

# Luce Foundation Makes \$3M in Emergency Grants to Support Communities and Organizations Affected by COVID-19

*Henry Luce Foundation*  
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Since the COVID-19 pandemic began to be recognized in the US, Henry Luce Foundation staff have worked closely with colleagues, partners, and grantees to understand the needs of affected groups and organizations. Those efforts came to fruition in April, when **the Foundation awarded \$3.1 million in emergency grants to aid fields and communities that the Foundation has long supported.** In addition, the Luce Foundation approved requests to reallocate more than \$1.75 million from existing project budgets to salary or general operating support at grantee institutions. The Foundation expects to continue awarding emergency grants in May.

The 23 emergency grants constitute a concerted effort to **sustain museums and cultural organizations, to provide relief to Native Americans and other vulnerable communities, and to support and mobilize higher education and research institutions.** They include:

- Grants of \$60,000 to \$250,000 to support staff salaries in small and mid-sized museums in Santa Fe, Tulsa, Portland (OR), Asheville, and Phoenix, as well as grants to larger museums in New York and elsewhere.
- A \$250,000 grant to the American Indian College Fund to enable instruction to continue remotely during the pandemic at tribal colleges.
- Contributions to emergency funds established by the Modern Language Association, the American Academy of Religion, and Xavier University in Louisiana, a historically black university that has long received support from the Foundation's [Clare Boothe Luce Program](#) for Women in STEM.

## **Sustaining Museums and Cultural Organizations**

The Foundation has sought to aid art museums and other cultural organizations that have suffered significant financial losses as a result of the pandemic. Endowment losses, the disappearance of ticket revenue, and a decline in fundraising have, together, put museums in a very precarious position. The Foundation has made funds available to these arts organizations—primarily from the Foundation's American Art Program, but also the Asia and Theology Programs—so that they can keep staff employed and collections safe and secure.

In addition to assisting individual institutions, the Luce Foundation has contributed \$100,000 to the NYC Arts Organizations Collaborative, a consortium of 15 New York City-based arts organizations that seeks to raise funds to support staff salaries in the coming months.

Altogether, \$1.86 million in new grants has been awarded in the arts and cultural sector and more than \$1.4 million has been reallocated for salary and general operating support. The Foundation has, so far, been able to assist 37 institutions in eleven states and the District of Columbia.

### **Providing Relief to Native Americans and other Vulnerable Communities**

The Foundation's Initiative on Native American Intellectual Leadership seeks to support Indigenous knowledge makers and knowledge keepers. These individuals—and the communities they serve—have been severely affected by the pandemic. Some tribal nations—especially in the Southwest—have seen high rates of infection on their tribal lands. Almost all Indigenous communities have suffered as tribal revenue has fallen, and in some cases, even collapsed. Businesses have closed, jobs have been lost, and food and water have become harder to procure.

A grant of \$250,000 to First Nations Development Institute has helped launch the [COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund](#) for Native American communities. The effort is designed to address these growing needs by distributing funds swiftly and efficiently to Native nonprofit organizations and tribes. Already, First Nations has distributed more than \$740,000 across the United States.

The Theology Program has launched an initiative to provide emergency support to vulnerable populations through community-based responses led by seminaries, divinity schools, and universities. The first such grant—to Vanderbilt Divinity School—provides [aid to service organizations](#) in the Nashville area. The Theology Program will continue to make grants of this kind in the coming weeks.

Altogether the Foundation has awarded \$650,000 in new grants and reallocated \$290,000 to aid Indigenous people and other vulnerable communities in the US.

### **Supporting and Mobilizing Higher Education and Research Institutions**

Colleges and universities have been badly hurt by the pandemic. Nonetheless, they, and other scholarly organizations, continue to undertake critical research on the disease and on the social, political, ethical, and economic effects of the pandemic and the response to it.

For example, the Luce Foundation has committed to a federated funding strategy—developed in collaboration with the MacArthur Foundation and the Ford Foundation—to focus on electronic pandemic surveillance and its potential impact on democratic practices. Grants to NYU GovLab and the American Geographical Society are part of this effort. And a grant to the Social Science Research Council will seed the [Council's new efforts to support research](#) on the COVID-19 era.

More than \$600,000 has been awarded thus far to support the knowledge sector and critical research that will help us to respond, recover, and reinvent in the aftermath.

## About the Henry Luce Foundation

The Henry Luce Foundation seeks to enrich public discourse by promoting innovative scholarship, cultivating new leaders, and fostering international understanding. The Foundation advances its mission through grantmaking and leadership programs in the fields of Asia, higher education, religion and theology, art, and public policy. Established in 1936 by Henry R. Luce, the co-founder and editor-in-chief of Time, Inc., the Foundation's earliest work honored his parents, missionary educators in China. The Foundation's programs today reflect the value Mr. Luce placed on learning, leadership, and long-term commitment in philanthropy.

For more information, visit [www.hluce.org](http://www.hluce.org).

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## Complete List of 23 Emergency Grants Awarded in April 2020

### American Art Program

- Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York: \$250,000 to support salaries of staff in the Department of Arts of the Americas.
- Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA), North Adams, Massachusetts: \$250,000 to support salaries of key staff required to maintain basic operations through the period of its closure.
- Asheville Art Museum, Asheville, North Carolina: \$150,000 for salary and operations support.
- Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona: \$125,000 for support of salaries across the museum.
- Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge, Massachusetts: \$100,000 to support salaries of the curatorial staff.
- Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon: \$100,000 to support curatorial salaries, including the un-endowed position of PAM's curator of Native American Art.
- Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: \$100,000 to support salaries of staff across the museum.
- Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: \$75,000 for salary support of its Americanist curator.

- Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, Santa Fe, New Mexico: \$60,000 to support contract curatorial positions, and partner artists who will create digital content for Native communities and the museum's general audience.
- Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, Tennessee: \$75,000 to support salaries of key staff required to maintain operations through the period of closure.
- The Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma: \$75,000, to support two curatorial positions: Associate Curator of Contemporary Art & Design; and Curator of Native American and Non-Western Art.
- NYC Arts Organizations Collaborative / Swiss Institute, New York, New York: \$100,000 to support a consortium of 15 New York City based arts organizations including Artists Space • Creative Time • The Drawing Center • Eyebeam • The Kitchen • The Laundromat Project • The Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts • Performance Space New York • Printed Matter • Recess • SculptureCenter • Socrates Sculpture Park • Storefront for Art and Architecture • Swiss Institute • White Columns.

### **Asia Program**

- Museum of Chinese in America, New York, New York: \$250,000 for emergency needs resulting from damage to collections in Mulberry Street fire and subsequent closure due to COVID-19. The grant will cover staff salary and general operations.

### **Higher Education Program**

- Xavier University of Louisiana, New Orleans, Louisiana: \$25,000 for supplemental funds for Clare Boothe Luce Scholar COVID-19-related emergency needs, and support for Xavier's COVID-19 student emergency fund.
- Modern Language Association, New York, New York: \$15,000 to provide emergency grants to adjunct faculty and recent PhDs who have lost income or do not have health benefits.

### **Initiative on Native American Intellectual Leadership**

- First Nations Development Institute, Longmont, Colorado: \$250,000 to help launch First Nations' new COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund for Native American communities.
- American Indian College Fund, Denver, Colorado: \$250,000 from the Collaboration and Incubation Fund to support Tribal College and University faculty as they begin to teach their students remotely.

### **Public Policy Program**

- Eyebeam, Brooklyn, New York: \$150,000 to support Eyebeam's Rapid Response Fund for A Better Digital Future. The Fund will provide competitive fellowships to a cohort of

12-20 artists for projects focused on building a better digital world out of this period of significant systems collapse.

- NYU GovLab, Brooklyn, New York: \$150,000 to support a federated funding strategy developed in collaboration with the MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, and Rockefeller Brothers Fund focused on COVID-19 surveillance and democratic practices.
- American Geographical Society (AGS), Brooklyn, New York: \$140,470 to support a federated funding strategy developed in collaboration with the MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, and Rockefeller Brothers Fund focused on COVID-19 surveillance and democratic practices.

### **Theology Program**

- Social Science Research Council, Brooklyn, New York: \$250,000 to seed the SSRC's initiative in response to COVID-19, including support for the production and distribution of digital content and resources, the organization of virtual working groups, the funding of small grants to support rapid research, and initial efforts to design a virtual research center.
- Vanderbilt University Divinity School, Nashville, Tennessee: \$150,000 to respond rapidly to a range of emergencies related to the COVID-19 pandemic, in partnership with the Public Theology and Racial Justice Collaborative (a multi-institutional project based at Vanderbilt Divinity School and funded by grants from the Theology Program).
- American Academy of Religion (AAR), Atlanta, Georgia: \$25,000 to create a fund to provide aid to members of the Academy who find themselves in need as a result of the pandemic and the response to it.