



Rockefeller Foundation records, Minutes and Annual Reports, SG 16.1 and SG 16.2

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English

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rockefeller Archive Center
Creator:	Rockefeller Foundation
Title:	Rockefeller Foundation records, Minutes and Annual Reports, SG 16.1 and SG 16.2
ID:	FA120
Date [inclusive]:	1913-1987
Physical Description:	42.3 Cubic Feet
Language of the Material:	English

Preferred Citation

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Biographical / Historical

Rockefeller Foundation

The Rockefeller Foundation was established by act of the New York State Legislature approved by the Governor on May 14, 1913, "to promote the well-being of mankind throughout the world." Between 1913 and 1928 the China Medical Board, the International Health Board, and the Division of Medical Education functioned as divisions of the Foundation, concentrating on the administration of programs in public health and medical education. A Division of Studies was created in 1923 to handle projects outside the medical field. These early years were experimental as the new foundation studied the methods of philanthropy and explored its relationships with other Rockefeller boards.

Although the Rockefeller Foundation is the largest and best known philanthropy founded by the Rockefeller family, it was neither the first nor the last to be established. The Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research (1901), the General Education Board (1902), the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission for the Eradication of Hookworm Disease (1909), and the Bureau of Social Hygiene (1911) all existed earlier. When the Foundation was created, the Sanitary Commission was disbanded. After the

establishment of the Foundation, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial (1918) and the International Education Board (1923) were created.

The Rockefeller boards and their programs were reconsidered and reorganized in 1927-1928 in order to avoid overlapping programs. The International Health Board of the Foundation was disbanded and an International Health Division was organized. The China Medical Board, Inc., was established as a separately incorporated institution, and the China Medical Board of the Foundation ceased to exist. The Division of Studies was dropped and the Division of Medical Education was phased out. The Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial was combined with the Foundation and the Spelman Fund of New York was chartered to continue activities of the LSRM that were not absorbed by the Foundation. The International Education Board was disbanded.

As a result of this reorganization, the Foundation adopted a program which included public health work (administered by the IHD), the advancement of knowledge in the medical and natural sciences (in part taken over from the IEB), the social sciences (formerly the field of the LSRM), and the humanities and arts (shared with the GEB). The Rockefeller Institute and the Bureau of Social Hygiene were not affected by the reorganization. The program adopted by the Foundation at this time remained basically the same for the next twenty years.

As its files accumulated, the Foundation maintained a card index recording the names of institutional and individual grantees and correspondents. A microfilm copy of this index is available at the Archive Center.

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Scope and Contents

The microfilm contains minutes of the Foundation.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Conditions Governing Access

User copies of minutes microfilm are open for research. Access to the original published volumes of annual reports is permitted.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Charitable uses, trusts, and foundations
- Philanthropy
- Charities
- Life sciences
- Philanthropy -- United States
- Public health
- Arts
- Medical sciences
- Humanities

Collection Inventory

Minutes, 1913-1987	
Title/Description	Instances
Minutes, 1913-1946	reel 1
Minutes, 1947-1964	reel 2
Minutes, 1913-1918	reel 3
Minutes, 1919-1922	reel 4
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