LEADING CHANGE through TESTIMONY

USC Shoah Foundation – The Institute for Visual History and Education
USC Shoah Foundation is at the forefront of using visual testimonies, education and research to overcome prejudice, intolerance and hatred. By giving voice to the witnesses of genocide and crimes against humanity, we advance the use of audiovisual testimonies to catalyze learning, inform advocacy and transform lives around the globe. We inspire people to take the future into their own hands so the terrors of the past are not repeated.

At the heart of our efforts is the Visual History Archive (VHA), the world’s largest collection of audiovisual interviews of survivors and witnesses of the Holocaust, the Armenian, Cambodian, Guatemalan, and Rwandan genocides, and the Nanjing Massacre. The VHA contains more than 53,000 interviews conducted in 63 countries and 41 languages and drives our convergent approach to research; compelling, interactive educational programs; cutting-edge digital preservation; and partnerships to intervene in the cycle that leads to mass violence.

We invite you to join us as we develop new methods for using testimony to create peace and justice, to help shape policy, to restore victims’ dignity, and to inspire the next generation.
“It is amazing to think, with New Dimensions in Testimony, I will be able to hold the same type of conversation with future generations that I have now when I go out to speak to students. It is a truly good use of technology for the future.”

Pinchas Gutter
Holocaust Survivor
The New Dimensions in Testimony project is developing new technology that will enable students — now and far into the future — to be able to have “virtual conversations” with Holocaust survivors about their life experiences. Here, Pinchas Gutter prepares to answer questions as he sits in a light stage, in the center of a half-dome lined with a green-screen backdrop and equipped with a system of lights, microphones and more than 50 video cameras.
We create opportunities for people to connect with testimony and with others who share their interests in new ways, wherever they are in the world.
The voices of survivors and witnesses offer uniquely powerful opportunities to educate, inform and inspire action. Expanding access to the Institute’s resources, especially the Visual History Archive (VHA), is critical to our mission. At the core of these efforts is our VHA Program, which meets the changing needs of the archive’s diverse users by getting the right digital resources to the right audience; growing communities of users by developing and refining our digital technologies including the use of virtual reality and other applications of testimony; building new educational platforms and templates; and partnering with organizations, school districts and governmental agencies to incorporate testimony into their programs and activities.
54
VHA Access sites
2016

500
Access sites
by 2019

+ 1 million
Estimated per annum
increase in video testimony
views, 2015-20

Continents use IWitness

Countries use IWitness

“Eyes on Testimony” Number of people reached by our work each year

Educators and students are registered users of IWitness

+16,000,000

+65,000

+65

V

+ 1 million
Holocaust survivor Celina Biniaz shares poetry about her experiences with a group of USC students and others learning about genocide at an event organized by DEFY, USC Shoah Foundation’s student association.
Research

The Institute is a preeminent academic authority for the study of genocide and the role of audiovisual testimony in research, leading new interdisciplinary studies to understand the origins of mass violence and the conditions for resistance. Each year the Institute supports and informs the pioneering work of hundreds of scholars at USC and around the world in disciplines as diverse as neuroscience, literature, psychology, religion, medicine, art and political science.

The Institute’s Center for Advanced Genocide Research spearheads definitive genocide research, with special emphasis on the study of mass violence and resistance; research on violence, emotion and behavioral change; and digital genocide research. Leading the academy as part of a major research university, the Center leverages the extraordinary cross-campus assets of the university and the robust global partnerships of the Institute to advance groundbreaking discoveries and solutions to contemporary global challenges.

The Institute and Center also pursue undergraduate coursework, international conferences and symposiums, prestigious fellowships and scholarships-in-residence for top academicians.
The Institute’s award-winning teaching tool is IWitness. This flagship educational website brings human stories of the Visual History Archive to secondary school teachers and their students in the form of dynamic multimedia-learning activities.
Education

USC Shoah Foundation is the world’s leading organization in testimony-based education, with professional development and digital tools reaching dozens of countries and a unique educational website, IWitness (iwitness.usc.edu). Through global and local partnerships, the Teacher Innovation Network, and an international cadre of regional consultants and trained teachers, we reach tens of thousands of educators and students every year.

The Institute strives to provide pivotal testimony-based educational tools and programs that engage learners and move them to act for a better world. The Institute’s proven global learning tools and programs incorporating the testimonies in the Visual History Archive offer multidimensional opportunities for students to connect with the past in ways that can contribute to their success today and their awareness of their own ability to create and sustain positive societal change.
71 countries and 50 U.S. states use IWitness

6.2 million students reached by our educational programs.

Percentage of secondary school students who, after viewing video testimonies, say they will speak up against stereotyping.
Global Outreach

By any measure, the Institute’s outreach achievements have been extraordinary, particularly for an organization so young. Over 20 years of activity, nearly every major media outlet in the world has covered or carried the Institute’s work, including print and digital media and short and long-form documentary films that have garnered major broadcast television and motion picture industry awards. Today, the Institute’s reaches more than 16 million people annually.

To expand our reach further and continue placing testimony at the forefront of our global engagement efforts, the Institute seeks to accelerate media production to generate new testimony-based content. Leveraging existing relationships with Comcast Corporation, Discovery Communications and other global outlets, the team will produce and distribute a range of media products that change the way people caught up in violence are heard and understood.

Produced media may include short films, television programs, feature-length films and an array of digital resources. The Institute anticipates innovating new media forms to tell testimony-based stories in ways that are impactful in the ever-evolving media landscape, ensuring the most relevant stories reach, inspire and empower audiences around the world.
GLOBAL OUTREACH
**Future Impact**

Investing in USC Shoah Foundation ensures that it can build upon its current strengths and assets and seize the opportunity to solidify the Institute’s worldwide impact in countering racism, hatred and intolerance.

Survivors of five genocides whose testimonies are in the Visual History Archive posed for photographer David Strick in Los Angeles, April 2015. Clockwise from left: Edith Umugiraneza (Rwandan Tutsi Genocide), Dario Gabbai (Holocaust) Sara Pol-Lim (Cambodian Genocide), Aracely Garrido (Guatemalan Genocide), Yevnigue Salibian (Armenian Genocide).
IWalks, an interactive educational program, connects concrete physical locations with clips of testimony from the Visual History Archive across several European cities.

“It’s up to us how we want to live and how we want others to live. If you want to make a beautiful world or a terrible world, it’s up to us.”

Shony Braun
Holocaust Survivor