

the
**HUO FAMILY
FOUNDATION**

Impact Report 2021



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The Huo Family Foundation is a grant-giving foundation based in London. Its mission is to support education, communities and the pursuit of knowledge.

© The Royal Opera House, Tristram Kenton



2021 was another extraordinary year that posed myriad challenges to people across the globe. For many, it was a year that started in lockdown and ended with the uncertainty of another COVID variant disrupting our way of life.

Throughout 2021, the organisations supported by the Huo Family Foundation worked tirelessly to help the communities they serve. Particular support was given to the performing arts sector in London which faced unprecedented challenges. In the following pages, we examine the way in which the institutions, performers, and technicians adapted to overcome these hurdles.

This report, our second annual Impact Report, also highlights some of the incredible work being carried out by our partners in other sectors. Our aim is to enable others to reach their potential, to make great scientific discoveries, release artistic talent, and gain a better understanding of our world.

In 2021 we continued to support ARK, Cambridge University, Columbia University, Fudan University, Imperial College, King's College London, Natural History Museum, Oxford Internet Institute, Oxford University, Policy Exchange, Princeton University, Tate Galleries, Teach for All, Teach for China, Teach First and Youth Communication.

We were delighted to make new grants to the Courtauld Institute of Art, Help Musicians, The London Symphony Orchestra, The National Theatre, The Old Vic, The Royal Opera House, and the Theatre Artists Fund.

In 2021 we observed extraordinary resilience, passion, creativity and curiosity in the teams we have had the privilege of supporting. This gives us renewed hope for the future and a desire to continue to make the world a better place for future generations.

Yan Huo & Xue Fang
Founders of the Huo Family Foundation

2021 beneficiaries

Education



COVID-19



Arts



Policy & Research



© Youth Communication



Our mission and impact

Since its inception in 2009, the Huo Family Foundation has given over \$50 million to support projects in the UK, the US and China.

The Foundation's mission is to support education, communities, and the pursuit of knowledge. Its current areas of focus are education, neuroscience and psychology, public policy, the arts, and scientific research.

Through its grants, the Foundation hopes to improve the prospects of individuals and to support the work of organisations seeking to build a safe and successful future for all society.

Focus Area

The Performing Arts

In early 2021, with the nation still in lockdown, it was clear that theatres and music venues were a long way from recovery. At the heart of the sector are the freelance artists who were impacted particularly hard by COVID-19; in a survey by Encore Musicians in 2020, 64% of respondents had considered leaving the profession.

Although some government support was available, many slipped through the cracks. The Huo Family Foundation was delighted to play a small role in helping the actors, set designers, writers, costume makers, and the many other skilled individuals who sustain the sector.

HFF gave £200,000 each to four leading arts organisations: the London Symphony Orchestra, the National Theatre, the Old Vic, and the Royal Opera House. Additionally, Help Musicians and the Theatre Artists Fund were given grants of £100,000 each to enable them to offer direct assistance to performers and technicians.



We released a short video in December 2021 telling the stories of some of those we supported in the arts.

Scan this QR code to watch.



© Theatre Artists Fund, Pamela Raith



London Symphony Orchestra

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It was one of the most powerful responses I have witnessed in all my years of working with the LSO. It was an honour to be a part of that. She could not stop smiling and literally shook with emotion. The session uncovered a love for classical music.

Member of Staff at the Royal London Hospital

HFF's funding helped the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) continue to support its freelancers and its community.

In its 100-year history, LSO's members had never been forced to stop performing, including throughout two world wars. Yet in 2020 and much of 2021, the Orchestra was silent. This closure of live performances meant a 60% reduction in income and a very challenging situation for the LSO. However, the Orchestra responded to the crisis in creative ways, determined to keep playing.

Its first focus was its members, many of whom missed out on government support. The LSO chose to continue to pay them for performances that were lost due to the pandemic and, when possible, broadcast live chamber performances from LSO St. Luke's to those at home.

The LSO swiftly launched its YouTube series *LSO Coffee Sessions* with musicians performing from their homes. LSO Children's Hospitals continued to see the LSO's members perform sessions via Zoom for young people with severe, life-threatening or terminal illnesses. LSO East London Academy string players were able to perform to 3000 people at Trafalgar Square in August 2021.



The Old Vic

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Very quickly, we realised we had to go right back to basics and think of how we could continue to reach our beneficiaries, to fulfil our charitable objectives, to keep paying our staff, to keep the building maintained and supported, despite the fact that overnight our income had gone to zero.

Kate Varah, Executive Director,
The Old Vic

The Foundation's grant helped the Old Vic diversify its offering.

The Old Vic does not receive any government funding. With a business model that relies on two thirds of its income from ticket sales and one third from philanthropy, it was impacted particularly badly by the closure of theatres.

During lockdown, the theatre introduced *IN CAMERA*, a paid streaming service that reached over 110,000 households in 93 countries worldwide, and *YOUR OLD VIC*, a free service that reached an audience of over 1 million. Both of these projects enabled the Old Vic's freelance community to continue to work despite doors being closed. Also moving online were the Old Vic's outreach projects which reached 4,300 members of the public. The programmes included: working with developing theatre-makers and those aspiring to enter the industry to boost their employability; a community project that connected primary schools to members of their over 60's Matinee Idols programme; and online professional development sessions for teachers to improve the arts provision in their schools.

As restrictions were lifted, the Old Vic continued to provide online performances alongside in-person productions. They had an online audience of nearly 90,000, while their live-streamed performances reached over 8,000 households. They were able to welcome 28 *Front Line Lambeth* participants, aged 16-25 and not in education, training or employment opportunities, to discover more about working in the creative industry and develop key transferable skills. Their flagship employability programme *Take the Lead*, aimed at school years 11-13, was adapted to deliver three workshops in school, with a final celebratory session called *OV Future Fest*.



National Theatre

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I think from all of this, institutions have recognised how artists are at the core of their work, and their wellbeing is paramount. It has helped the buildings, the freelancers, and the work become closer.

Clint Dyer, Deputy Creative Director, National Theatre

The Huo Family Foundation's funding enabled the National Theatre to continue giving theatre-makers meaningful employment.

The National Theatre typically stages 20-25 productions per year; in 2020 they only managed two. In order to survive financially, they reduced their workforce by one third. Although performances restarted in 2021, they were limited and were thrown into further difficulty with the rise of the Omicron variant.

In 2020, the National launched *National Theatre at Home*, allowing audiences to watch past performances online, with royalties being distributed to those involved in the original production. In addition, they continued to commission and develop new works, employing actors, writers, and directors. In early 2021, the Lyttleton Theatre transformed into a film studio, producing versions of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Death of England: Face to Face*. To foster and support theatre craftspeople, the National Theatre offered paid apprenticeships in technical theatre, scenic art, and costume.

The National Theatre continued its outreach throughout 2021: it worked to grow relationships with local and regional theatres, facilitating the improvement of the nation's social and cultural health; it gave secondary schools free access to *NT Live*, with 75% of all of the nation's schools accessing it over the year; and it continued to offer an expanding range of nationwide learning programmes to combat the decline in arts provisions in the UK and inspire the next generation of theatre workers.



Royal Opera House

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We understood that we had to stay close to the audience... We were determined to do whatever we could, whenever we could, to keep our artists together and to connect to our audiences.

Alex Beard, CEO,
Royal Opera House

The Huo Family Foundation's funding enabled the Royal Opera House (ROH) to continue to connect with audiences and produce great work.

The ROH had to adjust drastically at the beginning of 2021. *The Nutcracker*, a Christmas favourite, ran for only 4 out of a scheduled 17 performances over the festive period. Furthermore, their outreach to schools and the wider community was severely impacted. However, ROH continued to produce outstanding work and ensured access to it was maintained, both online and in-person where possible.

The ROH YouTube channel reached 1 million subscribers and their 15 pay-per-view online ballet performances were watched 233,000 times, two-thirds of which were from outside London.

The Opera House supported 1,400 teachers through its online platforms and its National Programmes, as well as seeing 80,000 visits to its *Create and Learn Programme* designed to help those home-schooling.

When live performances were able to continue in 2021, several free events were held, including *La Bohème* for NHS staff, two days of *ROH Unlocked* performed in the Covent Garden Piazza, and *ROH Open House*. ROH was also able to stage 48 ballet and opera performances through 3 mini-seasons that worked around changing government guidelines.



The Theatre Artists Fund

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If it wasn't for the Fund, I would have had to turn my back on the profession. I don't know what I would have done without it, personally, but now I'm in a position where I can ride the storm, I can wait for other auditions to come in, I can pay the mortgage and I can support my family.

Theatre Artists Fund
Beneficiary, Actor and Singer,
London

HFF's grant enabled the Theatre Artists Fund to give freelancers grants that would keep them afloat when they were unable to work.

The Theatre Artists Fund provides support for theatre workers across the UK in need of urgent financial support due to the devastating impact of COVID-19. Between July 2020 and December 2021, 8,924 emergency grants of £1,000 and £500 across six rounds have been awarded, towards living costs such as rent, food, and electricity alongside signposting to mental-health support.

The fund's primary concern is to champion those artists more vulnerable to financial hardship. On average across six funding rounds, 11% of grantees are a sole carer for a dependent or are a carer for someone with additional needs, 49% are receiving Universal Credit, and 35% identified as being from a lower socio-economic background. 56% of all grants have been received by artists outside of London.

By granting this support, the Fund hopes to enable both experienced and emerging artists to remain in the profession, while also encouraging fresh talent to enter into the creative industry, continuing theatre's positive impact on its communities.



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Help Musicians aren't there to pity or judge you; on the contrary, they sincerely want to support the people that make this industry.

Help Musicians beneficiary,
Blues singer, Edinburgh

Help Musicians

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When COVID first hit, it seemed almost impossible to continue making a career in music... The support from Help Musicians has obviously helped me financially, but also mentally, as it has restored my confidence and allowed me to be less stressed, which in turn has only had positive effects on my creativity.

Help Musicians beneficiary,
Singer-songwriter, Leeds

The Huo Family Foundation's funding supported those in the music industry who were unable to work.

Help Musicians reacted quickly to the pandemic in 2020, setting up the Coronavirus Hardship Fund to support freelancers with grants to help with their living costs. Since its inception, the fund has supported over 20,000 musicians with over 30,000 grants.

Unfortunately, 2021 proved as challenging for many freelancers as the previous year. 74% of musicians surveyed by Help Musicians saw a December 2021 income of less than half of their earnings for December 2019; 74% also said they earned less than £1000 in December 2021, a level that is below the National Living Wage. Furthermore, in 2021 Help Musicians saw a 65% rise in 2021 of those using their Music Minds Matter mental health support service.

Help Musicians hardship funding offered those struggling a valuable financial lifeline - one that encouraged them to stay in the industry.

Our partners

During 2021, the Huo Family Foundation was privileged to support a number of other organisations whose work is highlighted in the following pages.

You can find interviews with many of our beneficiaries in our *In Conversation With* series by scanning the QR code below.



Education & Research



© Teach First

Teach First

The Foundation continued to support two Teach First programmes, both focused on improving leadership in schools serving disadvantaged communities.

Leading Together works with leadership teams in schools to help them overcome the barriers which stop pupils from achieving their potential. In 2020/21, they worked with teams in 34 schools. 75% of the schools which have been Ofsted rated since starting the *Leading Together* programme have improved their rating.

Teach First's National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) aim to equip teachers for leadership positions within schools serving disadvantaged communities. Three quarters of headteachers in Teach First's partner schools agree that pupil outcomes had improved as a result of the training.

Going forward, Teach First will use their NPQ and *Leading Together* programmes to enable inclusive and diverse school leadership and promote a fair education for all.

Teach for China

Teach for China works towards a good education for all children in China, focusing on those from rural communities. The Foundation's grant has helped over 800 young teachers to deliver engaging and innovative lessons to pupils in 40 districts. In 2021, 40 schools had a Teach for China Fellow deliver English lessons for the first time and a third of the Fellows delivered classes that were once considered rare in rural communities, such as music, sports, art, and STEM subjects.

Pupils of Fellows showed great progress in 2021, with over half of their students achieving consistently good grades. The Fellows also delivered a range of extra-curricular activities for the pupils; highlights included an art project that encouraged pupils to use Yunnan ethnic culture to create prints that tell the stories of their villages and a month-long culture and art festival that encouraged pupils to think about the wider aspects of English as a subject.

Teach for All

Teach for All's mission is an equitable education for all children globally. They work to connect their 60 partner organisations, including Teach First and Teach for China, to help share ideas and practices to improve pupil outcomes. In 2021, their partner organisations trained and placed 14,900 teachers, with a reach of 1.1 million pupils.

2021 also saw Teach for All host its second Virtual Global Conference, bringing together hundreds of people from around the world to share their thoughts and experiences in the sector.

Ark Schools

Ark continued to build on its Science Mastery curriculum in 2021. All 24 Ark schools participated in the pilot scheme, despite the significant challenges posed by COVID-19. The result has been hugely positive from the teachers participating, 74% of which believed that the Science Mastery curriculum had a positive impact on pupil outcomes.

Youth Communication

Working with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in New York, Youth Communication trains young writers to write about their experiences growing up in New York. The charity then uses their stories to create resources that improve literacy skills while also encouraging open discussion of topics around societal and political issues and students' social and emotional health.

In 2021, Youth Communication worked with over 650 educators working with teens in schools, after-school programs, foster care agencies, and other settings, to help them deliver their curricula to an estimated 16,000 young people.



Columbia University

World Projects

Columbia World Projects draws upon the wealth of knowledge on offer at Columbia to tackle societal issues and advance human welfare globally.

Examples of this are adapting agriculture practices to combat the effects of climate change, creating risk models to support vulnerable communities in hurricane prone areas, and improving the life chances for children from low income families.

In 2021 the HFF grant supported the work of Dr Hollie R. Gilman whose work focused on improving the political engagement of residents in New York. By using civic technology that fostered connections between city government and their constituents, Dr Gilman found an increased uptake in civic engagement within those communities.

Princeton University

Centre for Information Technology Policy

Princeton's Centre for Information Technology Policy (CITP) seeks to understand how technology, policy, and society intersect. In 2021 the Foundation supported three projects: the *Emerging Scholars Programme*, which offers graduates two-year placements as research assistants at CITP; the *A.I. Nation Podcast*, which, in partnership with WHYY radio, breaks down Artificial Intelligence and discusses its implications on our everyday lives; and the Tech Policy Clinic, which invites experts in the field to share how they have overcome real-world challenges.

Mailman School of Public Health

The Huo Scholarships are awarded to graduate students who are committed to pursuing a career in public health. In 2021, five Huo Scholars received funding for the two year Masters programme.

Additionally, the Huo Scholars and 15 other graduate students completed summer practicums working on projects looking to enhance social welfare. In 2021, the practicums included working in community kitchens, for NGOs working on optimal development of young children, and with formerly incarcerated women with histories of domestic violence to help rebuild their lives.

Computational and Theoretical Neuroscience Fund

The Fund enables Princeton's Neuroscience Institute to acquire the most up to date and powerful tools available for their research, which often requires analysing large datasets. In 2021, this focused on improving the data storage systems which facilitate the enormous volume of research undertaken by the labs.

Graduate Fellowship Fund

The Graduate Fellows programme supports graduate students whose research is focused on China. Since its inception it has funded 22 Fellows. The 2021 Fellows are researching the philanthropic/non-profit sector in China and its moral and ethical dimensions; and how Xi'an became a modern city whilst conserving its ancient routes.

Graduate School Programming and Administration

The grant helps Princeton's Graduate School to offer exceptional support to students as they plan for the future, specifically through their GradFUTURES programme. In 2021, the team further embraced the shift to virtual programming, increased internal and external outreach, and deployed creative and data-driven approaches to scale and deepen their impact.

Cambridge University

The P.C. Ho scholarship is awarded to doctoral candidates studying physics, based at the Cavendish Laboratory. There are currently three P.C.Ho Scholars.

- Fionn Bishop's research looks into why, despite the Big Bang producing equal parts matter and anti-matter, it is comprised mainly of matter. She does this by analysing data gained from the Large Hadron Collider gained from observing particle breakdown.
- Jiri Etrych and his team look at strongly interacting or out-of-equilibrium quantum gases.
- Toby Mitchell looks at quantum mechanical systems and their use in device applications. He is particularly interested in the uncertain nature of the quantum realm.

Fudan University

In 2021, the Foundation awarded a new grant that will place PhD candidates studying humanities and social sciences in partner universities around the world. When COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, they will be offered short-term visits to leading universities and research institutions which will provide both an academic and cultural challenge.

Oxford Internet Institute

The Foundation supports Professor Andrew Przybylski and his team working on the programme *Adolescent Wellbeing in the Digital Age*. Their work looks at the effects of various forms of social media and gaming and its effects on adolescent wellbeing. Przybylski's team has pioneered work with companies such as Nintendo and EA to get first-hand data on these effects, and are working with other companies such as Facebook and Sony to establish data-sharing relationships. Their research is regularly covered by national news outlets.



The Arts



© The Courtauld Galleries

Tate Galleries

Exhibitions

In January 2021, the Foundation awarded grants to four exhibitions at the Tate Galleries: Paula Rego at Tate Britain; Emily Speed at Tate Liverpool; Auguste Rodin at Tate Modern; Petrit Halilaj at Tate St. Ives; and Surrealism Beyond Borders at Tate Modern.

The exhibitions that took place in 2021 saw strong visitor numbers despite capacity restrictions. Paula Rego saw 64,000 visitors in its 141-day run and Rodin saw 108,000 visitors, with both receiving a string of four and five star reviews.

Young People's Programme

The Huo Family Foundation grant supported the Curator of the Young People's Programme (YPP), Péjú Oshin.

In 2021, the Tate focused on staying connected with the students of the YPP, supporting their wellbeing, reaching the most vulnerable, and producing accessible online content. Péjú coordinated a dynamic programme that catered to all of these, including introducing paid roles for Tate Collective Students and connecting Tate alumni with current students.

Natural History Museum

The Natural History Museum's (NHM) grant supported key aspects of the Museum's *Urban Nature Project* in 2021.

Their *Learning Programme* conducted research on the Museum's local communities in order to understand their connection to the nature that surrounds them. This will inform their development of the Museum's *Citizen Science Programme*, which hopes to reach 80,000 individuals interested in designing research and monitoring and collecting data for the Museum.

NHM is also working in partnership with the Prince's Trust to help reach disadvantaged young people not in work, education, or training, giving them the opportunity for a one-week placement in the Museum.

The Courtauld Institute of Art

The Foundation sponsored the *Van Gogh: Self Portraits* exhibition at the newly openend Courtauld Galleries. It is the first exhibition to house so many of the artist's self-portraits in one room. In a prolific period of work, Van Gogh painted 35 self-portraits in the space of 3 years between 1886 and 1889.

This exhibition will house 16 of these, including the Courtauld's own *Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear*, along with two paintings considered to be reflective of his personality.





COVID-19

Imperial College London

HFF's grant to Imperial College supported their on-campus localised testing programme, which was designed to isolate asymptomatic cases and prevent the spread of infection. This enabled Imperial's REACT-1 and REACT-2 studies, led by Professor Paul Elliott, which track the progress of COVID-19 through PCR testing and antigen testing throughout the UK. The REACT studies have been used as key sources for government policy relating to the pandemic.

By the end of 2021, REACT's programmes had used data from 3.8 million volunteers, which had been linked to NHS vaccination data. This has and will be used to determine vaccine effectiveness, trends in 'long-COVID', and to determine if there are any predictors of vaccine hesitancy.

King's College London

King's College London's team, led by Professor Mike Malim, used the Foundation's grant to understand the body's antibody response to COVID-19. This research led to a better understanding of how best to treat the virus and how different populations are affected.

Published research included: finding that the antibody response tends to continue 8 days after the onset of symptoms, at which point they start to decline; that delayed second dosing of vaccines led to a worse immune response in cancer patients, leaving them vulnerable if given a 12-week interval dose; and that the use of interleukin-6 blockers in combination with corticosteroids greatly improved the treatment of severely ill COVID-19 patients.



© Oxford University



© Theatre Artists Fund, Pamela Raith

Oxford University

The Foundation supported COVID-19 research led by Professors Sarah Walker, Susie Dunachie and Paul Klenerman. Professor Walker's team, in partnership with the Office for National Statistics, conducted the COVID-19 Infection Survey.

This research, made possible by a nationally representative group of over 440,000 volunteers, was vital in informing the government's response to the virus. It helped discern how the population was responding symptomatically to different variants, how vaccine efficacy ranged with each variant, and if there were any biomarkers indicating who would get infected after vaccination.

Professors Dunachie and Klenerman's team were tasked with studying the role of T-cells in the body's immune response. They found that natural immunity can last a very long time in some individuals, but it is incredibly varied. Further outputs of their research were that prior immunity strongly boosted the immune response to vaccination and that in healthy individuals the extended dose interval provided better protection against new variants.

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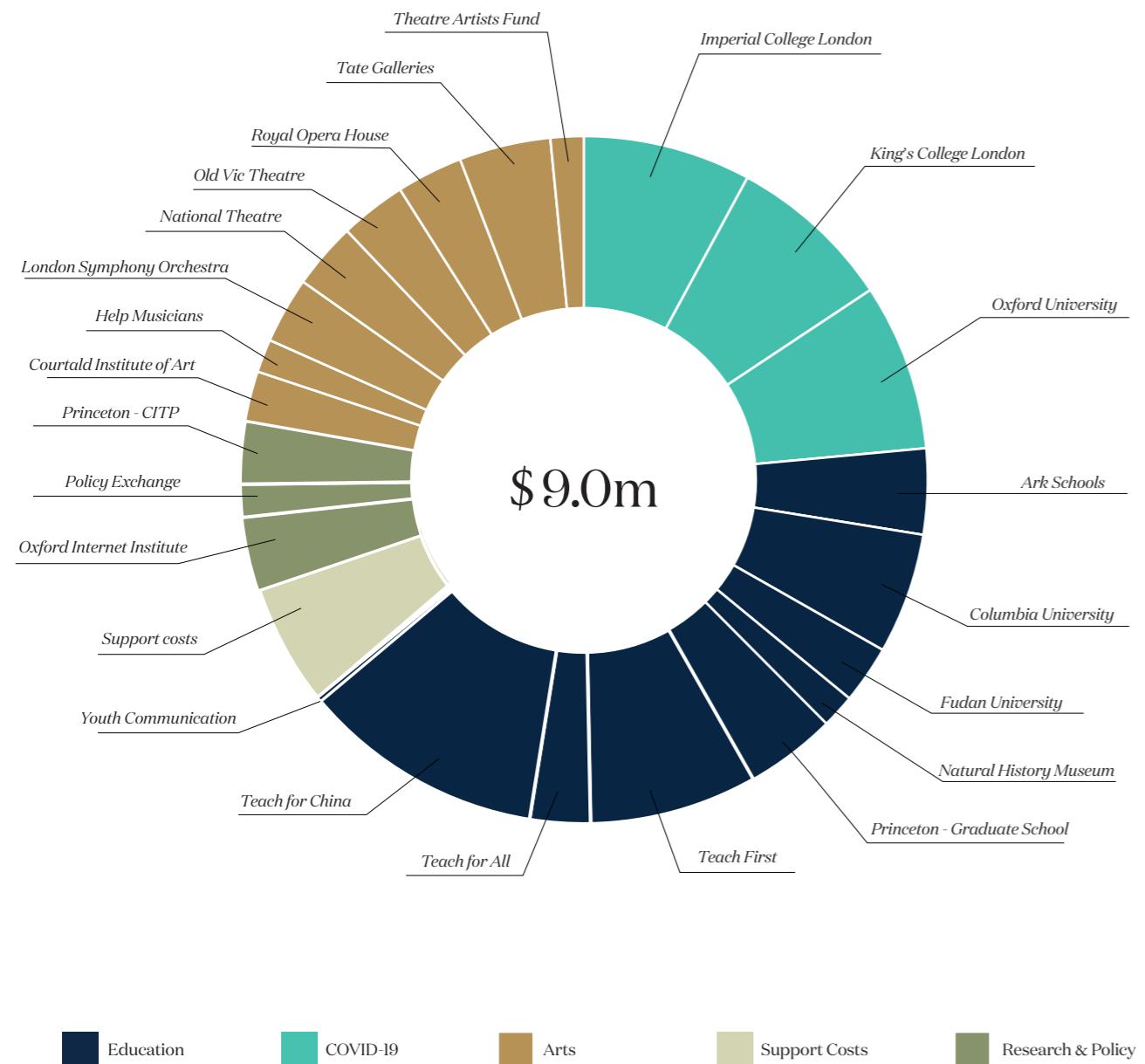
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If you have any questions about the Huo Family Foundation, please get in touch.

2021 Expenditure



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