



GRATEFUL DEAD STUDIES ASSOCIATION



Pre-Incorporation

REPORT

2017

2018

2019



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introduction

This report documents the work of the Grateful Dead Studies Association during the three years of its preliminary organization, 2017–2019. Written for members and supporters, the report provides a thorough account of the work of the Association as it took shape prior to its formal incorporation.

The report provides a chronological survey of that effort with a summary and detailed outline of each year’s work, including organization, outreach, and initiatives. Following standard practice for nonprofit reporting, that information is arranged by projects, donors, and finances.

Due to its size, volunteer status, and funding, the Association is not subject to the reporting and accounting requirements that larger not-for-profit organizations must meet, especially those that receive government grants. Nonetheless, the Association adheres to those standards as an expression of its mission and ideals. This report reflects that commitment and fulfills those requirements.

Though not a formal regulatory document, this report provides a detailed accounting of Association income and expenses. As befits a pre-incorporation, all-volunteer effort, income during these three years was provided by donors, both direct payments and in-kind contributions. Invoiced contributions constitute the most substantial in-kind donations, primarily the costs of building the websites and incorporating the Association, but those figures necessarily exclude the most substantial work on the Association: its organizational infrastructure and major projects. The records of these efforts will eventually transition to the Deering Manuscripts Library of Northwestern University as part of the Grateful Dead Studies collection, one of the Association’s first projects.

In addition to the donors, officers, and volunteers who made the Grateful Dead Studies Association a reality, the Association owes its establishment to the scholars who have long believed in the idea of an international academic community devoted to Grateful Dead studies. Their hard work and commitment not only exemplify the best in scholarly ideals, they also reflect the spirit that defined the achievement of the band whose music, project, and continuing legacy inspire our collective inquiry.

mission

The Grateful Dead Studies Association is a professional academic organization devoted to advancing the scholarly study of the Grateful Dead phenomenon through conference meetings, publications, and related efforts. The Association was established to support and promote high-level scholarship on the Grateful Dead and ensure that it is rigorous, respectful, critical, and accessible.

Organized and registered as a 501c3 not-for-profit corporation, the Association is governed by an Executive Council elected by its members with oversight from a Board of Advisors and a Board of Advocates. An all-volunteer organization, the Association relies on dues and donations to fund its efforts.

As an organization of academic professionals, scholars, and readers, the Association understands that counterculture figures, marginalized communities, and stigmatized phenomena face unique challenges in their struggle to gain acceptance as legitimate topics for scholarly inquiry. The Association recognizes that the Grateful Dead espoused the highest artistic standards in their work, and we believe that work and its reception and significance merit, sustain, and repay the highest level of scholarly scrutiny.

The Association is interdisciplinary and supports a wide-ranging discourse that includes diverse disciplines, fields, and theoretical perspectives. The Association especially values the participation of underrepresented voices in academe and believes strongly that discourse is strengthened by diversity. The Association encourages participation by scholars at every stage of their careers and values participation by students, adjunct professionals, and those working outside of the academy. The Association is committed to fostering a respectful, critical, and professional conversation governed by the highest standards of scholarly rigor and civility.

As listeners and readers, the Association understands that interest in the Grateful Dead is widespread and believes that scholarship can be enriched by an audience that extends beyond the academic world.

The members of the Association know that access to scholarly research and publication is increasingly cordoned off by publishers, libraries, and academic institutions. The Association believes strongly in the principles of open access and is committed to making its work accessible to the public.

principles

In order to fulfill the goals of its mission, the Grateful Dead Studies Association adheres to the following principles as guiding ideals in all aspects of its work. These ideals are also reflected in the Association's Code of Ethics (<http://deadstudies.org/code-of-ethics/>), which governs the conduct of all members.

Rigor

We strive to adhere to the highest standards in all of our projects, publications, and administrative work.

Inclusiveness

We believe in the value of interdisciplinarity, diversity, and inclusiveness, and understand that these qualities are fundamental to the integrity and caliber of our work. We value and actively work to expand the participation of underrepresented voices, perspectives and communities in the Association and its efforts.

Accessibility

We support the principle of open access and make our scholarship freely accessible, at no cost, to the academic community and the public.

Transparency

We conduct our business openly and make public our deliberations and work in the form of meeting minutes, committee and regulatory reports, and other assessments.

Accountability

We adhere to the highest standards of record-keeping, accounting, and reporting in all aspects of our work.

history

Although scholars first became interested in the Grateful Dead in the 1960s, academic study surged in the 1990s, following the formal dissolution of the band in 1995. In 1998, the Southwest/Texas American/Popular Culture Association conference (later the Southwest Popular/American Culture Association) created a Grateful Dead area, and since then, the pace of academic work has steadily increased. In 2007, the University of Massachusetts–Amherst held an academic symposium on the band, attracting more than 100 scholars and papers, and in 2014, San Jose State University hosted more than 300 scholars from across the country and internationally at the conference *So Many Roads: The World in the Grateful Dead*.

Discussions about forming a professional organization to help steward and promote the interdisciplinary academic discourse on the band began in 2000, but only coalesced into a formal initiative in 2017. Two factors prompted that effort: the need to elevate the profile and enhance the rigor of the discourse, and to facilitate that by establishing a forum for high-level scholarship on the band and phenomenon.

Both factors had their roots in the shifting currents of academe and the vulnerability of discourses that lack organizational support. The experience of the short-lived academic journal *Dead Studies* (2011–2013) demonstrated the problems caused by that lack of a secure foundation. When administrative changes cancelled planned institutional support for the publication of a revised and accessible reformat of the journal, stakeholders realized that an independent organization was required in order to honor the commitment of participants and ensure the accessibility of the work.

At the same time, scholars who participated in the Southwest Popular/American Culture Association recognized the need for greater access and rigor in the conference work on the Grateful Dead phenomenon. At the 2018 meeting, Granville Ganter, Nicholas Meriwether, and Kurt Torell formed an ad hoc task force that met for two years, researching and drafting a constitution and bylaws for the Grateful Dead Studies Association. In 2019, thirty interested prospective members voted to incorporate the Association. That process was completed in 2020, and the Association was formally launched on August 1, 2020.

Overview

The first year's work focused on the infrastructure for the Association's publications, both print and online. Informing the effort was the experience of earlier, ephemeral efforts, including the series *Dead Letters*, the journal *Dead Studies*, and the *Program of the Grateful Dead Scholars Caucus*. These publications had been unable to establish a secure organizational foundation and financing, which limited their reach to only a handful of interested readers. Growing interest from readers and contributors led to the decision to form the Association to provide a stable foundation for scholarly work in the field, both print and online. In July, the first phase of work commenced, focusing on the journal and the websites.

Major Projects

Journal The design and development of *Grateful Dead Studies*, the Association's flagship publication, commenced in late summer. Surveys of colleagues and members of the Council of Editors of Learned Journals (CELJ) provided input on editorial policies and associated issues, which the journal's interdisciplinary scope made more complex than most niche or single-topic journals. Editorial policies, a journal style guide, and author contracts were developed and implemented.

Websites Web domains were established, hosting contracted, and design initiated. Research showed that two sites would be required, one for the Association and one for the journal. Well-known Grateful Dead artist Ken Schneidman was hired to develop a logo.

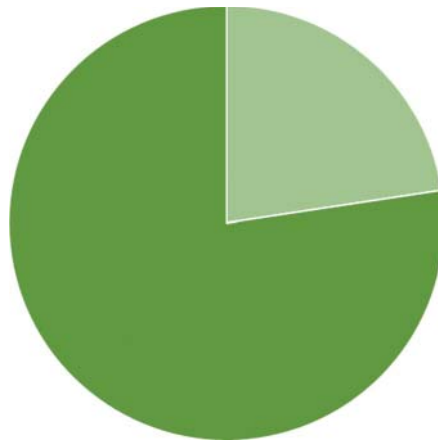
Donors and Gifts

Three donors supported the Association's work in 2017. Two donors provided major in-kind gifts: Photographers Susana Millman and Robbie Cohen generously donated the use of their images for the websites. All of the Association's direct expenses were paid by a third donor, who also provided facilities and operational expenses.

Finances

Association finances in 2017 were limited, reflecting the organization's pre-incorporation start-up status and the need to control expenses. Income consisted of donations, primarily in-kind but some direct payments. All expenses were paid in full as they accrued, with no debts or liabilities carried over to 2019.

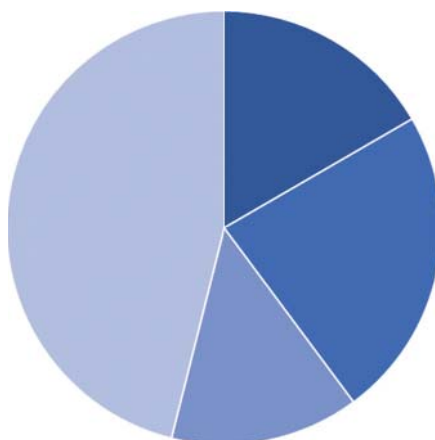
Income In-kind contributions constituted the majority of income for the year, slightly more than 77% of the total. Direct payments of Association expenses accounted for the remainder, approximately 23%.



2017 Income

In-Kind Donations	\$5,500.00
Direct Payments	\$1,606.63
Total Income	\$7,106.63

Expenses The largest category of expenditures was Program Costs, which accounted for 46% of the total; this included some website development costs as well as licensing fees. Facilities accounted for 23% and Operations almost 17% of the total, with Marketing representing the remaining 14%.



2017 Expenses

Program Costs	\$3,275.00
Facilities	\$1,650.00
Operations	\$1,181.63
Marketing	\$1,000.00
Total Expenses	\$7,106.63

Overview

Work on the infrastructure of the Association began in earnest in 2018 with the formation of the Ad Hoc Task Force on Incorporation in February. Established at the urging of Granville Ganter and Kurt Torell, the Task Force was convened with Nicholas Meriwether, who had served as chair of the Grateful Dead area of the Southwest Popular and American Culture Association (SWPACA) conference for many years. Conversations at the SWPACA conference defined the Task Force's charge to research the structure of a 501c3 nonprofit academic organization, and work began in the spring. Regular meetings throughout the year refined the constitution, bylaws, and associated issues. Outreach secured legal assistance with incorporation, producing an agreement with a team of attorneys for representation. Website development was a major effort, with prototypes for both completed by the end of the year.

Major Projects

Organization The Task Force researched other academic and professional organizations and relevant articles and white papers to determine the optimal structure for Association governance and the appropriate language for its constitution, bylaws, and code of ethics. Preliminary drafts were completed by the end of the year.

Websites The design of both sites was completed and major pages created. Beta testing commenced with input from stakeholders that refined features and functionality.

Journal The final design was completed and approved with new content commissioned for the first three volumes, including additional features, essays, and editorial content. Extant content was converted to the new format and citation style. Volume 4 was finalized and advanced to editing.

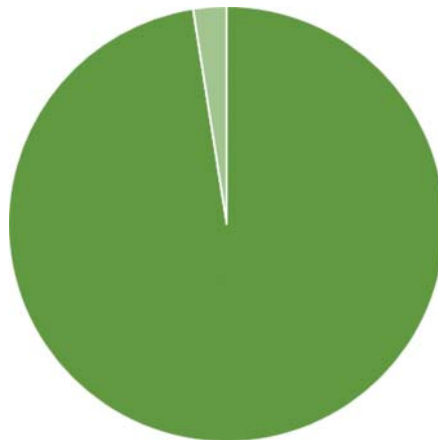
Donors and Gifts

One donor provided all of the income for the Association in 2018, both monetary donations and in-kind gifts and services. Although the overall amount of direct donations was lower this year, due to fewer expenses, in-kind donations increased as work on the websites increased. Not counted but equally significant was the work of the Ad Hoc Task Force and related administrative efforts, which reporting rules exclude.

Finances

Although the work of the Association increased in 2018, expenses remained limited. All income was donated, largely in-kind with fewer direct payments than in 2017. As in 2017, expenses were paid in full, with no debts carried over to 2019.

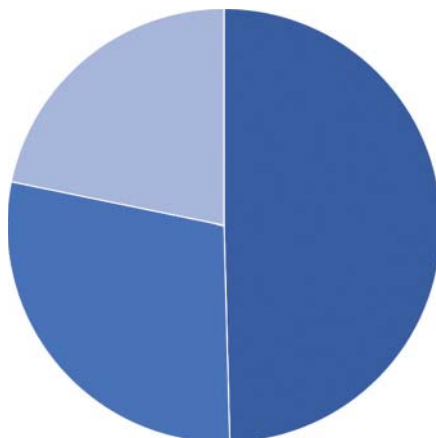
Income In-kind contributions constituted the majority of income for the year, slightly more than 97% of the total. Direct payments of expenses accounted for the remainder, approximately 3%.



2018 Income

In-Kind Donations	\$6,491.75
Direct Payments	\$164.88
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Total Income	\$6,656.63

Expenses The largest category of expenditures was Facilities, which accounted for almost 50% of the total. Operations, which included additional website costs over 2017 levels, represented almost 29% of expenses, with Program Costs comprising the remaining 21%.



2018 Expenses

Facilities	\$3,300.00
Operations	\$1,906.63
Program Costs	\$1,450.00
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Total Expenses	\$6,656.63

Overview

The Association's work increased dramatically in 2019, including extensive work to define the infrastructure and incorporate the Association as a 501c3 not-for-profit. The planning and successful execution of the organizational meeting, held in February, marked another milestone in that effort. Refinements to the beta versions of the websites for the Association and journal continued, and Volume 4 was published in September. Incorporation costs, all donated, accounted for the majority of the expenses for the year.

Major Projects

Organization Federal and state incorporation proceeded, with California registration secured in May and federal registration initiated. The Task Force on Incorporation completed its initial work on the constitution and bylaws with draft versions presented at the organizational meeting in February, when the first slate of officers was elected. Following that meeting, the Executive Council convened throughout the year, establishing procedures and finalizing the format for minutes.

First Meeting Planned with the assistance of the Task Force, the organizational meeting took place in February in Albuquerque, with participants signing membership pledge cards and electing the Association's first slate of officers.

Publications A comprehensive plan for the Association's publications began to take shape, organized around four major efforts: the journal, the websites, a newsletter, and proceedings. In addition to the publication of Volume 4 of the journal, the first newsletter was published in the fall, and work on the websites continued. Planning for the Proceedings commenced, focusing on preliminary design and scope.

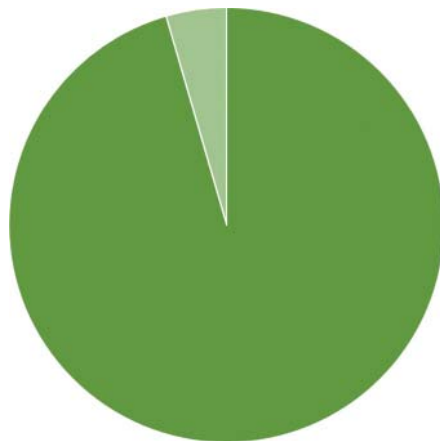
Donors and Gifts

Three donors covered Association expenses in 2019, one continuing and two new supporters. Two made monetary contributions and two made substantial in-kind service donations, with legal expenses constituting the bulk of those contributions.

Finances

The legal work to incorporate the Association increased the budget significantly in 2019. As in 2017 and 2018, income for the year consisted entirely of donations, primarily in-kind but some direct payments. All expenses were paid in full as they accrued, with no liabilities carried over to 2020.

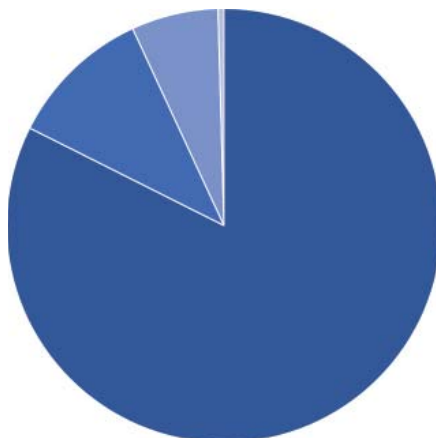
Income In-kind contributions constituted the majority of income for the year, almost 96% of the total, with direct payments accounting for the remaining 4%.



2019 Income

In-Kind Donations	\$48,027.00
Direct Payments	\$2,262.89
Total Income	\$50,289.89

Expenses The largest category of expenditures was Business Fees, which accounted for more than 82% of the total, largely due to legal costs. Operations represented slightly over 10% of expenses, with Program Costs comprising almost 6.5% and Marketing the remaining fraction of approximately 0.4%.



2019 Expenses

Business Fees	\$41,445.00
Operations	\$5,370.63
Program Costs	\$3,249.90
Marketing	\$221.36
Total Expenses	\$50,289.89

with thanks

Donors

Robbie Cohen
Granville Ganter
Andrew R. McGaan
Nicholas G. Meriwether
Susana Millman

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Granville Ganter *President-Elect*
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