

PHILANTHROPY'S COMMITMENT DURING COVID-19

Over 40 of the top philanthropies have signed a pledge to provide their grantees with flexible funding support during the Covid-19 crisis. Specifically they have pledged to:

- -Loosen or eliminate the restrictions on current grants. This can include: converting project-based grants to unrestricted support; accelerating payment schedules; and not holding grantees responsible if conferences, events, and other project deliverables must be postponed or canceled.
- -Make new grants as unrestricted as possible, so nonprofit partners have maximum flexibility to respond to this crisis.
- -Reduce what they ask of their nonprofit partners, postponing reporting requirements, site visits, and other demands on their time during this challenging period.

More details: <https://www.cof.org/news/call-action-philanthropys-commitment-during-covid-19>



Foundation messages in response to the Covid-19 crisis

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

- The Foundation's work is continuing uninterrupted. We will be making grant payments and reviewing proposals as usual.
- We recognize that efforts to mitigate the rapid spread of COVID-19 may have disrupted your work. If your ability to do grant-related work has been affected, know that we will flexibly work with you to make adjustments as needed.
- We understand that the rapid spread of the virus and containment efforts may necessitate shifts in work plans that are related to your grant award, and that may also result in the cancellation or postponement of events, travel, hiring plans, and general disruption of work flows. These shifts may result in changes to grant expenditures, as well as in the anticipated duration of your grant award. As a result, we are prepared to assist you with any COVID-19-related modifications, including no-cost award extensions, that you may need to request. *Please send an email to program staff to initiate a COVID-19 related modification. Please also note that the HESH program will be allowing a three-month grace period for reporting on all grants.*
- We know that many of you are experiencing unsettling organizational challenges. We are carefully keeping you in mind as we think through the uncertainties. You will soon hear more from your main contacts in your specific program area, and they will be available to answer questions and offer support in the coming days and weeks.
- While Mellon's staff will be working remotely at least for the coming week and longer if prudent, we expect to be available to you, as always. If you have questions or concerns, please let us know.
- Please know that the Mellon Foundation is taking all necessary and prudent steps to support public health during this rapidly escalating situation. These include restricting non-essential domestic and international travel for employees, and substituting conference and video calls

for in-person meetings. We will monitor the situation carefully, using the most reliable sources available to determine Mellon staff participation in future public events, and whether or not to hold Foundation-planned convenings in the months ahead. We will be sure to keep all relevant parties informed as promptly as possible. Although we will be working remotely for periods of time as deemed appropriate and necessary, we continue to operate with minimal disruption, and our staff stand ready to assist you as needed.

Ford Foundation

As the implications of COVID-19 unfold, we know that the shocks of this "new normal" are severe and unanticipated for you — our grantee partners — as indeed they are for us all, professionally and personally. We are acutely aware that this global crisis will manifest differently in different contexts, and therefore requires a lot of customization in our responses.

To that end, we want to provide you with maximum flexibility in how you use our funds in this time of extraordinary challenge. We know that "one size will not fit all" so our program officers plan to reach out to you individually to work on the best ways in which we can support you. The purpose of this communication is to share our general policies so that you will have them in advance of those conversations. We don't have all the answers, but we are learning as we go and continuing to adapt our responses.

Our funding policies are designed to weather crises:

During Darren's tenure, the Ford Foundation has put in place financial policies that are intended for a time like this. Our goal is to provide as much flexibility, certainty, and stability for grantee partners as possible, despite a time of turmoil in financial markets. We have four primary ways of doing this:

1. **First**, the foundation's primary grantmaking modality is now general operating support. We have moved our total annual grantmaking from 25% to 71% GOS over the last four years. We also doubled the overhead allocation for project grants from 10% to 20%, and even more when a compelling case is made.
2. **Second**, we take a balanced approach to investing and protecting our endowment, reducing risk and providing a potential cushion for economic downturns. In 2015, we changed our budgetary policies to apply a three-year rolling average of the endowment value to determine our spending each year. In doing so, we insulate our grantees because the foundation's spending does not fall off a financial cliff.
3. **Third**, we have adopted multi-year budgets for each of our program teams to enable more funding certainty for grantees.
4. **Fourth**, we work hard to manage Ford's own operational costs in order to maximize the resources available for grants.

Providing flexibility in the near term:

We recognize that the kinds of flexibility you need may include: postponing or canceling convenings or other activities that our grant is supporting; delaying grant deliverables because activities aren't able to continue as planned; or delaying submission of proposals or reports. In

consultation with your program officer, we are willing to formalize changes to your grant agreement as well, specifically:

- **For grantee partners receiving project support, we are open to converting your current project grants to general support**, so that you have maximum flexibility to respond to COVID-19. If this is something that would be helpful to you, please let your program officer know. *This applies to all grantees other than expenditure responsibility grantees, universities, fiscal sponsors, and governmental units; if you fall into one of those categories, you should speak to your program officer directly and there may be other ways we can provide you with more flexibility.*
- **We are open to changing the payment schedule for your grant if that would be helpful to you.** Again, please let your program officer know if there are adjustments we can make.
- **Grant funds will not be rescinded if a program, conference, or other grant activity is canceled or postponed due to COVID-19.** We understand you have sunk costs and will work with you to repurpose any remaining grant funds for other activities.

Collective advocacy for broader policy change:

- In the US and beyond, as appropriate, we should seize the opportunities presented by this crisis to advocate for the kinds of policy changes that will help the populations who will be hardest hit by the coronavirus emergency. Together, we can use our platforms to advocate for these kinds of policies. In many cases, these are policies you advocate for generally — reduced carbon footprint; paid sick leave; expanded access to health insurance; customized support for people with disabilities; expanded unemployment insurance; food aid; rental assistance and mortgage forbearance, student debt relief; and more. Your program officers will be interested to hear what you are doing and what you would find helpful in this regard.

As we talk with you over the coming days and months, we will take what we learn and do our best to adapt to your evolving needs. We are very aware of the challenges to morale, organizational culture, and productivity that many of our organizations will be facing. We are committed to being good partners and a source of meaningful support for you.

McKnight Foundation

- Starting Monday, March 16, our staff will work remotely through April 13. Business operations will continue. Even as we need to modify how we do our work, we remain committed to responding to grantees and other partners in a timely manner. While site visits and in-person meetings will be put on pause, staff will be available by email and phone and can arrange video or telephone conferences.
- Our offices are closed to members of the public, and we will discontinue the use of our meeting spaces for all outside guests. We regret any hardship or inconvenience this places on organizations with upcoming reservations.
- We will consider the impact of coronavirus on your organization's progress toward your grant agreement. We recognize the pandemic presents many challenges for nonprofits, from canceled events to market declines to business continuity pressures. If the coronavirus has prevented you from moving forward with a conference or other gathering, or slowed down other services or plans, please know we support you in

making prudent decisions that balance public health and safety concerns. Contact your program officer if you may need potential adjustments to the terms of your grant agreement.

- We stand with our grantees and our communities. This pandemic will have many social and economic implications, some of which we are only beginning to understand. As we learn more, we will be reviewing our response options.
- If you have specific ideas, please be in touch with your primary Foundation contact or send us a message through [this monitored Contact Us web page](#).

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

- All Kellogg Foundation offices, including the Battle Creek, Michigan headquarters, will be closed for in-person business at the end of the workday on Monday, March 16, 2020.
- Although offices will be closed, and we will not be engaged in face-to-face contact (such as meetings and site visits), *business activities will continue without disruption*. This includes making all planned payments and related operations. Fortunately, we are well-positioned with the tools, technology, channels, systems and practices to continue to work responsively and steadily during this time.
- We recognize that your organization and community are also responding to this public health situation. Under the circumstances, we want to be responsive and flexible. Please [contact us](#) with questions or concerns.

Joyce Foundation

- In light of new [guidance](#) issued by the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago to help minimize the spread of COVID-19, the Joyce Foundation will close our offices at the end of the business day on Friday, March 13, 2020. All staff will work remotely beginning Monday, March 16th, 2020.
- Additionally, we have restricted all non-essential travel, postponed or cancelled events through mid-April and will be conducting all meetings via Zoom or phone. We have taken these steps to protect our staff and to do our part to contribute positively to the public health response to the virus.
- During this challenging time, our work will continue. We do not anticipate any disruption to the grantmaking process – we will continue to review funding requests, pay grants and otherwise support our grantees. Our staff will be reachable by email and phone. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Oak Foundation

- Oak staff will cancel or postpone all work-related travel and attendance at face-to-face meetings/events until 4 April. If you have a face-to-face meeting planned with an Oak staff member, they will reach out to you to discuss postponing or cancelling their attendance.
- Oak staff will mostly work remotely from 13 - 29 March. We recently went through a process to increase the technology capabilities of staff to work remotely. Therefore, we want to assure you that we are prepared and will do everything possible to continue our grant-making work remotely, including processing payments and participating in meetings via videoconferencing or calls. We ask for your patience if some processes take longer than usual.

- We will continue to monitor the situation closely, and adjust our actions as needed and grounded in the advice of the World Health Organization, and public health authorities in the US, UK and Switzerland.
- Oak staff are here to support you. We know that you and your organisations are also taking this situation just as seriously and considering every precaution to keep staff safe and healthy. Please know that we fully support any decisions you and your organisations may make regarding cancelling or postponing meetings and events. We can work with you to reschedule any face-to-face meetings. We are available to speak via videoconferencing or phone.

Gilead

- As we adjust to the changes COVID-19 is bringing to our lives, workplaces and communities we want to let you know that Gilead stands with you. There is a lot of uncertainty right now, but we remain confident in one thing: your commitment to provide the best possible care to the people you serve, no matter what obstacles stand in your way.
- The passion and creativity you bring to tackling our most formidable public health challenges – including Hepatitis C and HIV – is exactly why we chose to partner with your organization. We have no doubt you will bring the same commitment to help your community deal with the current COVID-19 outbreak.
- We also want to make sure you know this crisis will not impact our current grant to your organization. We want to do what we can to support you in these unprecedented times, and that requires providing additional flexibility. While we certainly hope that programming and critical services continue, it's very likely that some deliverables won't be met, events and activities will be cancelled, and grant reporting will be delayed. That is all ok – we're not suspending our grants at a time when you need support more than ever.
- Our team is actively exploring a variety of options to ensure our community partners remain financially sustainable for the long term. Once we have solidified those plans, we will communicate the options directly to you. In the interim, please don't hesitate to contact your grants manager if there is something your organization immediately needs. Your organization continues to be essential to the communities you serve, now more than ever before.
- Contact: Gilead Corporate Grants: Grants@gilead.com

William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

We have announced that we will be closing our office building beginning on Monday, March 16 through Friday, April 3, at which point we will evaluate the situation and consider next steps. During this time, our staff will work remotely as part of the important effort to observe social distancing and reduce the spread of COVID-19, which ultimately will save lives and preserve public health resources.

In addition to closing the building temporarily, the foundation is restricting travel and cancelling or postponing public events and meetings. While we deeply regret having to miss opportunities to meet directly with many of you, we feel this is the right decision. We are available in the meantime via phone, email, and Zoom – please do not hesitate to reach out. Our building may be closed, but the foundation remains open.

We recognize that the pandemic may affect the important work you undertake. The Hewlett Foundation wants to support you throughout. If you are receiving this email, your grant came through our Special Projects program. In thinking about the various kinds of grants we make under this program, I would offer the following guidance:

- If you have received a General Operating Support (GOS) grant, you can already use the funding as you wish, in whatever way best serves the interests of your organization. If you need us to adjust something about your timelines or reporting deadlines, please let me know. We will of course be flexible given the disruption.
- If you received a project or program grant and can still use our funds as intended for the project or program, please just continue your work. As with GOS grants, let me know if you need us to adjust the timeline for the project or any other administrative or reporting requirements.
- If you received a project or program grant and are no longer sure you can use the funds for their intended purpose, please contact me directly so we can discuss your specific challenges and figure out the best solution.
- If yours is an Expenditure Responsibility grant (because, for example, your organization is not a public charity), and you cannot use the funds for their intended purpose, please contact me directly so we can figure out the best solution consistent with IRS requirements for such grants.
- Contact: Larry Kramer, President, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation:
LKramer@hewlett.org

Kresge Foundation

- In accordance with guidance and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and the State of Michigan to mitigate community spread of COVID-19, The Kresge Foundation is closing its Troy and Detroit, Michigan offices effective today, with an anticipated reopening on Monday, April 6, 2020.
- Our work will nonetheless continue. Our mission to expand opportunity in American cities and to protect the health, wellness, and welfare of the least fortunate among us has never been more important.
- We will do everything we can to minimize disruptions to our work. All Kresge staff will work from home and remain accessible via email, phone, and remote meeting technologies. And although we are ceasing all business-related travel, as well as cancelling or postponing Kresge-hosted convenings and public events until at least early May, our grantmaking and

social investing – along with the entirety of the Foundation’s suite of operations – will press on.

- A moment like this casts in bright relief that our mission to expand opportunity in American cities and to protect the health, wellness and welfare of the least fortunate among us has never been more important. Viewed from the ground up, that mission can fully meet the magnitude of the challenge only if we extend to you on the front lines of social change full flexibility to do what you believe is best for those you serve. You’ve conveyed that to us and to philanthropy at large with absolute clarity. We need to respond in kind. Here is our commitment to our grantees:
- If you need **flexibility during a cash-flow crisis**, we will convert restricted funding to general operating support;
- We will **suspend grantee reporting requirements and site visits** for the foreseeable future;
- We will **expedite grant approvals** and amendments; and
- We will permit those who have been forced to cancel events to **retain and re-purpose the funding** we have made in support of those activities.

This may not be the full answer for some of you. And there may be other steps we can take that would be equally beneficial. We strongly encourage you to be in touch in either case. Please contact your Kresge program officer to discuss how we can be of deepest service to you. Regardless of need and how these options may be of interest to our partners individually, we are committed to listening with compassion and respect, and will communicate actionable messages with clarity and assurance – leaving no ambiguity about what we propose to do in partnership with you.

Zegar Family Foundation

To Our Partners,

We hope that this note finds you, your colleagues and family Safe and Well! As we all adjust to the new harsh realities imposed by COVID-19, we at the Zegar Family Foundation (the “Foundation”) realize that adapting to health emergency rules and keeping everyone healthy may pose significant challenges to accomplishing your mission and the goals, targets, timeframes and metrics you have set with respect thereto. We are confident that as an organization you are continuing to do the best that you can to provide your valuable contributions and/or services. However, in the face of this ongoing health and financial crisis, we are mindful that you may need to consider adjustments to how you are directing the Foundation’s resources and/or meeting the other grant requirements that have been established.

Please know that we are open to discussing these matters and will work with you to do all that we can to remain flexible and supportive during these difficult times. Please do not hesitate to email us including with any updated contact or other information we should have. We are standing by to work with you! Indeed, if you have any new strategies for which funding is required to assist those urgently in need at this critical time, please let us know.

As always, we thank you for all the important work that you do!

- **Contact:** Lan T. Pham | Director of Grants Management, Zegar Family Foundation, lan@zegarff.org

Stavros Niarchos Foundation

Since our founding, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation’s fundamental mission has been to promote the common good. We are proud that together with our grantee partners—our friends and collaborators—we have contributed to improving the lives of those in need.

In these unprecedented times, when the most vulnerable among us face even greater risks, continuing to support this work remains our utmost priority.

In consultation with SNF’s expert medical advisors and advice from health authorities that practicing social distancing is the most effective way to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, we have implemented a policy of remote operations for our offices in Athens, New York, and Monaco for as long as necessary.

Our goal, especially in this uncharted territory, is to keep working with the same passion in support of current and prospective grantees every day. We will inevitably encounter difficulties and delays, but safety, health, and above all the common good are more important than any of the daily challenges we will work to overcome.

Now more than ever, we are committed to being a part of the solution and working together to have a positive impact on society.

Nathan Cummings Foundation

- In light of the public health risk of COVID-19, and in alignment with the Office of the Mayor of New York City, Nathan Cummings Foundation staff will work from home until further notice. During this time, our meetings will be held virtually or postponed until re-opening our office is advisable. We will make every effort to ensure there is no disruption to our grantmaking and operations.
- NCF remains steadfastly committed to our partners and appreciates that organizations are adjusting plans to prioritize safety, well-being, and the emergent needs of their communities. We understand that many groups are now taking on additional work and want to reassure you that we will be as accommodating as we can to support you during this time.
- We encourage you to reach out to your program contact if you have any questions regarding your grant or requests for accommodations to be made, such as deadline extensions or changes to deliverables.
- We will provide updates as they become available.

David and Lucille Packard Foundation

As the wide-ranging implications of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to unfold, we recognize the profound impacts this is having on each of you, both professionally and personally. During this unprecedented time, the Packard Foundation’s primary focus is to accommodate, as best we can, the unique demands shouldered by our grantees. We want you and your organization to be resilient and strong in the coming days, weeks, and beyond so you may continue your important work.

We believe in your leadership and know you will make best use of the Foundation’s funding during this time of crisis. With that in mind, below are the guiding principles we are using to support our grantees in the coming months.

- We are open to converting project grants to general operating support, providing our grantees maximum flexibility to use funds where they are most needed. If this is something that would be helpful to you, please let your program officer know. This applies to all grantees other than expenditure responsibility grantees, universities, fiscal sponsors, and governmental units; if you fall into one of those categories, there may be other ways we can provide you with more flexibility.
- All grantees will automatically receive a 4-month extension for any grant report due between February 28 and June 30. We are happy to adjust project timelines or additional reporting deadlines as needed.
- We will make payments on your grants as scheduled, and we are open to requests for expedited payments if that would be helpful.
- We understand changed plans, cancelled events, changed budgets, and delayed or altered reports. For example, funds expended for events that are now cancelled (and not refundable) can be charged to our grant without formal modification to our grant agreement. We are acutely aware that this global crisis will manifest differently across geographies, the issues you work on, and the type of grant you have received. Therefore, your questions may require nuanced responses. Our program teams are available to work with each grantee on the best way we can support each and every partner.

We are adjusting our response as we learn more about the impact of COVID-19 and from our conversations with you. We commit to promptly share our thinking with you as it evolves. In addition, we are urgently exploring how we might support projects in response to slowing the spread of COVID-19 and additional support for the people and organizations most impacted.

Please continue to provide our program staff with feedback as you speak with them and please send your suggestions to me about how we can best support you by emailing me at feedback@packard.org.