



SFPE Educational & Scientific  
Foundation 2021 Annual Report





# SFPE Educational & Scientific Foundation 2021 Annual Report

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## Introduction & Organizational Growth

Thank you for your interest in the SFPE Foundation! We invite you to browse this full-length *2021 Annual Report*, where we cover some of the many highlights from our activities and programs over the past year. To learn more, check out our [website](#) and follow us on social media ([LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#)) so you'll always be informed about new initiatives and opportunities available through the Foundation. To view a short, one-page summary, please check out our [2021 Annual Report Summary](#).

### Overview

The Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE) established the SFPE Educational and Scientific Foundation in 1979. The SFPE Foundation (or, the Foundation), is a 501(c)(3) organization incorporated in the United States that facilitates research and educational initiatives to advance the scientific understanding of fire in the natural and built environments. With the support of external grants and individual, corporate, and SFPE chapter donations, the Foundation funds professional awards, student scholarships, and research grants; leads cross-sectoral research collaborations; conducts research workshops and meetings; develops new initiatives to support the next generation of fire protection engineers; and disseminates knowledge to advance the field of fire engineering and fire safety science globally. Learn more by reviewing this 2021 Annual Report, and by visiting our website at: [www.sfpe.org/foundation/](http://www.sfpe.org/foundation/).

This year has been one of tremendous growth at the Foundation, as summarized in this message from the Chair of the SFPE Foundation Board of Governors, Peter Senez:

*Over the past 18 months, we have embarked on an ambitious program to expand our efforts beyond our traditional focus on student grants and professional awards toward a major initiative to support the research needs of the profession. As you may know, SFPE's [Research Roadmap](#) lays out the gaps in knowledge and engineering tools that our current and future membership will need to practice in a changing fire protection engineering environment. We are committed to helping fill those gaps with research. Contributions from individuals, SFPE Chapters, and corporations will help us do so.*

*As you can see from our [2021 Annual Report Summary](#), our research and educational support has expanded a great deal. 2021 is shaping up to be another successful year with two more [Research Roadmap Projects](#) initiated, three [student research grants](#) recently [awarded](#), and some ambitious plans for expanding our funding base and building new research and educational partnerships.*

*September 2021*

*Peter Senez, Chair, SFPE Foundation Board of Governors*

## Board of Governors Expansion

We welcomed four new Governors to the Board of Governors, bringing the total number of Governors to 16. The newest governors are:



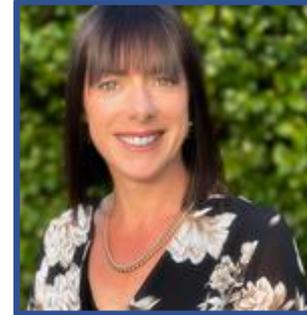
**Kathleen Almand,  
PE, FSFPE**



**Maria Marks,  
CFPS, SET  
Siemens Smart  
Infrastructure**



**Leonard J. Ramo,  
PE, PEng, CFPS  
Telgian  
Engineering &  
Consulting**



**Debbie Scott,  
FEngNZ, IntPE,  
PMSFPE  
OnFire Consulting**

Review the full list of Foundation Governors on our [website](#).

## New Staff Support – Foundation Director Hired

Join us in welcoming [Leslie Marshall](#), PhD, as the new SFPE Foundation Director! Dr. Marshall is the first full-time employee for the Foundation, creating a new milestone as the Foundation continues its trajectory of growth and giving to serve the global fire protection and safety engineering community as well as enhance the scientific understanding of fire and its interaction with the natural and built environments.

Dr. Marshall previously served as Associate Director at the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Sustainable Business where she developed and managed cross-sectoral research and advocacy partnerships; facilitated strategic planning; led program management, evaluation, and assessment; and had success in fundraising, relationship management, and grant development. She earned her doctorate and master's in political science from the University of Pittsburgh and her bachelor's from Denison University.



“Leslie’s international experience in leading collaborations between companies, researchers, higher ed, government agencies, and foundations will build on the Foundation’s recent growth and enhance the

opportunities for the Foundation to make greater significant impacts globally,” - SFPE CEO, Nicole Boston.  
<https://bit.ly/3rSmvHW>

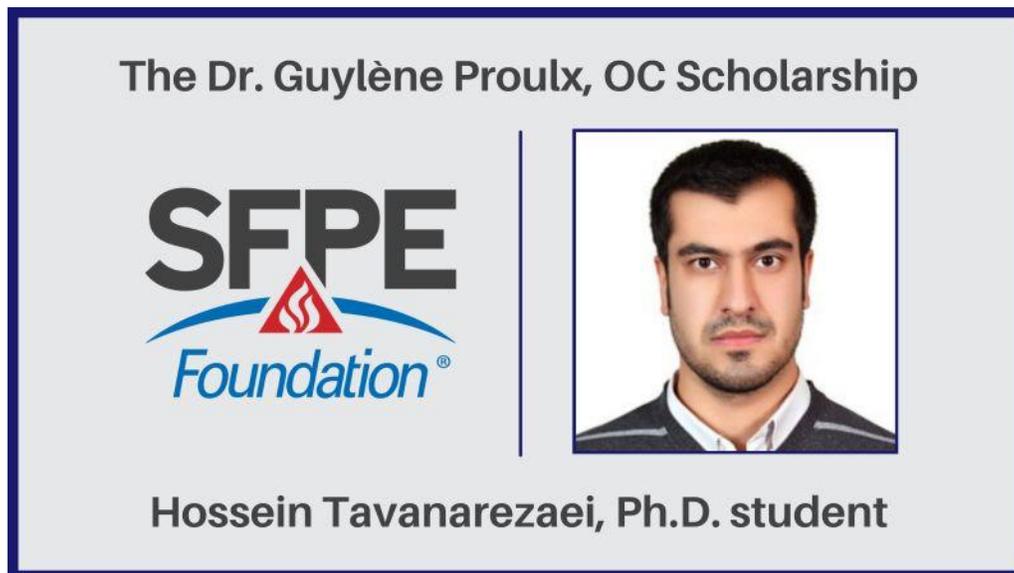
Under Dr. Marshall’s leadership, and with the support of the Board of Governors and SFPE, the SFPE Foundation is excited to announce that we’ll be expanding our staff capacity with two new positions reporting to the Foundation Director: a **Research Project Manager** and a **Donor Relations Manager**. These new positions will provide critical operational support to manage all of the projects administered by the Foundation. They will also allow us to better evaluate and communicate the impact of the Foundation’s work to donors, the broader SFPE community, and other relevant stakeholders. We remain committed to being trustworthy stewards of the funds that are entrusted to us in support of our mission.

## Education – Student Awards & Scholarships

### Dr. Guylène Proulx, OC Scholarship

The [Dr. Guylène Proulx, OC Scholarship](#) honors Dr. Guylène Proulx, one of the preeminent researchers and communicators in the field of human behavior in emergencies.

Please join us in congratulating the 2021 Dr. Guylène Proulx, OC Scholarship recipient: [Hossein Tavanarezaei](#), Ph.D. student at [Ulster University](#), and his faculty advisor, [Dr. Karen Boyce](#). Hossein Tavanarezaei was chosen for the timeliness of his research on the microscopic characteristics of individuals in crowds, its relevance to the SFPE [Research Roadmap](#), and the direct impact it has on increasing our understanding of human behavior.



## Student Scholar Award

The Foundation's Student Scholar Award recognizes outstanding student scholars around the world in support of the science and practice of fire protection engineering.

Please join us in congratulating the 2021 [Student Scholar Award](#) recipient: [Xingyu Ren](#), Ph.D. candidate at [University of Maryland](#). Xingyu Ren was selected in recognition of his contributions to our knowledge of wildfires and fire science instrumentation, as well as his efforts to promote the discipline of fire engineering.



## Frederick W. Mowrer Global Scholar Award

The aim of the Mowrer Global Scholar Award is to impact safety around the world by supporting students to build fire protection expertise in developing countries with rapidly expanding infrastructure. Endowed by Kathleen Almand, P.E. FSFPE, this scholarship honors Dr. Mowrer's impact on the field of fire protection engineering and the development of fire protection engineering as an international academic discipline.

Join us in congratulating the 2021 [Frederick W. Mowrer Global Scholar Award](#) recipient: [Anene Oguaka, CEng](#) of [Stellenbosch University](#). Anene Oguaka, originally from Nigeria, was selected for his work on performance-based fire engineering design with a focus on the local wine industry.

## Frederick W. Mowrer Global Scholar Award



Anene Oguaka, MSc, CEng, MCIBSE

## Education & Research – Support for Student Projects

### Student Research Grants

The SFPE Foundation supports a number of initiatives designed to further its mission to enhance the scientific understanding of fire and its interaction with the natural and built environments. An important part of this mission is developing the next generation of fire protection engineers. The Foundation encourages this through an emphasis on student involvement in the SFPE [Research Roadmap](#) program as well as through the Student Research Grant Program.

[Student Research Grant](#) recipients receive \$5,000 USD to support a research project relevant to the field of fire engineering. Proposals are usually accepted in May and November, with two rounds of awards made each year.

Please join us in congratulating the May 2021 Student Research Grant recipients:

1. [Cheryl A. Marek](#), P.E., Ph.D. candidate, [University of Maryland](#), for “Causal Factors in the Escalation of Fire Incidents During Naval Ship Maintenance Availabilities”
2. [David Morrisset](#), Ph.D. student, [The University of Edinburgh](#), for “Quantifying the Statistical Uncertainty of Furniture-Scale Fire Testing”
3. [Iffah Umairah Zulmajdi](#), Ph.D. candidate, [Universiti Putra Malaysia](#), for “A Comparison of Zone and Field Model for the Probabilistic Simulation of NIST Kitchen Fire”

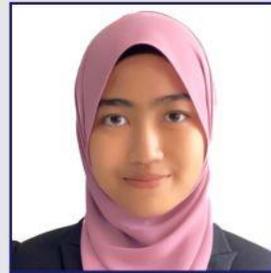
## Spring 2021 Student Research Grants



Cheryl A. Marek, P.E.,  
Ph.D. candidate



David Morrisset,  
Ph.D. student



Iffah Umairah Zulmadji,  
Ph.D. candidate

## Research – Awards & Recognition

### Arthur B. Guise Medal

Initiated in 1982, the Arthur B. Guise Medal recognizes eminent achievement in the advancement of the science and technology of fire protection engineering and is named in memory of the achievements of Arthur Guise, who singularly developed dry chemicals for use as fire extinguishing agents. The achievement may be in research, development, design, innovation, management, education, or literature.

Please join us in congratulating the 2021 [Arthur B. Guise Medal](#) recipient: [Pravinray D. Gandhi](#), Ph.D., [UL](#). Dr. Gandhi has led UL's fire research and development group for more than 35 years, implementing fire modeling tools in fire safety evaluations, creating and advancing safety standards related to all aspects of fire protection, and impacting product design across a range of fire detection, suppression, and safety applications.

Beyond Dr. Gandhi's contributions to fire research, he has served on the [NFPA](#) Fire Test Committee, the [ASTM International](#) E05 Fire Standards Committee, and the ASTM D09 Electrical and Electronic Insulating Materials Committee, developing a broad range of fire testing standards; he has been a key contributor in developing educational displays at the [Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago](#); and, he has contributed to the advancement of fire protection engineering as a program and laboratory advisor for [Worcester Polytechnic Institute](#) and [Case Western Reserve University](#).

## Arthur B. Guise Medal



Pravinray D. Gandhi, Ph.D.

## Jack Bono Award for Engineering Communication

Established in 1994, the Bono Award is named after Jack A. Bono, a Fellow and Past President of the Society who worked at Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. (UL) for 44 years. This award recognizes the author(s) of the paper published in the SFPE journal, *Fire Technology*, during the prior year that has most contributed to the advancement and application of professional fire protection engineering.

Please join us in congratulating the 2021 [Jack Bono Award for Engineering Communication](#) co-author recipients:

- [Peiyi Sun, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University](#)
- [Roeland Bisschop, RISE Research Institutes of Sweden](#)
- [Huichang Niu, Ph.D., Institute of Industry Technology, Guangzhou & Chinese Academy of Sciences](#)
- [Xinyan Huang, Ph.D., The Hong Kong Polytechnic University](#)

Their winning article, “A Review of Battery Fires in Electric Vehicles,” focuses on fire safety issues associated with electric vehicles, such as thermal runaway and lithium-ion batteries. Download this *Fire Technology* journal article at: <https://bit.ly/3zuHuFH>.



## Research – Advancing Science through Grantmaking

### Projects Launched in 2021

#### *Open Call Request for Proposals*

In October 2021, the SFPE Foundation [invited proposals](#) on any topic germane to one or more of the following priority research areas identified in the SFPE Research Roadmap:

1. Resilience/Sustainability
2. Wildland/WUI Fires
3. Innovative Technology/Materials

For a full description of the gaps identified in each of the above areas, please consult the [SFPE Research Roadmap](#).

We welcomed proposals from groups or individuals. Proposals had to be submitted by October 31, 2021. Up to \$30,000 (USD) could be awarded.

## **NEW!** Request for Proposals

**Resilience/Sustainability**

**Wildland/WUI Fires**

**Innovative Technology/Materials**

Application Deadline:  
October 31, 2021



### *Water Supply and Climate Change: The Impact of Water Stress on Fire Protection Systems*

It is widely acknowledged that the impacts of climate change include more widespread and prolonged drought conditions, increased risk of flooding, rising temperatures, reduced snowpack, and shifts in weather patterns globally. Many of these changes not only increase the risk of fire events, but also place additional strain on the public water supplies that are an integral part of many fire protection systems. To design for more resilient communities in this context, fire protection engineers need to understand the linkages between climate change, public water supplies, and fire protection systems design. In September of 2021, the Foundation granted an award to [Oklahoma State University](#) to conduct this study, which focuses on the built environment and in-building fires.

This project will contribute to the Foundation's research portfolio in the Research Roadmap threads of **Fire Safety Systems** and **Resilience/Sustainability**.

### **Projects Completed in 2021**

#### *Development of Fire Practitioner Tools*

In August 2020, the Foundation granted an award to the [Fire Research Group](#) of New Zealand for the Development of Fire Engineering Practitioner Tools. The goal of this project was to understand the range of models and tools practicing fire engineers use around the world, identify gaps in needs and tool usage, and make recommendations to SFPE and SFPE Foundation regarding future initiatives to support optimal

tool usage worldwide. This project included an international survey of current practices, an assessment of available tools, a gaps analysis, and a report that summarizes the findings and priorities for industry tool development.

This project contributes to the Foundation’s research portfolio in the Research Roadmap threads of **Building Fires, Resilience/Sustainability, and Fire Dynamics**.

### *Design Fire and Material Performance*

The Foundation initiated a project whose overall goal was to develop the architecture for a “living” comprehensive dataset that could be used for assessing hazards and creating design fires. Additionally, the project aimed to develop a framework that may be used by engineers to develop design fires, aligned with the state of the practice as described in the 5th edition of the SFPE Handbook of Fire Protection Engineering and the SFPE Engineering Guide to Performance-Based Fire Protection. The Foundation selected a team of researchers from [Poole Fire Protection](#), [Performance Based Fire Protection Engineering](#), and the [University of Maryland Department of Fire Protection Engineering](#) to complete the project.

This project contributes to the Foundation’s research portfolio in the Research Roadmap threads of **Building Fires** and **Fire Dynamics**.

## Projects Completed in 2020

### *Anthropomorphic Data and Movement Speeds*

[York University](#) in Canada, under the leadership of Principal Investigator [Dr. John Gales](#), led a collaborative multi-institutional effort, including [Arup](#) and [Lund University](#) in Sweden, aiming to compile and organize contemporary, project specific, movement speeds from existing published and unpublished datasets from industry and academic partners globally, with special considerations for accessibility, upwards/downwards movement, etc. The project also studied the underlying fundamental individual characteristics of movement to set the stage for future improvements in data collection. The project outputs included a report plus an online portal and database.

This project contributes to the Foundation’s research portfolio in the Research Roadmap thread of **Human Behavior**.

### *Estimating Occupant Loads in Retail Buildings*

Occupant load is a critical factor in egress analyses for fire safety systems. Codified values for occupant load for many occupancies are estimates which frequently do not reflect actual conditions. Further, a full statistical analysis of the data, taking into account its variability, is often not undertaken and reported. For retail buildings in particular, the variability of the occupant load can provide important design information. This project, led by Principal Investigator [Gianluca De Sanctis](#) of [EBP Engineering](#) in Switzerland, provides:

1. An in-depth assessment of currently available people counting systems, identifying strengths and weaknesses.
2. A review of occupant loads in actual fire incidents in retail buildings to assess optimum measurement intervals and statistical analyses.
3. An in-depth statistical analysis of occupant data in Swiss retail stores, exploring the impact of occupancy detailed type, building configuration and location.

This project contributes to the Foundation's research portfolio in the Research Roadmap thread of **Building Fires**.

### *Using Bio-Mechanical Data to Determine Evacuation Capability*

This project was led by Principal Investigator [Peter Thompson](#) of [Lund University](#). Experimental data on single-file pedestrian movement was analyzed and implemented in a prototype movement model. The prototype model was developed to predict movement of persons based on a first principle approach using basic population data such as age, height, gender, and response time to adapt the walking speed in a crowd. The experimental data provide the biomechanical information needed in the model. The intention with this new approach was to present a predictive capability for the future as a consequence of the identified demographical changes observed in today's society.

This project contributes to the Foundation's research portfolio in the Research Roadmap thread of **Human Behavior**.

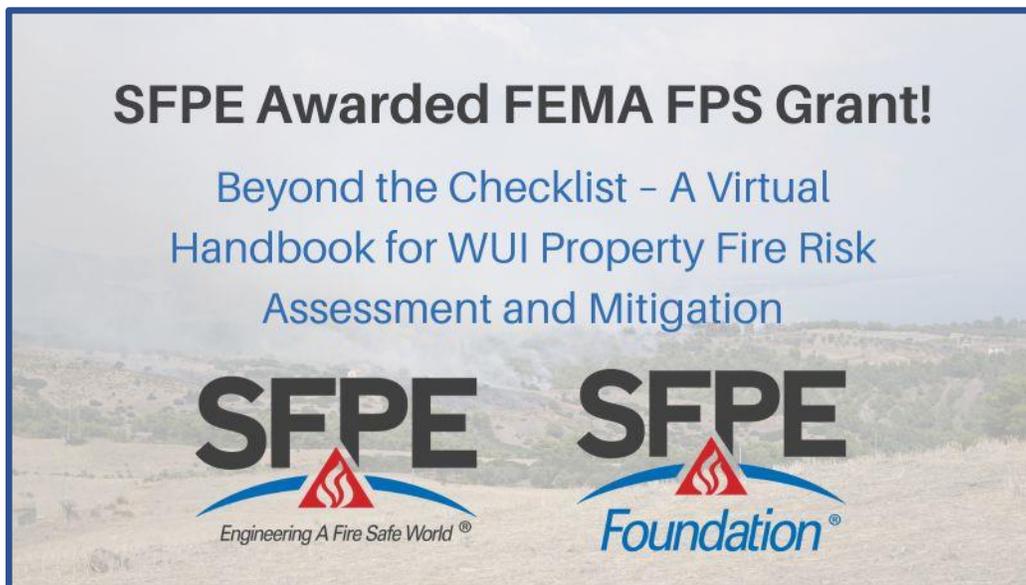
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Final reports and other public project-related materials for completed Foundation-funded projects are available on the Foundation's [website](#).

## Research – Advancing Science through Collaboration

### New FEMA FP&S Grant

In August of 2021, SFPE was awarded a [U.S. Department of Homeland Security / FEMA](#) Fire Prevention & Safety Grant to develop engineering-based resource materials to support fire departments at the Wildland-Urban-Interface (WUI). The project, “Beyond the Checklist – A Virtual Handbook for WUI Property Fire Risk Assessment and Mitigation,” will be led by SFPE and SFPE Foundation and will build on existing and emerging initiatives.



### Modern Vehicle Hazards in Parking Garages and Vehicle Carriers

In 2020, the SFPE Foundation and [NFPA Fire Protection Research Foundation](#) co-sponsored this project, led by [Haavard Boehmer](#) of [Combustion Science & Engineering, Inc.](#)

Fires in vehicles are not uncommon, but the majority of these occur along the road or after collision. Vehicle fires in parking structures developing into large, out of control events are fairly rare, and civilian injuries in these types of incidents number fewer than two dozen annually in the USA. However, fires in parking structures can lead to very large economic losses, as evidenced by recent fires at Liverpool’s Echo Arena (UK) and at the Stavanger Airport (Norway). These incidents involved hundreds of automobiles and resulted in severe structural damage. Fires on marine vehicle carriers or ferries are extremely challenging due to the setting and can result in injury and loss of life to passengers and crew, as well as loss of the

cargo and the vessel. Data on modern vehicles imply there is a small, and shrinking, margin of error when a single vehicle fire can develop into a conflagration. It is important to understand the hazard posed by modern vehicle fires and determine if current fire codes are mandating adequate fire protection requirements.

This project completed an analysis of the current scientific literature regarding the fire hazard modern vehicles represent to parking garages and marine vessels. The changes in vehicle and garage design were documented, and the factors that most impact the fire development were identified. Areas where current codes may be inadequate were identified and knowledge gaps and potential areas of research required to address the hazard were identified.

This project contributes to the Foundation's research portfolio in the Research Roadmap threads of **Non-Building Fires, Building Fires, and Resilience/Sustainability**.

## How to Support Our Work

The Foundation continues to make an impact internationally due, in large part, to our many generous donors. Our donors include corporations, SFPE Chapters, and individuals. The Foundation is very grateful to every donor for their support and confidence, regardless of the amount donated. Every dollar counts! The Foundation is a charitable 501(c)(3) organization incorporated in the United States of America. If you contribute, you should consult a tax advisor to determine whether your contribution is tax deductible.

## New Annual Day of Giving Established

[SFPE Foundation](#) celebrated our 42nd birthday this year with the Annual Day of Giving drive on August 7th! This event, starting August 5th, officially kicked off the 2021 donation season! To support the mission of the Foundation with your donation and help us grow our impact, please visit: <https://bit.ly/3ilPzX6>.

**\*\*If we get to 42 unique donors by October 19th, all donors contributing between now and then will automatically be entered into a random drawing for the chance to win an iPad!\*\***

For more insight into the impact of your contributions on the future of the field, check out the testimonials below from recent student award and grant recipients, as well as reflections from a major donor.



*“The SFPE Foundation has created opportunities for all types of fire protection students to pursue research.”*

Natalia Flores Quiroz, 2020 Student Research Grant Recipient



*“From the built environment to wildfires, there are so many opportunities to advance fire protection engineering through research.”*

Matt Bonner, PhD, 2020 Student Scholar Award Recipient



*“The support of the SFPE Foundation made me a part of the global fire protection engineering community.”*

Mary Button, 2020 Proulx Scholarship Recipient



*“Giving to the Foundation is my way of supporting the next generation of our profession, which has done so much for me. It’s also my way of making an impact on fire safety in parts of the world which need it most – by investing in the future engineers who will make that happen.”*

Kathleen Almand, P.E., Member, Foundation Board of Governors

## AmazonSmile Program Initiated

Did you know the SFPE Foundation is on [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)? Click [here](#) to sign up for [AmazonSmile](#) and set **SFPE Educational and Scientific Foundation** as your preferred non-profit organization to make a donation to the SFPE Foundation with every purchase. This will **not** increase the cost of your purchase and 0.5% of the purchase price will be donated to the SFPE Foundation on all eligible purchases. Remember to shop using [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) or with AmazonSmile ON in the Amazon app and AmazonSmile will donate to the Foundation at no cost to you.

For more information, check out: <https://www.sfpe.org/foundation/waystogive/amazonmile>

## Individual Giving

Generous giving by individuals has offered the Foundation stability and opportunities to expand its impact since the very beginning. Individuals can choose from a variety of giving methods that best suit their needs, including:

- Cash or check
- Credit card
- Redirection of SFPE or SFPE Foundation award or honorarium
- [Planned giving](#) (i.e., life insurance policy/equity; retirement plan assets, bequest provisions, etc.)
- [AmazonSmile program](#)

To give online, login and contribute through the [donation portal](#). Contact Foundation Director Leslie Marshall ([foundation@sfpe.org](mailto:foundation@sfpe.org)) to learn more about how you can donate to support our work, including planned giving options and major gifts.

## Corporate Giving

Corporations can give at least \$5,000 annually and receive special recognition as follows:

- Kilowatt Level: \$5,000 - \$9,999
- Megawatt Level: \$10,000 - \$24,999
- Gigawatt Level: \$25,000 or more

The mission of the SFPE Foundation is to enhance the scientific understanding of fire and its interaction with the natural and built environment. There are hundreds of corporations whose mission aligns or overlaps with that of the Foundation. A number of [corporations give](#) to the Foundation at each of the three levels, and we are very grateful for their trust and support. We invite other corporations and

industry leaders who benefit from the Foundation's work to also give generously and become a Kilowatt, Megawatt, or Gigawatt Level supporter.

Corporate donors are given grateful recognition on the Foundation's website and during the Foundation's presentation at the Annual Business Meeting at the SFPE Annual Conference & Expo.

## Chapter Giving

SFPE Chapters can partner with the Foundation by giving whatever amount the chapter membership feels is appropriate. Through giving, Chapters can contribute to the advancement of fire protection education and science in a way that is sustainable and has global reach. Any amount is welcome, and no amount is too small. [Chapters that donate](#) receive credit toward the [SFPE Chapter Excellence Award \(ACE\) program](#).

## Directing Your Donation for Maximum Impact

The Foundation offers several funds to which you can direct your donation to achieve an impact that is most meaningful and important to you. These are listed and described below.

- [Robert W. Fitzgerald Challenge Fund](#):  
Every dollar donated and directed here will be matched up to \$2,500 annually through 2026. This is a great way to multiply your donation. The money in this fund is used to support the Proulx Scholarship Fund, which awards \$5,000 annually as a scholarship for a student engaged in a research project in the field of human behavior related to fire or emergencies.
- [UL and William Henry Merrill Society Matching Campaign](#):  
Every dollar donated by an individual or an SFPE Chapter and directed to the Annual Fund or the Robert W. Fitzgerald Challenge Fund will be matched by UL up to a maximum of \$25,000 annually.
- [Annual Fund](#):  
Every dollar donated and directed here will be used by the Foundation at the discretion of the Board of Governors to further the mission of the Foundation.

## How to Give

- Online:  
To give online, go to <https://sfpe.users.membersuite.com/donations> and select your desired options.

- Check by Mail:  
Make check payable to “SFPE Educational & Scientific Foundation, Inc.” and send to:

SFPE Educational & Scientific Foundation Inc.  
Attn: Donations  
9711 Washingtonian Blvd. Suite 380  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Note: in the memo line on the check, indicate the direction for your donation (i.e., Annual Fund, Fitzgerald Fund)