The Greenwood Encyclopedia of American Institutions

Each work in the *Encyclopedia* is designed to provide concise histories of major voluntary groups and nonprofit organizations that have played significant roles in American civic, cultural, political, and economic life from the colonial era to the present.

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Foundations

editors-in-chief
HAROLD M. KEELE AND JOSEPH C. KIGER

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William M. Dietel succeeded Dana S. Creel as president in 1975. The RBF, with 1980 assets of about $177 million, employs a program and support staff of approximately twenty-five members, plus consultants on occasion.

No detailed, independent history of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund has been written, although Waldemar A. Neilsen includes a short summary in his book, *The Big Foundations* (1972).The most comprehensive source of information about the RBF is its *Annual Reports*, which have been published with reference to every year the fund has operated. The current report is available from the RBF office, 1290 Avenue of the Americas, Room 3450, New York, New York 10104.

RBF records for the years 1941–1976, including all grant-related documents, are located in the Rockefeller Brothers Fund archive at the Rockefeller Archive Center, Pocantico Hills, North Tarrytown, New York 10591. Research inquiries may be made of Joseph W. Ernst, Director. Recent documents remain on file in the RBF office library. Records covering the most recent ten years are not publicly available.

AMY P. LONGSWORTH

ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION, THE (RF). The idea of establishing a foundation independent of the donor and his family, professionally managed, and with the mandate "to attempt to cure evils at their source" without regard to national boundaries probably came from Frederick T. Gates, a former Baptist minister and a long-time associate of John D. Rockefeller, Sr., who exerted considerable personal influence on all the Rockefeller philanthropies.

Originally it was hoped that such a Rockefeller trust would be chartered by the Congress of the United States, with its organization and program subject to continuing congressional review. Legislation was introduced to this end in 1910, 1911, and 1912, but the Congress, strongly influenced by hostility toward large corporations and their founders, was not receptive to such a proposal.

The result was that the Rockefeller Foundation was finally incorporated by the New York state legislature in 1913 with an initial endowment of $35 million "to promote the well-being of mankind throughout the world."

At their first meeting, on May 14, 1913, under the leadership of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the trustees of the foundation began to address themselves to the then-vast problem of how to spend the foundation's funds wisely. They decided to concentrate the RF's energies in the fields of public health and medicine, agreeing with Frederick Gates's eloquent arguments that disease is the supreme ill in human life.

The decision grew from two interrelated factors. First, at the turn of the century, disease was the implacable barrier to human welfare everywhere. Even in the United States, life expectancy in 1913 was only fifty-two years, compared with seventy-three years today. One out of every ten American children died in the first year of life, compared with one in seventy-two today. Second, considerable knowledge of many of the great endemic diseases—malaria, hookworm, yellow fever, and typhus, for example—was in hand but was not being applied. A job of organizing, financing, and educating needed to be done.

The trustees voted to continue the programs of the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission (which became the International Health Board of the Rockefeller Foundation) in the field of hookworm control. The Sanitary Commission had, in the years 1910 through 1914, done extensive work in eleven southern states where—with the cooperation of governmental agencies, charities, women's clubs, ministers, teachers, and practicing physicians—massive campaigns of public education and medication were carried out. Over 25,000 public meetings were held, attended by more than 2 million people who were given the facts of the disease and its prevention. Sanitary inspectors examined 250,000 rural homes to check sources of infection; traveling dispensaries provided free examination and free treatment.

Wickliffe Rose, who had directed the work of the Sanitary Commission and now led the foundation's International Health Board, had earlier conceived the idea of carrying this hookworm control work abroad, where the disease prevailed in a wide belt around the equator. Although a relatively effective therapy for the disease—capsules of thymol and salts—was known, the essential job was to demonstrate to hundreds of millions of people that improved sanitation was the only means of preventing hookworm infection. Therefore, in the years immediately following 1913, the hookworm control activity of the Rockefeller Foundation was carried to fifty-two countries on six continents as well as twenty-nine islands. In a typical year, seventy-three foundation staff members were on assignments in thirty-six foreign countries and territories. Everywhere, the foundation's International Health Board worked cooperatively with the governments of the countries involved.

Wickliffe Rose had not gone very far in his work before he began to realize that to extend the great benefits of preventive medicine it would be necessary to create new institutions for the training of specialists to staff the local health agencies on which depends continuing protection against endemic diseases. The Rockefeller Foundation, therefore, appropriated more than $6 million to build and endow the School of Hygiene and Public Health, at the Johns Hopkins University, the first such institution in the world. The RF then spent over $25 million in developing public health schools and institutions in Ankara, Athens, Belgrade, Bucharest, Budapest, Calcutta, Cluj, Copenhagen, London, Madrid, Manila, Olso, Prague, Rome, São Paulo, Sofia, Stockholm, Tokyo, Toronto, Warsaw, and Zagreb, as well as at Harvard University and the University of Michigan. At the same time, the foundation developed a system of fellowships that brought promising students from all over the world to these schools of public health.

Medical and public health fellowships were the beginning of what eventually was to become a global study program, embracing every field of foundation

activity. Through the years, over thirteen thousand scientists and scholars from most of the world's nations have been given the opportunity for advanced study; twenty-eight have later in their careers been recipients of a Nobel Prize.

Even more extensive control programs were mounted against malaria and yellow fever, and to a lesser extent against diseases such as typhus, influenza, rabies, yaws, bilharziasis, syphilis, tuberculosis, and amoebic dysentery. For example, in 1915, the Rockefeller Foundation established pilot malaria-control projects in Arkansas and Mississippi to find answers to basic questions such as how to break the chain of transmission from man-to-mosquito-to-man and how to protect populations effectively and economically from infection. The success of these projects led, in 1919, to the beginning of a coordinated attack in ten southern states by the U.S. Public Health Service, state boards of health, and the foundation. The campaign was gradually expanded and intensified, until the final push in the years 1942–1944 virtually eradicated malaria from this country.

In 1938, there exploded in Brazil the most severe malaria epidemic ever recorded in this hemisphere. Over one hundred thousand cases, with at least fourteen thousand deaths, occurred in the first six months. So widespread was this epidemic that crops went unharvested, and starvation added to the ravages of malaria. At the invitation of the Brazilian government, the Rockefeller Foundation brought together a large antimalarial organization to bring the epidemic under control. Operating in the manner of a military campaign, over two thousand people set themselves the almost unbelievably painstaking task of eliminating every single malaria-transmitting mosquito from a twelve-thousand-square-mile area. By the end of 1940, *Anopheles gambiae* could no longer be found in the region: the western hemisphere was free from danger.

The RF's greatest single public-health effort, however, was in the field of yellow fever. For centuries, this disease had periodically ravaged many parts of the world with cataclysmic outbreaks against which no protection was possible. As late as 1905, a yellow fever epidemic, which began in New Orleans, caused one thousand deaths in the southern states. For over thirty years, starting in 1915, the RF fought this terrible disease, whose complexities proved a challenge to laboratory and field-workers alike, with a large staff of scientists in New York, Africa, and Latin America. Many of them contracted yellow fever; six died of it.

The vaccine now used to protect people from yellow fever was eventually developed in 1935 at the Rockefeller Foundation's New York laboratories, from a blood specimen taken in 1927 from a West African native named Asibi. In 1951, Dr. Max Theiler, a member of the New York laboratories, was awarded a Nobel Prize for this achievement.

An extraordinary chapter in the foundation's history is its work in China. In 1913, the RF offered to introduce Western medicine to China. Eight years later, the Peking Union Medical College (PUMC)—"the most beautiful medical school in the world"—was dedicated. Distinguished medical scientists from the United States and Europe complemented largely Western-trained Chinese faculties deployed in fifty-nine buildings over twenty-five acres. For twenty years, PUMC graduates furnished the leadership for China's medical schools and public health programs—fewer than ten entered private practice. Research was focused almost exclusively on disease problems relevant to China.

Of even more far-reaching importance were the pioneering efforts of Dr. John B. Grant to establish community-based health care in China's cities and countryside. This was a successful undertaking that, when joined to the mass literacy and social welfare efforts led by Dr. James Yen, evolved into some of the first large-scale, integrated, rural development models.

The war with Japan and the subsequent autocracy of Mao brought to an end, seemingly forever, an enormously promising collaboration, one which represented the single largest investment the RF has ever made. But with the normalization of relationships between the United States and China in 1972, the RF was asked to return to China. Today, once again, considerable collaborative work is being done, particularly in the fields of the agricultural sciences and reproductive physiology.

It became increasingly clear to those who guided the Rockefeller Foundation that there was little promise for lasting progress in public health unless medical education as a whole could be improved. On receipt of an additional $50 million from John D. Rockefeller, Sr., in 1919, the RF devoted millions of dollars to improving the quality of medical teaching in Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Canada, Brazil, Lebanon, the Pacific Islands, and Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, the General Education Board,* another Rockefeller family philanthropy, gave extensive support to the improvement of medical education in the United States, where low standards of teaching had been revealed by the famous Abraham Flexner report.

By the middle of the 1920s, with the quality of medical education increasingly a national and international concern, the Rockefeller Foundation turned away from the support of teaching and toward the development of new knowledge. A new division of medical sciences, under Dr. Alan Gregg, gave direct support for research into unsolved or unexplored problems in fields such as infectious diseases, human genetics, the behavioral sciences, endocrinology, and, importantly, psychiatry in the medical school context.

The year 1928 marked the consolidation of several Rockefeller philanthropies. The Rockefeller Foundation assumed responsibility for programs leading to the advancement of knowledge in the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities and arts, as well as the medical sciences.These had been previously administered by three other Rockefeller philanthropies: the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial,* the General Education Board, and the International Education Board. The RF thus entered vast new fields of research and scholarship, ending its almost exclusive concentration on medicine and public health.

In the mid-1930s, the Rockefeller Foundation turned to support investigations in relatively new and unexplored fields concerned with "the constitution, structure, and function of living organisms and their component parts." Under the

guidance of Warren Weaver, almost $100 million was spent over the next twenty years to support a great variety of projects in the basic life sciences, with the principal focus on the increasingly productive discipline of molecular biology. The work of men such as Linus Pauling, George W. Beadle, George Hevesy, Ernest O. Lawrence, and George E. Hale was encouraged by grants to their institutions.

Support for the physical sciences, while lesser in scope, is typified by a $6 million grant from three Rockefeller philanthropies for the construction of the two-hundred-inch Hale telescope on Mount Palomar.

During the 1930s and 1940s, research funds for experimental biology became increasingly available elsewhere. The RF, therefore, began to place increased emphasis on the application of scientific knowledge then available, especially in the agricultural sciences.

In 1942, the Mexican government invited the foundation to send staff members to work in a cooperative venture for the improvement of Mexico's basic food crops. Under the leadership of J. George Harrar, an accomplished plant pathologist who twenty years later was to become president of the Rockefeller Foundation, the work began with those crops basic in the Mexican diet: maize and wheat. As one project appeared to be on the way to success, additional sections were established—first on potatoes, then on vegetables, sorghum, barley, and forage and pasture legumes and grasses. The last step was to extend the work into the animal sciences.

The pattern of crop improvement began with the collection and study of indigenous varieties and with experimentation on introduced types to select superior strains for prompt release to farmers. It continued with a parallel, longer-term program of plant breeding to create higher-yielding, disease-resistant strains superior to indigenous varieties. Supporting the breeding work, studies in soil fertility and disease and pest control led to knowledge of how farmers could most advantageously manage the improved varieties to secure maximum yields.

As important as the scientific work was the advanced training of many hundreds of young Mexican scientists, and the intensive development of strong agricultural training institutes.

The impact of this cooperative program produced dramatic results. Within twenty years, food production doubled as a result of research, advances in seed production, proper use of fertilizers, irrigation of new lands, and improved communications systems. In 1961, the minister of agriculture could announce the creation of the National Institute of Agricultural Research, staffed and administered by Mexican scientists, to absorb the cooperative program and the entire experiment station system.

In 1950, two members of the RF staff in Mexico City boarded an airplane bound for Bogotá, Colombia, taking with them hundreds of packets of wheat lines developed in Mexico. With their experience in the Mexican program, and with the advantage of possessing seeds representing previous research, the two scientists, later joined by others, started a cooperative program in Colombia which, in a shorter time, has achieved just as outstanding results as the one in Mexico.

Similarly, in 1955, a staff member in Colombia went to Chile to begin another cooperative food crop improvement project. In 1956, the Rockefeller Foundation extended the agricultural program to Asia in response to an invitation from the government of India. These "country programs," as they were called within the RF, laid the bases for the so-called Green Revolution, greatly increased productivity-per-acre due to improved seeds and their proper cultivation. By 1977, an estimated 30 percent of land given to the cultivation of rice in all of Asia was sown to improved varieties, as was 72 percent of the wheat acreage.

Unable to meet the number of requests from individual countries, the RF and the Ford Foundation* developed the concept of international agricultural research agencies devoted to specific food crops and serving whole regions. The first such center, the International Rice Research Institute, was started in the Philippines in 1960, operated with funds from the Ford and Rockefeller foundations. Today, a global network of thirteen such centers is supported by an international consortium of national and international agencies that in 1981 raised more than $130 million for the network's research activities.

The Green Revolution—agriculture-led development in the Third World—is probably, together with the work of the RF's former International Health Division, the foundation's most substantial achievement, one that was recognized in 1970 with a Nobel Peace Prize to Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, a staff member still active in Mexico today.

During its first fifteen years, the Rockefeller Foundation concerned itself almost exclusively with medicine and the exact sciences as a means toward a better life. But many of humanity's predicaments—such as war, poverty, and prejudice—do not lend themselves to clear-cut scientific solutions; they are likely to yield only to an evolutionary process of analysis, systematization, education, and testing. It is the goal of the social sciences to illuminate and help direct this complex evolutionary process.

In 1928, with the absorption of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, the RF acquired a working interest in scholarly investigations—principally in economics, political science, and sociology—aimed at the clarification of man's relationship to his social environment. At that time, the social sciences were largely governed by tradition and chance, university social science departments were as often as not poorly developed, and competent men in the social sciences were few. A bold beginning had been made by Beardsley Ruml, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial's young and imaginative director, to put the social sciences on a sounder scientific footing. His work left the Rockefeller Foundation in a position to carry forward a well-articulated program based on the promotion of systematic research and aimed at achieving concrete improvements in areas such as international relations, economics, and public administration.

On an increasingly expansive front, the Rockefeller Foundation helped develop

strong university research centers, here and abroad, to create fundamental knowledge upon which good teaching could rest. Universities given such encouragement include Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Stanford, Vanderbilt, Texas, Geneva, Paris, and Stockholm, among many others. Through various research institutes, the RF supported systematic inquiries into economic, political, and social problems where little empirical knowledge was available. Through the award of fellowships, the foundation increased the number of trained social scientists. Where the will existed, it sought to bring together scholars from several disciplines for joint studies on some of the concrete problems of the times. For example, the Great Depression brought emphasis to studies of economic stabilization. International relations became an important interest in the 1930s as the world scene became increasingly complex and threatening.

After World War II, as scores of countries gained independence, the foundation supported considerable work in the social sciences at universities in such nations to underpin their hopes for rapid growth grounded on economic, educational, and administrative techniques that have grown out of the social sciences over the past fifty years.

For more than fifty years, the Rockefeller Foundation has supported scholarly and creative work in the humanities and the arts. At first, the work of the foundation followed lines established by the General Education Board—support for archaeology, bibliography, biography, and language study. But, in 1934, a trustee committee urged a shift away from supporting the preservation of the past in favor of interpreting the present.

In literature, the foundation began by encouraging talented young writers, to provide a measure of time and freedom for further creative work. Awards were made to gifted writers in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, India, Nigeria, Japan, and the Philippines. Latin American literature, too, rarely available in translation, received support through the translation and publication of seventy-five major works.

In history, the foundation gave considerable impetus and assistance to definitive collections of the papers of great American statesmen, among them Lincoln, Madison, Hamilton, Jay, and Wilson. Other approaches that received a great deal of attention were the historical illumination of our own century and historical studies of the non-Western world.

Beginning in the 1930s, the RF intensively supported the effective teaching of major modern languages in America. To extend knowledge and education of other contemporary cultures, the foundation helped develop centers at leading American and foreign academic institutions for the study, in depth, of foreign history, culture, and institutions.

Among the arts, drama is the field in which the foundation has been active over the longest period. In the 1930s and 1940s, the foundation helped advance community and university drama in the United States through new plays, experimental productions, and the training of playwrights, directors, and actors. Foundation grants helped support or establish a variety of lively theatre groups,

including the Stratford Shakespearean Festival, in Ontario; the American Shakespeare Festival, in Stratford, Connecticut; the Arena Stage, in Washington, D.C.; and the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, in New York City. In the 1950s, the foundation's interest in the performing arts was expanded to include music and the dance.

In the early 1960s, considerable discussion took place among the RF's trustees on how best to draw upon the lessons of the past in a world where pioneer effort by the foundation has been absorbed, on a vastly increasing scale, by programs of government and international organizations. Therefore, in 1963, on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary, the Rockefeller foundation's trustees focused the RF's financial and professional resources, still substantial by the standards of the day, on five programs or areas in which several disciplines were associated for maximum effectiveness. The five areas defined by the trustees were the conquest of hunger, the populations problem, strengthening emerging centers of learning in the less-developed world, moving toward equal opportunity for all in the United States, and aiding our cultural development.

Under the leadership of Dr. J. George Harrar, who had directed the dramatically successful agricultural programs and had recently been elected president of the RF, considerable work of lasting significance was done over the next two decades in the areas defined by the trustees. Harrar's interest in improving world agriculture naturally remained unabated, but equally decisive was his unflagging insistence on improving educational and economic opportunities for black Americans.

Following its long interest in non-Western cultures, the RF brought its expertise in agriculture, the medical and natural sciences, and the social sciences (particularly economics) to bear on strengthening universities in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, with the objective of enabling these institutions to furnish well-trained men and women to participate in the development of their countries and regions. The methodology of this program, successively called University Development and then Education for Development, consisted of assigning key foundation staff to a university, substantially augmented by visiting professors mostly from U.S. universities, who together fleshed out academic departments while promising younger faculty members received additional training as RF fellows in highly regarded universities before returning to their teaching positions. Grants from the RF, meanwhile, provided improved teaching and research facilities. The objective was for RF and other expatriate faculty to work themselves out of a job. This was accomplished to a highly satisfactory degree, so much so that the trustees were able to phase out this program, the final step taken in 1983. In terms of money spent and staff deployed, it remains the largest program ever undertaken by the RF.

During those same years, the population program played an active role in supporting private and official efforts to create awareness of the consequences of extremely rapid rates of increase, and to stimulate research and availability of culturally acceptable means of family planning.

At home, the Rockefeller Foundation became one of the most consistent advocates and supporters of equality of opportunity for blacks, at first in the field of higher education, later in training black administrators for selected public school systems with largely black student populations. In addition, its arts program expanded vigorously into the support of creative individuals—particularly playwrights, choreographers, and video artists—at a time when the performing arts captured the interest and imagination of the American public as never before.

Realism dictates that the Rockefeller Foundation today must take a more modest view of its potential for influencing progress. The soaring costs of inflation and relatively static capital funds can only diminish the foundation's grant-making ability. As for its well-known operational programs, it is unthinkable today to maintain, as the foundation did in 1970, a field staff of 143 highly experienced professionals, distributed over 15 nations. It is painful that at a time when the private initiative is stressed emphatically that the RF's responses, as those of other private organizations, must necessarily be circumscribed.

But despite adverse circumstances common to all private, nonprofit organizations, the RF is determined, in the words of its president, to "sustain its global vision."

The foundation, with 1981 assets of about $883 million, is organized into six programs staffed by specialists in fields relevant to program interests. Richard W. Lyman, formerly president of Stanford University, is the foundation's chief executive officer; he is assisted by three vice-presidents. A board of twenty-three trustees of widely varying experiences passes on the grant proposals made to them by program officers at regular meetings. The six programs and their 1981 expenditures are: Arts, Humanities, and Contemporary Values—$6.4 million; Conquest of Hunger—$7.9 million; Education for Development—$5.2 million (program being phased out); Equal Opportunity—$4.9 million; International Relations—$3.7 million; Population and Health—$11 million. Each program's specific interests are detailed in the annual report, which is available on request.

An overview of the program areas makes clear the RF's continuing commitment to assist in the economic and social development of the world's poorer countries, with a renewed interest in long-neglected tropical diseases that afflict hundreds of millions of people. At home, its long-standing interest in helping to advance the educational and economic opportunities of blacks has not flagged and now extends to Hispanics and other minority-group members. And a new program in international relations seeks to enhance the global capacity to prevent conflict between nations that would render immaterial all other human effort.

The headquarters offices of the Rockefeller Foundation are located at 1133 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10036. Rockefeller Foundation archival material is located and may be consulted, upon inquiry, at the Rockefeller Archive Center, Hillcrest, Pocantico Hills, North Tarrytown, New York 10591.

For further information, see the RF's standard history, now outdated, by Raymond B. Fosdick, *The Story of the Rockefeller Foundation* (1952); E. C. Stakman, Richard Bradfield, and Paul C. Mangelsdorf, *Campaigns Against Hunger* (1967); William Greer, *The Plague Killers* (1969); and Mary Brown Bullock, *An American Transplant: The Rockefeller Foundation and Peking Union Medical* College (1980). See also *Annual Reports* of the foundation, published continuously since 1914.

HENRY ROMNEY

ROCKEFELLER MEMORIAL. See Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial.

ROSENWALD FUND. See Julius Rosenwald Fund.

ROWLAND FOUNDATION, INC. Incorporated in Delaware in 1960 by Edwin H. Land and Helen M. Land, as Edwin H. Land-Helen M. Land, Inc., the Rowland Foundation took its present name in 1972. Edwin Land made a fortune through his invention of the Polaroid-Land camera and other scientific discoveries. The foundation has been financed through grants of cash or stock in Land's Polaroid Corporation.

Initially, the foundation was relatively small, but, in the 1970s, its assets grew to about $34 million, which is approximately what its corpus was in 1980. The foundation, with annual grants in recent years ranging from $0.75 million to $1.5 million, has devoted well over 50 percent of its annual giving for the support of higher and secondary education, hospitals, and medical research, with the remainder devoted to the support of arts, culture, and social welfare programs.

In 1979, the Rowland Foundation established a scientific laboratory or research institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts. A 1981 press account stated that the foundation would transfer millions of dollars in its assets to this new institute. Thus, it appears that the institute will become the major beneficiary of future foundation support.

The Rowland Foundation is governed by a five-member board of trustees, with Edwin H. Land serving as president, Helen M. Land as vice-president, and two other members of the Land family on the board. The mailing address of the foundation is Post Office Box 13, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138.

Almost the only additional information on this foundation readily available to the public are the annual reports and returns filed by it with the Internal Revenue Service, and the various Foundation Center publications. See, however, *Annual Reports*, published since 1979, and an article "Polaroid's Land To Cut Holdings from 11% to 7.7%," *Wall Street Journal* (July 22, 1981), p. 11.

RUBINSTEIN FOUNDATION. See Helena Rubinstein Foundation, Inc.

RUSSELL SAGE FOUNDATION. Established by Margaret Olivia Sage in 1907, the Russell Sage Foundation is probably the oldest general-purpose foundation in the United States. The foundation's first leaders developed its initial social research and social welfare policy programs out of the private charity organization movement. They pursued those programs with remarkable con-