A Collections-Based Research and Educational Institution

The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens is a collections-based research and educational institution serving scholars and the general public.

Each year, The Huntington:

• Provides nearly 2,000 scholars with access to a world-class collection of rare books, manuscripts, photographs, maps, paintings, prints, sculpture, and decorative arts.
• Awards $2.1 million in fellowships (through a peer-review process) to scholars for advanced humanities research.
• Educates thousands of schoolchildren and their teachers in art, history, literature, and botanical science through special tours and programs.
• Organizes special exhibitions to enhance the visitor experience, interpret the collections, and facilitate learning.
• Hosts more than 800,000 visitors.

The Huntington has a Membership totaling nearly 45,000 households, an active volunteer corps of some 1,200, and a full- and part-time staff of about 500. It is an independent nonprofit organization, supported by gifts and grants from individuals, corporations, foundations, and government agencies, and by a private endowment.

Henry and Arabella Huntington

Railroad and real estate businessman Henry Edwards Huntington was born on Feb. 27, 1850, in Oneonta, N.Y. Henry and his uncle, Collis P. Huntington, were leaders in building the railroads that span the country. In 1892, Henry moved to San Francisco to represent Huntington interests on the Pacific Coast. In 1902 (two years after the death of Collis), Huntington transferred his headquarters to Los Angeles and started to connect, consolidate, and extend the electric railway system in Southern California (the “Red Cars”). He had large landholdings in Southern California and numerous business interests. In 1903, he bought the San Marino Ranch (now The Huntington). He married Arabella Duval Huntington, the widow of Collis, in 1913. Together they amassed extensive library, art, and botanical collections that continue to evolve. In August of 1919, they signed a trust document that transformed their private estate into a public institution, making their collections available “to promote the public welfare.” Henry died in 1927; Arabella predeceased him by three years. The Huntington opened publicly to visitors in 1928.
The Library Exhibition Hall showcases some of the most outstanding rare books and manuscripts in the collection. About 150 rare objects are grouped thematically around 12 key works, prompting visitors to consider each item in a wider context.

The Dibner Hall of the History of Science is a permanent exhibition focusing on astronomy, natural history, medicine, and light.

The West Hall of the Library presents temporary themed exhibitions.

The 90,000-square-foot Munger Research Center provides storage capacity for further collections development, work space for scholars and staff, and facilities for conservation, preservation, exhibition preparation, digital imaging, and photography.

Art Museum

The Huntington’s Art Museum features European and American art spanning more than 500 years and includes more than 42,000 objects. Extraordinary examples of decorative arts and folk art, paintings, prints and drawings, photography, and sculpture are displayed in the Huntington Art Gallery, the original home of Henry and Arabella Huntington, and in the Virginia Steele Scott Galleries of American Art. Both buildings also showcase smaller, temporary exhibitions that focus on masterworks in the collection, or that place The Huntington’s historic works in conversation with contemporary artistic practice.

European Art Highlights

- One of the greatest collections of 18th-century British grand manner portraiture outside of the United Kingdom, including Thomas Gainsborough’s *The Blue Boy* and Joshua Reynolds’ *Sarah Siddons as the Tragic Muse*, as well as important examples of 19th-century British landscape painting by such artists as John Constable and J.M.W. Turner; major holdings of materials related to the Arts and Crafts movement, including works by Edward Burne-Jones and Walter Crane, with particular strength in designs produced by the William Morris firm; more than 13,000 British drawings, ranging from the 17th through the 20th centuries, including William Blake’s watercolor designs for illustrations to Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, fine examples by artists associated with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and such modernists as David Bomberg and Paul Nash.

- Important holdings of 18th-century decorative art, particularly French furnishings and textiles produced before the French Revolution, including *The Noble Pastoral*, a series of tapestries made by the Beauvais manufactory, and a significant group of Sévres porcelain garnitures; 18th-century French sculpture, including the life-size bronze *Diana the Huntress* by Jean-Antoine Houdon, and such paintings as *The Young Knitter Asleep* by Jean-Baptiste Greuze and the *Portrait of Rabaut Saint-Etienne* by Jacques-Louis David.

American Art Highlights

- Begun with a major gift from the Virginia Steele Scott Foundation in 1979, the American art holdings number about 270 paintings, 80 works of sculpture, 1,000 decorative art objects, 9,500 prints and drawings, and 1,800 photographs.

- Masterpieces in the paintings collection include Frederic Edwin Church’s monumental *Chimborazo*; Mary Cassatt’s intimate *Breakfast in Bed*; Edward Hopper’s evocative sailing scene, *The Long Leg*; Andy Warhol’s *Small Crushed Campbell’s Soup Can (Beef Noodle)*; and Charles White’s *Soldier*, an important example of 20th-century social realism.

- The Jonathan and Karin Fielding Collection contains 18th- and 19th-century paintings, furniture, and works of decorative art, offering visitors insights into the history of American art practices through beautiful objects made for everyday living by early Americans.

- An important part of the permanent installation is a gallery devoted to the work of early 20th-century Pasadena architects and Arts and Crafts masters Charles and Henry Greene.

Botanical Gardens

Encompassing approximately 130 acres of the 207-acre grounds, the Botanical Gardens contain more than a dozen spectacular themed gardens.

Highlights

- Liu Fang Yuan, the Garden of Flowing Fragrance, reflects the traditional style of scholar gardens in Suzhou, China, and features a 1.5-acre lake, a complex of pavilions, a teahouse and tea shop, stone bridges, and waterfalls set against a wooded backdrop of mature oaks and pines. The garden’s final phase includes new pavilions, a restaurant, and an exhibition complex. At more than 12 acres, the garden is one of the largest classical-style Chinese gardens in the world.

- The Japanese Garden, set along a canyon to the south of the Chinese Garden, comprises a traditional Japanese house, a moon bridge, a walled Zen garden, bonsai courts, and Seifu-an, a ceremonial teahouse and garden.

- The Desert Garden, features one of the largest outdoor collections of mature cacti and succulents in the world.

- The Frances and Sidney Brody California Garden in the Steven S. Koblik Education and Visitor Center is arranged along a central allée of olive trees. The garden includes native and adaptive plantings set among hedge rooms in a nod toward more formal landscape design.

- The Frances Lasker Brody Botanical Center, featuring:
  - The Helen and Peter Bing Children’s Garden, introducing youngsters to the wonders of the natural world through interactive sculptural elements;
  - The Rose Hills Foundation Conservatory for Botanical Science and the Associated Foundations Teaching Greenhouse, providing hands-on botanical science opportunities for children and families, and showcasing orchids and other tropical collections;
  - Laboratories for botanical research where botanists are using cryopreservation techniques to safely freeze and conserve fragile plant tissue, and where genetic research reveals much about the evolutionary history of cycads;
  - The Ranch Garden, for testing and demonstrating contemporary ideas about sustainable urban agriculture.

- Nearly 16,000 plant species

- Additional garden areas devoted to roses and camellias, each collection with more than 1,000 different cultivars.

- The Australian, Herb, Jungle, Lily Ponds, Palm, and Subtropical gardens are among other important botanical attractions.
Research

Each year, nearly 2,000 scholars in the fields of history, literature, art history, and the history of science, technology, and medicine come from around the world to conduct academic research in The Huntington’s library and art collections. About 150 of these faculty and graduate students receive research grants or fellowships, which are awarded through a rigorous process of external peer review. The scholarship that is carried out in reading rooms results in academic monographs and scholarly articles; in bestselling and prizewinning books; in acclaimed documentary films; and in many of the history and social studies texts used to educate the nation’s schoolchildren. The Huntington also disseminates research through an extensive program of academic conferences, workshops, seminars, and lectures.

In partnership with the University of Southern California and Caltech, The Huntington has established three research centers: The USC-Huntington Early Modern Studies Institute supports advanced research and scholarship on human societies between 1450 and 1800; the Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West brings together historians, journalists, and policymakers to investigate the history of the American West; and the Research Institute for the History of Science and Technology at Caltech and The Huntington facilitates the exploration of the history of science and technology. The Huntington also participates with other neighboring institutions through several humanities collaborations with Caltech and through The Huntington-University of California Program for the Advancement of the Humanities.

Education

The Huntington’s education programs interpret the collections and promote lifelong learning to a broad audience.

• Each year, school programs introduce the collections to more than 20,000 schoolchildren from around Southern California through tours led by docents.
• The Huntington partners with schools and school districts to provide deep, long-term engagement with students and teachers through school visits and professional development for teachers. Education staff use inquiry-based techniques and then help educators implement these techniques in their own teaching.
• More than 20,000 households participate each year in public programs, including classes, workshops, performances, lectures, and our annual summer program for children, Huntington Explorers.
• The Huntington collaborates regularly with the Boys and Girls Club, YWCA, and other community organizations serving young people and diverse audiences.

Architecture at a Glance

The Huntington is also known for its architecture.

• The Huntington Art Gallery, originally Henry and Arabella’s home, was designed by Myron Hunt and Elmer Grey. It was constructed from 1909 to 1911 and comprises 55,000 square feet. A 2008 renovation and adaptive reuse was led by Earl Corp. and Architectural Resources Group.
• The Virginia Steele Scott Galleries of American Art comprises the Virginia Steele Scott Gallery (1984), designed by Paul Gray, and the Lois and Robert F. Erburu Gallery (2005), designed by Frederick Fisher, a space totaling 39,100 square feet. A new addition, also designed by Fisher, the Jonathan and Karin Fielding Wing, opened in 2016 adding 8,600 square feet.
• The Mary Lou and George Boone Gallery was designed by Hunt and Grey as the Huntington’s garage and built in 1911. The 8,000-square-foot structure was converted to gallery space in 1999 by architect Brenda Levin.
• The original 96,000-square-foot Library building was also designed by Hunt and Grey and built in 1919; it has five subsequent additions, including the 90,000-square-foot Munger Research Center (2004), designed by Earl Corp.
• The Huntington Mausoleum is the burial place of Henry and Arabella. It was designed by John Russell Pope (responsible for the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C.), with sculpture by John Gregory, and completed in 1929.
• The Frances Lasker Brody Botanical Center was designed by Offenhauser and Associates and includes a maintenance complex (15,000 square feet; built in 2000); the research and education facility (45,000 square feet; 2001); The Rose Hills Foundation Conservatory for Botanical Science (18,000 square feet; 2003), and the Helen and Peter Bing Children’s Garden (43,500 square feet; 2004).
• The 6.5-acre Steven S. Koblik Education and Visitor Center (2015), comprises 94,000 feet of interior space. The complex encompasses 52,000 square feet of classrooms, an auditorium, a multi-purpose room, café, coffee shop, gift shop, boardroom, and orientation gallery. It also includes 42,000 square feet of underground storage space. The complex was designed by Architectural Resources Group; the landscape architect was the Office of Cheryl Barton.

Financial Highlights

Beginning in 1927 with Henry Huntington’s gift of the estate, its collections, and an endowment of $8.5 million, The Huntington has received generous private support, helping to fund operations and build the endowment to a market value of $500 million (as of June 30, 2019).

The Huntington is committed to careful stewardship of its physical resources and financial assets, as well as of its staff, members and donors, and multiple audiences. The total budget for the fiscal year 2019–20 is $54 million before capital expenditures.

The chart below shows the key sources of revenue for the fiscal year 2019–20. The Huntington uses a 5% spend rate on the endowment to generate 45% of the budgeted income. Donors and Membership contribute to fund 27% of the annual budget. Earned revenues are generated by admissions, the Huntington Store, food services, and a variety of other activities that support 28% of the budget.

Sources of Fiscal Year 2019–20 Budget Spending

- Contributions: 27%
- Endowment Income: 45%
- Earned Revenues: 28%