



**THE VOLGENAU FOUNDATION**  
**Mission, Vision, Values, & Guiding Principles**  
**and**  
**Funding Priorities, Goals, & Strategies**  
**As of November 2023**

**Mission**

The mission of The Volgenau Foundation is to protect and restore the natural environment, support education of under-resourced communities, and strengthen appreciation of classical music.

**Vision**

We envision a world in which all living things have the resources to thrive within sustainable ecosystems, and culturally vibrant opportunities are accessible for all.

**Values**

We are guided by two fundamental values: honesty and service.

**Guiding Principles**

The following principles guide our giving:

- Compassion and Authenticity – Our relationships are based on transparency, trust, and care for others.
- Collaboration and Effectiveness – We partner with organizations, communities, and other philanthropic entities that are trusted leaders, and work together to maximize our collective resources.
- Innovation and Learning – We support organizations and leaders who incorporate creative approaches, amplify lessons learned, and scale best practices.
- Stewardship and Sustainability – We invest in efforts that promote effective solutions to the root causes of environmental degradation and create lasting change.
- Opportunity and Equity – We fund access to education in order to build awareness, capacity, and self-sufficiency.

## **Our Funding Priorities**

### **1. Funding Priority: Marine, Freshwater, and Land Conservation**

To protect land, marine, and freshwater resources that support natural ecosystems, biodiversity, and people, and to increase resilience to climate change.

**Goal Statement:** The foundation is deeply committed to the preservation of natural resources, both on land and in marine and freshwater ecosystems, with a dual focus on nurturing thriving natural ecosystems and improving the well-being of communities that depend on them. Our overarching goal is to ensure that protected areas support the balance of nature and enhance the quality of life for people.

#### **Strategies:**

**Policy Change for Conservation:** We support programs and initiatives dedicated to policy change. By advancing policies that promote conservation and responsible resource management, we aim to ensure the long-term protection of vital ecosystems and habitats.

**Program Support:** We provide funding for projects that actively engage in conservation efforts. These initiatives work on the ground, implementing practical solutions to protect and restore land, marine, and freshwater resources, ensuring the sustainability of ecosystems and their associated benefits.

**Education for Sustainability:** We invest in educational programs that raise awareness and build a deep understanding of conservation issues. These programs are essential for inspiring individuals and communities to take an active role in preserving natural resources and fostering sustainable practices.

**Scientific Research:** We support research initiatives that answer critical questions and address challenges related to environmental degradation and its impact on wildlife. Through scientific inquiry, we seek solutions to pressing conservation issues and strive to advance understanding of ecosystems.

**Land Protection:** We work to safeguard critical land areas, especially those identified as biodiversity hotspots. By protecting these regions, we help maintain the integrity of large ecosystems and establish pathways for wildlife movement, contributing to the overall health of the environment.

**Indigenous Partnerships:** We recognize the invaluable wisdom and stewardship values of Indigenous communities. We collaborate with Indigenous-led initiatives, blending traditional knowledge with western science to enhance conservation efforts and ensure the sustainable coexistence of natural ecosystems and human communities.

The Foundation employs a comprehensive approach, uniting these strategies to create a lasting impact on conservation. Through the joint mission to both preserve nature and support human well-being, we strive to leave a legacy of thriving, harmonious ecosystems for current and future generations.

## 2. Funding Priority: Wildlife Protection, Co-existence, and Connectivity

To increase resilience to our changing climate, address and mitigate the impact of humans on wildlife habitat and movement, and promote healthy coexistence between humans and wildlife.

**Goal Statement:** The Foundation seeks to enhance resilience of wildlife in the face of climate change and mitigate the impacts of human activities on wildlife movement, habitat, and survival. Our main objective is to ensure that the planet's remarkable biodiversity not only endures but thrives, while fostering coexistence between human communities and the natural world.

### **Strategies:**

**Wildlife Passage Enhancement:** We support organizations that tackle the challenges of wildlife movement and habitat protection since both are crucial in the search for food, mates, and favorable living conditions. Interventions such as constructing underpasses, overpasses, and wildlife-friendly fencing are essential to ensure safe pathways for wildlife, minimize human-wildlife conflicts, and preserve critical migration routes.

**Mitigating Human-Wildlife Conflict:** We fund innovative solutions to alleviate conflicts between humans and wildlife. Examples of such solutions include road crossing structures, wildlife-friendly fencing, optimal food storage to prevent wildlife habituation to humans, actions to deter predator conflicts with livestock, championing ropeless fishing gear to prevent marine mammal entanglements, and shipping lane speed controls to avoid collisions with marine mammals and reduce pollution.

**Public Education:** We invest in public education initiatives that raise awareness about the importance of coexistence with wildlife and the impacts of human actions on wildlife. Educating the public about the significance of responsible practices and wildlife protection is fundamental to fostering a culture of respect for the natural world.

**Species-Specific Conservation:** We recognize the value of protecting specific species that are either endangered, serve as keystone species with significant ecological roles, or are culturally relevant to Indigenous communities. Through these efforts, we aim to preserve biodiversity and ecological balance.

The Foundation's multifaceted approach is to create lasting positive impacts on wildlife protection, coexistence, and connectivity. We believe in the intrinsic value of each species and our shared responsibility to safeguard and restore their populations, in order to ensure a harmonious coexistence between humans and the natural world while addressing the urgent challenges posed by climate change and habitat disruption.

### **3. Funding Priority: Education focused on Conservation and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)**

To provide under-resourced communities with access to conservation and STEM education.

**Goal Statement:** The Foundation is committed to increasing access to conservation and STEM education for under-resourced communities, equipping young people with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to become conscientious stewards of the environment. This includes understanding the full ramifications of climate change, and becoming productive members of society. Our goal is to inspire a new generation that is not only academically proficient but also socially and environmentally conscious.

#### **Strategies:**

**Conservation-Focused Education:** We support programs that offer conservation-focused education, connecting young people with the importance of preserving our natural world. Among other things, these programs facilitate an in-depth understanding of environmental conservation, biodiversity, and the delicate balance of ecosystems.

**STEM Integration:** We fund programs that use Science, Technology, Engineering and Math as a means to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills and inspire a creative and holistic understanding of conservation. This could also include using visual arts, music, and other creative expressions to foster a deep appreciation for the environment, highlighting the intricate connection between art and nature.

**Leadership Development:** We invest in leadership development initiatives to empower youth with the confidence and skills required to take on leadership roles in their communities and beyond. Through mentorship and experiential learning, we aim to cultivate a generation of leaders who champion environmental sustainability.

**Outdoor Experiential Learning:** We believe in the power of outdoor education to connect students with nature in a profound way. We fund programs that take students out of the classroom and into the natural world, providing hands-on environmental education experiences to ignite their passion for preserving our earth.

Through these combined strategies, the Foundation seeks to nurture well-rounded individuals who are not only scientifically proficient but also possess a deep sense of environmental responsibility and a commitment to making a positive impact on their communities.

#### 4. Funding Priority: Classical Music

To increase youth exposure to, appreciation of, and interest in classical music.

**Goal Statement:** We provide funding to a select number of organizations to honor our family's long-standing interest in fostering a deeper connection to classical music, with a specific focus on engaging and inspiring youth. We aspire to kindle an enduring appreciation for classical music, ensuring it remains a vibrant art form and cultural experience that enriches the human soul for generations to come.

##### **Strategies:**

**Education and Instrument Access:** We support programs that provide classical musical instruments and education, particularly for under-resourced youth. We invest in educational opportunities that make classical music more accessible and comprehensible to young audiences. Our focus is on enhancing music education to nurture an appreciation of classical compositions and their historical significance.

**Composition and Creation:** We encourage the creation of new classical music compositions. We believe in the importance of not only preserving the classics but also in promoting the development of contemporary works that connect with today's youth while respecting the traditions of this art form.

**Inspiration through Nature:** We recognize the profound emotional connection between classical music and nature. Therefore, we support organizations that draw inspiration from the natural world, be it through compositions inspired by nature's beauty or performances in outdoor settings. This unique approach provides an innovative gateway for youth to connect with classical music in a meaningful way.

Through these strategies, the Foundation is dedicated to instilling a lifelong passion for classical music among young people, enriching their lives, and ensuring that this timeless art form remains an integral part of our cultural heritage.