

ASOR 2025—Strengthening Our Foundation | Expanding Horizons—A Call to Action

As we prepare to celebrate our 125th year, ASOR invites our members to participate in an ambitious fundraising effort to strengthen and expand our effectiveness.

Founded in 1900, The American Society of Overseas Research (ASOR) initiates, encourages and supports research about the history and cultures of the Near East and the wider Mediterranean world. In 2025 we will celebrate our 125th year. This achievement is especially important at a time when archaeology and the humanities broadly are being phased out of many institutions, and cultural heritage around the world is being destroyed. This destruction is a cause for concern because, globally, we now understand that acts against people's cultural heritage are a first step toward violence and extremism.

In an environment where many humanities organizations are shrinking, ASOR is in a strong position to act for positive change. Our financial stability and growing membership, coupled with ASOR's continuing legacy of credibility, leadership, and scholarship uniquely position us to shape the future.

Raising our sights requires institutional resolve and significant resources to meet the challenges ahead. It also offers exciting opportunities for our members personally, and for ASOR as an organization, to create and implement innovative solutions with an eye towards the long-term future. Our members are our greatest strength. Together, we can respond effectively to this call to action to shape the future of our profession and document and protect cultural heritage in innovative ways.

With your participation, ASOR can:

1. Increase membership support: You can strengthen and widen ASOR's geographic impact throughout the Middle East and North Africa with scholarships, research fellowships and excavation project grants including citizens from countries that lack resources.
2. Widen and expand ASOR's publications: You can ensure that ASOR continues to disseminate knowledge and educate the public in an economic climate where support for scholarship is shrinking.
3. Make ASOR more accessible to everyone: You can address financial need for access in North America, North Africa, the Middle East, and around the world. With you, ASOR can set an example with diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives that span language and cultural divides.
4. Grow Cultural Heritage Initiatives: You can support cultural heritage stabilization, documentation, and mitigation efforts. You can guarantee that ASOR continues to be seen as a world leader in protecting heritage and ensure the continuation of education and stewardship programs that combat violent extremism and misuse of heritage by authoritarian rulers.
5. Develop Greater Online Access: You can fund innovations in the rapidly growing field of online and virtual resources to make research accessible to everyone with a computer, tablet, or phone.
6. Expand the Friends of ASOR Programs: You can help underwrite education and outreach programs that will broaden ASOR's membership and bring non-academic supporters with an interest in the ancient world to our organization.
7. Strengthen the Foundation of ASOR's Operations: You can safeguard ASOR's work to 2050 and beyond through the Annual Fund or through endowment gifts to sustain operational staffing and capital needs at the James F. Strange Center.

These are but a few ideas.

The humanities have never faced greater obstacles, but ASOR has the financial stability and talent to find innovative solutions.

You, our members, are a critical part of this effort. If we do not respond to this call to action to shape the future of our profession and document and protect cultural heritage in innovative ways, who will? Please join us as we to celebrate together our 125th year with "ASOR 2025— Strengthening Our Foundation | Expanding Horizons—A Call to Action."

APPENDIX

- I. Support for Members
 - a. Basic level: scholarships for memberships and annual registration
 - i. Make the tent bigger and maintain equal access
 - ii. Would like one-time / annual gift and endowments for these fees
 - b. Fieldwork participation scholarships
 - i. We have a nice base already
 - ii. This is will not be our focus, but we will certainly allow people to give towards this
 - c. Excavation grants (to dig directors and others)
 - i. We have some, but we need these grants to increase. For example, \$50,000 would endow \$2,500 per year. \$250,000 would endow \$12,500.
 - ii. Annual Gifts should be encouraged
 - d. Annual Meeting Travel Scholarships
 - e. Research Fellowships for ASOR members
 - i. We do not have many of these currently; high priority / need
 - ii. Examples are Travel to Collections Fellowships, Mason Fellowship, Dever Fellowship, and Dar Ben Gacem Fellowship
- II. Publications
 - a. Subventions for excavation reports
 - b. Subventions for ASOR books (this series has been suspended for 18 years)
 - c. Support for journals
 - i. Endow *News@ASOR* or *ANE Today*
 - ii. Gifts to provide increased access or features to *BASOR*, *NEA*, *JCS*
- III. Make ASOR accessible to everyone (in addition to scholarships above)
 - a. BIPOC endowment: need to continue to grow for BIPOC participation
 - b. Scholarships for members outside North America
 - c. Other DEI initiatives
 - d. Online access enhancement (e.g., expanded translations of virtual meeting)
 - e. ASOR Climate Sustainability Fund—creating endowment to fund membership initiatives that would lower the climate impact in countries where ASOR members work
- IV. Cultural Heritage Initiatives
 - a. Mini grants for civil society organizations in regions were ASOR conducts work
 - b. Modest funds to supplement federal and other grants for non-allowable costs (e.g., funds for brick-and-mortar projects in education and stewardship programs).
 - c. Shepard Urgent Action Grants
- V. Online Access
 - a. LCP
 - b. Online education and outreach programs
 - c. *News@ASOR*—gifts to endow
 - d. *ANE Today*—gifts to endow or support
 - e. ASOR Online Library
 - i. Photo archives
 - ii. Maps for member use
- VI. Friends of ASOR programs
- VII. Support for operations of ASOR
 - a. Annual Fund contributions (unrestricted)
 - b. Building Fund (finish that endowment)
 - c. Multi-purpose room and kitchen remodel of Strange Center
 - d. Endow positions (e.g., Annual Meeting Staff or Executive Director position)
 - e. Endowment for Operations (Fund for ASOR)