



RITA ALLEN
FOUNDATION



TRANSFORMATIONS

REPORT TO COMMUNITY 2013-2014



ProPublica and Public Lab (see page 11)

CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Board of Directors, Scientific Advisory Committee and Staff	4
Uncovering Biological Mysteries	6
Investing in a 21st-Century Democracy	9
Building a Philanthropic Feedback Movement	15
2014 Grants	17
2013 Grants	18
Financials	19

Cover: To study the neuronal processes that underlie pain perception, researchers use fluorescent antibodies to label multiple types of sensory neurons. (Image courtesy of Gregory Scherrer Laboratory)



Public Lab
(see page 11)

FROM NEW IDEAS TO TRANSFORMATION

How do you invest in the unexpected? The Rita Allen Foundation provides seed funding for leaders in science and society working on breakthrough solutions to complex problems. We look for potentially transformative ideas in their earliest stages—which means outcomes are not certain. This requires us to adopt the creative, curious, learning mindset of the scientists and social innovators we support, as explored in our [Guiding Principles](#) (page 5). We work through cycles of experimentation, testing, listening and revision. We are, in a sense, a philanthropic lab.

This approach has been inspired by the Rita Allen Foundation Scholars program, through which the Foundation has invested in pioneering biomedical science for nearly 40 years. Scholars are selected on the basis of the promise of their ideas and their potential for leadership, collaboration and learning—not on whether they can already prove that their ideas are correct. This approach has produced outsized results, as Scholars have gone on to advance the frontiers of biological understanding and essential medical treatments. In 2013 and 2014, the Rita Allen Foundation welcomed two new classes of Rita Allen Foundation Scholars seeking answers to intriguing questions such as how mobile DNA segments—or “jumping genes”—may contribute to neurodegenerative disease. Read more in [Uncovering Biological Mysteries](#) (page 6).

When the Foundation’s resources expanded in 2009, we were able to take on new areas of investment, with a focus on fostering informed civic engagement. We seek out innovative approaches that leverage the remarkable opportunities for new kinds of engagement presented by digital media, social

technology, and tools for data collection and analysis. Perhaps most important, we support work that brings together people with promising ideas and a shared goal to create effective modern societies governed by and for the people. It is remarkable to see such networks at work as they seek and prototype new solutions—like the system Code for America Fellows created with Atlanta, Georgia, to help people navigate the court system. Read more in [Investing in a 21st-Century Democracy](#) (page 9).

Recognizing the deep connections among issues across the social sector, the Foundation also works to strengthen philanthropy as a whole. Often the most transformative ideas transcend the barriers of domains and fields. Over the past two years, the Foundation has used seed investments and strategic conversations to nurture new ideas and tools to help social-sector organizations develop more effective and inclusive feedback loops. These resources and the mindset they represent are beginning to have a profound impact on how organizations approach efforts to change society for the better. Read more in [Building a Philanthropic Feedback Movement](#) (page 15).

This Report to Community highlights a handful of the new ideas we’ve supported over the past two years. Others can be found in the [full list of grants](#) (pages 17-18). We are excited by the potential ahead for innovative solutions to complex and significant problems.

Elizabeth Good Christopherson
President and Chief Executive Officer

2013-14 Board of Directors

Elizabeth Good Christopherson
President and Chief Executive Officer

Jon Cummings

Robbert Dijkgraaf, Ph.D.

William F. Gadsden
Chair

Henry H. Hitch

Landon Y. Jones

The Honorable Thomas H. Kean

Sivan Nemovicher

Geneva Overholser

Samuel S.-H. Wang, Ph.D.*

Emeritus Members

Robert E. Campbell

Moore Gates, Jr.

Aristides Georgantas

*Former Rita Allen Foundation Scholar

2013-14 Scientific Advisory Committee

Members of the Scientific Advisory Committee are critical advisors to the Rita Allen Foundation Board of Directors on matters involving our Scholars program and other grant proposals.

Dr. Kathleen M. Foley*
Rita Allen Foundation Medical Advisor
Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer
Center (MSKCC)
Weill Cornell Medical College

Dr. Douglas T. Fearon
Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

Dr. Charles D. Gilbert*
The Rockefeller University

Dr. Gregory J. Hannon*
Howard Hughes Medical Institute
University of Cambridge
Cancer Research UK Cambridge
Institute

Dr. Jeffrey D. Macklis*
Harvard University
Harvard Stem Cell Institute

Dr. Carl F. Nathan*
Weill Cornell Medical College
Weill Cornell Graduate School of
Medical Sciences

Dr. Joan A. Steitz
Yale School of Medicine

Emeritus Members
Dr. Maurice S. Fox
Dr. Irving H. Goldberg
Dr. Howard H. Hiatt
*Dr. Thomas M. Jessell**
Dr. Arnold J. Levine
Dr. James D. Watson
Dr. Torsten N. Wiesel

*Former Rita Allen Foundation Scholar

2013-14 Staff

Elizabeth Good Christopherson,
President and Chief Executive Officer

Kate Belyi, *Communications*

Jonathan Kartt, *Program and Evaluation*

Allison Litus, *Executive Assistant to the President*

Molly Sharlach, *Communications and Digital Engagement*

Kathleen Thompson, *Operations and Program*

Kari Williams Tyksinski, *Finance*

Ann Webb, *Special Projects*

MISSION

The Rita Allen Foundation invests in transformative ideas in their earliest stages to leverage their growth and promote breakthrough solutions to significant problems.

It enables early-career biomedical scholars to do pioneering research, seeds innovative approaches to fostering informed civic engagement, and develops knowledge and networks to build the effectiveness of the philanthropic sector. Throughout its work, the Foundation embraces collaboration, creativity, learning and leadership.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Innovation

We will be an innovative and agile organization; to this end, we will rely on strategic, collaborative approaches to initiate and support pioneering programs that break new ground and challenge the status quo.



Core Values

We will bring to our work and seek in our relationships with others a commitment to, and belief in, the positive power of courage, hope, passion, and shared aspirations; we are committed to translate these core values into effective action.



Focus

We will focus our efforts on enduring areas of domestic and global concern; our goals especially include advancing the frontiers of biomedical science, leadership and education. We will respond to short-term societal needs and undertake programs consistent with the mission and vision of the Foundation.



Leadership

To be a leader and a model both in our programs and in our operations, we will embrace appropriate levels of risk; we will foster an entrepreneurial spirit informed by inquisitiveness, due diligence, creativity, and responsible stewardship of our assets.



Lasting Outcomes

We seek to advance new ideas and discoveries that address the root causes of challenging problems; we will define success by objectives linked to a significantly positive and lasting impact on individuals and the broader society.



Learning

We will engage in a collegial process of continuous learning, hard work and reassessment; we recognize that these qualities are essential to achievement of our mission.



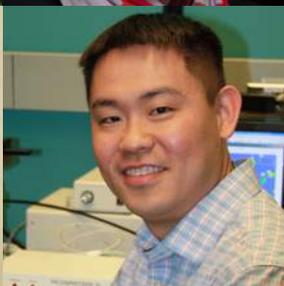
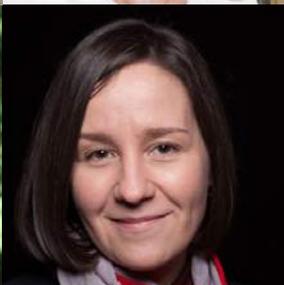
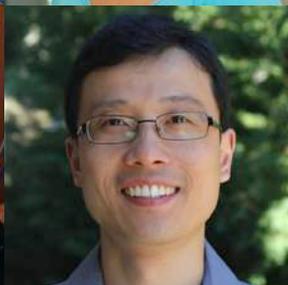
Collaboration

We will work with and convene leaders to develop and implement strategies that support innovation and bring new ideas and information to targeted groups; new areas of collaboration will evolve as we continually reevaluate human needs.

UNCOVERING BIOLOGICAL MYSTERIES

Rita Allen Foundation Scholars explore how the body works in health and disease

RITA ALLEN FOUNDATION SCHOLARS



Class of 2013

Michael Boyce, Duke University School of Medicine
Sophie Dumont*, University of California, San Francisco
Dorothea Fiedler, Princeton University
Elena Gracheva, Yale School of Medicine
William Greenleaf, Stanford University School of Medicine
Rebecca Seal, University of Pittsburgh
Reza Sharif-Naeini, McGill University

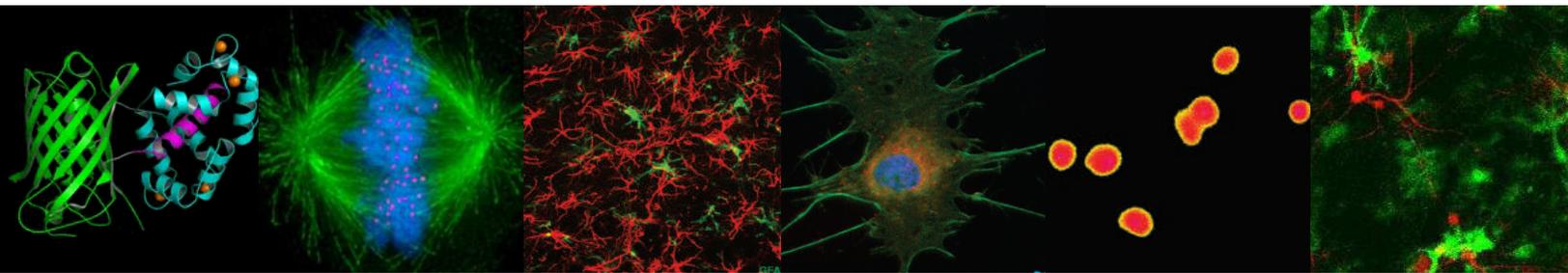
Class of 2014

Lei Ding, Columbia University
Molly Hammell*, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory
Sebastian Klinge, The Rockefeller University
Zachary Knight, University of California, San Francisco
Gregory Scherrer, Stanford University
Lin Tian, University of California, Davis
Tuan Trang, University of Calgary

* Milton E. Cassel Scholar

"I was particularly impressed by the work that other Rita Allen Scholars presented at the 2013 symposium. It was clear from the excellent research presentations that Rita Allen Foundation funding had allowed previous Scholars to launch challenging and important projects early in their careers. That, in turn, has inspired me to use my own funding to undertake a similarly ambitious project."

—MICHAEL BOYCE



IMAGES (LEFT TO RIGHT): COURTESY OF LIN TIAN, WIKIMEDIA/AFUNGUY, HEATHER LEDUC-PESSAH, COURTESY OF LIN TIAN

Since 1976, the Rita Allen Foundation Scholars program has provided transformative grants to young leaders in biomedical science, whose pioneering research is advancing our understanding of the human body. The Scholars program supports basic research in the fields of cancer, immunology, and neuroscience. The Rita Allen Foundation also collaborates with the American Pain Society to sponsor a joint award to scholars studying mechanisms and potential treatments for pain. Through the Scholars, the Foundation embraces innovative research that has above-average risk and groundbreaking possibilities. The more than 130 past recipients have made significant advances in their fields of research and have received honors including the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, the National Medal of Science, the Wolf Prize in Medicine and the Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences.

Scholars are nominated by select research institutions and selected by a Scientific Advisory Committee of leading scientists and clinicians. Scholars and their affiliated institutions receive grants of up to \$110,000 annually for a maximum of five years. Scholars in the Classes of 2013 and 2014 are using new frameworks and tools to investigate subjects including chromosome replication, the molecular basis of sensation, and neural circuits that control body weight and food intake. Visit the Rita Allen Foundation website to learn more about the Scholars' research.

www.ritaallen.org/foundation-scholars.htm

"The funding from the Rita Allen Foundation is absolutely essential to my lab. It will support the development of much-needed imaging tools, which will enable us to obtain a comprehensive view of both excitatory and inhibitory synapses in action at the cellular, tissue and whole-animal levels. We will also apply these tools to uncover the functional organization of cortical layer 1 interneurons in shaping long-range interactions and their links to behavior, which can't be done with current technology."

—LIN TIAN

"Funding from the Rita Allen Foundation will allow us to take risks and explore uncharted areas of biology. Much of the work in my lab involves using RNA sequencing to discover new populations of neurons involved in feeding and other physiologic processes. The neurons we discover are often completely uncharacterized, which means we must conduct extensive preliminary studies before we can apply for funding from more traditional sources. Funding from the Rita Allen Foundation will allow us to go in these unexplored directions and invest the time required to uncover genuinely new biology."

—ZACHARY KNIGHT

RESEARCH IN ACTION

COURTESY OF ZACHARY KNIGHT

PEANUT BUTTER AND CHOCOLATE provoke strong responses in the brain. Even a whiff of these high-energy goodies can shake up neural activity in the arcuate nucleus, a region of the brain's hypothalamus responsible for appetite control.

Two types of arcuate nucleus neurons influence feeding behavior: AgRP neurons drive a hungry animal to eat, while POMC neurons suppress appetite. AgRP and POMC activity levels are known to fluctuate as hormone and nutrient levels rise and fall over the course of a day.

But the more immediate effects of food on these neurons are only now coming to light. Physiologist Zachary Knight, a 2014 Rita Allen Foundation Scholar, and his research group at the University of California, San Francisco, are using a new fiber-optic technique to record real-time neural activity in live mice. Knight's team has shown that AgRP neurons switch on within seconds of a hungry mouse detecting food. This activity appears to lead the animal to actively seek out food, the researchers reported in the February 26, 2015 issue of *Cell*.

They found that nutrient-packed chocolate and peanut butter triggered faster neural responses than regular lab chow. Seeing the food in addition to smelling it also amplified the brain's reaction. Notably, the activity of AgRP neurons dropped rapidly as soon as an animal started to eat, and was accompanied by a corresponding increase in POMC neuron activity. This result was unexpected, Knight said in a news story announcing the findings:

"If you simply give food to the mouse, almost immediately the neurons reversed their activation state," he said. "This happens when the mouse first sees and smells the food, before they even take a bite."

The study could inform new approaches to anti-obesity therapies, as drugs targeting AgRP-related pathways have so far been unsuccessful in clinical trials. These drugs "might be manipulating the decision to go to the grocery store, not necessarily the decision to take the next bite of food," Knight said.

INVESTING IN A 21ST-CENTURY DEMOCRACY

The Foundation supports innovative approaches to strengthening civil society in America



MATTHIAS GIBSON

“Young people, because of social media, have always felt they’ve had a voice. They’re coming from the assumption that government is a hackable system—an operating system that can be optimized. It’s in their DNA, and they just go and do it.”

—JENNIFER PAHLKA, FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CODE FOR AMERICA, IN “THE MAYOR’S GEEK SQUAD,” *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, MARCH 23, 2013

*Code for America
2015 fellows
Sophia Dengo
Asturias and
Ernie Hsiung visit
the Miami-Dade
County 3-1-1
Department.*

Code for America Fellowship Program

Code for America’s flagship Fellowship program connects talented individuals in technology and data science (including software developers, designers and project managers) with local governments and citizens to create new approaches to solving their communities’ trickiest problems. Together, they build tools that enable people from both inside and outside public institutions to collectively solving local problems. During the yearlong fellowship, developers, designers and researchers work alongside local public officials to build digital tools, foster new approaches to problem solving and tackle community issues. Ultimately, Fellows are building a movement for civic innovation within local government, breaking down obstacles to using new technology to address a host of civic challenges.

www.codeforamerica.org

FLICKR/1FLATWORLD



Oakland, California

A three-person Code for America team, two of whom were Oakland residents, worked with a variety of stakeholders in Oakland to create RecordTrac, which allows city employees to manage public records requests, keep requesters updated and post documents online for others who may want them. It also makes it easier for citizens to submit requests, and it tracks data that can be used to improve the system.

FLICKR/EKKE



Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico wrestles with high unemployment and a trend of educated young people leaving the island. Code for America Fellows created PrimerPeso to help entrepreneurs navigate incentives and resources available to help them start and develop their business.

FLICKR/RICHARD CAWOOD



Atlanta, Georgia

Atlanta's municipal courts were filling with long lines of people waiting to deal with traffic tickets and missed court dates. Code for America Fellows created CourtBot, a texting app that gives people information about their citation and whether they can pay the fine immediately over the phone. They also created ATLCourt, a new, easy-to-navigate website for Atlanta's municipal court system that allows people to easily look up their court dates.

TERADATA PARTNERS USER GROUP 2014



DataKind

DataKind harnesses the power of data science in the service of humanity by bringing together teams of data science volunteers and social change organizations on projects that address tough humanitarian challenges. From weekend-long DataDives that help organizations do initial data analysis, exploration and prototyping, to six-month DataCorps projects that help organizations use data science to transform their work and their sector, DataKind leverages the skills and passion of data scientists who want to contribute to social change. Support from the Rita Allen Foundation has allowed DataKind to build its development capacity as it moves from its start-up phase to rapid growth, providing services based on the overwhelming amount of interest from both data scientists and mission-driven organizations around the world.

www.datakind.org

Climate Central and the National Research Council Advancing Research on Distrust and Skepticism toward Mainstream Science in America

Distrust and skepticism toward scientific evidence is widespread among the American public—a phenomenon that can jeopardize public health and impede evidence-based decision-making. With seed funding from the Rita Allen Foundation and the Schmidt Family Foundation, the National Research Council and Climate Central are collaborating on an effort to better understand science skepticism across a range of issues. This project will set a national research agenda to fill in gaps in knowledge, in addition to examining ways to improve public confidence in science and understanding of scientific methods. A committee of experts will map the landscape of research on public distrust of science, including underlying psychological dynamics and the role of communication factors. These findings will be published in a consensus report, and they will guide a set of experiments focused on understanding skepticism of climate science. This research will result in published, peer-reviewed social-scientific literature and new resources for scientists and the media.

www.nationalacademies.org/nrc
www.climatecentral.org



REID WISEMAN

The Public Laboratory for Open Technology and Science



EDMUND D. FOUNTAIN FOR PROPUBLICA/THE LENS

The Public Laboratory for Open Technology and Science (Public Lab) develops open-source hardware and software tools and creates methods that allow people to become “citizen scientists,” collecting environmental data to add to or counter what’s made available by government and industry. Using do-it-yourself measurement tools—like a spectrometer made from a DVD-R, card paper, a webcam and double-sided tape—residents are able to make informed decisions about local environmental risks. With support from the Rita Allen Foundation, Public Lab is developing its model and outreach, focusing on communities facing imminent environmental health threats in the Northeast.

www.publiclab.org

Public Lab and ProPublica (see page 14) collaborated to capture aerial images of coastal restoration efforts in the Mississippi River Delta. Read the story [here](#).

“Imagine a future where data plays an ever larger role in governance and civic life, but where the public’s literacy in, and ability to contribute to and leverage, that data gives it a meaningful part in fair and informed decision making.”

—JEFFREY WARREN, CO-FOUNDER AND RESEARCH DIRECTOR, THE PUBLIC LABORATORY FOR OPEN TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE, IN “THE PROMISE OF ‘SMALL DATA,’” TECHPRESIDENT, JULY 17, 2013



MapLight Voter's Edge

Voter's Edge is a groundbreaking online guide to ballot measures and candidates created by MapLight, a nonpartisan research organization. On the Voter's Edge website or through an embeddable web widget, voters can enter a street address to view a personalized ballot featuring candidate biographies, ballot measure news and endorsements, campaign finance data, and other information. Citizens can even share their ballot choices via social media—an option meant to encourage debate and boost voter participation.

With support from the Rita Allen Foundation, Voter's Edge has expanded to cover all 50 states and provide nonpartisan information about all federal and state-level candidates as well as state-level ballot measures. The expanded Voter's Edge guide is the first of its kind and includes information on each candidate, including his or her top funders, top priorities, occupation, previous terms in office, endorsements and voting record. It gives a summary of information for casual viewers while also allowing users to dig deeper into the source data. During the 2014 election season, 1 million unique visitors accessed Voter's Edge.

www.votersedge.org

"An informed electorate is essential to a functioning democracy. Voter's Edge gives you, the voter, the edge against all the biased, negative advertising. It's the quick, easy way to get the facts before you vote."

**—DANIEL G. NEWMAN,
COFOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, MAPLIGHT**

Democracy Works TurboVote

TurboVote works to bring how we vote into the 21st century, helping Americans stay informed about upcoming elections and navigate the process of civic participation. Following earlier support, the Rita Allen Foundation is providing startup funding for TurboVote's partnership with two of the largest leadership networks in higher education, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) and the National Association of Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA). In part because of this partnership, more than 200 colleges and universities across the country have now adopted TurboVote as a "one-stop" civic participation platform for students. In 2014, TurboVote passed a milestone with over a quarter of a million voters served.

www.turbovote.org



DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

TOOLS TO INFORM



Solutions Journalism Network

The Solutions Journalism Network provides resources for journalists to help them inform readers about constructive responses to social problems. The Network has trained reporters and editors in dozens of newsrooms and recently released a comprehensive toolkit for solutions journalism. Support from the Rita Allen Foundation is allowing the Network to investigate the impact of their approaches and to create a series of free webinars on solutions journalism in collaboration with the Poynter Institute's News University, as well as an undergraduate solutions journalism curriculum in partnership with Temple University's School of Media and Communication.

www.solutionsjournalism.org



Center for Responsive Politics

With support from the Rita Allen Foundation, the Center for Responsive Politics is creating an unparalleled database of financial data on nonprofits that are politically active in federal elections, sources of political "dark money," because they can receive unlimited contributions but are not required to disclose the identities of their funders. The Center is also producing a series of in-depth reports that explain the trends and implications of politically active nonprofits.

www.opensecrets.org/outsidespending/nonprof_summ.php



Engaging News Project

The Engaging News Project develops web-based strategies for informing audiences, promoting substantive discourse and helping people understand diverse views, all while analyzing the business outcomes essential to news organizations. With support from the Rita Allen Foundation, the Engaging News Project is developing its capacity and tools on a number of fronts, including mapping news engagement efforts underway, convening digital news innovators from media organizations around the country, testing existing and new ideas, planning for the project's long-term viability, and building an online information portal.

www.engagingnewsproject.org



OpenCongress

The Sunlight Foundation's OpenCongress project enables anyone to follow and explore the activities of Congress, and it has become a leading comprehensive, nonpartisan source for legislative information. With support from the Rita Allen Foundation, the Sunlight Foundation is redesigning the tool with user-centered principles as a new platform for all of Sunlight's federal data, beyond the site's current focus on legislators, bills and votes. Sunlight is integrating it with other tools and real-time data about congressional actions and political influence, and is spreading it to wider audiences.

www.opencongress.org



American Press Institute

Rigorous fact-checking of public figures by journalists can give people essential knowledge for making informed decisions about civic issues. The American Press Institute's fact-checking project, launched in 2014, is building research, tools, networks and training to refine effective fact-checking techniques and extend them to newsrooms of all sizes. With support from the Rita Allen Foundation, the American Press Institute is extending this work into the 2016 election season as well as studying economic incentives for fact-checking by tracking reader engagement with fact-checking content.

www.americanpressinstitute.org/fact-checking-project



ProPublica

As a leading voice in public-interest journalism, ProPublica has tested a number of ways of engaging audiences in investigative reports, including an interactive data set about pharmaceutical payments to doctors and a cartoon and Broadway song about banking practices that fueled the 2008 financial crisis. Now, with support from the Rita Allen Foundation, ProPublica is building in-house multimedia resources to create new story forms, attract wider audiences and increase the impact of its prize-winning reporting.

www.propublica.org



Media Impact Funders

Media Impact Funders is a network organization serving funders who use the power of media and technology for social change. Support from the Rita Allen Foundation and the Wyncote Foundation has enabled the creation of Assessing Impact of Media (AIM), an online portal for research, tools, articles and analysis on the emerging field of media impact assessment. Together with a related project to map the landscape of media grant making, Media Impact Funders is using the AIM project and related events to make connections between current knowledge, practice and outcomes and advance impact assessment work among funders and media makers.

www.mediaimpactfunders.org/assessing-impact-of-media



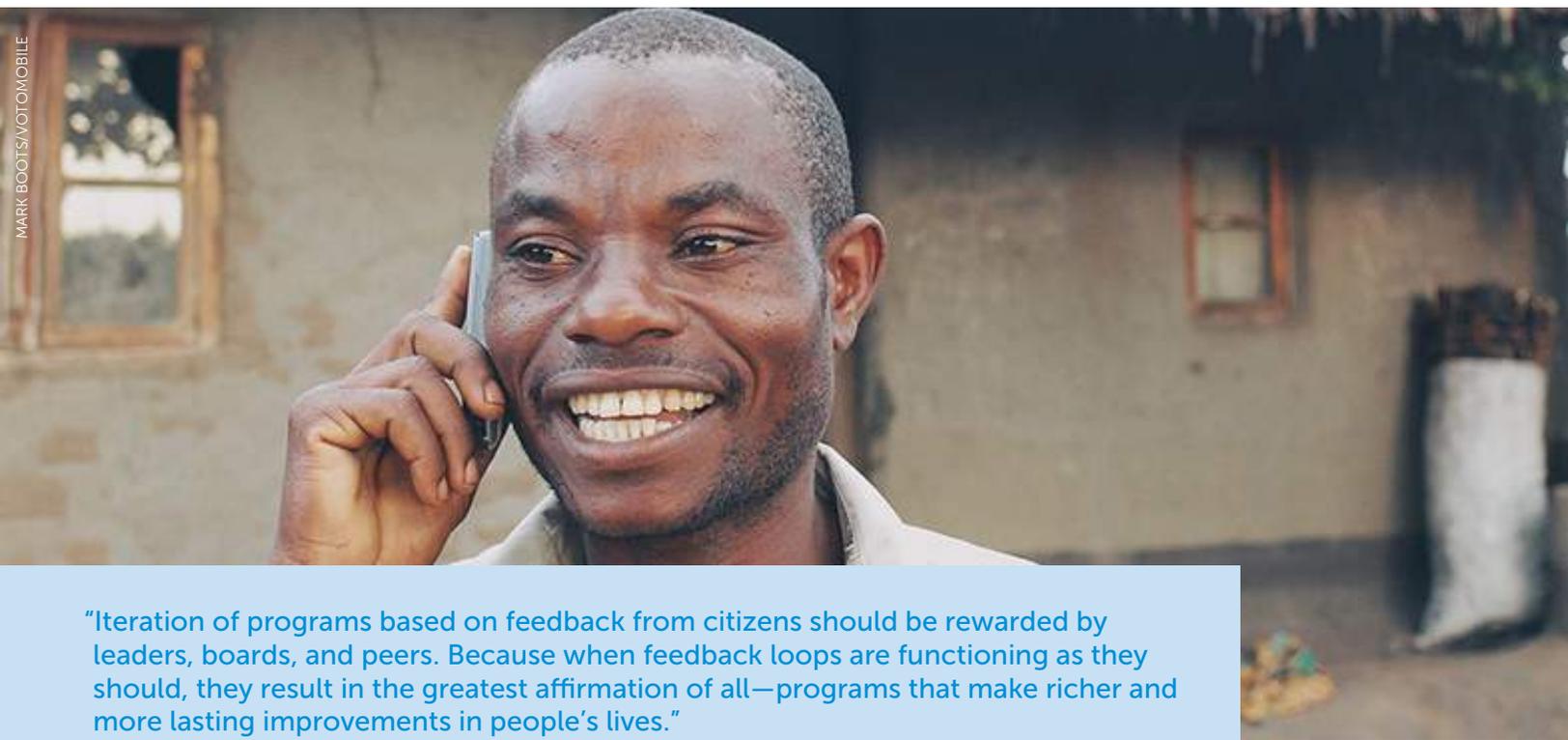
Harmony Institute

The Harmony Institute applies experimental, data-driven methods to investigate how entertainment media can bring about social change. A grant from the Rita Allen Foundation will support a new Media Impact Fellowship Program for leading researchers in the social sciences and data science. The Institute will collaborate with the Fellows in developing projects to analyze the social impact of films, television programs, games, news stories and other media, such as Story Pilot, a new web application exploring the impact of documentary film.

harmony-institute.org

BUILDING A PHILANTHROPIC FEEDBACK MOVEMENT

The Foundation is collaborating with others to create a more responsive and effective social sector



MARK BOOTS/VOTOMOBILE

“Iteration of programs based on feedback from citizens should be rewarded by leaders, boards, and peers. Because when feedback loops are functioning as they should, they result in the greatest affirmation of all—programs that make richer and more lasting improvements in people’s lives.”

– DENNIS WHITTLE, EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF ASHOKA CHANGEMAKERS AND CO-FOUNDER OF FEEDBACK LABS, AND ELIZABETH CHRISTOPHERSON, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF RITA ALLEN FOUNDATION, FROM “WHAT’S YOUR FEEDBACK LOOP?” FORBES.COM, OCTOBER 28, 2013

The Feedback Toolkit provides a diagnostic quiz to help organizations assess their own feedback loops, as well as guides, tools and examples from organizations putting new approaches to feedback into action (including VOTO Mobile, pictured above).

Feedback Labs and Feedback Labs Toolkit

Feedback Labs is a consortium of organizations working to ensure that people served by social change work have a strong voice in each part of the process, a nascent and revolutionary concept for governments, nonprofits and donors. Together, Feedback Labs member organizations seek to support citizen feedback by framing and clarifying key issues, developing effective tools and mainstreaming the use of feedback loops in the social sector. Feedback Labs began in 2013 with leadership from Ashoka Changemakers, GlobalGiving, Development Gateway and Keystone Accountability (among others) and seed funding from the Rita Allen Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. It has since become a key hub of resources to accelerate the culture of listening and cocreation in the social sector, with members including practitioners, funding platforms, technology providers and direct-service organizations that aim to invert the top-down tendency of aid, philanthropy and governments. It has received significant support from the Fund for Shared Insight to build its capacity (see page 16), as well as from the Rita Allen Foundation to develop an online toolkit of resources.

www.feedbacklabs.org

Fund for Shared Insight

The Fund for Shared Insight is a collaborative effort among the Rita Allen Foundation and other foundations to bring greater responsiveness and effectiveness to philanthropy. Shared Insight will provide more than \$5 million per year over three years in grants to nonprofit organizations working to develop tools, knowledge and leadership in the area of philanthropic openness and responsiveness. Among the 13 organizations selected for the initial round of funding are two that currently receive support from the Rita Allen Foundation: Feedback Labs (see page 15) and the Center for Effective Philanthropy (see box). Shared Insight is co-chaired by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Ford Foundation. Other founding funders include the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, The JPB Foundation, Liquidnet, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.



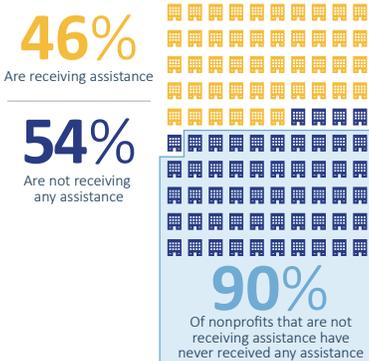
www.fundforsharedinsight.org

“What if the people meant to benefit from the programs that foundations support, as well as the nonprofits we finance, could contribute their needs, opinions, and experiences to help us improve our current grant-making programs and suggest ideas for the future? Imagine if all of us working for social and environmental change understood better what the intended beneficiaries of our work think and what we could do differently to ensure that we achieve our goals.”

—HILARY PENNINGTON, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE FORD FOUNDATION’S EDUCATION, CREATIVITY AND FREE EXPRESSION PROGRAM, AND FAY TWERSKY, DIRECTOR OF THE EFFECTIVE PHILANTHROPY GROUP AT THE WILLIAM AND FLORA HEWLETT FOUNDATION—COCHAIRS OF THE FUND FOR SHARED INSIGHT, IN “MORE FEEDBACK WOULD IMPROVE FOUNDATIONS’ SERVICE TO SOCIETY,” *THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY*, SEPTEMBER 4, 2014

The Center for Effective Philanthropy Nonprofit Practices and Perspectives in Beneficiary Feedback

Financial or Nonmonetary Assistance Received from Foundations for Beneficiary Feedback
Percentage of nonprofits



Do nonprofits seek feedback from the people they serve? Support from the Rita Allen Foundation enabled The Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) to research the extent to which nonprofit leaders believe their organizations and their foundation funders are listening to their beneficiaries—those they ultimately seek to serve. The resulting report, *Hearing from Those We Seek to Help: Nonprofit Practices and Perspectives in Beneficiary Feedback*, is available on the Center’s website. Its findings include:

- 99% of nonprofits surveyed report collecting feedback from their beneficiaries, though methods vary.
- 84% of nonprofits surveyed believe that only some or fewer of their foundation funders have strategic approaches that reflect a deep understanding of their ultimate beneficiaries.
- Foundations that are perceived as having the best understanding of beneficiaries engage with grantees, adopt a humble, open and collaborative approach, or develop a deep connection to the issues or communities they seek to affect.

www.effectivephilanthropy.org

2014 GRANTS

In 2014, the Foundation's grant making fell into two broad domains: **Young Leaders in Science and Social Innovation**, and **Civic Literacy and Engagement**. In addition to these main categories, the Foundation also supports efforts to strengthen the philanthropic field and gives one-time grants for a variety of purposes.

YOUNG LEADERS IN SCIENCE AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

Emerging Leaders in Science and Society
American Association for the Advancement of Science
\$50,000 (over two years)

2015 Ashoka Future Forum
Ashoka
\$50,000 (over one year)

Connecting the Dots: Effectively Communicating Science to Non-Scientists
Research!America
\$50,000 (over six months)

Rita Allen Foundation Scholars
\$2,950,000

CIVIC LITERACY AND ENGAGEMENT

Online Solutions Journalism Curriculum and Tools
Solutions Journalism Network
\$137,500 (over one year)

Media Impact Fellowship Program
Harmony Institute
\$150,000 (over one year)

Advancing Research on Distrust and Skepticism Toward Mainstream Science in America
Climate Central
\$250,000 (over two years)

Improving and Increasing Fact-Checking in Journalism
American Press Institute
\$100,000 (over two years)

Philly Political Media Watch
The Internet Archive, Sunlight Foundation, Committee of Seventy, University of Delaware Center for Community Research and Service, University of Pennsylvania Linguistic Data Consortium
\$100,000 (over one year)

Impact Research
Solutions Journalism Network
\$50,000 (over one year)

Fellowship Program
Code for America
\$150,000 (over one year)

Strategic Business Plan Implementation
Nonprofit Quarterly
\$100,000 (over one year)

Supporting Innovations in Voting Information
Healthy Democracy
\$65,000 (over nine months)

Engaging News Project
The Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life at the University of Texas at Austin
\$150,000 (over two years)

State Integrity Investigation 2.0
The Center for Public Integrity
\$300,000 (over 1.5 years)

Challenge Fund for Innovation in Journalism Education
Online News Association
\$200,000 (over two years)

Landscape Analysis of Digital Civic Engagement
Personal Democracy Media
\$48,000 (over one year)

Impact Analysis and Media Impact Festival
Media Impact Funders
\$50,000 (over one year)

OpenCongress
Sunlight Foundation
\$200,000 (over two years)

Expansion of Multimedia Story Capacity
ProPublica
\$100,000 (over one year)

TurboVote
Democracy Works
\$150,000 (over one year)

Investigating Political Nonprofits and Online Citizen Engagement Campaign
Center for Responsive Politics
\$150,000 (over one year)

OTHER

Fund for Shared Insight
Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors
\$750,000 (over three years)

The Disaster Philanthropy Playbook
Center for Disaster Philanthropy and Council of New Jersey Grantmakers
\$100,000 (over one year)

Feedback Labs Toolkit
Ashoka
\$50,000 (over one year)

Grants are listed in reverse chronological order within each category.

2013 GRANTS

In 2013, the Foundation's grant making fell into three broad domains: **Young Leaders in Science and Social Innovation**, **Civic Literacy and Engagement**, and **Community Building**. In subsequent years, the domain of Community Building has been folded into our other grant making areas. In addition to these main categories, the Foundation supports efforts to strengthen the philanthropic field, and it gives one-time grants for a variety of purposes.

YOUNG LEADERS IN SCIENCE AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

Building Development Capacity
DataKind
\$50,000 (over one year)

Emerging Leaders Program
Princeton AlumniCorps
\$50,000 (over one year)

Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey Clinical Research Experience for High School Students
Rutgers University Foundation
\$50,000 (over one year)

Civic Consumption 2013 Conference and Knowledge Building Project
Groundswell
\$25,000 (over one year)

Outreach in Under-Resourced Communities
The Public Laboratory for Open Technology and Science
\$50,000 (over one year)

Life Sciences Lecture Series
New Jersey Technology Council
\$10,000 (over two years)

Kiva City Newark Initiative
The Intersect Fund
\$4,245 (one-time grant)

MothSHOP Storytelling Workshop at 2013 Ashoka Future Forum
Storyville Center
\$20,000 (one-time grant)

Rita Allen Foundation Scholars
\$2,850,000

CIVIC LITERACY AND ENGAGEMENT

Civic Sector Coverage and Collaborative Journalism Initiative
Nonprofit Quarterly
\$50,000 (over one year)

Performance Measurement and Evaluation Capacity Building
Generation Citizen
\$50,000 (over one year)

Media Impact Focus Event: Assessing the Impact of Media
The Paley Center for Media
\$15,000 (one-time grant)

Foundation Funding for U.S. Democracy Landscape Project
Foundation Center
\$28,150 (over six months)

Voter's Edge
MapLight
\$150,000 (over 1.5 years)

Building Online Media Capacity
Media Impact Funders
\$50,000 (over one year)

Fellowship Program
Code for America
\$150,000 (over one year)

Performance Measurement and Evaluation Capacity Building
The Right Question Institute
\$50,000 (over one year)

Civic Cities
The Citizens Campaign
\$400,000 (over two years)

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Community Development and Urban Agriculture
Isles, Inc.
\$254,341 (over two years)

OTHER

Educational Programs and Special Exhibitions
Princeton University Art Museum
\$10,000 (one-time grant)

Investigation of Nonprofit Practices and Perspectives in Beneficiary Feedback
The Center for Effective Philanthropy
\$50,000 (over one year)

Feedback Labs
Ashoka
\$350,000 (over two years)

Grants are listed in reverse chronological order within each category.

FINANCIALS

Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Change in Net Assets (Modified Cash Basis)

2013 (Audited)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
Revenue and Support				
Investment Income (Loss)				
Interest and dividends	4,097,064	115,112	-	4,212,176
Net realized gain (loss) on investments	1,295,007	36,391	-	1,331,398
Translation gain	9,109	-	-	9,109
Other income	-	-	-	-
Costs attributable to investments	(439,307)	-	-	(439,307)
Net Investment Income (Loss)	4,961,873	151,503	-	5,113,376
Net assets released from restrictions	736,313	(736,313)	-	-
Total Revenue and Support	5,698,186	(584,810)	-	5,113,376
Expenses				
Grant awards	5,678,210	-	-	5,678,210
Program and foundation operations	1,549,912	-	-	1,549,912
Federal excise tax	20,000	-	-	20,000
Total Expenses	7,248,122	-	-	7,248,122
Change in net assets before appreciation in fair value of investments	(1,549,936)	(584,810)	-	(2,134,746)
Appreciation in fair value of investments	21,365,291	600,373	-	21,965,664
Change in Net Assets	19,815,355	15,563	-	19,830,918
Net Assets				
Beginning of Year	143,801,834	100,754	3,579,622	147,482,210
End of Year	163,617,189	116,317	3,579,622	167,313,128

2012 (Audited)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
Revenue and Support				
Investment Income (Loss)				
Interest and dividends	3,838,164	178,444	-	4,016,608
Net realized gain (loss) on investments	1,448,109	67,306	-	1,515,415
Translation gain	38,846	-	-	38,846
Other income	1,836	-	-	1,836
Costs attributable to investments	(433,653)	-	-	(433,653)
Net Investment Income (Loss)	4,893,302	245,750	-	5,139,052
Net assets released from restrictions	706,516	(706,516)	-	-
Total Revenue and Support	5,599,818	(460,766)	-	5,139,052
Expenses				
Grant awards	5,823,733	-	-	5,823,733
Program and foundation operations	1,307,181	-	-	1,307,181
Federal excise tax	80,000	-	-	80,000
Total Expenses	7,210,914	-	-	7,210,914
Change in net assets before appreciation in fair value of investments	(1,611,096)	(460,766)	-	(2,071,862)
Appreciation in fair value of investments	9,610,028	446,700	-	10,056,728
Change in Net Assets	7,998,932	(14,066)	-	7,984,866
Net Assets				
Beginning of Year	135,802,902	114,820	3,579,622	139,497,344
End of Year	143,801,834	100,754	3,579,622	147,482,210



92 Nassau Street, Third Floor
Princeton, New Jersey 08542
609-683-8010
609-683-8025 (fax)
info@ritaallen.org
www.ritaallen.org