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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **In Response to Federal Cuts to National Endowment for the Humanities, Mellon Foundation Announces \$15 Million Emergency Funding for Humanities Councils, including up to \$250,000 for Humanities Guåhan**

*This investment by the Mellon Foundation will help stabilize Humanities Guåhan after the sudden cancellation of its federal operating grants by NEH earlier this month.*

Hagåtña, GU, Thursday, May 1, 2025 — Today, the Mellon Foundation announced a \$15 million emergency funding commitment to the Federation of State Humanities Councils (the Federation) in response to the abrupt federal funding cuts that have devastated state humanities councils. This emergency funding will help provide support to all 56 state and jurisdictional humanities councils across the United States, including up to \$250,000 for Humanities Guåhan.

Mellon's investment comes at a critical moment when \$65 million in federal support for state humanities councils has been eliminated as a result of cuts to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). On April 2, Humanities Guåhan received notice that all its grant funding through the NEH had been cancelled, effective immediately, resulting in a loss of over \$750,000.

The grant from Mellon means an immediate \$200,000 for Humanities Guåhan, plus a \$50,000 challenge grant if we can raise the same amount in community donations. Members of the public can help meet the match by donating to Humanities Guåhan through <https://tinyurl.com/supporthg>.

### **What does this grant mean for Humanities Guåhan?**

This emergency grant provides vital breathing room. It allows Humanities Guåhan to restore core operations, support staff, and resume essential programming—including the relaunch of our family literacy initiative, Motherread/Fatheread. This program provides literary resources to those who need them most, empowering families by promoting school readiness for children, increasing adult literacy, and strengthening pathways to further education or employment. This work has been carried out in partnership with key community organizations such as the Guam

Head Start Program, the Department of Corrections Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Program (RSAT), and Catholic Social Service Aleo Women's Shelter.

This funding is also essential for sustaining our Community Conversations program, which provides spaces for connection, sharing of stories, finding common ground, and deepening our collective understanding of the humanities and the human experience. Outreach for this program spans across Guåhan, Micronesia, the Pacific region, and globally. Our community partnerships have included organizations such as the Salvation Army Lighthouse Recovery Center, Guma' Mami, and the Department of Youth Affairs.

However, while this generous support helps stabilize the organization in the short term, it does not close the full gap left by the loss of federal NEH funding. Humanities Guåhan still urgently needs continued community support to sustain its work over the long term.

"This funding from the Mellon Foundation is a critical lifeline," said CJ Ochoco, Executive Director of Humanities Guåhan. "It allows us to keep moving forward at a time of deep uncertainty. While this support offers real hope, we still need our community to help us meet the match and sustain the work that matters—supporting literacy, preserving culture, and creating spaces where the people of Guåhan can connect, reflect, and be heard."

The organization is deeply grateful for this emergency funding, and is calling on the community to help meet the match and carry the work forward. Together, Guåhan can meet this moment and ensure the humanities remain strong and rooted in the island's future.

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### **About Humanities Guåhan**

Founded in 1991 by a dedicated group of citizens from Guåhan, Humanities Guåhan is a federally recognized non-profit organization affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), an independent federal agency. Our mission is to foster community engagement and dialogue, inspire critical thinking, and enrich the quality of life for island residents through the power of the humanities. We present and support a wide range of public humanities programs, including family literacy initiatives, community grant-making, interpretive exhibitions, documentary screenings and discussions, cultural workshops and performances, literary and food democracy tours, and community conversations. We are committed to strengthening and expanding public humanities programming for the people of Guåhan, building foundational support and forging partnerships with local organizations to benefit our island and people.

### **About the Federation of State Humanities Councils**

Founded in 1977, the Federation of State Humanities Councils (Federation) is the membership organization of the 56 state and jurisdictional humanities councils. The Federation supports, connects, and amplifies the work and voices of our members, demonstrating councils' value for

communities and their collective impact on civic health and cultural vibrancy. The Federation envisions a fully resourced, inclusive, and thriving humanities council network.

### **About The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation**

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is the nation's largest supporter of the arts and humanities. Since 1969, the Foundation has been guided by its core belief that the humanities and arts are essential to human understanding. We believe that the arts and humanities are where we express our complex humanity, and that everyone deserves the beauty and empowerment that can be found there. Through our grants, we seek to build just communities enriched by meaning and guided by critical thinking, where ideas and imagination can thrive.

### **Media Kit**

For photos, please access the media kit through the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1R4nN3TZzCISuqJEiV9wRHVAmR54kXje9?usp=sharing>

### **Media Contact**

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