

Grant Opportunities

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Alfred P. Sloan Foundation

Brief description and history of the fund

The foundation, created in 1934, supports original research and broad-based education related to science, technology, and economic performance. They seek proposals for original projects for which funding from the private sector, the government, or other foundations is not widely available. Alfred P. Sloan Jr. stated: "I would like to see the Foundation explore in every way possible the expansion of education, as this is the foundation of all progress." In their homepage, they link to the article: "Imagining a Digital Public Library of America¹" that describes a project for a centralized, digitized public library that would contain all of the country's books, images, and archival materials, and that would be accessible to anyone with an Internet connection.

The Foundation does not fund

- Projects aimed at pre-college students or for endowments
- Buildings or equipment
- Fundraising drives

Recent funds

Education and Careers in Science and Technology. Anytime, Science Education Anyplace

Learning Grants for online learning development. Asynchronous Learning Networks (ALNs) program were initiated at Drexel University, University of Illinois, Pennsylvania State University, SUNY, Council for Adult and Experiential Learning.

Over \$5 million supported the growth and development of the Sloan Consortium (Sloan-C: www.sloan-c.org), a group of Sloan grantee and other institutions committed to promoting quality online education.

Significant grantmaking in this program ended in 2008, though selective support of ongoing projects will continue through 2010.

Program Director: Frank Mayadas

Universal Access to Recorded Knowledge Program began in 2004 to increase access to recorded knowledge by encouraging digitization of material in the public domain, assuring public archiving of knowledge on the Internet, and fostering availability of books on demand. Much support went to the Internet Archive for archiving Web content and building a universal digital library. In 2005, spurred by Google's efforts to commercially digitize books, the Internet Archive, together with dozens of libraries, universities, archives, museums, and companies like Microsoft and Yahoo, formed The Open Content Alliance (OCA), a coordinating group for the creation of an open access digital library.

Other grants in this program included:

- Library of Congress (\$2,000,000): To digitize books and support developments in digitization capabilities.
- PALINET (\$1,000,000): To establish a collaborative digitization service for open access to the materials of over 600 member institutions. In 2009, PALINET merged with SOLINET.
- On Demand Books, LLC (\$766,000): To develop and build the first-ever print-on-demand book capability — the Espresso Book Machine (EBM) — that manufactures quality paperbacks from a digital file. The EBM has since been licensed to Ingram while several countries have also bought the EBM.

¹ http://www.cjr.org/the_news_frontier/imagining_a_digital_public_lib.php

Current Initiatives Relevant to the Work of NSDL

- **Basic Research - The Encyclopedia of Life** – A joint effort with the MacArthur Foundation, this program endeavors to build a reliable online encyclopedia with a Web page for every known species on earth. Content is being generated via the Bio-diversity Heritage Library, a consortium of ten major natural history museum libraries, botanical libraries, research institutions, other web-based resources, and by professional and citizen scientists. Employing wiki software, people worldwide are invited to contribute. A grant of \$2.5 million went to the Smithsonian Institution in 2009 for continued work on this online encyclopedia project (see www.eol.org).
- **Public Understanding of Science and Technology – Other Efforts** The program focuses on educating the public about science and technology. Traditional tracks include support for films, television, radio, books, and plays but other efforts include support for Internet projects, conferences, and multimedia events. Examples include grants to develop a web version of: 'The Biology of the Horse' interactive that is part of the: The Horse exhibition at the American Museum of Natural History and to support Arizona State University to develop a comprehensive and accessible website to promote greater understanding of human evolution (www.becominghuman.or)
Program Director: Doron Weber (weber@sloan.org)
- **Information Technology and the Dissemination of Knowledge** – This broad-based effort seeks to increase public access to information by encouraging digitization of materials in the public domain, developing public archives of digital material, and fostering the availability of books on demand.
- **Select National Issues - Digital Information Technology and the Dissemination of Knowledge program** was born out of the Universal Access to Knowledge program in 2008. Its additional goals include seeking to create interactive communities to share knowledge centered around social and natural science to generate deeper interactions and new discoveries as well as supporting research to improve understanding of the economics of markets for information goods. To date, the program has primarily encouraged digitizing material in the public domain; assuring public archiving, preservation and open access of this material; and fostering its availability to people everywhere through such technologies as books on demand.
Grants in this program include:
 - Wikimedia Foundation (\$3,000,000): To improve the accuracy and organizational capacity of Wikipedia.
 - Open Knowledge Commons (OKC) (\$400,000): to create more community-building efforts and more collaborative projects in the library and archival worlds.Program Directors: Doron Weber (weber@sloan.org) and Daniel Goroff

To Apply

email a one-page letter of inquiry to Program Director. Telephone inquiries are not accepted. Details on the letter of inquiry and following steps are described on site (<http://www.sloan.org/apply/page/3>)

The John D. and Catherine T. Mac Arthur Foundation

Brief description and history of the fund

Recent funds

Total 44 - Examples above \$500,000 include:

- Blueprint Research & Design (San Francisco, California): \$550,000 in support of building the field of digital media and learning (over two years). (2008)
- Carnegie Mellon University (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania): \$500,000 to design and build the physical and virtual site for a pilot digital media youth program in the Chicago Public Library that will serve to launch a Chicago learning network. (2009)
- Common Sense Media (San Francisco, California): \$980,000 to build the field of digital media and learning through engagement with parents and teachers (over two years). (2009)
- Social Science Research Council (Brooklyn, New York): \$1,500,000 to implement a learning network of schools, libraries, museums, after-school programs, online communities, and the home in New York City (over three years). (2010)
- Social Science Research Council (Brooklyn, New York): \$1,000,000 to establish StartL, a public/private fund for new digital media applications for learning (over two years). (2009)
- Social Science Research Council (New York, New York): \$612,000 to develop a plan for a learning network of schools, libraries, museums, after-school programs, online communities, and the home in New York City. (2008)
- University of California, Irvine (Irvine, California): \$2,970,000 to establish a Research Hub for the field of digital media and learning (over two years). (2009)

Current Initiatives Relevant to the Work of NSDL

Digital Media & Learning Initiative

MacArthur grantmaking in education explores rapidly evolving new technologies, including digital media. It aims to determine how digital media are changing the way young people learn, play, socialize and participate in civic and daily life. This fund encourages innovation and provides resources for new learning environments, including those developed by younger designers and scholars, since 2007. In 2011, the grant budget for this program area is \$22.1 million. Awards have recognized individuals, for-profit companies, universities, and community organizations using new media to transform learning. This fund invites U.S. and international participants to compete for \$2 million in grant awards administered by HASTAC. The Competition seeks projects that use digital or new media as platforms for participatory learning.

What MacArthur Funds

1. **Research:** Ethnographic studies, surveys, interdisciplinary research networks, and other projects are examining what young people are doing online, their views on such activities, and what knowledge, skills, and competencies they are gaining.
2. **Practice:** Grants also support efforts to develop new learning environments to understand how schools, libraries, museums, and other formal and informal institutions need to adapt, change, and collaborate as a result of young people's use of digital media. Projects are looking at learning in virtual worlds, through game design, with mobile devices, and through

the interactions in social networks—in and out of school. Resources support new school design and learning networks in Chicago and New York City.

3. **Field-Building:** To help build the emerging digital media and learning field, the Foundation portfolio includes the MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Media and Learning, and the MacArthur Foundation Reports on Digital Media and Learning, both published by MIT Press. An interactive Web site and the Spotlight Blog are additional resources for the field, as is the Digital Media and Learning Research Hub, a new international research center at the University of California, Irvine.

To Apply

No fixed deadlines. Send a cover sheet and a letter of inquiry about the work being proposed to the Foundation (either by mail to the Office of Grants Management at the Foundation's Chicago address John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Office of Grants Management, 140 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60603-5285- or by email to 4answers@macfound.org). The format for such letters can be found in Applying for Grants:

http://www.macfound.org/site/c.lkLXJ8MQKrH/b.913959/k.E1BE/Applying_for_Grants.htm

Usually, the Foundation replies within 4 to 8 weeks.

Program Staff

- Constance M. Yowell, Director of Education
- An-Me Chung, Associate Director of Education
- Craig Wacker, Program Officer

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

Brief description and history of the fund

The Foundation does not fund ...

Foundation's funds can be used only for purposes that are consistent with its status as a charitable organization. It does not consider requests to fund:

- Construction
- Equipment and computer purchases
- Health education programs

Recent funds

above \$500,000 awarded in 2010 in the area of Education for the US Region

Title	Date of Award	Amount
Foundation for California Community Colleges	11/14/2010	\$1,944,000
Rice University	11/14/2010	\$1,650,000
WestEd	09/01/2010	\$1,500,000
Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors	11/14/2010	\$1,500,000
Pivot Learning Partners	07/18/2010	\$1,500,000
Monterey Institute for Technology and Education	11/14/2010	\$1,200,000
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching	11/14/2010	\$1,185,000
Envision Schools	07/18/2010	\$1,000,000
Educause	11/14/2010	\$1,000,000
Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education	03/21/2010	\$800,000
Institute for Evidence-Based Change	11/14/2010	\$700,000
Foundation for California Community Colleges	03/21/2010	\$600,000
Education Resource Strategies	07/18/2010	\$570,000

Current Initiatives Relevant to the Work of NSDL - Education Program

The Education Program does not accept inquiries to fund Libraries and museums. It makes grants to expand the reach of openly available educational resources and to support "deeper learning" for all students, with a particular focus on those from disadvantaged areas. One of the goals of the program is to: "Equalize access to knowledge for teachers and students around the globe through Open Educational Resources." The Education Program invests in organizations that develop and advocate for innovation in ideas, practices, and tools, as well as those that participate in the public policy debate on these issues. The Foundation strategic plan can be found at http://www.hewlett.org/uploads/documents/Education_Strategic_Plan_2010.pdf

Deeper Learning Track

The Education Program will invest in organizations that:

- Promote policies or strategies that create incentives for K-12 schools and community colleges to focus on deeper learning—particularly improved assessments used to measure a student's academic growth
- Build the capacity of the education system and teaching practices both online and in the classroom to reach large numbers of students with deeper learning
- Support proof points, including model K-12 schools and community colleges, and fund research that promote deeper learning as an attainable and necessary goal for all students
- Develop new, innovative models to increase access for all students and to improve deeper learning

Open Educational Resources Track

The Education Program invests in organizations that:

- Develop OER for K-12 and community colleges, expand OER networks, and develop guidelines and tools for the field
- Promote policies or strategies creating funds and incentives, or provide communications and technical assistance to policymakers, that will advance greater access to learning through OER
- Research and evaluate the impact of OER on teaching and learning
- Develop innovative OER models

For 2011 and beyond, the Program's OER investments will focus primarily on supporting:

- The infrastructure needed to sustain a well-functioning open educational ecosystem
- Demonstration projects that strengthen student access to deeper learning in K-12 and community colleges

To Apply

The majority of grants are awarded to organizations by invitation. The Foundation does accept unsolicited Letters of Inquiry for the Education Program, for the Deeper Learning and Open Educational Resources tracks from organizations looking for funding. Only on very rare occasions are grants awarded in response to these unsolicited funding inquiries. There are no deadlines for their submission. Organizations interested in applying for funding should submit a Letter of Inquiry online whenever possible. There is no need to talk with Hewlett staff before submitting the application. If you have already spoken to Foundation staff about the request, it should be indicated in the application. The Foundation replies within 30 days (they do not respond to phone calls or emails requesting the status of a submitted Letter of Inquiry).

Do not submit a full proposal until invited to do so.

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Brief description and history of the fund

US education-related programs follow the overarching grantmaking priority of improving high school education. Most of the grants go to U.S. tax-exempt organizations (U.S. 501(c)(3)) that the Foundation staff independently identifies. A small percentage of grantmaking occurs through Requests for Proposals (RFPs).

Recent funds

for 2010 & 2011, above \$1,500,000, in the US in the education-related areas:

Awardee	Program	Amount
Educause	Postsecondary Education	\$18,362,322
Denver Public Schools and Atlanta Public Schools (each)	College-Ready Education	\$10,000,000
Jobs for the Future Inc.	Postsecondary Education	\$9,633,537
U.S. Education Delivery Institute, Inc.	College-Ready Education	\$5,000,000
University of Texas at Austin-Charles A. Dana Center	College-Ready Education	\$4,999,989
Washington Early Learning Fund	Early Learning	\$4,775,000
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching	Postsecondary Education	\$4,409,433
The Broad Center for the Management of School Systems	College-Ready Education	\$3,589,314
Stand for Children Leadership Center	College-Ready Education	\$3,476,300
MetaMetrics, Inc.	College-Ready Education	\$3,468,005
American Federation Of Teachers Educational Foundation	College-Ready Education	\$3,421,725
National Center on Education & the Economy	College-Ready Education	\$3,200,000
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development	College-Ready Education	\$3,024,695
Research Foundation of the City University of New York	Postsecondary Education	\$3,000,000
Riverside Community College District	Postsecondary Education	\$3,000,000
City of Mesa	Postsecondary Education	\$3,000,000
City and County of San Francisco	Postsecondary Education	\$3,000,000
Brown University	College-Ready Education	\$2,993,431
Prince George's County Public Schools	College-Ready Education	\$2,500,169
New Technology Network, LLC	College-Ready Education	\$2,112,080
Florida Virtual School	College-Ready Education	\$2,021,928
Inigral, Inc.	Postsecondary Education	\$2,000,000
The Aspen Institute Inc	Postsecondary Education	\$2,000,000
Center for Teaching Quality, Inc.	College-Ready Education	\$1,999,353
Communities Foundation of Texas	College-Ready Education	\$1,997,426
Research Foundation of the City University of New York	Postsecondary Education	\$1,988,931
MDC, Inc.	Postsecondary Education	\$1,800,000
Nellie Mae Education Foundation	College-Ready Education	\$1,750,000
Uncommon Knowledge and Achievement, Inc.	College-Ready Education	\$1,700,011
Alaska Department of Education and Early Development	Libraries	\$1,650,000
New Jersey State Library	Libraries	\$1,650,000
Corporate Voices for Working Families Inc	Postsecondary Education	\$1,586,744
Stanford University - John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities	College-Ready Education	\$1,541,091
Committee for Economic Development	Postsecondary Education	\$1,532,181
The Achievement Network	College-Ready Education	\$1,500,596

To Apply

Funding for the US Education initiative (including College-Ready Education, Early Learning, Post-secondary Education and the Libraries) grants is by invitation only. They do not accept letters of inquiry (LOI) or unsolicited proposals.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Brief description and history of the fund

A not-for-profit corporation under the laws of the State of New York, formed in 1969. By the end of 2009, assets totaled \$5 billion, with annual grantmaking appropriations of approximately \$199.5 million. Their grantmaking philosophy: to build, strengthen and sustain institutions and their core capacities, rather than supporting narrowly defined projects.

Foundation current president (since 2006): Don Michael Randel

Current Initiatives

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation supports grantees within five defined program areas:

- **Higher Education and Scholarship.** The primary domain of interest in this grant program is to support the humanities, arts, and “humanistic” social sciences. The Higher Education and Scholarship program includes:
 - *Research Universities and Humanistic Scholarship:* for institutions that sustain scholarship in the humanities and “humanistic” social sciences, primarily research universities but also a small number of centers for advanced study and independent research libraries.
 - *Liberal Arts Colleges Program:* Within this program, the Libraries and Information Technology effort seeks to strengthen the academic infrastructure of the liberal arts college and its library’s role in a rapidly changing technological environment by promoting both intra- and inter-institutional collaborations and cost-saving efforts. Many of the grants in this area have assisted faculty members, librarians, and information technology staff in making effective use of electronic resources for teaching and research.
In recent years, the Liberal Arts Colleges Program has established two non-profit organizations that serve institutions of higher education, one of which is The National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education (www.nitle.org) that helps liberal arts colleges and universities use technology strategically and collaboratively to advance teaching and learning across the disciplines.
Program contact: Please direct grant and reporting inquiries to: Susan I. Dady, Program Associate, sd@mellon.org. All grants made by the Liberal Arts Colleges Program result from invitations issued by the Foundation to institutions and organizations with which staff have engaged in preliminary exchanges. Uninvited proposals are not considered.
 - *Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Diversity Initiatives*
 - *Special International Emphasis: South Africa*
- **Scholarly Communications and Information Technology:** Scholarly communications covers a broad range of activities, including the discovery, collection, organization, evaluation, interpretation, and preservation of primary and other sources of information, and the publication and dissemination of scholarly research. Within this wide area, the Foundation’s grantmaking in scholarly communications has three main objectives: (1) to support libraries and archives in their efforts to preserve and provide access to materials of broad cultural and scholarly significance; (2) to assist scholars in the development of

specialized resources that promise to open or advance fields of study in the humanities and humanistic social sciences; and (3) to strengthen the publication of humanistic scholarship and its dissemination to the widest possible audience.

Information technology includes the design, development, implementation, and support of computer-based systems for converting, storing, protecting, processing, retrieving, and transmitting information in electronic form. Grantmaking in information technology focuses on the development of computer-based applications and systems that advance the objectives of the five core areas of Foundation interest: the liberal arts and humanistic scholarship in higher education, scholarly communications, museums and art conservation, performing arts, and conservation and the environment.

The Foundation is rarely able to respond positively to unsolicited requests. Prospective applicants are encouraged to explore their ideas informally with program staff in a short email describing their funding needs before submitting formal proposals. Letters of inquiry regarding ideas that fall within the program described above are welcome and reviewed throughout the year. Please direct all inquiries to: Donald J. Waters (djw@mellon.org) or Helen Cullyer (hc@mellon.org)

Please note that grants within the Scholarly Communications and Information Technology program do not cover overhead or indirect costs, or graduate student tuition.

- **Museums and Art Conservation**
- **Performing Arts**
- **Conservation and the Environment:** no longer being supported

To Apply

Collaborative planning between the Foundation and its grantee institutions generally precedes awards and is an integral part of grantmaking. Therefore, prospective applicants are encouraged not to submit a full proposal but rather to send a short query letter that sets forth the need, nature and amount of their request, along with evidence of suitable classification by the Internal Revenue Service.

Grant inquiries should be made, by writing or e-mail, to the appropriate program officer and program area. We ask that you not send duplicate inquiries to more than one program area. The Foundation does not make grants to individuals. Unsolicited proposals are rarely funded.