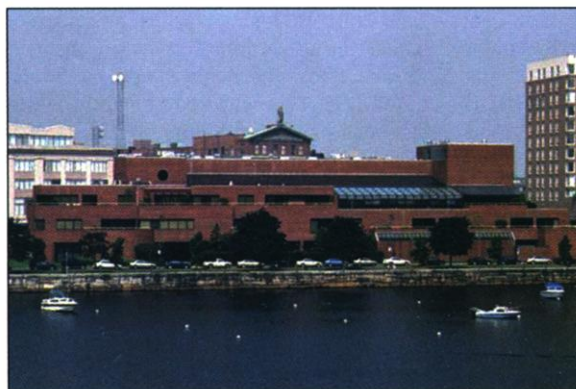


UNIVERSITIES

Family Moves to Give Institute to Harvard

BOSTON—A small but prestigious institute on the banks of the Charles River, the legacy of Polaroid founder Edwin Land, may soon



Harvard bound? Researchers worry that the unique Rowland Institute will lose its identity if it is transferred to Harvard.

become part of Harvard University. The Land family has offered the Rowland Institute for Science in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to the university as a gift, according to several sources familiar with the negotiations. If the deal pans out, the institute—and its endowment—will be incorporated into Harvard's arts and sciences program. The offer is a coup for the university, given its severe shortage of space and the prime location of the institute just a few kilometers from the main campus. But the change could spell the demise of the institute's novel line of basic research.

Land, inventor of instant photography, set up the institute in 1980 to conduct a wide range of basic research in physics, chemistry, and biology. Rowland has an annual budget of \$7.5 million, more than two dozen researchers, and an endowment between \$50 million and \$100 million, according to Michael Burns, the institute's research director. Housed in a 10,000-square-meter building, the institute employs about 70 people. Sources close to the talks say that members of the Land family—who declined to discuss the issue—have decided the institute is too expensive to maintain.

The proposed merger is “an imaginative concept from the Rowland, which has an impressive history of fostering new cross-disciplinary research,” says Jeremy Knowles, dean of Harvard's faculty of arts and sciences. Knowles adds that the merger could strengthen the Rowland Institute while providing “new opportunities for scientific research and teaching at Harvard.” But the fate of Rowland's researchers and their work is unclear. “We have absolutely no idea

what's going on,” says institute microbiologist Diane Schaak. “We're not very happy, and we worry about the big machinery of Harvard taking over.”

A team of Harvard researchers recently reviewed the institute. The Rowland scientists “are eclectic and interested in high-risk and high-return research,” says Harvard biologist

Markus Meister, who participated. The team recently submitted a paper to Knowles on the institute's future should Harvard assume control. One suggestion was to convert it to the neuroscience center now in the planning stage (*Science*, 24 August, p. 1419). Meister, who declined to discuss the report in detail, concedes that the Charles River facility “is not the ideal location,” as the goal of the neuroscience center is to encourage interdisciplinary work among Harvard departments.

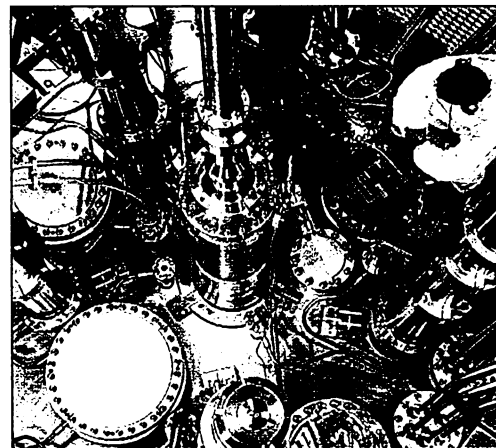
The Land family is reportedly eager to complete the deal soon, and Knowles says that both sides will work on the details in the coming weeks. As for the Rowland researchers, “we all have our CVs ready,” says Schaak.

—ANDREW LAWLER

NEUTRON SOURCES

Compromise Lifts Hopes For German Reactor

BERLIN—A reactor designed to produce neutrons for research cleared a political logjam this week and moved one step closer to beginning operations. Feuding politicians said they had reached a compromise that could allow researchers to power up the FRM-II facility in Garching, outside Munich, although it will likely be several months before studies can begin. The com-



Ready to go. The long-delayed FRM-II reactor may finally get the green light.

CREDITS: (TOP TO BOTTOM) ROWLAND INSTITUTE FOR SCIENCE; FRM-II

Nuclear Security Administration, chief scientist Maureen McCarthy has asked the department's 17 national laboratories to “compile a list of their top five or 10 areas of expertise.” If the labs can’t “respond to this war on terrorism, we probably shouldn’t be in business,” she says, adding that the attacks have given the labs “a unifying sense of mission” unseen since the end of the Cold War.

At the National Institutes of Health, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases is “accelerating” work on smallpox vaccines and drugs, says director Anthony Fauci (*Science*, 19 October, p. 498). It is launching studies to see if a five- or 10-fold dilution of the country's limited supply of smallpox vaccine would still raise a robust immune response. The institute has also ramped up efforts to test a new anthrax vaccine in clinical trials. “We have a meeting every morning on these issues,” says Fauci.

NSF officials are already seeing the preliminary results of some of nearly two dozen grants of \$15,000 to \$40,000 each the agency made soon after the 11 September attacks. Video of a University of South Florida robot probing the smoking Trade Center ruins, for instance, was featured at the 11 October meeting of the National Science Board, which oversees the agency. NSF-funded engineering studies of the Trade Center collapses, including steel analysis conducted by Abolhassan Astanteh-Asl and colleagues at the University of California, Berkeley, will be discussed at a mid-December workshop in New York City. And this week, Tom Smith and Ken Rasinski of the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Center released the preliminary results of an agency-funded, nationwide psychological survey that compared how Americans responded to the 11 September attacks and the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy. In general, the survey of 2100 people found that people were angrier, but less psychologically shaken, by the terrorist assaults than by the president's death.

Deciding where such studies might fit into a comprehensive antiterrorism research agenda will be the job of an NAS task force expected to issue its first findings by next March. NAS officials expect to recruit up to 20 panelists for the study, to be led by biologist Richard Klausner, former head of the National Cancer Institute, and Lewis Branscomb, a science policy expert at Harvard University. The effort is expected to become a major conduit for advice from the academic community to the White House on how scientists might contribute to the global battle against terror.

—DAVID MALAKOFF AND ROBERT KOENIG

With reporting by Jocelyn Kaiser.