



RAOUL WALLENBERG INSTITUTE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Teaching, research, and public engagement to study and combat ethnic and religious hatred

The Raoul Wallenberg Institute at the University of Michigan fosters the values embodied by Raoul Wallenberg—empathy, tolerance, courage, and leadership—by studying hatred directed against religious and ethnic communities, fostering cross-cultural understanding, and elevating civic discourse. Through teaching, research, and public engagement, the institute will develop strategies to combat antisemitism, divisiveness, and discrimination.

The Raoul Wallenberg Institute was established by the University of Michigan in December 2023 as part of a university-wide effort to combat antisemitism and advance religious diversity and inclusion on all three campuses. “We are bringing together leading U-M expertise and diverse perspectives toward a safer and more inclusive world, and even more, a brighter world of peace,” announced President Santa J. Ono.

Raoul Wallenberg, the institute's namesake, was a Swedish humanitarian who graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in architecture in 1935. Nine years later, he volunteered to work in Budapest on behalf of the U.S. War Refugee Board to aid U.S. efforts to rescue European Jews during the Holocaust. He is credited with saving some twenty thousand Jews from deportation to the Auschwitz death camp by establishing safe houses and handing out Swedish protective papers.

Wallenberg was made an honorary citizen of the United States by President Ronald Reagan—one of only eight people in history to receive this honor—and was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal by President Barack Obama. Since 1985, Wallenberg’s legacy has been honored at the University of Michigan through the Wallenberg Medal and Lecture and the Wallenberg Fellowship.

RESEARCH

The Raoul Wallenberg Institute at the University of Michigan will become a leading center for cutting-edge research on issues related to the mission of the institute.

MAJOR RESEARCH INITIATIVES

The Raoul Wallenberg Institute directly sponsors and oversees major collaborative research initiatives at the University of Michigan. Several major research projects are already underway, including a longitudinal research survey to determine student perspectives of minority religious communities on campus, historical research regarding religious holiday celebrations in American public schools, and a history of hatred in the Great Lakes Region. The institute has also invited applications for major research funding to support University of Michigan faculty working on projects that support its mission of studying and combating religious and ethnic hatred.



RESEARCH FUNDING SUPPORT

Each year, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute will solicit proposals from across U-M for smaller research projects that advance the mission of the institute. These may include requests for summer faculty funding, funding for student research assistants, postdoctoral researchers, equipment, travel, and other eligible research expenses.

RESIDENTIAL FELLOWSHIPS

The Raoul Wallenberg Institute will also provide fellowships for scholars and practitioners whose work advances the mission of the institute and enhances its intellectual community. These fellowships can include U-M faculty, emeritus/emerita faculty, visiting faculty, postdoctoral scholars, and practitioners (researchers, journalists, NGO members, activists, governmental and intergovernmental officials on leave, and independent scholars) and can include short term and/or longer term fellowships of up to three years. Fellows will teach courses and pursue their own projects while interacting and collaborating with the institute and other resources at the University of Michigan.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Raoul Wallenberg Institute at the University of Michigan will be a public-facing resource for the State of Michigan.

PUBLIC DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH

The Raoul Wallenberg Institute will disseminate the results of its research and programs on a regular basis through various means, including opinion pieces in major media outlets, podcasts, public conferences and symposia, the publication of occasional research papers, webcasts, and newsletters.

SPEAKER / EVENT SERIES

The Raoul Wallenberg Institute will sponsor moderated conversations on charged issues related to the mission of the institute. These conversations will model open and respectful dialogue and will provide opportunities for influential and thoughtful figures in the public eye (politicians, thought leaders, entertainers, influencers, etc.) to be in conversation with subject experts and professional moderators.



DISTRICT AND CHARTER SCHOOL OUTREACH

The Raoul Wallenberg Institute will serve as a resource for district and charter schools in the state of Michigan, particularly in reference to the Genocide and Holocaust Education Public Act 170 of 2016, which requires "age and grade-appropriate instructions about genocide, including but not limited to the Holocaust and the Armenian genocide." In collaboration with other Holocaust pedagogy initiatives, the institute will hold seminars and workshops for school leaders, identify and publicize age and grade appropriate sources of information, and offer assistance in the ongoing development of curricula. The institute will also undertake age-appropriate school-focused programming within the scope of the institute's mission. When appropriate, such programs may be developed and carried out in association with other University of Michigan centers and programs.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

We welcome gifts at all levels to support the critical work of the Raoul Wallenberg Institute. The following fundraising targets may be reached through individual major gifts or a number of smaller gifts. Gifts of \$50,000 - \$1 million will qualify for a 1:1 university match until funds are depleted.

RESEARCH

Endowed fellowship fund to provide stipends and grants for faculty, visitors, and practitioners to conduct scholarly research and teach. We seek endowed support for nine fellowships at \$1M each to help fund salaries and benefits.—\$9 million

Endowed research fund to support the awarding of multiple projects and grants each year—\$5 million

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Endowed community outreach fund to build staff and infrastructure for a speaker/events series (including recorded material), exhibits, and other campus programming, as well as for implementing school outreach.—\$2 million

Visiting professional residencies to support short term residencies for professionals in the field, such as journalists, clergy, and activists to engage with the institute.—\$2 million

FACULTY LEADERSHIP POSITION

Endowed faculty director to ensure sustained academic leadership and vision, as well as strong administrative direction. We have established the faculty director position to guide scholarly and teaching activities across the institute and beyond.—\$3 million

INTERNSHIP FUND

Endowed internship fund to provide internship opportunities for recent graduates to experience work and research opportunities at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute.—\$1 million

DISCRETIONARY FUND

Endowed discretionary resource fund to provide long-term flexibility in pursuing opportunities to grow and position the institute as a global resource for combating antisemitism, divisiveness, and discrimination. Funds may be used to launch new initiatives, host major conferences and events on campus, and participate in international programs.—\$4 million

WAYS TO FUND YOUR GIFT

Your partnership connects the college's rich past to a boundless and bright future. You can change lives with gifts of cash, pledges, or appreciated securities, and create a meaningful legacy through your bequest, trusts, gift annuities, and other planned gifts. Your generosity makes an impact on what's next, for a better tomorrow.

for what's next ▶

Look to Michigan

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