



ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE RUSSIAN INVASION,
WORLD MONUMENTS FUND RECEIVES \$1 MILLION FROM
HELEN FRANKENTHALER FOUNDATION
FOR CULTURAL PROTECTION IN UKRAINE

Additional Significant Contributions Received from
U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation

New York, NY – February 28, 2024 – Two years after the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, [World Monuments Fund \(WMF\)](#) has received \$1 million in funding from the [Helen Frankenthaler Foundation](#) to support its [Ukraine Heritage Response Fund](#), under which WMF has organized its preservation efforts in Ukraine. The funding, which expands upon the Foundation’s initial seed grant of \$500,000 given in 2022, will help protect vital heritage at sites across the country, among them the Odesa National Fine Arts Museum, which was damaged by Russian missiles as recently as November 5.

WMF has additionally received a significant contribution from the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) to stabilize the Teacher’s House monument in Kyiv. The new funding brings the total raised by WMF for the Ukraine Heritage Response Fund since 2022 to \$2.5 million, of which the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation has contributed \$1.5 million.

Last month, a UNESCO report verified damage to 337 cultural heritage sites across Ukraine since the country’s invasion in February 2022. WMF’s efforts through the Ukraine Heritage Response Fund have included the distribution of specialized fire extinguishers to help protect around 200 historic wooden churches, on-the-ground support and damage assessment of historic sites in some of the most affected regions, the installation of protective structures, equipment supply, urgent stabilization, and weatherization at key sites of historic importance as the war continues through a second harsh winter .

“World Monuments Fund is grateful to the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, and its other donors for their continued support of our work in this country,” said **Bénédicte de Montlaur, President and CEO of World Monuments Fund**. “The destruction of cultural heritage during the war in Ukraine remains an area of deep concern for our organization. Our help is still urgently needed there, and we are proud to support Ukrainian heritage professionals deploying incredible efforts to save their heritage.”

This Ukraine Heritage Response Fund has allowed WMF to engage in more than 17 local conservation projects to date, among them the protection of the facade of the sixteenth-century [Black House](#) in Lviv, the provision of damage monitoring equipment to St. Sophia Cathedral of Kyiv, the installation of a temporary cover at Holy Trinity Church in Zhovkva, and countless winterization efforts at locations like the [Chernihiv Regional Library of Youth](#). In each instance, WMF is partnering with local professionals and other international organizations such as Cultural Emergency Response (CER), as well as coordinating with the Ukraine Ministry of Culture and Information Policy and UNESCO.

“WMF is doing an extraordinary job documenting and protecting Ukraine’s art and architecture under dire conditions. The Helen Frankenthaler Foundation is proud to support the WMF in their work of preserving that cultural heritage,” said **Lise Motherwell, Chair of the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation.**

The AFCP grant focusing on the [Teacher’s House](#) represents WMF’s latest effort in the region. The century-old monument was damaged when rockets targeted an intersection in central Kyiv just a few hundred meters from the building on October 10, 2022. The resulting shockwave from the explosion knocked out the windows and doors of the Teacher’s House, damaging 500 square meters of glass, including that of the beautiful glass dome that made the Teacher’s House an instant landmark to residents following its completion in 1912. Underneath this dome sits its signature acoustic hall, which might have flooded if not for the quick actions of the local teams that covered the structure with a special water-resistant film. The new funding will go toward the reconstruction of the iconic dome, among other critical site needs.

The Okhtyrka Local History Museum was likewise severely damaged in March 2022 when Russian bombs hit Okhtyrka’s historic center, blowing out the building’s windows, causing its roof to partially collapse, and affecting the exhibits inside. The museum’s above-ground structure was quickly protected from the elements, and WMF is now working with local partners to establish the building’s basement as a community center, giving new life to a building that is no longer at immediate risk. At the Odesa National Fine Arts Museum, WMF is helping to digitize the museum’s collection of historical architectural drawings, mitigating the risk of their destruction in light of the most recent attack.

WMF has a longstanding history of serving as heritage first responders, with a well-established Crisis Response Program infrastructure to address emergency situations for cultural heritage sites around the globe. Following human conflict and natural disasters, WMF has undertaken recent crisis response projects to protect heritage in Türkiye, Yemen, Iraq, Tanzania, Mexico, Peru, Japan, and elsewhere.

About WMF

World Monuments Fund (WMF) is the leading independent organization devoted to safeguarding the world’s most treasured places to enrich people’s lives and build mutual understanding across cultures and communities. The organization is headquartered in New York City with offices and affiliates in Cambodia, France, India, Peru, Portugal, Spain, and the UK. Since 1965, our global team of experts has preserved the world’s diverse cultural heritage using the highest international standards at more than 700 sites in 112 countries. Partnering with local communities, funders, and governments, WMF draws on heritage to address some of today’s most pressing challenges: climate adaptation, inclusive heritage, balanced tourism, and post-crisis recovery. With a commitment to the people who bring places to life, WMF embraces the potential of the past to create a more resilient and inclusive society.

About the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation

The Helen Frankenthaler Foundation supports the artist’s legacy through a variety of initiatives, including exhibitions, loans of artworks, research and publications, conservation, grants, educational programs for the public and the scholarly community, and the publishing of a catalogue raisonné. It is dedicated to promoting greater public interest in and understanding of the visual arts.

About AFCP

Established by Congress in 2001, the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) supports projects to preserve a wide range of cultural heritage in less developed countries, including historic buildings, archaeological sites, ethnographic objects, paintings, manuscripts, museum collections and indigenous languages and other forms of traditional cultural expression. Since its inception, the program has supported more than 1,000 projects worldwide.