

FRANKENTHALER FOUNDATION EXPANDS ITS CLIMATE INITIATIVE TO \$15M ACCELERATING COMMITMENT TO CLIMATE ACTION IN VISUAL ARTS SECTOR

**\$2.7 Million Awarded to 48 Art Museums and Schools
Through Third Cycle of Frankenthaler Climate Initiative**

**To Date, Foundation Has Conferred More Than \$10.8 Million Supporting
175 Energy Efficiency and Clean Energy Projects at Nearly 150 Art Organizations Across U.S.**

New York, NY—August 9, 2023—The Helen Frankenthaler Foundation announced today that it is expanding its commitment to climate action in the visual arts, increasing funding for its [Frankenthaler Climate Initiative](#) (FCI) from \$10 million to a total of **\$15 million** and extending the grantmaking program to include at least two additional cycles in 2024 and 2025. This extension builds upon the success and growth of the initiative since first launching in 2021, which has included the tripling of the Foundation’s initial \$5-million commitment and the broadening of its applicant parameters to include museums, non-collecting visual arts organizations, and art schools. The Foundation simultaneously announced it is **awarding \$2.7 million to 48 art organizations** across the country through its third grantmaking cycle, which launched earlier this year, bringing the total funding conferred to date to more than \$10.8 million.

Developed and implemented in partnership with [RMI](#) and [Environment & Culture Partners](#), the Frankenthaler Climate Initiative is the largest private national grant-making program of its kind supporting institutions focused on visual arts and arts education. The initiative supports nonprofit organizations of varying sizes as they work to reduce their climate impact, from scoping and technical assistance grants that assess opportunities and strategies for energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions, to implementation grants that provide partial and seed funding for fully specified projects.

The recipients from the 2023 cycle represent a broad cross-section of visual arts institutions, including art schools and university museums such as **Pratt Institute** (NY) and the **Chazen Museum of Art at the University of Wisconsin-Madison** (WI); regional museums and specialized institutions such as **Portland Museum of Art** (ME), **New Orleans Museum of Art** (LA), and **The Noguchi Museum** (NY); arts nonprofits such as **SITE Santa Fe** (NM) and the **Wassaic Project** (NY); and institutions with national and international reach, such as the **Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago** (IL) and **San Francisco Museum of Modern Art** (CA), among many others. The full listing of 2023 grantees can be found [here](#).

Concurrent with its grantmaking efforts, the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation continues to raise awareness of the critical importance of sustainable operations and practices in the arts and the positive impact that these can have through workshops and public programs. The Foundation will mount a special public program on **Friday, September 22**, during **Climate Week NYC**, with details to be shared in the coming weeks.

“We are thrilled by the continued interest the Frankenthaler Climate Initiative has received from visual arts institutions who want to fight climate change, but often don’t have the means. These organizations have inspired us with their ingenuity and commitment to lower their carbon footprints. We decided to extend our funding and FCI’s grantmaking cycle, so that others can participate in this clean energy initiative,” remarked Lise Motherwell, Director and Board Chair of the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation. Added Clifford Ross, President of the Board of Directors, “Leadership grants have become a

significant part of the Foundation’s work extending Helen Frankenthaler’s legacy. And nothing is more important than climate reform.”

Noted Elizabeth Smith, Executive Director of the Foundation, “At a time when we are all feeling the impact of extreme climate change, it is especially gratifying to expand the urgent work of the Frankenthaler Climate Initiative.”

“As we approach the middle of this pivotal decade for climate action, we are seeing the transformative power of cultural institutions in improving energy efficiency and embracing clean energy solutions,” remarked Jon Creyts, CEO of RMI. “While cultural institutions still need substantial support for their technical and capital projects, the good news is that energy efficiency measures often bring both financial benefits and emission reductions to these institutions. We are thrilled about the selection of year three grantees and the positive impact they will have.”

Highlighted projects from FCI’s 2023 grant cycle will:

- Advance the energy resiliency of grantees and their communities at institutions including:
 - **National Nordic Museum** (WA), where the development and installation of a solar-powered microgrid ensures that the museum as well as vulnerable community members will have access to power in case of emergency;
 - **California College of the Arts** (CA), where a microgrid project will expand capacity for renewable power generation and storage throughout the institution’s San Francisco campus; and
 - **Fine Arts Works Center** (MA), whose purchase and installation of a renewable energy generator alternative will provide stability for the organization and clean, load-saving power to the grid.
- Implement impactful systems and infrastructure changes to support collection care and presentation, including:
 - **Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History** (MI), where installation of an on-site steam humidification system will ensure ongoing collection preservation as it reduces the institution’s carbon footprint; and
 - **Kentucky Museum at Western Kentucky University** (KY), which will be able to improve and expand its collection gallery spaces through infrastructure improvements and additions to its historic building.
- Seed action plans for energy reduction through the replacement of outdated facilities, including:
 - **Academy Art Museum** (MD), which will be updating its HVAC systems throughout its complex of historic buildings that served a variety of functions—from schoolhouse to funeral parlor—before becoming a museum;
 - **California Institute of the Arts** (CA), which will be upgrading windows in its student-utilized visual art and gallery spaces across its campus, reducing energy costs while increasing natural lighting; and
 - **Turchin Center for the Visual Arts, Appalachian State University** (NC), which is undertaking a series of energy reduction measures, ranging from new HVAC controls to

installing ceramic window films that will significantly decrease the building's energy consumption.

- Proactively assess and plan for high-performing capital expansions and low-emissions new buildings, including:
 - **Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture (CA)**, which is conducting a pre-design energy assessment as part of a long-term pier shed rehabilitation project; and
 - **Miller Institute of Contemporary Art at Carnegie Mellon University (PA)**, which is developing energy efficiency and carbon reduction strategies for its forthcoming new building.

“2023 saw the largest number and most sophisticated project proposals to date, as the visual arts field continues to grow in its capacity to affect positive change on climate,” said Sarah Sutton, CEO of Environment & Culture Partners. “FCI’s third-year grants support a broad spectrum of climate projects that will yield quantitative and qualitative data critical to institutional benchmarking and to advancing work addressing climate change. The increased appetite for pursuing energy efficient practices across the cultural sector is a clear indicator that the essential changes being made by FCI grantees is moving the needle in favor of clean energy and climate smart choices.”

As part of the Initiative, all FCI grant recipients track and report their energy consumption and greenhouse gas reduction using Energy Star® Portfolio Manager, helping to build an industry standard benchmark for measuring and tracking building energy use. The application process for the next grant-making cycle is expected to open in Spring 2024.

About the Frankenthaler Climate Initiative

The [Frankenthaler Climate Initiative](#) is the first nation-wide program to support energy efficiency and clean energy use for the visual arts and the largest private national grant-making program to address climate change action through cultural institutions. The \$15 million ongoing initiative provides critical support to visual art institutions in the United States seeking to assess their impact on the environment and to lower ongoing energy costs. To date, the Foundation has conferred more than \$10.8 million supporting 175 energy efficiency and clean energy projects at 147 institutions across 34 states in the U.S. through the Frankenthaler Climate Initiative.

Building on the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation’s commitment to social impact philanthropy and to catalyzing positive change on critical issues in the arts, the Foundation launched the Initiative in 2021 in association with [RMI](#), an independent nonprofit that engages businesses, communities, institutions, and entrepreneurs in accelerating the adoption of market-based solutions that cost-effectively create a clean, prosperous, and secure low-carbon future; and [Environment & Culture Partners](#), a nonprofit that creates relationships and leads collaborations that engage the cultural sector in broader climate action. For more information, visit frankenthalerclimateinitiative.org.

About Helen Frankenthaler Foundation

Established and endowed by Helen Frankenthaler during her lifetime, the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation advances the artist’s legacy and inspires a new generation of practitioners through a range of philanthropic, educational, and research initiatives. Since becoming active in 2013, the Foundation has continued to strategically expand its program, which includes organizing and supporting significant exhibitions of the artist’s work, fostering new research and publications, advancing educational programs

in partnership with arts organizations around the world, and launching groundbreaking initiatives that foster systemic change in the field. As a primary resource on the artist, and a steward of her collection and archive, the Foundation holds an extensive selection of Frankenthaler's work in a variety of mediums, her collection of works by other artists, and original papers and materials pertaining to her life and work.

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