

2017 - 2021



Dean's Report

USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism



Table of Contents

3

Introduction and Strategic Priorities

5

Executive Summary

7

Academic Excellence

Academic Programs
Faculty
Research and Grants

19

Supporting Student Success

25

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access

30

Thought Leadership

34

Critical Foundations

Operations, Administration and Culture
Financial Management and Fundraising
Communications

40

The Path Forward

Introduction and Strategic Priorities

This report is intended to detail our accomplishments from 2017 to 2021 as an international leader in teaching, scholarship and practice across the fields of communication, journalism and public relations. It reflects the combined efforts of more than 200 remarkable full- and part-time faculty, and 150 staff as we continue to advance the vision of our founder, Ambassador Walter H. Annenberg, and his charge to use communication to understand the profound changes of our time.

We have witnessed profound disruption, re-invention, innovation in media and communication — particularly in the ways in which media is produced, distributed, consumed and understood. It inspired new and urgent debates around the role of public discourse, freedom of speech, access to information, the spread of misinformation, trust, truth and accuracy.

This also represents an extraordinary time during which USC Annenberg moved toward a new paradigm, one that borrows from the world of technology, and from the spirit and energy of entrepreneurs. Together, we have developed a “dynamic stability” that allows us, as individuals, as a community of inquiry, and as an institution of higher education, to become more flexible as we “lean in” to change. We have embraced a willingness to generate new ideas, test them, and pivot with purpose and grace as we seek continued innovation, re-invention and growth.

Since 2017, we have focused on leveraging our “dynamic stability” to guide our work in three key areas: (1) establishing new and re-imagined academic foundations, (2) forging connections within and beyond the academy, and (3) leading vital conversations in the public square.

Advancing academic excellence with the school, first and foremost begins with our faculty, our most precious resource — and one on which USC Annenberg’s reputation as the world’s preeminent school for communication relies. Our own distinguished professor Manuel Castells has observed that “any new form of social organization and any process of technological change generates their own mythology” where there is “a gap between social change” and our understanding of it. We have invested in scholarship to address this gap, which at times feels like a chasm, to define the transformation of communication in the digital age, examining its effects and implications.

In addition, we have strengthened USC Annenberg’s traditional areas of strength including health and organizational communication, network analysis, cultural studies, and new media. Agility and velocity, two critical components of “dynamic stability,” fuel our faculty’s continuous and iterative review and re-imagining of our curricula and teaching. This dedication has propelled the launch of new degree programs — on campus and online — across several of our disciplines, and re-imagined master’s programs.

Our second priority has been to expand our network, to position ourselves along communication’s frontier. We have formed new and strengthened existing partnerships with our industries of practice to help build the diverse, creative workforce our changing fields need. We have created new connections for our students through immersive professional learning opportunities in which our students experience firsthand the

convergence and disruption in media, communication and emerging technologies, and imagine their possible place in it. They listen in on the planning behind national ad campaigns, talk with top-level executives or early-career professionals, and bounce ideas off creative strategists. Working with professional news organizations, they produce rigorous journalism covering events in small communities and big cities across the country. Even as the pandemic forced us to limit in-person experiences, those programs were reimagined as engaging and transformative virtual classes.

This new generation of students challenges the way we think about our industries of practice, and we have watched how employers who engage with our students come away energized, inspired to consider their products, services or culture in entirely different ways. These have become signature USC Annenberg experiences, and continue to inspire new models of intergenerational collaboration. That spirit of shared learning infuses all of our partnerships.

Our third priority has been to expand USC Annenberg's presence in the public square, to create opportunities for conversation, dialogue and debate. We have worked to do more than be part of the conversation, but instead to lead the critical conversations of our time. Our contributions ignite debate and accelerate positive change. USC Annenberg has invested in a portfolio of groundbreaking and news-making research to ground public discourse in accurate, timely and relevant data, and to center issues of equity, inclusion and access. We have amplified USC Annenberg's voice, increasing our impact and engaging policymakers, industry leaders, influencers and the general public.

Finally, underlying all our work in these three critical areas has been an ongoing commitment to the principles and practices of diversity, equity, inclusion and access. This is reflected in the breadth of perspectives and backgrounds among our faculty, staff and students, and in all that we do academically and professionally.

USC Annenberg would not be the school it is today without our commitment to excellence, and to our community of faculty, staff and students as the myriad contributions of our supporters — alumni, industry partners, collaborators and our dedicated Board of Councilors. This summary highlights some of our most significant work across these areas of focus along with related accomplishments.

Willow Bay

Dean, USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism
Walter H. Annenberg Chair in Communication

Executive Summary

Academic Excellence

Academic Programs

- Launched two new master's programs and five new minors, and reviewed eight existing programs to reflect transformation across our industries and disciplines.
- Advanced excellence and innovation in our classrooms, and in our award-winning student newsroom with new content verticals and greater industry input.

Faculty

- Refreshed faculty ranks with 20 new full-time hires (40% URM).
- Advanced equitable compensation and practices for all categories of faculty.
- Mobilized resources to promote teaching excellence in virtual space.

Research and Grants

- Reorganized and expanded [the](#) school's research and grants infrastructure
- Accelerated change in our disciplines and industries through high-impact research centers

Supporting Student Success

- Innovated new systems and structures to support the USC Annenberg student experience.
- Created dynamic new industry partnerships and a broad constellation of funded professional development opportunities.
- Intensified support for students' social and emotional well-being.
- Increased financial assistance and accelerated strategies for inclusion and access.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access

- Created new governance and infrastructure to ensure principles of DEIA are embedded in every core function of the school.
- Advanced principles and fostered dialogue through new teaching collaboratives, training programs, activity guidelines, new student, staff and faculty communities, and programming and media.
- Increased faculty diversity, including growing racial and ethnic representation and achieving gender equity in the faculty ranks.
- Increased the diversity of senior leadership, increasing URM and female representation.

Thought Leadership

- Led conversations globally, nationally and locally (~300 per year) to deepen our understanding of the profound changes in the world around us and to confront systemic challenges.
- Engaged firsthand through scholarship and practice, the vibrant growth in tech, art and culture, fashion, food, sports, politics, and new media in Los Angeles and beyond.

Critical Foundations

Operations, Administration and Culture

- Created dynamic new teams to support academic excellence and operations during pandemic.
- Improved opportunities for staff, including the creation of Staff Council, improved communications, and the introduction of professional development and community-building opportunities.

Financial Management and Fundraising

- Returned school to balanced budgets through revenue growth and cost containment.
- Delivered surplus of \$6.2M and increased reserves to \$10.7M.
- Exceeded fundraising goals with \$76M raised term- to-date, including \$27M in endowment, and advanced key priorities of student support and academic innovation.

Communications

- Restructured communications team to support strategic marketing and brand storytelling.
- Delivered dramatic and award-winning growth of original content, improved nature and cadence of communication.
- Leveraged strengths of the marketing and communications team to advance school priorities.

Academic Excellence

Academic Programs

The rapid evolution of industries within our core areas of scholarship and practice demands constant curricular reinvention, while still ensuring that we retain core values and competencies like critical thinking, ethical reasoning and multimedia storytelling. As a result, we have accelerated innovation in our curricula and teaching across all of our programs — communication, public relations, public diplomacy and journalism — using a continuous, iterative review process that has resulted in substantive revision of existing programs as well as the debut of new programs and minors.

New Programs

Developed and launched new academic degree programs to reflect the sweeping transformation across the global communications landscape and to position students at the leading edge of our dynamic industries:

- **[MA in Public Relations and Advertising](#)** (PRA): After closely examining the current state of the PR, advertising and communication fields, and tapping our network of industry experts, we revamped our second largest master's program, MA in Strategic Public Relations. PRA, launched in Fall 2020, prepares students to create integrated public relations campaigns that span paid, earned, shared and owned media types, support persuasive storytelling with data intelligence, create multi-platform content, build influencer relations strategies, advance brand activations, and use audience insight-mining to inform and execute PR strategies.
- **[MA in Digital Media Management](#)** (DMM): DMM prepares managers to better understand the evolving media landscape, make data-driven and ethical decisions, and lead diverse teams with the technical, artistic, analytical, and production skills needed to create engaging content and technologies for the global marketplace and build a more equitable future. DMM was built entirely internally at USC — Annenberg's first partnership with USC Online. This new model will deliver stronger topline growth as USC Online and USC Annenberg share equally in the expense and revenue, and USC Annenberg has the option of full ownership and management in three to five years. This model also helps us to grow our internal capacity to develop new pedagogy and scale similar programs in the online space.

Developed and launched five undergraduate minors, several of them with other schools, to allow undergraduates to deepen their understanding of specific themes and industry topics:

- **Cultural Diplomacy:** Focuses on the ways in which consideration of cultural issues and engagement in the cultural sphere can enhance foreign affairs and international interactions.
- **Justice, Voice and Advocacy:** Explores the central role communication, media, news and public relations play in a multicultural society, and helps students develop as more engaged, informed and empathetic citizens.

- **News and Information Innovation:** Combines USC Annenberg's journalistic expertise with the innovation fostered at the USC Iovine and Young Academy to give students from across the university the mindset and skills needed to be thought leaders and change agents in the information ecosystem.
- **Podcasting:** In collaboration with the USC School of Cinematic Arts and the USC School of Dramatic Arts, provides a grounding in the history, theory, production and business of podcasting.
- **Sports Media Industries:** Provides an introduction to sports journalism as content production and the notion of sports media as a unique setting for publicity, advertising and public relations.

Academic Program Review

To ensure we continue to elevate the value of a USC Annenberg degree, we conducted a comprehensive review of all of the school's undergraduate and graduate degree programs:

School of Communication:

- **Master's programs:** The first three programmatic reviews (FY17-18) resulted in significant changes to master's programs in Public Diplomacy, Digital Social Media and Communication Data Science (jointly offered with the USC Viterbi School of Engineering). In Fall 2018, enrollment in the programs increased, with Digital Social Media nearly doubling. A review of Communications Management, which was initiated in 2019 was suspended when classes moved online, and has been delayed further until after the school hires a new program director. Global Communication, a dual degree program with the London School of Economics, will be reviewed after a leadership transition takes place following this academic year.
- **Doctoral program:** Initiated a review of the communication doctoral program to ensure it equips students to graduate in five years and prepares them for careers both in and outside of academia, with a detailed look at curricula and qualifying exam process in Spring 2022.
- **Undergraduate communication major:** Currently undergoing a UCAR review, in conjunction with the Provost's Office, and we will utilize our review findings to implement new standards of assessment to ensure our students have the strongest foundation for their future academic and career pursuits.

School of Journalism:

- **Undergraduate programs:** Following the debut of a new BA in Journalism in 2016-17, we have continued to monitor and adjust curricula to be responsive to ever-changing best practices. Changes included adding a required course, a "shift" as a working journalist in our Media Center directly participating in the news production process for field reporting and live programs.
- **Master's programs:** A review of our three journalism master's programs yielded several adjustments and additions including: the addition of a required investigative reporting course, redefinition of a common and robust curricular experience through the Power of Narrative course, and the addition of new specialization options including Race and Social Justice as well as Food and Culture.

USC Annenberg Media Center

USC Annenberg's [Media Center](#) is a classroom and a working newsroom with state-of-the-art capabilities, allowing students to acquire the advanced multimedia and analytical skills necessary to produce news content while measuring impact across platforms. It is also an incubator for new ways of telling stories and connecting with audiences. Students — 400 of them in a typical semester — join the student-led news outlet [Annenberg Media](#) to explore writing, podcasting, television and video production for social media. Through the center's Digital Media Analytics Desk, they can also learn to monitor the social stream and how to collect and analyze data for real-time events, brand communication and advertising campaigns.

Continued to advance excellence and innovation in the student-run newsroom by:

- Expanding coverage areas to delve deeper into topics that matter to the USC community with the creation of new desks in politics, visuals/photography, and health and wellness.
- Establishing new content verticals, including [Dímelo](#), which focuses on Latinx storytelling, and [Black](#), which is inspired by the creativity of the Black community.
- Creating an [Equity Board](#) to examine how students approach their sources, the importance of inclusion and providing useful tips for when things go wrong. The signature accomplishment of the board was the [Annenberg Media Guide to Equitable Reporting and Newsroom Style](#).
- Managing the development of news gathering and multi-platform production skills for 150 undergraduate and master's students who complete assigned lab shifts each semester.
- Covering critical news and milestone moments such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the [2020 Presidential Election](#).
- Pioneering stronger collaboration with USC Annenberg classes, starting a "From the Classroom," section to publish student work edited by instructors. Stories ranged from personal essays inspired by the death of George Floyd to deeply reported profiles for a presidential reporting class.
- Recruiting industry professionals to serve as instructors and coaches, guiding students as they produce multi-platform journalism on a variety of topics of industry to a youth audience. Many work in newsrooms across Los Angeles or are on-air, multi-media journalists, podcast creators and freelance writers from organizations such as ESPN, Fox LA, Politico and Yahoo News.
- Successfully increased the diversity of Media Center faculty which is 38% white, 5% Asian, 22% Latinx, 24% Black, 3% Middle Eastern and 3% Unknown. Gender ratio is 62% female and 38% male.

Communications Efforts for Academic Programs

In conjunction with the revision of the school's undergraduate and graduate degree programs, the communications and marketing team, in partnership with the admissions team, developed a refreshed and consistent branding and messaging platform that more clearly articulates the distinct vision, mission and purpose for each program's innovative curriculum and learning outcomes. This encompassed:

- Developing the school's first integrated recruitment marketing campaign, which included the first-ever comprehensive paid search and social marketing campaigns for the school's 10 on-campus graduate degree programs.

- Launching redesigned admissions website section and master’s program web pages.
- Creating an original series of master’s program recruitment videos.
 - Recognized with gold Award of Excellence for recruitment videos from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) District VII.
- Creating a new suite of print communications for prospective students.
 - Recognized with the Silver Award of Excellence in student recruitment publications from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) District VII.
- Creating and launching enhanced admitted student conversion efforts, including:
 - Creating first-ever microsites for admitted undergraduates and master’s students.
 - Introducing first-ever use of Salesforce’s Pardot to automate communications to admitted and certified master’s students.

Student Awards

In addition to their coursework and extracurricular activities, our communication and journalism undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students — as well as our student-run media outlets — have been recognized with numerous awards and honors, including:

- 150+ students working at USC Annenberg Media, Ampersand and the Media Center Beacon Project recognized at the 60th, 61st, 62nd, 63rd Annual Los Angeles Press Club’s SoCal Journalism Awards, the National Arts and Entertainment Journalism Awards and the Hearst Journalism Awards.
- 60+ communication doctoral students won awards and honors at major conferences, including the National Communication Association, the International Communication Association, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, and the Research Conference on Communication, Information and Internet Policy.
- Annenberg TV News was voted the Best Video Newscast in the Radio Television Digital News Association’s Edward R. Murrow Awards two years in a row.
- JOVRNALISM won a Webby award for Video Reality and L.A. Press Club’s Best Use of Social Media Award to Enhance Cover Story Award.

Faculty

USC Annenberg’s greatest strength is our passionate, gifted and diverse faculty who bring cutting-edge knowledge, experience and insight to our school. Our extraordinary group of scholars and professionals continue to confront systemic challenges and deepen our understanding of the profound changes in the world around us, while offering our students a truly transformative college experience. We have successfully executed a multi-year strategy to attract and retain a new generation of 20 diverse and celebrated scholars and practitioners, adding expertise to our ranks to address contemporary shifts in communication, information and media.

Refreshed our tenure ranks and repositioned our sub-disciplines:

- Enhanced interdisciplinary collaboration by establishing a joint faculty appointment with the USC Department of Computer Science, helping further strengthen an already robust collaborative relationship between USC Annenberg and USC Viterbi.
- Reinforced our health communication thought leadership with faculty who employ cutting-edge approaches and merge online and offline partnerships with urban communities to study Black and Latinx health inequities and social justice-facing data science.
- Expanded and updated our scholarly portfolio in science and technology (STS) studies, networks and computational communication, mobile and emerging media technologies, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, and big data in advertising and public relations.
- Added depth and breadth to our media studies with new faculty experts in transnational media and explorations of race, politics and gender across mass media, sports media and popular culture.

Expanded professional expertise in key domains:

- Added distinguished RTPC faculty in public relations, investigative journalism and political journalism, extending or restarting searches as necessary to ensure candidates met the criteria of both advancing communication across diverse constituencies and demonstrating the level of excellence required to be a member of our faculty.
- Our full-time RTPC faculty, along with our adjunct and part-time instructors, enrich our classrooms with highly specialized expertise and offer real-time exposure to changes in the field, along with invaluable mentoring and support networks for students and alumni on their professional journeys.

Increased faculty diversity, including growing racial and ethnic representation and achieving gender equity in the faculty ranks:

- Since 2017, 40% of the 20 newly hired full-time faculty are URM (35% Black, 5% Latinx); 15% are Asian, and 45% are white. These hires have increased our gender diversity as well; 55% are female or non-binary and 45% are male.
- As of FY21, representation among USC Annenberg tenure-track and RTPC faculty members stood at 12% Black (12 out of 102), 10% Latinx (10), 8% Asian (8), 1% Pacific Islander (1), and 66% white (67) — approaching, and in some cases exactly reflecting, national demographics. Our balance of men to women is 57% to 42% and 1% non-binary.
- Increased the racial and ethnic diversity of our adjunct and part-time faculty from 2017 to 2021. The proportion who self-identify in Workday as Black or African American has increased from 5% to 10%, as Hispanic or Latino from 8% to 12%, and as Asian from 6% to 8%, while the proportion who self-identify as white decreased from 74% to 54%. Actual diversity is likely greater since a significant proportion (23% in 2021) of our adjunct and part-time faculty declines or omits to self-identify.

Improved communication and transparency around compensation practices and merit review:

- Initiated annual reporting led by our associate dean for faculty affairs by sharing summary benchmarking data, both external and internal, with the faculty of each school, including aggregated and disaggregated data at the school level for each rank.
- In the process of prototyping an online dashboard for this data, with access that can be restricted to faculty users as appropriate; currently in discussion with the Annenberg Faculty Advisory Council.

Established equitable compensation practices:

- In FY19, USC Annenberg achieved the milestone of equitable faculty compensation, with salary equity at 100% of parity or more for nearly all categories.
- Consistently review salaries at each of the ranks to look for any evidence of inequity for faculty from underrepresented minorities. Faculty of color are among the most highly compensated in their respective ranks on the tenure track. However, in FY19, we found some cases where RTPC URM faculty were below the median. We made appropriate equity adjustments, equalizing to peers with comparable rank, instructional profiles and professional standing, and have continued to review, adjust and maintain parity in the years since.
- Analyzed and assessed merit review process for bias related to gender, race/ethnicity and rank, determining that while no bias appeared across gender or race/ethnicity, a clear bias emerged when faculty rank was considered (i.e., faculty of lower rank were consistently awarded lower merit scores). As a result, our schools are creating new guidelines for evaluating faculty on the basis of rank.

Advanced equitable practices for adjunct and part-time faculty:

- Sought and received approval to provide a one-time, equity-based increase in compensation for part-time/adjunct faculty members — and have continued systematically to raise their compensation since. This process has taken several years to implement given our large number of adjunct and part-time faculty.
- Created and appointed to the position a liaison to adjunct faculty for greater representation and advocacy, who worked to improve teaching support, access to resources and training.
- Created opportunities for adjunct and part-time faculty to participate more fully in the life of the school through advisory and service roles, social events, and inclusion in regular faculty and all-school meetings.

Advanced teaching excellence:

- Appointed an assistant dean for excellence in teaching and added the position to the school's senior leadership team. Assistant dean produced and implemented a comprehensive excellence in teaching plan, developed protocols and rubrics for new teaching evaluation tools, with a new teaching reflection statement for annual merit reviews in the communication school, and a classroom observation pilot for adjunct/part-time faculty in the journalism school.

Mobilized faculty training and support in the transition to online learning:

- Created an Excellence in Teaching Task Force under the leadership of assistant dean, with six CET fellows and our online learning director, to manage and support faculty in the pandemic-driven transition to online teaching for all full- and part-time faculty.
- Excellence in Teaching Task Force developed and implemented comprehensive teaching support plan for online and hybrid instruction, recalibrated our teaching platforms, pedagogies and practices to address the needs of students across different time zones, including producing eight development seminars in support of online/HyFlex teaching and creating a repository of resources related to online and hybrid modalities.
- Continue to provide USC Annenberg faculty with ongoing triage and support for hybrid teaching and online tools (Zoom, Blackboard, Moodle, Canvas, VoiceThread, Poll Everywhere, etc.).
- Implemented the rollout of Zoom Assistants (ZAs) covering 21 weekly classes for Fall 2021, providing in-person support for hybrid modalities.

Increased visibility for faculty research/scholarship and professional practice:

- Earned nearly 80,000 media mentions across global press from FY18-21, including *The New York Times*, *WIRED* and *The Guardian* as well as broadcast outlets such as *NPR* and *ABC News*.
- Since FY18 two dozen individual faculty have authored 35 articles for *The Conversation*, resulting in approximately 1.3 million reads to date and republishing in outlets such as *Newsweek*, *Salon*, *Smithsonian Magazine* and *Fast Company*.
- Introduced new website [faculty directory](#) and profile page designs that have resulted in more than 100% increase in unique pageviews.
- Created "[Faculty Focus](#)" video series, which provides a digital library of faculty experts speaking to their research and teaching excellence.
- Established a recognition webpage to showcase faculty achievements.

Faculty continued to earn international and national distinctions and awards, including:

- Microsoft Research visiting scholars (2)
- Berggruen Institute Fellows (2)
- Tow-CUNY Disruptive Journalism Education Fellow
- Berlin Prize recipients (2)
- Peabody Award juror
- Society of Professional Journalists "Best in Show" Award
- NewsPro Top 10 Journalism Educator
- American Academy of Advertising Promising Professor Award
- USC Libraries' inaugural Floyd Covington Faculty Fellow
- USC Provost Mentoring Awards (2)
- Numerous honorary doctorates, book awards, fellows, and scholarly and professional board members

Research and Grants

Recognizing that our research potential was underdeveloped, we implemented a strategic shift to build a more robust and productive research environment and to advance a culture of external grant seeking with an emphasis on new federal grants. A new management structure, additional staff resources, targeted recruitment of research-productive faculty, and investment in faculty and student research engagement have revitalized USC Annenberg's research culture and resulted in an upwards trajectory in proposals, awards and total funding. Recognizing that tackling the challenges we face will demand ever more ambitious collaborations, we have established new models for interdisciplinary and collaborative research both within the university and beyond our walls.

Changes implemented will grow research engagement and career exploration among our students, strengthen their research pathways and preparation, enhance research productivity of our faculty, and ultimately increase research funding and opportunities. Research at our well-regarded centers continues to thrive, increasing the school's visibility and generating a significant amount of external funds.

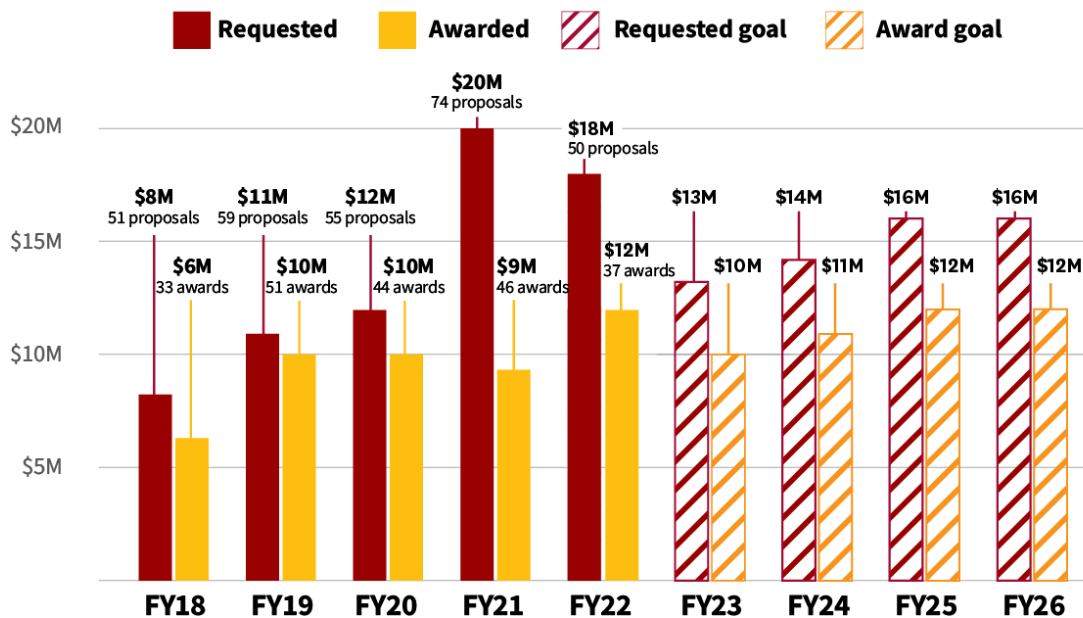
Invested in infrastructure and staff to support growth in private and federal grant support:

- Created a new organizational structure for research, situating it within our development and external relations team, which allows us to leverage fundraising strategies and resources for school priorities across individual, foundation, corporate, and government/federal prospects and partners.
- Added a senior research administrator with deep experience in federal grants, particularly NIH and NSF mechanisms, where we are seeing high potential for growth especially among our health communication and communication network faculty.
- Streamlined grant processes and provided greater administrative capacity, creating a more proactive, supportive, customer-service-driven grants culture welcomed by our faculty.

Increased grant awards:

- From FY11 to FY16, USC Annenberg averaged 29 awards totaling \$8M annually. In the past four years (FY17-21), these increased to an average of 44 awards and \$9M total funding annually.
- Total awards declined in FY20 due in part to pandemic-related shifts in sponsor giving among our disciplines, however, the number of proposal submissions by our faculty reached a 10-year high of 74 submissions, \$20.36M in total amount requested.
- Targeted recruitment of research-focused faculty and investments in the research environment, are delivering increases in new federal awards. Federal awards as a percentage of USC Annenberg's research and sponsored program funding increased from 11% in FY20 to 22% in FY21.
- As a result of higher F&A rates on federal awards, indirect cost recovery on sponsored projects year-over-year is on an upward trajectory — increasing 17% in the most recent fiscal year (FY21).
- Forecast double digit increases in the following years with \$12M in funds requested for FY22.

Research Proposals and Awards



Strengthened our faculty and student research infrastructure and culture:

- Established a donor-funded Undergraduate Research Fellows program to create additional research experiences and build a longer runway for research training. Undergraduate fellows receive stipends and develop an original, independent research project under the supervision of USC Annenberg faculty, demonstrating to future employers, graduate programs, and social justice communities their ability to creatively and rigorously build knowledge and make impacts.
- Secured donor funding to pilot a new program in Fall 2021, AUGment, to build bridges between our undergraduates and PhDs. With AUGment, Communication Honors Program students receive 1-1 mentoring on their thesis projects from USC Annenberg PhD students. PhD students can learn how to be research mentors, help guide nascent projects and give constructive scholarly feedback. These skills will complement their research and teaching assistant experiences and help them be even more competitive in different post-graduation job markets.
- Raised external funding for a Faculty Research Fund to provide seed, bridge or supplemental funding to USC Annenberg faculty. It helps them to jumpstart ambitious new projects and bring existing ones to completion, with an eye toward larger external grants down the road, with priority given to projects that engage student researchers.

Catalyzed interdisciplinary collaboration and research:

- Established the [Annenberg Center for Collaborative Communication](#), with our sister institution, the Annenberg School at the University of Pennsylvania, a first-of-its-kind center that will leverage the

skills, research and intellectual vision of the two educational institutions that Ambassador Walter H. Annenberg founded. The center will provide a critical infrastructure for reimagining and potentially revolutionizing how communication can be used to address complex issues, from health care and data privacy to the restructuring of media industries in an age of streaming and networked distribution.

- Created USC Annenberg's first joint faculty appointment with USC Viterbi, [Emilio Ferrara](#), to add to our research capacity and expertise in machine learning, network science, data science and social media, and to further strengthen an already robust collaborative relationship between USC Annenberg and USC Viterbi.
- Pioneered a new industry-academic research partnership model at USC with the appointment of [Kate Crawford](#), one of the world's foremost experts on the social implications of artificial intelligence, as a research professor of communication and science and technology studies and faculty affiliate of the USC Center on Science, Technology, and Public Life. While maintaining her role as a senior principal researcher at Microsoft Research New York, she will help advance critical research on the role of justice and power in socio-technical systems and expand USC Annenberg's research presence and portfolio in AI, data and media technologies.
- USC Annenberg's Center for Communication Leadership and Policy secured funding of nearly \$3M from Google to launch the [USC Election Cybersecurity Initiative](#) with partners at five other USC schools — Viterbi, Dornsife, Gould, Marshall, and Price. The bipartisan effort helped election officials defend against digital attacks through state-specific training sessions that reached more than 3,800 participants across all 50 states in advance of the November 2020 elections.
- In partnership with [Common Sense](#), launched a multi-year global mapping project, [The New Normal: Parents, Teens, and Digital Devices Around the World](#), that is sparking a global conversation about the ways in which mobile devices are rewiring daily life for families everywhere. Following an [initial study](#) of U.S. parents, teens and mobile devices that Common Sense published in 2016, USC Annenberg joined with Common Sense to research and compare media habits and attitudes in [Japan](#) (2017), the [UK](#) (2018) and [Mexico](#) (2019).

Accelerated change through high impact research centers:

Below are some of the most notable and accomplished research centers, whose timely and critical work helps to keep USC Annenberg at the forefront of our disciplines and our industries of practice:

- The [Annenberg Inclusion Initiative](#) (All) continues its vital work challenging inequality at the doors of Hollywood, defining areas where diversity is needed — above and below the line, in front of and behind the camera. All has expanded its research on representation (it initiated the first-ever study of Muslim representation in popular movies, funded by the Ford Foundation); launched the Music Coalition to engage music leaders in cultivating an inclusive industry culture and business practices that advance equality among artists, musicians and employees; established industry partnerships such as with Netflix for a first-of-its-kind look at inclusion across Netflix's scripted series and films and created and advocated for the Inclusion Rider. FY21 funding: \$1.6M.
- The [Center for Health Journalism](#) (CHJ) equips journalists with specialized knowledge, tools and techniques to report effectively and accurately on a range of critical health issues. CHJ also partners with newsrooms to investigate health challenges and solutions in their communities with fact-based, rigorous reporting. In 2020, the center's journalistic output reached tens of millions of

news consumers with more than 200 stories in news outlets across the nation, and its Health Reporting Fellowships have educated more than 1,000 journalists nationwide. FY21 funding: \$1.1M.

- The [Norman Lear Center](#) (NLC) is a nonpartisan research and public policy center that studies the social, political, economic and cultural impact of entertainment on the world. NLC is advancing societal change one story at a time through its dual programs of Hollywood Health and Society and the Media Impact Project. FY21 funding: \$2M.
- The [Health Equity and Media Collab](#), a new center led by Associate Professor of Communication Robin Stevens, is an interdisciplinary team spanning the fields of medicine, journalism, communication and social work, that taps into the vast wealth of data that social media provides to glean insights into health behaviors among youth. Despite the vast wealth of data found in online communities where youth learn and communicate — their “digital media neighborhood” — there is little research into the insights the data reveals. The Collab studies social media posts, shares, and networks, then uses lessons learned to design and implement health interventions around sexual risk behaviors and substance use.
- USC Annenberg offers extensive leadership and innovation capabilities at the intersection of communication and AI, especially in the team of Kate Crawford and Mike Ananny, who together are sparking new synergies around AI research at the school. Associate Professor Mike Ananny leads USC Annenberg’s [MASTS \(Media as SocioTechnical Systems\) research collective](#), focusing on how technological controversies shape public life and the creation of new interdisciplinary methods for studying digital infrastructures. Seeded through donor funding, MASTS engages students and faculty from seven USC schools to build interdisciplinary knowledge and action. USC Annenberg Research Professor Kate Crawford (see above) is one of the world's leading experts on the social power of artificial intelligence (AI) and the ways in which questions of justice and fairness play out in technological systems. FY21 funding: \$300K; FY22 funding: \$300K from Sloan Foundation, Social Implications of AI grant.
- The [Center for Public Relations](#) led by Fred Cook, chair of the global PR firm Golin, connects corporations, agencies, academics and students to define the future of the PR industry and develop those who will shape it. Since 2017, its annual [Relevance Report](#) — a guide to emerging issues and a forecast of topics and trends that will be impacting society, business and communication in the coming year — has served as an essential barometer for leaders and influencers across industries. Its 2021 report — [Politics, Polarization and Purpose](#) — predicted that political polarization and the proliferation of conspiracy theories are likely to persist throughout 2021, calling for healing these deep divisions through a collaborative approach to communication that is consistent, inclusive, and honest. This work led to the launch of the [Polarization Index](#), the first-ever data-science-based index tracking national political division as measured within social media conversation. The index is designed to help C-suite executives better understand public opinion and inform their corporate strategies, including whether to take a stand on controversial topics that may impact customers, employees, and shareholders.

Research and impact increasingly recognized by a diverse range of prestigious and highly selective funders, including:

- \$3.5M from the MacArthur Foundation (PI: Colin Maclay) in 2018 for the Participatory Civic Media Creatorship, a cohort-based experiential learning program for leading practitioners who promote social progress through media and technology; renewed in 2021 for 3 years at \$3M. The MacArthur Foundation also renewed the Civic Imagination Initiative at \$450K to continue Provost Professor Henry Jenkins' work bridging perceived cultural gaps between diverse communities across the country.
- \$2M from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for "Imagining a Culture of Health: Proof of Concept for a Narrative Change Strategy" (PI: Marty Kaplan), a project of the Norman Lear Center to explore issues surrounding the narratives of well-being and illness in popular culture.
- \$2.8M from Google to USC Annenberg's Center on Communication Leadership and Policy (PI: Geoff Cowan) to launch the USC Election Cybersecurity Initiative in collaboration with five other USC schools.
- \$1M from Pivotal Ventures Inc. to the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative (PI: Stacy Smith) to expand the Initiative's core infrastructure and broaden its scope of operations to best influence the entertainment industry for equality, and \$200K from the Ford Foundation for its project "Missing and Maligned: Exploring Muslim Representation in Media."
- \$450K from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundations to support Center for Health Journalism's Public Health Data Journalism Fellowships.
- \$900K from the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation to the Lear Center's Hollywood, Health, and Society program (PI: Kate Folb), for its work to ensure accurate depictions of health issues in media.
- \$745K from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development at NIH to Lindsay Young for her study, "HIV Prevention and Care." Professor Young's research bridges social network methodologies, health communication frameworks, and public health research to understand the relational and communication contexts of young sexual and racial minorities that impact their HIV prevention and risk engagement.
- \$572K from the Gates Foundation to the the Media Impact Project, the research and evaluation arm of the Norman Lear Center (PI: Erica Rosenthal), for research to understand narratives surrounding the issue of poverty in popular entertainment, and \$320K from Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors for research aimed at measuring the impact of pop culture on social change.
- \$330K from the National Institute on Drug Abuse at NIH to Robin Stevens for her research utilizing Twitter to identify and recruit young Black men at high risk of HIV infection.
- \$174K from the National Science Foundation to Marlon Twyman II for "CRII: HCC: The Creation, Maintenance, and Disruption of Inequality in Online Communities."

Supporting Student Success

Student Services, led by deeply experienced staff working closely with faculty, alumni and industry partners, provides academic and career advising, experiential education, professional development and career services opportunities to current students and alumni. It is one of the school's most vibrant spaces for innovation, and its impactful work across multiple areas is one of the defining characteristics of the USC Annenberg student experience.

Since 2017, we have increased investment in student support, directed more focused attention toward student health and well-being, significantly enhanced our career services capabilities, created new opportunities for experiential learning, and forged stronger industry partnerships to help prepare the diverse, highly skilled and creative workforce that our changing fields need.

There are many pathways to success, and USC Annenberg remains committed to working with students to set their unique goals for life-long success and to chart the best routes forward to achieving them. Through the multiple pandemic-related disruptions, our faculty and staff thought beyond innovation to wholesale reinvention as we sought to meet our students' rapidly evolving academic, social/emotional and professional development needs.

Improved and enhanced organizational infrastructure to support continued innovation:

- Established a Student Experience Team to connect student-focused resources and staff during the pandemic. Composed of senior leaders in advancement, communication and student affairs, the team listened closely to the needs of students and worked to create new programs and adapt existing ones. The collaboration brought new energy and creativity to the student experience space.
- Restructured industry relations efforts by adding a permanent full-time, industry relations associate director, a unique hybrid role reporting to both the offices of student services and development, and fostering numerous opportunities for cross-pollination between career development and our external partners.
- Designed and implemented the first two phases of Annenberg Insights, a donor-funded, tech-driven initiative, which establishes a system for capturing each step of a student's journey — major, coursework, extracurricular activities, internships, jobs, conferences, and professional affiliations — and uses this data to track each student's (and alumni's) career trajectory. Combined with labor market insights, the student data will fuel state-of-the-art predictive analytics and generate a set of tools — never before available in one source — that will empower our academic advisors and career counselors to chart the best route forward for our students to accomplish their unique goals.

Strengthened individual academic advising as critical first point of contact for more than 1,500 undergraduate and 1,300 master's students:

- Responded nimbly to unprecedented and frequent academic policy changes through strong teamwork and effective communication across the academic advising team, including helping students navigate these changes and implementing fully remote advising beginning in March 2020.
- Addressed changing student needs and preferences by surveying students on preferred modalities (in-person vs. virtual advising) in Fall 2021 and by transitioning to new appointment booking software in order to support hybrid preferences.

Improved USC Annenberg's ability to connect students with meaningful career opportunities upon graduation and beyond:

- USC Annenberg requires one-on-one academic advising for undergraduates, including a career advising appointment for sophomores.
- Refreshed Annenberg Works, which engages with more than 300 companies annually through on-campus programming, identifying new and emerging companies that reflect the breadth of career opportunities to our graduates and represent the employers of the future.
- Engaged nearly 80 companies through 60+ virtual programs during a year of remote instruction (FY21), including company information sessions, virtual career fairs and other unique employer partnerships.
- Conducted more than 60 calls with employer partners during the early days of the pandemic in Spring 2020, in an effort to understand their critical business needs and get updates on rapidly changing full-time and summer internship hiring. We shared these insights with graduating students, helping them be more targeted with their employment searches.
- Distribute more than 3,000 unique job and internship postings on our online career board each year.
- In the four most recent USC Annenberg graduating classes for which placement data is available, averaged 98% to 99% percent employment (full-time paid internship, full-time job or enrollment in graduate school) across all programs within 12 months of graduation, with 88-90% of alumni accounted for.

Expanded industry partnerships and student opportunities, accelerating the growth of professional development opportunities:

- Launched Annenberg Agency, a new program to remotely deploy our students in a professional capacity via micro-internships to assist organizations with their communications needs. Across winter, spring and two summer sessions, 22 nonprofit and brand clients engaged 134 students.
- Worked with industry partners to create customized, funded collaborations that expand the traditional internship model, such as the Annenberg/Legendary Entertainment Associate Marketers team; 27 new industry opportunities were added in FY21 alone, including opportunities with Spotify, Grab Games, Inclusive TV, the Latin Grammy Recording Academy, and KABC's Race and Culture Unit.
- Collaborated with the Los Angeles Times to offer our students and 2020 graduates a unique opportunity to document and publish the stories of individuals lost amid the pandemic. The

partnership has continued with students examining demographic and other data to identify patterns to help shape healthcare policy.

- Created a series of free USC Annenberg Digital Lounge Certification Courses offering recent graduates and current students the opportunity to continue to build their skills given the slack in the job market caused by the pandemic. Courses offered included Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Indesign, Adobe Premiere, and Microsoft Excel.

Expanded and enhanced experiential education programs:

- Created four distinct programs bringing students to South Korea to cover the 2018 Winter Olympics, and a partnership with NBC to engage students covering the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
- Developed and launched the first Alternative Spring Break program in Thailand, with a focus on social change, and launched a Spring Break Career Immersion program in Washington, D.C., focusing on political careers.
- Expanded the successful career exploration “Maymester” programs, creating immersive programs in multimedia reporting — with students investigating social, economic and political processes in Mexico City, the aftermath of the hurricanes in Puerto Rico (in partnership with NBC Latino), local elections in Monticello, Utah (with The San Juan Record and the Guardian) — as well as a week-long Sports Media Industries Maymester in Los Angeles. When programming shifted to remote, we created two compelling virtual Maymester programs that engaged 32 students and 25 companies across 96 hours of Zoom over three weeks, offering our students the opportunity to learn and network with executives (and alumni) within our communities of practice.
- Through an estate gift from alumnus and Los Angeles real estate broker William Irving Griffith '46, we launched our first summer reporting internship program, The Beacon Project. Closely mentored by working investigative journalists, students developed stories that garnered regional and national attention and collected numerous LA Press Club awards.

Increased equity in international programs and enhanced exposure to the global world of work:

- Increased equity and access to study abroad programs. In most recent complete study abroad year (AY19-20), 15% of total participants were Pell Grant recipients (29 students); 34% of participants in semester-long programs were students of color (42 students); and 13% of participants in semester-long programs were first-generation students (16 students). 86% of participants in spring break programs were students of color (24 students).
- Enhanced professional development within international programs, adding alumni engagement in London and Rome programs (i.e., the Student Mentor Program in London), alumni receptions, and career talks; and Career Treks in Sydney and Hong Kong.
- Safely evacuated over 100 Annenberg students who were studying abroad during the initial onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and successfully managed their transition to virtual learning.
- Reinvented study abroad in a virtual world, moving the International Communication Studies program entirely online and embedding consulting projects into the course curriculum to allow students to experience the global world of work. Faculty living and working in Rome and London delivered Global View courses virtually.

Adjusted new student welcome experiences and expanded mentoring programs and affinity groups to help create a stronger sense of belonging:

- Launched unprecedented effort to welcome and engage new students (and their families) earlier and more frequently. Strategies included personalized electronic outreach, virtual cohorts for students to meet their peers prior to the start of classes, and a “Get to Know USC Annenberg” series to introduce incoming students to Annenberg’s various programs and opportunities.
- Reached 200 new students with revamped mentoring programs: Our Student Communities mentoring program introduced 113 incoming first generation students and students of color with more than a dozen faculty, staff, and alumni mentors in AY 2020-21; our Peer-to-Peer Mentors program paired 29 upper division USC Annenberg student mentors with 78 first year and new transfer students, with extremely positive feedback.
- Established a new global mentorship program specifically to support our graduate students in China, engaging close to 90 students and 40 alumni, with 100% positive feedback about the experiences and matches.
- Innovated a new professional mentor program, Seeing ME in the Media, which matches BIPOC and first-generation students with media professionals; participation doubled (to 62 matches) in its second year.
- Established a Class of 2020 mentor program to help ameliorate the incredibly challenging circumstances faced by recent graduates; graduating students are paired with an alumni mentor to support their job search efforts and assist them in making professional connections.
- Initiated Annenberg Cross-Cultural Student Association, a student-led group whose goal is to foster a more inclusive community by promoting cultural awareness through DEIA-themed events.

Intensified focus on support for students’ social and emotional well-being:

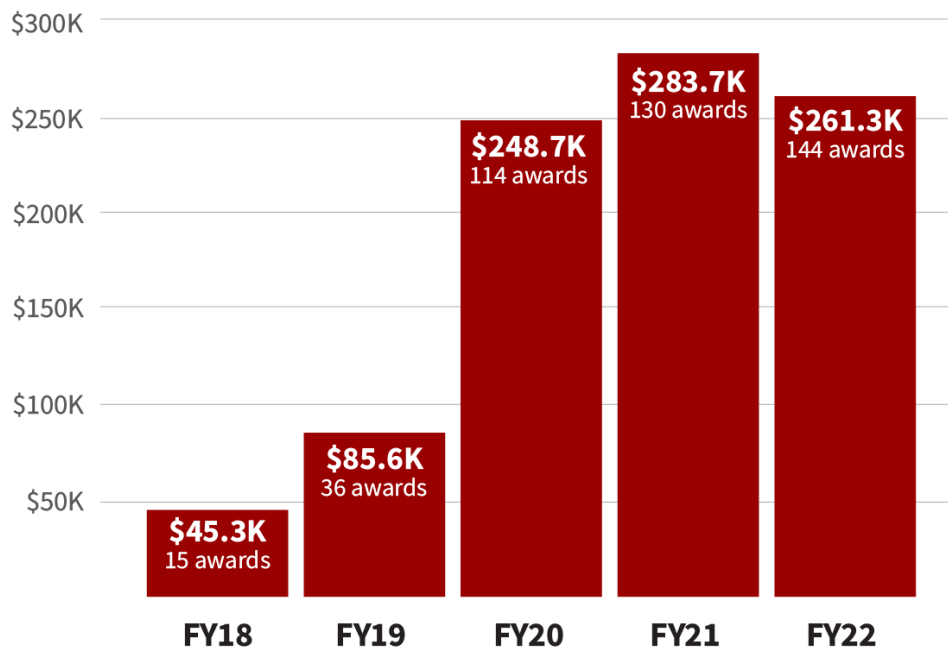
- Partnered with Health Promotion Strategy Office to review USC Annenberg-specific health and wellness data from the Healthy Minds Survey and Student Well-being Index Survey.
- Modified student mentor programs (see above) designed to increase students’ sense of belonging during a year of online classes.
- Established [Kaleigh Finnie Memorial Endowment for Student Mental Health](#). The fund provides scholarships and awards to graduate and undergraduate students to develop critical research and generate important conversations around mental health. 17 students supported with a total of \$24k in scholarships and awards.
- Established the first student-driven Health and Wellness Desk in the USC Annenberg Media Center to share stories, stimulate conversations, and point to resources available on campus.

Increased financial assistance to ensure equitable access to the full USC Annenberg experience:

- Pioneered two donor-supported funds to help address the unique needs of this generation of students and remove barriers to student success: our Student Success Fund (to increase access to student experiential activities) and Student Emergency Assistance Fund (for unexpected personal or family circumstances). These funds have proven critical to our students during financially precarious times and have established a model that other units at USC are now adopting.

- Since the funds were launched in 2017 and 2018, 703 awards have been granted totaling \$1,046,190.
- These funds are a fundraising priority and have shifted from current use to an endowment that now stands at \$2.5M.
- Introduced an Unpaid Internship Stipend as part of the Student Success funding, which awarded \$500 stipends totaling \$62.5K in FY21 to help support access to professional development.
- During the two years impacted by the pandemic (FY21 and FY22), our Student Emergency Assistance Fund and Student Success Fund supported 426 students and disbursed \$648K in funds.
- During the study abroad student recall of Spring 2020, financially supported the return of over 100 USC Annenberg students, reimbursing lost housing costs, return flights, and program fees above and beyond what other campus study abroad units were able to provide.

Emergency Aid Spending Growth



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access

At USC Annenberg, our mission — *to lead the fields of communication, journalism and public relations in a global multicultural environment through groundbreaking scholarship, professional work, teaching and public service* — can only be seen as inseparable from our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. We cannot advance the fields of communication, journalism and public relations without full representation and inclusion across all manners of difference. Driven by this mission, and guided by the five-year framework of the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access Plan for USC Annenberg, initially drafted in 2017 and revised in 2019, we introduced a set of shared Annenberg goals aimed at furthering our progress in advancing the diversity and inclusion of faculty, staff and students and convening a variety of voices around critical issues.

We have achieved notable progress in some DEIA areas: We increasingly center and highlight diverse perspectives in our public programming; implement more inclusive approaches for teaching and student mentoring; support community engagement programs for youth in our neighboring communities; and prioritize increased diversity of our faculty, student and staff populations. These achievements represent years of rigorous and focused efforts to realize the principles of diversity and equity at the core of our school, a reflection of the deep level of commitment on the part of the entire USC Annenberg community.

But the powerful response and conversations within our school community in the midst of the Black Lives Matter protests in the summer of 2020 was truly a reckoning. As these pivotal events shined a glaring light on the depths of our nation's systemic racism, it became clear that a racial justice lens was necessary to examine our own school community — from admissions, hiring, and retention practices to curriculum and teaching methods. Our initial steps were structural, involving revamping our governance mechanisms, bringing in new leadership, and launching a working group to jumpstart what would be a productive two years of meaningful change at USC Annenberg.

Our resulting efforts have focused on: developing new training programs for faculty, staff and students; curricular review; supporting inclusive teaching practices; crafting DEIA-focused guidelines for various school programs and activities; and continuing efforts to foster discussions school-wide. However, we acknowledge this is only the beginning. As we move forward, we are committed to an inclusive process of concerted planning and vigorous action, tracking data and outcomes and adjusting strategies to drive meaningful change.

Ensured principles of DEIA are embedded in every core function and area of the school, and scaffolded by clear governance and infrastructure:

- Established DEIA task force in Fall 2020, appointed DEIA associate dean, and in Fall 2021 added a Diversity Council to formalize the role and embed it firmly into school practices.
- Launched a Summer 2020 working group tasked with assessing DEIA challenges including: culture, training, curriculum, professional practices and public programming, with reports submitted in Fall 2020.

- Held a “Candid Conversations” series focused on DEIA issues at USC Annenberg with faculty and staff ([survey](#) found participants were overwhelmingly positive about the process).
- Our Black faculty and staff created a Black Faculty and Staff Council, whose mission is to ensure that USC Annenberg is committed and dedicated to anti-racism, Black success and inclusion. Our strong cohort of Black faculty — tenured and RTPC — have planned an ambitious scholarly agenda for the Council.

Centered DEIA practices in curriculum and teaching:

- Launched the USC Annenberg Teaching Collaborative with instructors highlighting pedagogical approaches and teaching tips tied to DEIA issues.
- USC Annenberg CET Fellows curated a list of DEIA teaching resources, now available on Blackboard.
- Incorporated DEIA priorities into annual faculty merit review process.
- Instituted regular updates to program syllabus templates to foster and underscore DEIA policies and priorities.

Developed and implemented faculty, staff and student DEIA training:

- Launched diversity and inclusion training workshops, beginning with training led by Shaun Harper, executive director of the USC Race and Equity Center, on ‘Strategic Approaches to Diversifying Our Faculty’ in Spring 2018.
- Collected research and tested options for training and professional development among faculty, staff and USC Annenberg Media Center (FY21).
- Provided mandatory training to USC Annenberg Media Center student leaders and many faculty through the Maynard Institute in Fall 2020.
- Launched Media Center student training series in Fall 2021, led by Dr. Shaun Harper and co-developed with USC Annenberg faculty and DEIA associate dean.
- Developing mandatory DEIA training program for master’s students in our public relations and communication master’s programs for pilot launch in Spring 2022, full rollout in Fall 2022. (collaboration with Ed-Tech company Minerva).
- Conducted a series of six staff professional development training sessions from November 2020 through July 2021 centered around creating a culture of inclusiveness and equity. The sessions, led by organizational psychologist Dr. Corey Yeager, integrated the school’s Culture Journey findings and included DEIA training, dialogues, breakout discussions, and 1:1 conversations.
- Fall 2021 planning commenced for a new faculty training series led by USC Race and Equity Center.

Centered and highlighted diverse perspectives in our public programming:

- Created [A Path Forward](#) web page for USC Annenberg community with a space to come together to engage with issues of racial justice, with a DEIA resource list open to faculty and student input.
- Developing a “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Event Planning Guide” with our MarCom team. In addition, a required acknowledgement field was added to the school’s event request form to affirm organizers’ commitment to incorporating a diversity and inclusion strategy into event conception, planning and execution.

- [Institute for Diversity and Empowerment](#) at USC Annenberg helmed signature events on campus exploring issues of difference, identity and culture in media, such as R.A.P. Lessons: Bridging Race, Arts, and Placemaking — a six-week video exhibition throughout Wallis Annenberg Hall.
- Created USC Annenberg and HBO Diverse Voices Forum (see Thought Leadership section).
- Commemorated numerous important historical moments to draw connections to our present and future, including [a panel exploring the legacy of the Chicano Moratorium](#) from Latino reporting and journalism education within USC Annenberg to the #SomosLAT movement.

Centered diverse perspectives in student media with faculty and curricular support:

- The newly reconfigured USC Annenberg DEIA Council includes a working group for student media training and practices that is reviewing literature and best practices for educating and training students and drafting a set of recommendations for faculty, media center and student media advisors.
- The USC Annenberg Media Center newsroom began a source diversity tracking initiative to benchmark current practices and set goals for improvement to ensure we are elevating diverse voices and perspectives.
- Launched a student-led Equity Board in the USC Annenberg Media Center to provide oversight and insight throughout the newsroom to help every student journalist understand how best to report on underrepresented communities. The board advocates for ethical practices across desks, inclusive hiring throughout the newsroom, and an overall environment of acceptance.
- Created the [Media Center’s Guide for Equitable Reporting Strategies and Newsroom Style](#), authored by a journalism master’s student with guidance from faculty.
- Student-led creation of content reflected increasingly diverse perspectives including Dimelo, USC's only bilingual, student-run news desk designed to amplify the Latinx voice; Black., a vertical for students to produce stories about Black issues for all platforms, which went live Fall 2021; and a Community Zine project produced in partnership with LA Taco, highlighting the diverse food culture of Los Angeles, and distributed in South LA neighborhoods.
- Grew diversity of backgrounds, perspectives, and expertise among part-time/adjunct faculty serving alongside our full-time faculty as instructors, advisors and coaches in our Media Center. The Media Center team has become a highly diverse group of part- and full-time faculty of whom 22% are Latinx, 24% Black, and 5% Asian.

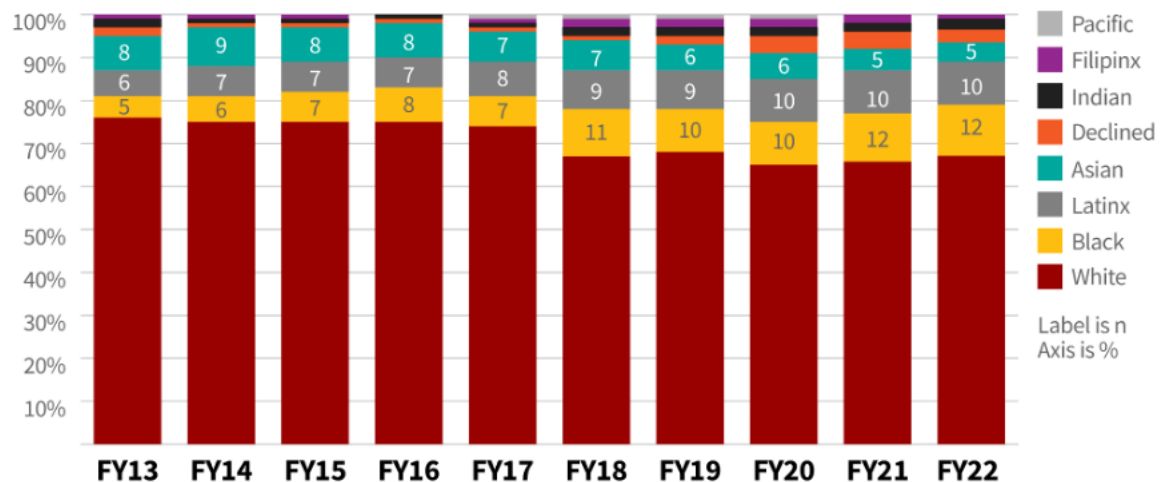
Developed and implemented strategies to increase diversity, access and equity in admissions practices and initiatives with the goal of increasing the number of BIPOC students in our undergraduate programs:

- Expanded and enhanced recruitment efforts to attract grads from minority serving institutions (MSI), including playing a lead role in USC’s inaugural MSI information session in Fall 2021.
- Building on our longstanding relationships with HBCUs, held Annenberg’s first HBCU virtual recruitment fair in Fall 2020 and revised it for Fall 2021.
- Exploring articulation agreements with the nine colleges of the LA Community College District to enhance the number of diverse students (including first-generation, low socio-economic backgrounds, and historically underrepresented) transferring to journalism.

Identified and implemented strategies to strengthen faculty diversity, equity and inclusion:

- Continued to evolve, develop and apply best practices for faculty screening, recruitment and hiring, including ensuring diverse representation in faculty search committees, requiring committee members to complete the school’s designated DEIA training before serving; advertising open positions in a range of outlets that target diverse readerships; and ensuring candidate pools comprise broad representation (and restarting searching when this is not the case).
- Demonstrated measurable progress toward increasing diversity of faculty across all areas of difference (see chart below and Academic Excellence: Faculty section).
- Strengthened efforts to foster an inclusive faculty community by creating a mentoring culture that supports advancement and promotes equal opportunity for all faculty, and by valuing and rewarding activities of our faculty that promote diversity and inclusion.

Annenberg FT Faculty Ethnic Diversity



Student outreach, support and mentoring (see Student Experience section)

Expanded community engagement efforts with an emphasis on creating an increasingly diverse student pipeline interested in pursuing further education and careers in communication and media:

- Secured and renewed donor funding for the USC [Annenberg Youth Academy for Media and Civic Engagement](#), an annual three-week summer intensive academy for 28 high school students. Students are exposed to the equivalent of first-year college-level courses and develop a rich understanding of the necessary role that media communications and journalism play in fashioning civic-minded thought leaders and innovators. All AYA participants have gone on to four-year colleges; 20% are pursuing media degrees.

- [Annenberg High School Day](#): a bi-annual program that brings hundreds of local high school youth to receive hands-on immersive training in journalism, communication, media, and public relations. More than 35 USC Annenberg students engaged as program volunteers.
- [Critical Media Project](#): a free media literacy web resource for educators and students (ages 8-21) that aims to (1) raise critical awareness and provide the tools to decode media representations of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, socio-economic class, religion, age, and disability, and develop an understanding as to how these identities intersect, and (2) to encourage and offer guidance for students to tell their own stories, create their own representations, and uphold their status as active and engaged participants in civic society. USC students help to shape the content of the Critical Media Project, making the issues presented particularly relevant to high school students.

Thought Leadership

USC Annenberg plays a vital role in fostering conversations globally, nationally and locally around critical issues facing our society and reshaping our industries of practice. During FY18–21, we advanced our thought leadership, using our research, teaching and scholarship to confront ongoing crises and systemic challenges, and to deepen our understanding of the profound changes in the world around us.

Our faculty, published in academic journals, were frequent contributors to the popular press and mainstream media. Through the creation and dissemination of their work and the public's engagement with it, our faculty delivered insights, challenged assumptions, and offered knowledge-based solutions to drive change.

In addition to increasing visibility for our faculty's research, scholarship and professional practice (as reflected in the Academic Excellence: Faculty section), we also continued to expand our deep connections to partners — individuals, companies and institutions. These are connections that we make for, and share with our students, and they contribute to a rich experience that blends academic and professional.

Since FY18, USC Annenberg has hosted approximately 300 events each year, offering a rich and diverse array of timely, culturally relevant, intellectually stimulating programming that enriches the student experience and that of the entire USC community, in addition to actively engaging with fellow scholars, professionals and the school's broader publics. As the range of topics and speakers demonstrate, USC Annenberg influences conversations in powerful and immediate ways, with impacts that extend not just to our academic disciplines and industries of practice but to our society's very foundations.

We also continued to leverage our position at the heart of Los Angeles, one of the world's great media capitals of the world. As we experience firsthand the vibrant growth in tech, art and culture, fashion, food, politics, and new media, USC Annenberg faculty, students and staff engage with this vibrant, complex, culturally diverse city as a laboratory for scholarship and practice, creating and participating in unique community engagement opportunities across all of our research and practice areas.

The coverage of our faculty, students and alumni on our owned, shared and earned media, combined with our events and community engagement, reflects our deep engagement with the issues — scholarly and professional — essential to propelling our academic disciplines and industries into a vibrant future.

Earned and Owned Media Coverage

Increased visibility for faculty research/scholarship and professional practice (see Academic Excellence: Faculty section)

Produced engaging content emphasizing the school's student-centered approach as well as its foundations in teaching, research/scholarship and practice (see Critical Foundations: Communications section)

Events and Programming

Attracted top scholars, industry leaders and cultural icons to discuss meaningful issues that are informing and impacting the fields of communication, journalism and public relations:

- [Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie](#), who received the Norman Lear Center's Ev Rogers Award.
- [US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy](#) on digital media and the Biden Administration's mental health priorities.
- [Former president of the Republic of China \(Taiwan\) Ma Ying-jeou](#) on geopolitical relations.
- [NBC Nightly News Anchor Lester Holt](#) on investigative reporting, fake news and transparency in the age of social media.
- Ambassador Capricia Penavic Marshall, who served as chief of protocol for President Obama, on the critical work of building diplomatic bridges.
- [Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn](#) on their book *Tightrope*, which chronicles the humanitarian crisis unfolding in rural America.
- [Congressman Joe Kennedy III](#) on American politics, the Democratic Party's prospects for the 2020 presidential election, and advice for the new generation.
- [Director, writer and producer Elizabeth Banks](#) on inclusion in film and the importance of female-driven projects.
- Actress Sophia Bush, Creative Artists Agency's Natalie Tran, and Democracy Works' Mike Ward on harnessing the power and reach of the entertainment industry to create positive social change.
- Annual Kenneth Owler Smith Symposiums on Public Relations featured Jay Carney, Senior Vice President, Corporate Affairs at Amazon, as well as Robert Gibbs, former White House communications director.
- [NBPA President and All-Star Chris Paul](#) on impact of COVID-19 pandemic and the racial injustice movement on the NBA: its players and fans.

Served as the center of numerous, diverse and important discussions that wrestled with complex issues such as:

- *The perils and promise of new technology*: AI and the evolution of a transformational technology; use of AI in data journalism; the misinformation pandemic and the networks that fuel it; the impact of mobile technologies on families around the world; cultural industries and digital platforms; the impact of new technology on public relations.
- *Racial and social justice, diversity, and inclusion*: harnessing the power of mobile and social media to confront inequities and drive change; inclusion strategies in podcasting, film, music and other industries; changing newsroom cultures; data and citizenship; health care and civil rights; homelessness and digital inclusion; civic engagement and the U.S. census; race in the fashion industry; cultural expression of political consciousness among athletes.

- *Environmental sustainability and climate change.*
- *Democracy 2020: The role of communication and journalism in a democratic society; cybersecurity and the elections.*
- *The evolution of journalism: Emerging tools and techniques for journalists; new threats to journalists' safety; how cultural and technology shifts and the global pandemic are changing our relationship to media and the news; health reporting trends and tools; business models of the future; the state of journalism in today's political culture; truth in the era of fake news.*
- *Living and coping with COVID-19: Making sense of "the greatest social experiment of our time" and managing the tectonic shifts in our daily lives; addressing the disparities in education and health revealed in its wake; government continuity and contingency planning; crisis communication; managing disruption and new opportunities in our industries of practice.*
- *Women's leadership: media's gender revolution and power and parity in women's leadership; identity and storytelling.*
- *Global public diplomacy: China's efforts to build soft power; building "the wall"; writing and refugees; public diplomacy on the Korean Peninsula; blockchain for policy; Japan-China relations; reframing the discourse on Israel/Palestine; America's unwinnable wars; and digital public diplomacy.*

Convened school-wide forums at pivotal moments to create deeper sense of connection among students, faculty and staff:

- Provided support for heightened increase in student suicides and overdoses (November 2019), early onset of COVID-19 pandemic (March 2020), Class of 2020 and post-graduation plans (April/May 2020), Racial justice movement in the wake of George Floyd's murder (June 2020), Presidential Election (November 2020).

Introduced signature event series with industry leaders and partners:

- Created [USC Annenberg and HBO Diverse Voices Forum](#), a year-long series designed to connect HBO's top talent and producers with USC Annenberg students and faculty to explore the role of diversity in the future of entertainment. Featured guests included: Academy [Award-winning actor Mahershala Ali](#); [Anna Deavere Smith, writer, producer and star of HBO's Notes from the Field](#); [Jeffrey Wright, actor, activist and star of HBO's O.G. and Westworld](#); and [Issa Rae, creator, writer and star of her own HBO series Insecure](#).
 - Recognized with bronze Award of Excellence in the "Multi-day/Series Special Events" category from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) District VII.
- Created [Annenberg Intelligence](#) online series to connect students with organizational leaders, who share their industry insights and career advice as we confront the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racial injustice. Content was designed to align with coursework (asynchronous content) and was co-hosted with students as co-moderators. Featured guests included: Award-winning sports journalist Stephen A. Smith, [WE Communications Global CEO and Founder Melissa Waggener Zorkin](#), [NBA Executive Vice President and Chief Communications Officer Mike Bass](#), and [Founder and CEO of UnitedMasters and Translation Steve Stoute](#).
- Teamed up with Spotify to produce World of Podcasting online series, which highlights diverse voices across popular genres and innovative formats from Spotify's perch atop the podcasting

industry. Featured guests include: Jemele Hill, creator and host of the Spotify podcast “Jemele Hill is Unbothered” and Titi Shodiya, co-host of Season 6 of Spotify’s “Dissect” podcast.

Served as host for professional organizations’ conferences and events:

- National Association of Black Journalists Media Summit and Career Fair
- Online News Association's Women's Leadership Accelerator
- Robert C. Maynard Institute for Journalism Education
- Public Relations Society of America

Community Engagement

Advanced programs to introduce students to the fields and disciplines of communication, develop media literacy and a pipeline of diverse talent for media industries (see Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access section)

Empowered local communities through storytelling:

- [Crosstown](#): a data-journalism project jointly run with USC Viterbi’s Integrated Media Systems Center that transforms data about key quality-of-life issues, such as traffic, crime and air quality, into local news stories on a website tailored to individual communities. Created a [new model for local news](#) that leverages neighborhood-level data to create specialized, hyperlocal email newsletters to serve L.A.’s many and varied communities.
- [JOVRNALISM Class](#): students train and empower members of underserved and underrepresented communities — such as [foster youth](#), domestic abuse survivors and those experiencing homelessness — to tell their own stories using 360-degree camera kits.

Contributed to the USC Initiative to Eliminate Homelessness through major projects including:

- [Reporting on Homelessness Course](#): students reported on a range of related stories and published a four-part series in the Huffington Post.
- [Connecting Skid Row](#): conducted community-engaged research with surveys and interviews, followed by co-design with community partner (LA CAN) of off-the-grid charging stations with free WiFi for resident online access, and finally mapping of Skid Row’s communication technology infrastructure.
- [Hand-washing Stations to Fight COVID-19](#): doctoral students in the graduate seminar course “Research, Practice and Social Change” engaged in a participatory research project with LA CAN to deploy DIY hand-washing stations on Skid Row to help combat COVID.

Critical Foundations

Operations, Administration and Culture

Historically, USC Annenberg's staff and senior leadership have been a tight-knit group of colleagues who have demonstrated mission-driven excellence in school operations and administration. They have always displayed ingenuity, creativity and sensitivity to the needs of our students, faculty, their dean and school directors, and one another. That was exceedingly evident during the disruption of the pandemic.

As is common in institutions of higher education, professionals serving in staff positions are often overlooked and undervalued. We have worked over the past several years to offer opportunities for professional growth, to more fully engage their expertise, to erode siloes between faculty and staff, and to build a stronger sense of community and belonging. The senior leadership team, called Deans and Directors, or DnD, was expanded to help support the work of the school directors, bringing additional expertise and perspectives. This reinvigorated team has been (and continues to be) critical in working to realize our vision and to address strategic issues and challenges at USC Annenberg.

Over the past several years, we have created an infrastructure to support professional development, community building and well-being for our staff of 150. An increased cadence of communication, most often during all-staff Zoom calls amid the intense months of pandemic-related upheaval and disruption, helped build trust, improved the flow of information and created a deeper sense of belonging. With the campus reopening, these all-staff meetings have continued on a regular basis. We created team-building and learning opportunities for staff through our Culture Journey activities and a DEIA education series, cultivating community and supporting coalitions within USC Annenberg.

Expanded senior leadership team (aka DnD) to integrate additional perspectives and areas of expertise and to build additional leadership capacity:

- Added directors of the Center for Public Relations and the USC Annenberg Media Center, and the chair of the Faculty Council.
- Created new positions, assistant dean for student affairs and assistant dean for excellence in teaching, adding important voices around the needs and experiences of students and elevating pedagogical best practices and faculty support.
- Increased the diversity of senior leadership, increasing URM and female representation (28% Hispanic, 17% Black, 56% white; 44% male and 56% female).

Leveraged the strengths of the senior leadership team to navigate significant challenges, particularly the disruption of the pandemic:

- Created Project Restart working groups, aligned with the university's planning process. Combined senior leaders across functions to bring multiple perspectives to bear on critical issues, including

teaching support for faculty during the transition to online learning, and subsequent return to campus, and students' needs as they were facing pandemic-related challenges and disruptions.

Created new leadership and advocacy group for staff:

- Initiated the creation of the first-ever Staff Council to improve communication between staff and senior leadership and to provide a forum for staff to solicit and distribute information related to administration, programs and issues affecting staff. Their mission is to serve as a voice for USC Annenberg staff, to advise the dean on the working climate and to communicate important information.

Initiated staff education and development opportunities, including:

- Committed to USC's Culture Journey, providing four USC Annenberg staff members to train and serve as facilitators and advocates in the Culture Network for the university-wide town halls and discussion sessions.
- Created and implemented a professional development and culture-building program at USC Annenberg centered on creating a culture of inclusiveness committed to equity and anti-racist policies, principles and practices. Helmed by our senior associate dean of administration and the Staff Council president, the series was led by organizational psychologist Dr. Corey Yeager and ran from November 2020 through July 2021.

Financial Management and Fundraising

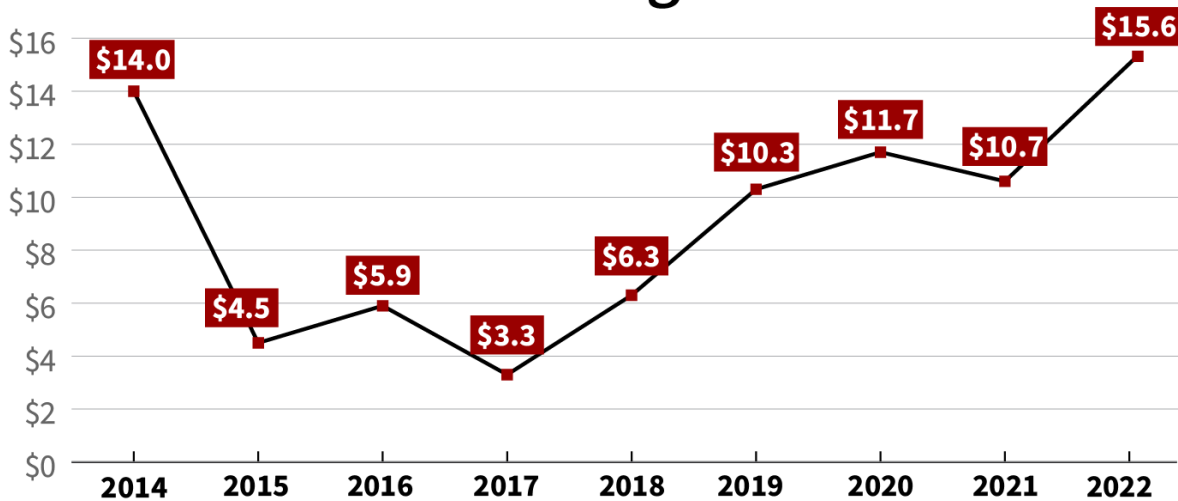
Financial health and sustainability remain a top priority for the school, and careful stewardship resulted in four consecutive balanced budgets from 2017 to 2021, reversing a period of deficits. We have added steadily to our reserves, driven largely through cost-containment measures and reductions in discretionary expenses together with enrollment-driven revenue gains. At the same time, healthy fundraising in excess of goals has allowed us to advance strategic priorities, including student aid, faculty support and facility renovations. Through this strong financial foundation, together with nimble decision-making and flexible funding mechanisms, we have achieved a degree of financial resiliency that promises a healthy and sustainable future for the school.

Financial Stewardship Highlights

- Returned to operating surplus generation in FY18 after several years of using Annenberg Reserve funds to finance operations, moving from a \$3.4M budgeted shortfall to a \$1.2M surplus
- While growth was not linear and reflects pandemic-related enrollment declines, total gross revenues increased 16.5% over a four-year period to \$94.2M in FY21 from \$80.9M in FY17.
- Total expenses (excluding ACC's and indirects) have only increased a total of 7.2% during this same four-year time frame. Prioritized faculty and staff compensation growth while controlling non-compensation operating expenses.
- Delivered an unrestricted surplus total of \$6.2M from FY18 to FY21..

- Increased the USC Annenberg Reserve account by more than \$7M (from \$3.3M in FY18 to a FY21 year-end balance of \$10.7M).
- Worked closely with the Annenberg Trust to identify prudent targets for reserve balances, with a recommended floor of \$10M, which will allow us to be resilient and responsive to critical needs and emergent opportunities in support of our academic mission.

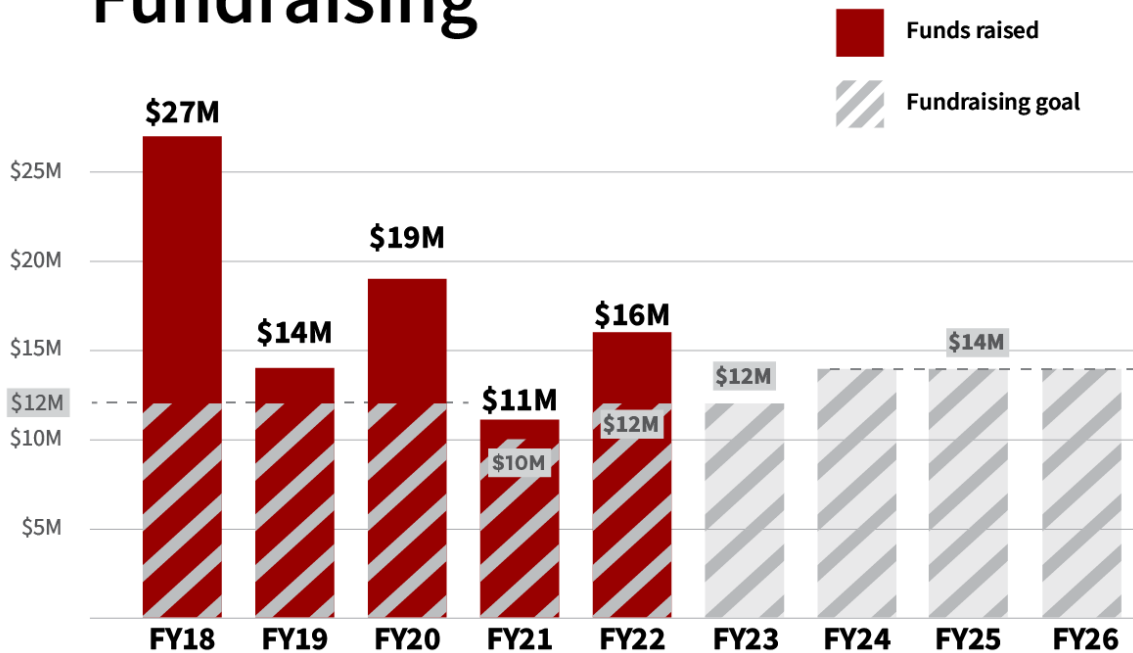
USC Annenberg Reserves



Fundraising Efforts, Priorities and Results

Our development team worked to create a more robust financial foundation, to broaden our base of future support by diversifying our gift funding streams, and to advance our key priorities, particularly student support and academic innovation. While not the sole arbiter of success, these numbers reflect a clear and persuasive vision, the excellence of our research community, and the enthusiasm that exists for our educational mission. These gifts reflect resounding support for our school's mission, our talented students, the robust educational and professional experiences we provide, and the exceptional faculty at our school's core. Our fundraising activities demonstrate our deep commitment to equity and access, and have consistently prioritized fundraising for student aid. Historically, gifts and grants from the Annenberg Foundation and family have constituted the majority of funds raised toward the school's endowment.

Fundraising



Fundraising

- Increased annual fundraising totals by 20% with \$76M raised from FY17-21.
- More than doubled fundraising goal of \$12M in FY18, yielding \$27M.
- FY20 was the highest fundraising year in school’s history without an Annenberg gift, yielding \$19M in funds raised and eclipsing our \$12M goal.
- FY21 during the challenging climate of the global pandemic, we surpassed our adjusted \$10M goal in FY21, raising \$11M.
- Raised \$27M in endowment funding (\$10M from Annenberg-related vs \$17M from non-Annenberg), contributing more to the school’s endowment from sources outside of the Annenberg Foundation and family than at any time during the school’s history.
- In recognition of Willow Bay’s appointment as dean, Wallis Annenberg established a new Leadership Fund, a permanent endowment of \$10M to be used at the discretion of the dean to support special needs, projects and opportunities.

Dramatically increased non-tuition student aid:

- Established Student Success Fund which has grown to \$4M. These funds are awarded to students pursuing extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities that are not covered by tuition.

- Established Student Emergency Aid Fund which has grown to \$1.3M. This funding assists students experiencing unforeseen circumstances and emergencies impacting their ability to pay tuition or cover everyday living expenses.
- Combined, nearly \$5M has been raised for the Student Success and Student Emergency Aid initiatives, including \$3.4M in endowment.

Grew diversity/talent pipeline-focused scholarships:

- Prioritized fundraising to support training the next generation of ethical and diverse journalists, and increased opportunity and access, including a \$500K gift to provide full tuition and support for five BIPOC students pursuing master's degrees in journalism, a [\\$1M endowed gift from ViacomCBS](#) to an HBCU alumna/us pursuing graduate journalism studies at USC Annenberg. And a scholarship to help America's newsrooms reflect the communities they serve.
- Raised more than \$7M for journalism scholarships since 2016 and succeeded in reducing the debt load of our journalism school graduates by nearly half since that time.
- Enlisted our [Center for Public Relations Board of Advisors](#) to create a new scholarship for a Black graduate student studying public relations and advertising to meet the demands of the Spring 2021 admissions cycle. Pursuing endowed funding in this space.
- Funded fellowships and internships with industry partners have yielded \$125K as of FY21, providing professional development support to more than 50 students and contributing to a diverse talent pipeline.

Faculty Chairs and Support

- Raised \$3M gift to establish an endowed [Chair in Cross-Cultural Communication](#), dedicated to advancing innovation, leadership and research into the ways music and popular culture can serve as conduits for cross-cultural exchange.
- Received \$4.5M estate gift to establish the William Griffith Chair in Journalism.

Research Support

- Seeded the MASTS (Media as Socio-Technical Systems) research collaborative through a gift of \$300K.
- Raised funds to strengthen research engagement across the school, including gifts of \$100K for a Faculty Research Fund and \$50K for an Undergraduate Research Fund.

Communications

The Office of Communication and Marketing's chief responsibility is to build an awareness of, and affinity for, the USC Annenberg mission and brand through their storytelling. The team focuses on the development, creation and distribution of engaging content across multiple mediums and platforms and for a variety of target audiences, including prospective and current students, donors and external media. The team's diverse efforts have played a pivotal role in enhancing the visibility of USC Annenberg,

deepening engagement with critical issues, individuals and institutions — and amplifying the school's impact within and beyond its community and industries of practice.

Restructured team to support strategic marketing and brand storytelling:

- Associate dean for communication and marketing increased focus on strategic communication priorities.
- Marcom team developed critical strengths in creative services, event production, and content creation and digital distribution, including owned media.

Produced engaging content emphasizing [the school's student-centered approach](#) as well as its foundations in teaching, research/scholarship and industries of practice:

- Delivered a robust stream of news content for the school's owned media channels.
 - Posted more than 300 original stories and 100 videos on USC Annenberg's website and social channels between FY18–21, increasing production by more than 150% in FY21 despite added internal communication demands amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Partnered with the development team to launch redesigned alumni magazine — USC Annenberg Magazine — for alumni, donors and parents.
 - Recognized with Gold in “Design (periodicals/magazines)” and “College and University General-Interest Magazines (circulation more than 30,000)” categories in Council for the Advancement and Support of Education's (CASE) National Circle of Excellence Awards.

Implemented comprehensive internal communication efforts to foster increased sense of community:

- Launched biweekly newsletters segmented to faculty/staff and students as well as a weekly events newsletter. Open and click-thru rates for all were well above industry standards.
- Centralized messaging of dean's school-wide communications and distributed more than 100 unique messages to students, faculty, staff, alumni and parents between FY18-21.

Leveraged strengths and competencies of communication and marketing team to advance key school priorities and initiatives, including:

- Diversity, equity, inclusion and access
- Integrated recruitment marketing for academic programs
- Student experience
- Increased support for faculty research and practice

The Path Forward

Since 2017, we have experienced a time marked by rapid and relentless change in our fields, much of it driven by technological advances. Wireless communication, for example, spread faster than any communication technology in history. It served as a potent source of fuel for the creation of new mass media, the “frictionless sharing” of online social networks — connecting billions in just a few years.

The events of FY17–21 only served to accelerate that change, as transformation in communication and its related disciplines have rewired the way we live, work, play, solve problems and consider our future. The internet of today, for example, is giving rise to the metaverse, where physical and virtual experiences combine, and the deployment of 5G promises of a new era of ubiquitous connectivity. Consequences, too, have emerged in rapid succession as we face a pandemic of misinformation, the erosion of norms around trust and truth, and the proliferation of networks that fuel it.

What has become clear is that a new paradigm of “dynamic stability,” has become an absolute necessity for us amid this new age of accelerated disruption and opportunity. This will continue to fuel our progress as we invest in emerging areas of scholarly inquiry and new domains of faculty expertise, identify and support unique pathways for our students to acquire new knowledge and along with it human-centered and technology-infused skills, and to advance conversations that are critical to our disciplines and our industries.

For example, USC Annenberg is ideally positioned to lead on the issues surrounding artificial intelligence and the ways computational technologies are transforming life and our intellectual landscape. These lines of inquiry go beyond the technical aspects of AI that are reshaping society and delve deeper into the historical, cultural and ethical roots of communication and its related fields. As our faculty leads a long-range planning process, we will identify other areas of scholarly opportunity.

Encouraging our faculty to think outside the USC Annenberg box, to see academic and professional collaborations with other academic units across the university will propel our future growth. We hope to explore how additional joint faculty appointments could expand our research collaborations with other academic units, develop new areas for high-impact scholarship and maximize our research productivity.

Developing leading-edge curricula that prepares our students with 21st-century competencies — including those in media literacy, data stewardship and diversity and inclusion — is not only paramount to their academic and professional success, but essential to our shared progress. For instance, we will support the demand for increasingly diverse workforces, by preparing communications professionals who are ready to collaborate across, manage and lead teams with diverse professional expertise and personal backgrounds.

As career paths become more personalized and fluid, less defined by the structural constraints of the past, we will develop more personalized pathways that allow students to integrate professional development opportunities into their academic schedules in different ways. The sustained use of our new

data-connected and data-informed student advising platform will allow us to help students chart and explore these paths, as we develop new models to blend classroom and applied learning.

We have learned so much from expanding and strengthening our partnerships with alumni and our industries of practice. We have witnessed firsthand the intergenerational transfer of knowledge that comes from engaging with our students and early-career alumni. We are watching, in real time, the demand for continual acquisition of new knowledge and skills, and have an opportunity, if not an imperative, to bring relevant and dynamic curricula to learners at all life's stages and phases. It isn't just our students whose career pathways are defying traditional norms. We will develop opportunities for our alumni and industry partners, offering access to lifelong learning and new skill acquisitions from a trusted brand in higher ed.

With the ability to think critically and learn new skills so fundamental to the future of our workforce, including our own, we will leverage our dynamic stability close to home. As we strive to fulfill USC Annenberg's mission with energy and excellence, we will identify new skills and professional tools essential to future success. For example, we will work to build a data mindset, a true change in USC Annenberg's culture, reinforcing the idea of data as a shared asset to empower teams' success. Our senior leadership will also work to identify talent needs, and optimal team structures to align with emerging areas of growth and opportunity.

Finally, USC Annenberg will continue to address the pressing issues of this new era of communication as we work to restore trust in rigorous, ethical journalism to shape the future of persuasive communications, to provide guidance and counsel to those who make policy for the ubiquitous and unpredictable force of new mass media, to help technology companies grapple with the unintended consequences of their massive reach and influence, and encourage them to consider issues such as values, ethics and intent. We will continue to bring our expertise in cultural theory and criticism to examine issues of race, gender and class as they shape contemporary communication, and we will use that knowledge to guide the media industry and emerging platforms on issues of equity and inclusion.

USC Annenberg stands at another exciting threshold into a new world whose contours and realities we are just beginning to fathom. As we have experienced a near constant state of flux, and learned to "lean in" to these titanic shifts, we are incredibly proud of the resilience, resolve, flexibility, generosity and creativity of our USC Annenberg faculty, staff and leadership in meeting this steady stream of challenges head-on as is so amply reflected in this report.

