

# University philanthropy: The Ford Foundation

May 2020

## Key findings

With its reputation for supporting higher education, the Ford Foundation is one of the US top 10 charitable endowments with assets over \$12.2bn.

- According to our study of its university giving, the Ford Foundation has disbursed 1,510 grants totaling \$358m to 286 universities and higher education institutions in 39 countries over the past 10 years.
- Our analysis of its disbursements from 2009-18 shows that US institutions are the largest beneficiaries of its university giving.
- Between 2009-18 110 American universities received 65% (\$228.7m) of giving. Chinese institutions are second place receiving 8% (\$28.4m) between 52 universities, while South African universities are the third biggest national beneficiary benefiting from 7% of funding (\$24.4m) shared between 13 institutions.
- Columbia University in New York is the biggest beneficiary of Ford Foundation giving in this survey, receiving 5.6% of all giving to higher education institutions. Between 2014-18, it received 62 grants totaling \$20.2m.
- The top three university beneficiaries are all US institutions – Columbia University (\$20.2m), Harvard (\$18.8m), and New York University (\$16.9m).
- The single largest Ford Foundation contribution to a university was a gift of \$3.2m in 2015 to the University of Maryland to fund its Institute of Arts Management.
- Harvard University has received the most Ford Foundation awards – 74 amounting to \$18.8m.
- Eight out of the top 10 beneficiaries are US universities, receiving \$105m.
- The two non-US universities in the top 10 are both South African – the University of the Witwatersrand which received 28 grants totaling \$6.7m; and the University of Cape Town which received 32 grants amounting to \$6.3m.

## About UniversityPhilanthropy.com

*UniversityPhilanthropy.com is the dedicated research arm of The Cape Partnership, the London-based public affairs and policy advisory firm. Our research looks exclusively at trends in UK philanthropy and giving to non-UK universities. Contact: [office@capepartnership.com](mailto:office@capepartnership.com)*

# University philanthropy: The Ford Foundation

## Key facts

The Ford Foundation is one of the best known charitable trust in the world, supporting higher education, the arts and social sciences. The table below sets out the top five countries that benefit from its university funding.



#	Beneficiary country	Total (2009-18)	Recip.	Biggest beneficiary
1	United States	\$228.7m	110	Columbia University
2	China	\$28.4m	52	Peking University
3	South Africa	\$24.4m	13	Univ. of the Witwatersrand
4	Brazil	\$12.9m	17	Federal University, Rio de J.
5	Egypt	\$8.7m	3	American University, Cairo

## Top 10 beneficiaries of Ford Foundation giving (2009-18)

University	Country	Sum
Columbia	US	<b>\$20.2m</b>
Harvard	US	<b>\$18.8m</b>
New York	US	<b>\$16.9m</b>
North Carolina, Chapel Hill	US	<b>\$14.7m</b>
UCLA	US	<b>\$12.9m</b>
Rutgers	US	<b>\$8.3.0m</b>
M.I.T.	US	<b>\$6.9m</b>
Wits	South Africa	<b>\$6.7m</b>
Berkeley	US	<b>\$6.5m</b>
Cape Town	South Africa	<b>\$6.3m</b>

## Chinese engagement

With its funding of over 50 Chinese universities and higher education institutions, the Ford Foundation is notable for its extensive China footprint. In the past decade Ford has supported more Chinese universities than institutions in Australia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East combined.

Peking University has received 25 grants in the past 10 years totaling \$4.8m. A significant sum of that funding has gone towards the University's Centre for Public Participation Studies. Shaanxi University received the largest individual grant (\$704k) to help establish a new graduate academic programme, *Experimental Economics in Education*.

The top five Chinese recipients between 2009-18 are:

- Peking University - \$4.8m
- China University of Political Science & Law - \$2.9m
- Beijing Normal University - \$2.5m
- Renmin University of China - \$2,3m
- Tsinghua University - \$1.5m

## About our research

The purpose of this research was to identify university giving by the Ford Foundation. Data over the past ten years used to compile this study is available from the Ford Foundation. For more information, contact: [office@capepartnership.com](mailto:office@capepartnership.com)

