysis to assess Rutgers-New Brunswick’s research strengths and opportunities that inform research programming and funding pursuits. Ms. Williams collaborates with partners such as ORED’s Research Data Integrity Group (R-DIG) and the Corporate Engagement Center to gather research submissions and awards data and intel on current and potential stakeholders. Recent projects include NIH award analyses across New Brunswick and RBHS, and a capabilities analysis of possible Engineering Research Center topics.