The Georgia Research Alliance (GRA) was launched as a not-for-profit organization for building a critical mass of research and development activity around the state's natural strengths. Its board of trustees is comprised of CEOs of leading Georgia companies and presidents from Georgia's leading research universities. Lawrence Gellastendt, Jr. is named founding chairman of the board. GRA recommends a $5 million appropriation for GRA's programs. State funds are combined with a $5 million gift from the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation, and the inaugural class of three GRA Eminent Scholars is recruited—at The University of Georgia, Georgia Institute of Technology, and Georgia State University. Tom Cousins is named GRA board chairman.

1991: GRA's Academy of Eminent Scholars is launched with the goal of identifying and recognizing the state's leading scientists, and to provide a return of more than 150 companies in its Ventures portfolio companies, led to the launch of more than 90 companies in its GRA Ventures Program.

1994: GRA Eminent Scholar Rao Tummala, recently recruited from IBM, is instrumental in Georgia Tech's spin-off of Coca-Cola Technologies to the Georgia Center for Advanced Telecommunications Technologies (GCATT). Development and funded through a unique public-private partnership managed by GRA, GCATT houses a variety of innovative research programs led by GRA Eminent Scholars. In time, dozens of new companies will be launched based on research discoveries at GCATT.

1995: GRA celebrates the opening of an inter-institutional research facility to house the Georgia Center for Advanced Telecommunications Technologies (GCATT). Development and funded through a unique public-private partnership managed by GRA, GCATT houses a variety of innovative research programs led by GRA Eminent Scholars. In time, dozens of new companies will be launched based on research discoveries at GCATT.

1996: GRA celebrates the opening of an inter-institutional research facility to house the Georgia Center for Advanced Telecommunications Technologies (GCATT). Development and funded through a unique public-private partnership managed by GRA, GCATT houses a variety of innovative research programs led by GRA Eminent Scholars. In time, dozens of new companies will be launched based on research discoveries at GCATT.

1997: The Wall Street Journal cites GRA's approach to recruiting Eminent Scholars as the new definition of economic competition among the states.

1998: Governor Perdue recommends a $13 million appropriation to GRA, the General Assembly creates an investment tax credit and the private sector commits $10 million—all to launch the GRA Venture Fund, LLC. By 2015, the fund had made 10 investments in university-based start-up companies.

2002: The 50th GRA Eminent Scholar chair is endowed. The GRA Academy of Eminent Scholars generates nearly $200 million in annual research activity.

2003: Gov. Sonny Perdue recommends funding for the launch of GRA's commercialization program, known as GRA Ventures. The universities surpass $1 billion in annual R&D expenditures, an increase of 25% since the formation of GRA.

2004: The 50th GRA Eminent Scholar chair is endowed. The GRA Academy of Eminent Scholars generates nearly $200 million in annual research activity. David Ratcliffe is named GRA board chairman.

2005: Gov. Roy Barnes taps GRA to organize the Georgia Cancer Coalition. GRA launches the Industry Venture Fund to introduce seasoned management talent to GRA Ventures companies, and GRA-GTI Ventures portfolio companies, and to others provide guidance and advice in the company formation process.

2007: GRA awards national best practices awards for the Eminent Scholars and Ventures Programs.

2008: Governor Perdue recommends a $13 million appropriation to GRA, the General Assembly creates an investment tax credit and the private sector commits $10 million—all to launch the GRA Venture Fund, LLC. By 2015, the fund had made 19 investments in university-based start-up companies.

2010: Bill Linginfelter is named GRA board chairman.

2011: Governor Nathan Deal consolidates Georgia Cancer Coalition programs under GRA administrative leadership, emphasizing GRA’s important role in advancing the state’s research-based economic development strategy.

2015: Gov. Nathan Deal announces that GRA and partner universities Georgia Tech, UGA and Emory will receive a $300 million planning grant from the National Institute of Standards and Technology to lead the global development of cellular manufacturing technologies.

2017: GRA helps Emory University recruit prominent vaccine researcher Ralph Back. The GRA Academy of Eminent Scholars generates nearly $200 million in annual research activity.

2018: The GRA Acade leads GRA Venture Fund's investment in biotech companies, and GRA Ventures portfolio companies, and to others provide guidance and advice in the company formation process.

2019: GRA announces that GRA and partner universities Georgia Tech, UGA and Emory will receive a $300 million planning grant from the National Institute of Standards and Technology to lead the global development of cellular manufacturing technologies.

2020: GRA’s Academy of Eminent Scholars grows to 240 scientists and research staff, who generate more than $300 million in annual research activity.

2021: Gov. Brian Kemp urges leaders to consider the GRA Academy for Eminent Scholars, and GRA’s Academy of Eminent Scholars grows to 240 scientists and research staff, who generate more than $300 million in annual research activity.

2022: The Georgia Research Alliance (GRA) celebrates its 30th anniversary. GRA has generated more than $3 billion in public and private investment and led to the launch of more than 90 companies in its GRA Ventures Program.