



# ARMENIAN COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT

Ընտանիք  
Ծնունդիս  
Family  
فاميليا  
Familia

€ 2,457,367  
SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

## THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT

aims to create a viable future for Armenian people, whereby their culture and language is preserved and valued.

The Department's activities are structured according to four priority areas: the preservation and advancement of the Armenian language and culture, emphasising education and the strengthening of the diaspora; investing in the youth of Armenia, and their commitment to civil society to help develop Armenia; improving Armenian-Turkish relations by sponsoring projects that encourage a common understanding of their shared history; preserving and making available the Armenian literary heritage.

In 2014, THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT (SCA) started its five-year plan of activities (2014-2018). The university scholarship programme was re-launched, and dispersed close to one million Euro in scholarships to Armenian and Armenian studies students around the globe. Support to schools in the diaspora continued, and, in the case of Lebanon – a major centre of Armenian education – a pedagogical reform initiative was started. In France, the preparation of educational material on Armenian history for schools was funded. As a new Armenian diaspora is emerging in Europe, sponsorship was given to a Prague-based news outlet, *Orer*, to write about the new communities. A modest grant enabled the *Collectif Metz Bazar*, an innovative group of young musicians from France, to tour Turkey and Armenia.

In Armenia, the Department provided support for civil society organisations, such as the Jinishian Foundation and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as part of its mission to promote civic education and the mobilisation of young people. A memorandum of understanding was also signed with the Ministry of the Diaspora in support of activities relating to Western Armenian. Some independent media channels also received support: Yerakouyn.com, the only online news site in Western Armenian, Hedq.am, the main investigative journalism team in Armenia, and *Inknakir*, a contemporary literature magazine.

The scholarships programme for university students and young researchers in Armenia to participate in international conferences proved extremely popular, with 60 candidates being given scholarships.

Through a collaboration between Istanbul's Anadolu Kültür, Berlin's Houshamadyan, and London's Gomidas Institute, grants were given to Armenian-Turkish dialogue initiatives. These included exhibitions, publications and exchange programmes. The Department continued its support to the "Repair" website which has emerged as a major on-line dialogue forum. Initiatives that highlighted the Armenian presence in the Ottoman Empire were privileged.

In Armenia, priority was given to continuing support for institutions such as Yerevan State University and the Madenataran Manuscript Library. Funding was provided for an e-book on the Armenian presence in Europe, which was published by the Armenian Virtual College, while sponsorship was also provided for conferences organised by the Society for Armenian Studies and The International Association for Armenian Studies, as well as an international seminar at the Gulbenkian Library in Jerusalem, organised by the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

18

PROJECTS SUPPORTED  
IN ARMENIA

48

PROJECTS SUPPORTED  
IN DIASPORA

## Activities

### › Activities in Lisbon

The Department's main activity involves promoting Armenian culture, education, and research throughout the world. In 2014, the Foundation organised the first Armenian Culture Week which involved a series of events: five concerts, six talks and roundtables, two international conferences, two exhibitions, and the screening of a film, which proved extremely popular. From 12-19 October, there were 16 events promoting the culture of the Foundation's founder among the Portuguese public, including the seminar *Armenians in 2115*, in which distinguished Armenian leaders and intellectuals had the opportunity to debate future strategies for the Armenian people.

### › Notable Projects

Although a large part of the Department's budget had been allocated to university scholarships, diasporan school funding and publications, support was provided to pioneering initiatives such as the Mekhitarist Catholic Congregation, in Venice and Vienna, to digitise its collection of journals (1794-1922). Since the Congregation's periodicals collection is one of the best in

the world, ensuring that texts can be accessed electronically will be hugely significant for Armenian Studies. Also worthy of note is the grant awarded to the Paris-based *Nor Haratch* newspaper, to assist with its European development, and the creation of a news website in Western Armenian.

A "call for proposals" was issued for initiatives on electronic Armenian language learning. Eight projects were selected, which were aimed at creating new language teaching methods. Funding was also provided to the educational workshop "Mgnig" in France in recognition of its innovative methods for teaching Armenian to children. The Howard Karagheusian Foundation obtained funding to expand its work in Lebanon with children who have special learning needs. These multi-annual projects received funding totalling more than 750,000 euros.



Roundtable during the exhibition entitled *More than Mr. 5%*  
© FCG / Márcia Lessa

Humanitarian aid to Syria  
© Syrian-Armenian Relief Committee

## Partnerships

### Abroad

A partnership was established with the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), a charity based in New York, and the Armenian Government to provide scholarships to Syrian-Armenian students so that they do not have to pay university tuition fees while studying in Armenia. The Department's funding amounted to 40% of the overall project budget of 320,000 dollars per year. This was in addition to the humanitarian aid provided in 2013. Another grant was awarded to the Kessab Educational Association for its work with refugees following the occupation of the town of Kessab by Syrian rebel forces in March. The Department collaborated with NGOs, the Armenian Government, schools, universities, Armenian churches, academic and research organisations, libraries and cultural organisations in 28 countries.

### In Portugal

The Armenian Communities Department worked with other Foundation programmes and departments, particularly for the organisation of Armenian Culture Week, including the Music, Museum, and Communication Departments, the Art Library, CAM, and the Gulbenkian Portuguese Language and Culture Programme.

### Publications

Publications included the works Calouste Gulbenkian: *Calouste Gulbenkian: The Man and His Work* (in multiple languages), and *Quem São os Arménios?* (the Portuguese version of *Who are the Armenians?*), a book for children and young adults.

## Evaluation

**THE DEPARTMENT ESTABLISHED** its evaluation policy, which was completed in November and has the following main principles: transparency (with respect to the results to be achieved), proportionality (with respect to the size and nature of projects), realism (to ensure the assessment system is not excessively demanding), participation (involvement of partners) and learning (to improve the decision-making and implementation process).

There was a rigorous project selection process, adhering to the following criteria: objectives and impact, expected results, partnerships, risk assessment, report requirements, visibility and communication, monitoring and sustainability.

During the implementation phase, payments are made in instalments, which are dependent on the internal assessment of progress and financial reports. Upon completion of the project, a final report is required.

In 2015, the Department has undertaken to evaluate the first phase of the implementation of its five-year plan, including some projects.

In 2014, the Department also started posting on its website the list of grant and scholarship awardees to enhance its accountability to the Armenian community worldwide.

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PUBLICATIONS SUPPORTED



Summer Course on the History of Art, Yerevan, Armenia  
© Sarah Ludwig, AHEI, 2014

Visit by Orhan Pamuk to the exhibition *More than Mr. 5%*  
© FCG / Márcia Lessa

EcoLab 2014





## NEW SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAMME

After a two-year hiatus, which was necessary for reorganising the programmes, in 2014, a new scholarships programme was introduced, with awards being based on merit rather than the financial status of applicants, since the governments of most developed countries provide scholarships or loans to the most needy students. There were less scholarships awarded but they were for larger amounts, falling into seven categories: Global Excellence, Armenian Studies, Teacher Education, Short Term Travel to Conferences, Undergraduate Studies in Developing Countries, Armenian Students in Portugal, and Emergency Scholarships. The Department processed 451 scholarship applications.

In all, €985,957 was awarded to 177 students from 20 countries, with 415 emergency schol-

arships for Syrian-Armenian students currently studying in Armenia, and 28 emergency scholarships for Syrian-Armenians studying in other countries.

Scholarships may be renewed for up to four years, with an assessment being required for each student at the end of each year for renewal purposes. The impact of this programme can be seen regularly through the praise offered by numerous Armenian diaspora intellectuals, who point out that their higher education was made possible by the award of a Gulbenkian grant.

**415**

EMERGENCY SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SYRIAN-ARMENIAN STUDENTS GRANTED

**177**

SCHOLARSHIPS GRANTED TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

**20**

COUNTRIES TO WHERE FUNDING WAS SENT

## PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE WESTERN ARMENIAN LANGUAGE

This is the heart of the Department's activities. Many of the supported projects described above reflect this priority, including the support for Nayiri.com to provide online Armenian dictionaries, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem to run Armenian language courses, and Wikimedia to increase the number of Wikipedia articles in Western Armenian.

With a view to improving Western Armenian teaching in diasporan schools, much of the support given by the Department is conditional on evaluation, reform and innovation undertaken by schools. This process has already begun in Armenian schools in Lebanon and will be introduced to other countries in 2015 and 2016. Grants awarded

will revert to specific initiatives aimed at achieving results.

Funding was also continued for Armenian schools in Syria, despite the civil war. Many have remained open amid extremely difficult circumstances, highlighting the resilience of the community.

**60**

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ARMENIAN DIASPORA SCHOOLS SUPPORTED

**3**

ARMENIAN ORPHANAGES SUPPORTED