2020
Annual Report

MHz FOUNDATION

Letter from the Chairman of the Board

This year has been the most difficult for many in recent history, but I'm pleased to bring some good news and hope to the table, in this yearly report from MHz Foundation. I share updates on MHz Curationist, the flagship project of the MHz Foundation, an ecosystem for collecting and sharing cultural materials from the Creative Commons and public domain. We aim to build connections and deepen cultural awareness by collectively framing the world we share.

As we reported last year, we successfully launched our beta Curationist platform in the spring of 2019 at the Creative Commons summit in Lisbon, Portugal, and our efforts over the past year have been dedicated to community-building, and bringing our platform to a fully functioning 2.0 version. Today, I will share what we mean by our 2.0 vision.

The vision of Curationist has shifted since we first conceptualized it. The first vision of the site was an online museum of Creative Commons and public domain exhibits, curated by a single curator, and possibly a team of curators, as a museum that would curate exhibits. The second vision of Curationist came through the realization that if we allowed the general public to curate, we could make a much stronger global impact through enabling the sharing of visual storytelling, leveraging the same free licensing schema that would allow us to offer those tools without gatekeepers.

Our third and current vision of the site, which we call Curationist 2.0, is an evolution of our revised vision, but one that grew out of the difficulties we found in attempting to bring our original vision to fruition. We discovered, in trying to develop a website that could be curated by all, that managing content sources in the Creative Commons environment is hard - that people use different taxonomies and schema, and that overall it's a bit of a mess. We realized that to truly get to the kind of impactful storytelling platform we wanted to build, we would need to start solving the problems of normalizing different taxonomies and data structures. It was a revelation to discover that others were enthusiastic and excited by our desire to do that because they needed it too. Our new idea is to focus not just on our site as a platform, but also the content stream (and content store) that our site will use, and to try to provide a centralized source of Creative Commons data that can be tagged and augmented with metadata that will allow not just our platforms, but other platforms to succeed in better storytelling. We are excited about the global impact this will have when we launch it!

We aren't doing that alone, we have organizations and companies in our camp helping to push us to success. In addition to our continued partnership with Creative Commons, our collaborations over the past year have extended to the Mozilla Foundation, with our thought piece essay titled, 'The Future of Internet Health' being highly regarded and selected for print publishing; and, just as notable, we are joining forces with the Smithsonian Institution as an official collaborator for the launch of their Open Access Initiative, bringing 3.4 million works online for free public use. This is a tremendous source of cultural heritage that Curationist.org will leverage. We also have some grant and individual donor success stories, detailed herein as well.

To accomplish all this, I'm also proud to report that MHz Foundation updated its mission statement to better reflect our new path forward. After a good deal of work, we can now say:

> **The mission of the MHz Foundation is to connect people with global cultural resources and perspectives through open knowledge.**

Why is doing all this work to change our mission and trying to achieve Curationist 2.0 particularly important now? We believe that everyone should see themselves reflected in the Internet, and take part in weaving their story into the online cultural fabric of our shared world. Recent cultural events around Black Lives Matter have shed further light on the importance of the individual story, and how we need to continue to create spaces for them to be told and heard as we move towards an equitable, democratized future.

This year has bolstered our commitment to our cause, while we stood in solidarity with those protesting anti-black violence, and stand committed to using our platform to advance anti-racist efforts. With the Curationist project, we are attempting to generate a platform that allows people to share stories of their cultural perspectives through art. Art helps shift perspectives and has the capacity to change hearts and minds.

As our team looks to find ways to generate content, which includes a celebration of the history and contributions of African Americans through the Curationist editorial platform, the staff and Board began work developing and publishing a diversity, equity, and inclusion plan to guide how we engage with curators, contributors, staff, editors, and our wider community. A synopsis of that plan is published herein, and the Foundation's annual strategic plans have been formed through that lens.

Finally, though we remain divested of for-profit activities, so that MHz Foundation can focus on its non-profit mission to enrich and champion global content curation, we have remained stewards of our ownership stake in MHz Networks, LLC., which operates MHz Choice, a subscription-based streaming service that continues to offer access to international content. The LLC shares a mission-driven focus on spreading cultural awareness, and we are proud of their continued development and subscription growth as well.

We hope you find this annual report informative, and we look forward to another productive year in 2021.
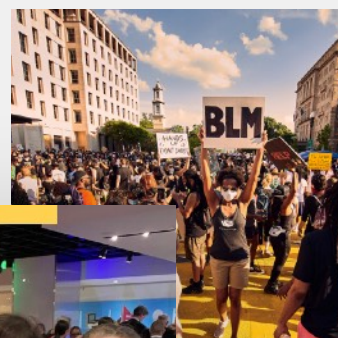
Best regards,

Benjamin Rees, Chairman of the Board

About
The MHz Foundation

The MHz Foundation is a non-profit organization led by a Board of Directors, and operated under the Executive Directorship of Christian Dawson, augmented by consultants, temporary and permanent staff, and a global team of writers and curators for our flagship MHz Curationist website. MHz Foundation proudly operates in support of its mission, **to connect people with global cultural resources and perspectives through open knowledge.**

The annual report documents the work of MHz Foundation during the 2020 calendar year.

The MHz Foundation Board

Benjamin Rees, Chairman
Kevin Karjala, Director
Casey Rea, Director
Ben Hall, Director
Dr. Agnieszka Chalas, Director
Dr. Manu Samriti Chander, Director

The MHz Foundation Staff

Christian Dawson, Executive Director
Virginia Poundstone, Director of Product and Content, Curationist
Taylor Tricarico, Operations Director
Hilary Osborne, Sponsorship Sales Lead
Amy Sawyer, Project Director
Bree Dodd, Project Manager
Thomas Guignard, Technical Project Manager
Vaunda Davis, Board Coordinator and Bookkeeper
Brandon J. Roy, Marketing and Promotions Specialist
Mary Miller, Grant Relationship Manager
Garrett Graddy-Lovelace, Academic Partnership Coordinator

Notable Events & Accomplishments
2020 in Review

The 2017 Board of Directors approved strategy has continued this year, to fund the development of MHz Curationist. In accordance with the terms of that strategy, the MHz Foundation Board is providing up-front investment to bring MHz Curationist to the market as a public good, and the Board intends to fund its base operations in total until May 2022, at which time the Board expects fundraising to augment and eventually replace the MHz Foundation investment. In FY2020, we continued to work toward that strategy, so that MHz Curationist can be a growing asset to the Foundation as quickly as possible.

Our growing team's continued dedication to our mission has produced several notable highlights, events, and accomplishments, to reflect upon from 2020:

Ongoing Platform Design and Development

With Curationist launched and serving the public, the development goals of 2020 were focused on user experience improvements, ease of publishing and search engine optimization. In Q3 of 2020, the Board approved a revised evolution of the technical development strategy that allows for diverse user profiles and contributions directly to the site, as well as an independent data store that enables us to take Creative Commons CC-BY and CCO content, and structure it through a dialogical editorial process; it defines the new best practices of content production beyond the imaginations, and limitations, of source cultural institutions themselves. In doing so, we hope to help normalize and provide additive metadata to diverse content streams in a way that allows them to be structured and shared in new curatorial ways.

Publishing

Sourcing, writing and publishing unique content from a global perspective was the focus of 2020. Under the direction of Virginia Poundstone, MHz developed a robust, original content pipeline, resourced with editors, writers, thought leaders, and artists from around the globe.

From Left to Right: Brewster Kahle, Founder of Internet Archive, Garrett Graddy-Lovelace, Academic Partnership Coordinator, and Christian Dawson, Executive Director

Notable Events & Accomplishments
2020 in Review (continued)

Community Shared Values

Curationist's Shared Community Values is a working document intended to build focus, clarity, and intentionality, around the commitments that drive the work of a dispersed community of media, archive, and cultural workers. These shared agreements are for the Curationist community to use as a guide, and correspond with actionable items in our Manual of Style. They remain unfixed and ready for growth. These values will serve as the essential underpinning for everything we create.

Grants and Fundraising

While grant organizations diverted their funds to pandemic relief related funding, Curationist's Fundraising team pressed on and secured Grant for the Web's Spark Grant. It also marked our first individual donor campaign that resulted in over 70 individual donors giving to the organization in support of Curationist.

Strategic Partnerships

Cultivating relationships with open knowledge advocates, talking to thought leaders to learn from, collaborating and sharing in best practices, remained central to the activities in 2020. In March we joined the Smithsonian Open Access Initiative, a new program allowing people to download, share, and transform, nearly three million of the museum's online items for any purpose, without cost, or permission. As a collaborator on this program, we help the Smithsonian showcase public access and use of 2.8 million newly available digital collections.

COVID Response - Online Educational Resource

As the world halted and educational institutions around the world began shutting down or restricting in-person education, a heightened need for online educational resources emerged. Under the guidance of MHz's educational consultant, Garrett Graddy-Lovelace.

"When we take from the Commons,
we must give back to the Commons."

Christian Dawson, Executive Director at MHz Foundation

MHz
CURATIONIST

An Expanded Overview

Our open access publication, MHz Curationist, is an online space for collaboratively curating arts and cultural content, using Creative Commons legal tools. The MHz Curationist platform is intended to be clear, easy to use, and entertaining. It is a platform that is enriching, but not overly academic, as well as being fun and trustworthy. MHz Curationist is our way of giving back to the Commons.

The MHz Foundation, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit, has been participating in the global open access movement with Curationist.org since 2016. In the spring of 2019, MHz Curationist beta was introduced to the world at the Creative Commons Global Summit, as a collaborative platform for people, wherever and whoever they are, to deepen their learning and transform their understanding of arts and culture from around the world. Our motivation and inspiration continues.

For nearly three years, MHz Curationist has listened, discussed, and researched opportunities for the platform, with global Open-GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives, and museums), communities. MHz Curationist is poised to become an important contributor, a next-generation platform and publisher of open access cultural content. Arriving at a mature moment for the global open access movement, MHz Curationist builds upon the collaborative work of individuals and institutions worldwide, who have contributed millions of data and digital assets to the global commons. MHz Curationist prioritizes content using Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC-BY) and the Creative Commons Zero Publication Domain Dedication (CC0), which enable maximum opportunities for use in commercial and non-commercial applications, while continuing to grow the commons for all.

What makes MHz Curationist unique is it draws upon Creative Commons and public domain content, shared by GLAM institutions through their open access programs, as well as third-party aggregators and community content hubs. The site is contributed to, and managed by, a collaborative team of freelancers, enthusiastic about sharing arts and culture in dialogue with others.

MHz Curationist is an inspiring and welcoming place for co-collaborators, guest editors, and future users, to share viewpoints on arts and culture. MHz Curationist will offer new, compelling, and unique content, particularly through the publication of editorial features, collections, and new metadata that build upon content from open access source repositories. Editorial features will incorporate fresh voices and visions through collaborations with the open access community, content, and commercial partners. MHz Curationist's contributions of enhanced data and long-form text, will be one of our most significant contributions to the Commons.

MHz Curationist is seeking partners who can contribute donations, sponsorships, in-kind technical support, along with a case study, and demo development. MHz Curationist, working with partners, has the potential to capture international attention and interest, for those seeking applications of openly licensed cultural content.
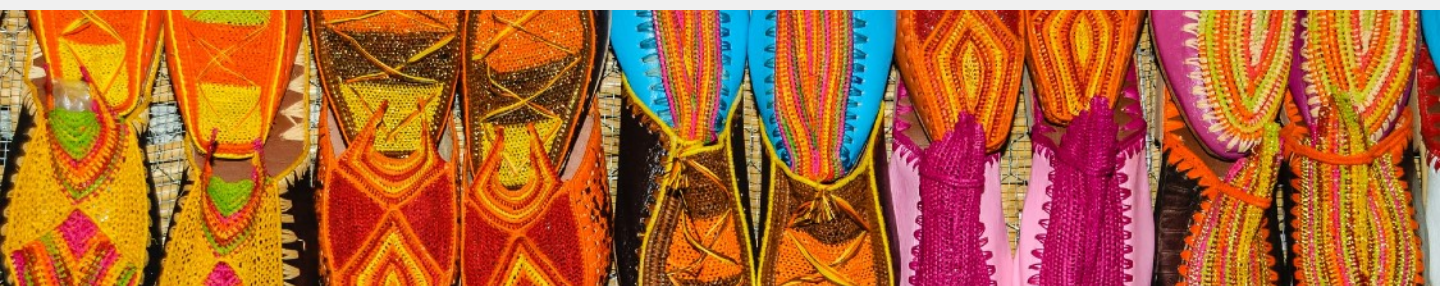
MHz **CURATIONIST**
Reframing the world we share.

The backbone of MHz Curationist is a search tool that discovers Creative Commons, Public Domain and open access artifacts. All content links to their original sources, but can be collected by users in a platform that allows for engaged and useful interaction with MHz Curationist.

In January 2019, we launched our incipient library and museum components. Our library is a searchable database of quality, culled, cultural content, from collections and archives from around the world. In our library, we curate mini-collections, exhibitions, and position projects for our museum. This work is presented in the form of an editorial style, with short and long-form articles, image essays, videos, audio projects, stories, and dialogs.

As MHz Curationist continues to grow, we will be expanding our efforts to develop a robust platform that will allow users to assemble various collections from our search tools, and share them publicly or privately. In an effort to present a more accurate, enriching global culture, we will also expand our publishing efforts to include commissioning new works for the Creative Commons, by leading cultural producers from the global majority.

MHz Curationist is not a single center, but an intersectional hub of many cultures: a collaborative global exchange comprising many dynamic places worldwide talking to one another. It is a tool for inclusion, integrated value creation, and innovation. Just as public parks, libraries, and museums are our commons, the Internet is also a commons, and does not have to be limited by copyright laws. MHz Curationist is a networked fulcrum supporting the free exchange of culture by all, for all.

Since launching the beta site, much has been learned about our audience and the potential functionality of the site. The original hypothesis of a target audience composed of people from the art and culture world, as early adopters, was quickly understood to not be a productive first path forward. Instead, the exciting potential paths within the open knowledge movement and academia, were identified and pursued. Creative Commons and Wikimedia Foundation have both been welcoming. Their excitement about Curationist is sustained through ongoing conversations about technology, community building, and partnership possibilities. With the expert counsel and guidance of Garrett Graddy-Lovelace, and support from board member Agnieszka Chalas, we have entered into academia by launching a fellowship program in partnership with the University of Toronto's School of Digital Curation. These fellows are working on a diversity of projects related to Curationist: experimenting with the possibilities of content curation, taxonomy, metadata research and analysis, user experience and user interface potentialities.

MHz **CURATIONIST**
Reframing the world we share.
(continued)

The original market research has been applied to the vision of Curationist.org, as a site that invites people to learn about, engage with, and situate themselves in a global arts and culture world that is diverse, dynamic and expanding. Two primary user segments were homed in on: conscientious art consumers and conscientious creatives. As part of our methodology, a small team of freelance curators from these user segments were scouted and hired. This intergenerational content curation team represents the two primary user segments and comes from a wide diversity of backgrounds. They are instrumental in helping to understand how the future of Curationist.org needs to be developed.

The website was delivered with a functionality based loosely on an indexed blog model. The process of content curation is multi-faceted and begins with content searching on openGLAM institution's websites, through CC search, Wikimedia Commons, and Google search (filtered for licensing). Items are then manually hot-linked into Curationist's backend through URLs, additional tags are added, items are submitted for review, and finally, they are posted to the site. Visitors can navigate the site in a few undefined ways, favorite items, and share things they find via Facebook and Twitter. The content curation team has also experimented with the beta version of the API search tool that is currently coupled to the WordPress site.

It has been an incredibly productive year in terms of learning outcomes. We have learned that without a thumbnail repository, hot-links to and from other sites, slows down our site overall. We now know that because the site was designed to be used as a single individual's blog, there are many pain points in the workflow of publishing for the content curation team. We also learned that there is not equitable representation in the available open knowledge content from the global majority of the world. There is now a known need to clearly establish our risk levels by writing a policy on copyright and fair use, for digital objects and the metadata they carry with them. We know user testing and iteration for front and back-end use needs to be more of our focus, as we continue to build out the site. From our internal user testing, we know that in order to align to our vision and engage our target users for repeat visits, there needs to be a more useful method of contribution, and better feedback tools developed. Finally, the API search tool needs to be developed as a separate project of MHz Foundation, so the functionality can be iterated and improved without impeding the development of curated content, so the product can become an open source content curation tool available to the field.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

For MHz Foundation, diversity, equity, and inclusion are not just initiatives, they are our essentiality. With Curationist.org, we are creating a radically collaborative online platform to enrich and champion global content curation, so people can learn, share, and better understand our world. No one voice can, or should, be called on to represent an entire community. Geographic diversity, anti-colonial, anti-racist, feminist, queer practices guide how we build our teams, how we deliver content, and how we cultivate our community. Transformation and innovation occur when varied ideas, perspectives, and backgrounds emerge as a collective voice.

But in light of this year's tragic and painful events that resulted in powerful and necessary demonstrations in cities across the United States, we recognize that words are not enough. Intentions are not enough. There is work to be done.

We are committed to anti-racism. We are committed to advancing equity as an intersectional issue, understanding the foundation of all equity work is anti-racism, due to the dominance of white supremacy in all systems of oppression. We accept that our commitment to anti-racism means a commitment to constant learning—we will make mistakes, but we are determined to learn from them and to improve.

To be transparent and realistic, we also acknowledge that our capacity as an organization means we cannot always implement measures to the level that we may like. We are accountable to ourselves, both as staff, as a board, and to the community, to create regular opportunities for reporting on our work, progress, mistakes, and plans.

A diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) action plan encompasses our mission, strategies, and practices to support a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization. This initiative will look at the internal and external needs of the organization in the area of DEI, and respond with a strategically aligned approach. The work of becoming an anti-racist organization, in tandem with the work of creating an ant-racist world, will take all of us and will not be accomplished in a year, or even a lifetime. Our commitment to this work is with a long-term view and is engrained in our operations.

While we continue to seek opportunities to learn and improve, the below policies and practices are how we are currently modelling the values of diversity, equity and inclusion:

- MHz staff regularly reviews and improves our recruitment, hiring, orientation, and retention practices to employ diverse staff, and create opportunities for every staff member to be their best and whole selves, through their work with MHz. This includes reviewing role descriptions to ensure the language is inclusive, with well-defined duties and expectations.

- We encourage all staff to recognize that they represent MHz in-person and online, in the office and beyond, with words and actions that meet our commitment and lead by example for our community. This includes not speaking on panels or at events where the speaker lineup is not diverse, and ensuring that written contributions we author include a diversity of voices and perspectives.

- MHz staff continuously review all external-facing material through a DEI focus before publishing on the website. All public-facing generated content and media creation is reviewed for language and tone, avoiding industry jargon, overtly gendered language, and assumptions about our audience. The brand and website design is reviewed for visual representations of varied cultures, ethnicities, multi-generational, and multi-gendered pairs, as well as visual and audio accessibility.
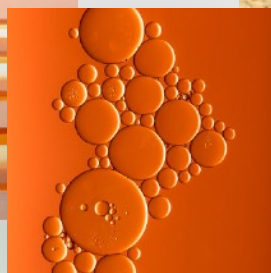
MHz **CURATIONIST**
Fundraising

Grants

FY20 saw our first grant success, as we further built our grant-making capabilities. MHz Foundation was chosen as a grant recipient from the Grant for the Web Spark Grant, as part of Grant for the Web's first public call for proposals. More than 280 applications underwent a rigorous independent judging process and ours won approval. Receiving funds from Grant for the Web was a very important step in seeking validation from the open knowledge community, in what we are trying to achieve. It allows us to show future nonprofit funders that people see our vision, and believe in what we can do.

The specific output from this grant will be a research report that we produce and publish, outlining how we plan to make our site sustainable long term. The focus of the research and reporting will be on monetization, and a roadmap to sustainability. We are excited about undertaking this essential effort, and a plan to get it accomplished is already underway.

General grant request materials are ready for us to customize as we expand our grant search. In the early part of 2021, the MHz Foundation will be applying for additional grants in alignment with our mission, alongside an ongoing exploration of funding opportunities. For the MHz Foundation to be successful in its mission-driven work, we have identified development needs that require $160,000 in grants and sponsorships. If you have an interest in helping the MHz Foundation, please connect with mary@mhzfoundation.org for details.

Individual Donor Campaign

In August 2020, MHz Foundation launched its very first fundraising campaign, asking individual donors to help support the mission of MHz Foundation and the Curationist project. Through the generosity of donors, we successfully achieved our fundraising objective, bringing a total of 73 new individual financial contributors to the MHz Foundation cause. Donors of our very first campaign will be receiving first access to our Creative Commons API aggregator search tool.

More motivated than ever, we push forward into the season ahead in development of our 2.0 platform, aligned on our mission of open access and free knowledge within the arts and cultural heritage space online. We look forward to engaging our donor pool, and finding ways to expand it with a similar campaign in 2021.

Corporate Sponsorships

MHz Curationist welcomes commercial partners with shared values of global open access. Through in-kind support of our technical roadmap, we aspire to connect with commercial partners who can help us generate global-scale awareness, scale our mission for massive impact, and help fund our technical developments with case studies for the community-at-large, to learn from and reap the benefits.

In collaboration with our team, you can:

- Provide technical infrastructure in-kind support

- Use MHz Curationist content as a demo with your products and platforms (new web publications, data visualizations, stories, augmented reality, virtual reality, etc.)

- Use MHz Curationist content in coordinated marketing and social media campaigns

- Experimental market research and product development with marketing dollars as part of corporate responsibility

Any other ideas? We would be thrilled to explore what is possible!

2020
Financial Report

In February 2020, MHz Foundation received $1,000,000 from Virginia Public Media (VPM). These funds were guaranteed as part of the separation agreement with CPBC in 2013. The funds were generated through the sale of CPBC spectrum to the FCC (Federal Communications Commission). Upon receipt of funds, $250,000 was transferred to the operating account to cover the day-to-day operational expenses of the foundation. An additional $250,000 was transferred in April, June, and September, to cover operating expenses as the foundation launched and supported Curationist. A statement of work for outsourced management was executed on October 1, 2018, between MHz Foundation Inc. and Open-i Advisors.

The activities and objectives outlined in the SOW included ensuring the successful launch of Curationist, leadership and strategic planning, and managing the day-to-day operations of the organization. Payments have been made throughout this fiscal year to cover these services. In 2020, all activities have exclusively been associated with the organization's mission-driven work with no investments made for any for-profit endeavors. The largest expense has been the final phase of technical development for the beta launch of MHz Curationist. This work has led to the ongoing creation and management of the Curationist program.

(Financial Statements follow)

Statement of Activity
January - December 2020

	TOTAL
Revenue	
4001 Donation from AmazonSmil	10.83
4002 Donation GoLively	1,687.20
4055 Spectrum Revenue	1,000,000.00
4200 Grant Revenue	15,000.00
Total Revenue	**$1,016,698.03**
GROSS PROFIT	**$1,016,698.03**
Expenditures	
6400 Postage / Shipping	0.00
6815 Auto Expense	20.86
Operating Expense	
6050 Directorship Agreement Expense	11,500.00
6299 Rent Expense	15,501.50
6300 Storage Rent	490.00
6301 Insurance-Corp Liab	4,076.37
6303 E&O Insurance	4,283.31
6303 Worker's Compensation	1,562.77
6308 Dues & Subscriptions	179.00
6500 Taxes & Licenses	572.00
6700 Prof Fees Legal	53,204.06
6703 Prof Fees-Accounting & Audit	36,524.20
6705 Prof Fees Talent	390,054.54
6830 Training, Seminars, and Classes	60.00
7002 Computer Software	10,673.98
7003 Website Development	2,648.32
7900 Bank Charges	277.44
7900.1 Stripe Fee	59.46
Total 7900 Bank Charges	336.90
Total Operating Expense	531,666.95
Personnel Expense	
6100 Salaries Expense	135,000.00
6111 Payroll Fees	7,761.71
6115 Payroll Taxes	11,415.23
6120 Employee Benefits	8,330.40
6121 Freelancers	79,681.58
Total Personnel Expense	242,188.92
Platform	
5004 SEO Contracting	10,966.76
6707 Hosting	8,665.11
6708 Improvements / Feature Requests	50,740.48
6709 Support Contract	71,875.00
6713 Technical Project Manager	18,037.50
Total Platform	160,284.85
Sponsorship / Grants	
6711 Grant Generation	99,733.58
6712 Sponsorship Generation	72,202.50
Total Sponsorship / Grants	171,936.08
Travel	2,115.41
6800 Travel - Hotel & Lodging	1,156.01
6805 Travel - Airfare, Train, etc.	341.14
6810 Travel - Taxi, Parking	724.01
6811 Travel Meals	384.98
Total Travel	4,721.55
Total Expenditures	**$1,110,819.21**
NET OPERATING REVENUE	**-$94,121.18**
Other Revenue	
4900 Interest Income	243.74
4999 Other Income	22,437.00
Total Other Revenue	**$22,680.74**
NET OTHER REVENUE	**$22,680.74**
NET REVENUE	**-$71,440.44**

Statement of Financial Position
As at December 31, 2020

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
1002 RBC #5564	154,342.79
1012 BofA Ckg #8772	338,550.83
1013 BofA Ckg #4369	13,981.25
Total Bank Accounts	**$506,874.87**
Accounts Receivable	
1212 Accounts Receivable	1,000,000.00
Total Accounts Receivable	**$1,000,000.00**
Other Current Assets	
1225 Rent Security Deposit	1,000.00
1800 Prepaid Expense	9,040.87
Total Other Current Assets	**$10,040.87**
Total Current Assets	**$1,516,915.74**
Other Assets	
1125 Investment MHz Networks LLC	$3,715,181.00
Total Other Assets	**$3,715,181.00**
TOTAL ASSETS	**$5,232,096.74**
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2000 Accounts Payable	74,620.22
Total Accounts Payable	**$74,620.22**
Credit Cards	
2299 Bank of America CC #5938	3,374.77
Total Credit Cards	**$3,374.77**
Other Current Liabilities	
2210 Accrued Expense	21,605.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	**$21,605.00**
Total Current Liabilities	**$99,599.99**
Long-Term Liabilities	
2251 Due to Related Parties	83,318.00
Total Long-Term Liabilities	**$83,318.00**
Total Liabilities	**$182,917.99**
Equity	
Retained Earnings	5,359,542.04
Net Revenue	-310,363.29
Total Equity	**$5,049,178.75**
NET LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	**$5,232,096.74**

MHz **CURATIONIST**
Director of Product & Content

Virginia Poundstone is the Director of Product and Content at the MHz Foundation, leading the emergent vision for MHz Curationist.

Prior to joining the MHz Foundation she was an art educator at Parsons, MICA, and Columbia University, where she taught courses about making things by breaking down systems to build improved structures. She is an artist, a Pollock-Krasner grantee, and a member of the cooperatively artist-run gallery, Essex Flowers, in New York City.

As MHz Curationist's founding Director of Product and Content, she aims to amplify the proportionally underrepresented voices in the digital commons by supporting international workers and leaders in cultural production and digital preservation. Her emergent vision for Curationist is to model an online space for redistribution as a two-way exchange that celebrates difference and deepens cultural awareness. With a commitment to decolonization, intersectionality, and social and environmental justice, knowledge production will be centred as a means to understand the ways people interpret and create the world and their, and our, collective place within it.

MHz CURATIONIST
Board of Directors

Ben Rees, Chairman

Benjamin Rees has fifteen years of experience in partnerships and business development in professional services, broadcast, and VOD industries. Benjamin is a global citizen, born in Australia, residing in the United States, and has traveled to over a dozen countries in Asia, Americas, and Europe, making his worldview wide and inclusive. Benjamin would like to bring that open worldview to everyone through the MHz Curationist.org and the MHz Foundation. He is currently an Assistant Director at a public company accounting firm, and his experience includes strategic account operations, revenue planning, business development, and financial analysis. From 2005-2008, Benjamin was Director of Partnerships and Business Development at IMAKE Software and Services, which specialized in open-source, highly scalable, content management, and entitlement software. He was responsible for managing partnerships with OEMs and system integrators, and provided financial analysis and due diligence resources.

Kevin Karjala, Director

Kevin Karjala is an experienced senior program delivery Principal Consultant, with expertise in leading business and technology impacting initiatives. He has worked with clients in multiple industries including cable, wireless, and media. Kevin excels in areas of large cross functional program delivery, software development, application, and device testing, requirements gathering and process design and execution.

Casey Rae, Director

Casey Rae is Director of Music Licensing at SiriusXM satellite radio, where he is responsible for licensing sound recordings for transmission to 35 million U.S. subscribers. Casey was previously CEO of the Future of Music Coalition, a Washington, D.C.-based education and advocacy organization for musicians and composers. He is also a musician, author and music/media professor at Georgetown University and Berklee College of Music, where he has authored Berklee's first comprehensive course on music policy for its graduate degree program. Casey regularly speaks on issues such as emerging business models, creators' rights, technology policy, and intellectual property at worldwide conferences, universities and in the media. He has testified before Congress on copyright and has written hundreds of articles on the impact of technology on the creative community in scholarly journals and other publications. Casey is an in-demand commentator in media outlets such as NPR, Washington Post, New York Times, Politico, Billboard, L.A. Times, CNBC and more. Casey also serves on the board of the Alliance for Media Arts and Culture—an organization dedicated to expanding opportunity for media makers in all 50 states and around the world. His book William S. Burroughs & the Cult of Rock 'n' Roll will be published by the University of Texas Press in 2019, followed by Music Copyright in Practice: An Authoritative Guide (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019). Casey also runs the D.C.-based label Lux Eterna Records and is the proud dad to two highly musical daughters.

Ben Hall, Director

Ben Hall is a chef/organizer/artist based in Detroit. Hall's work revolves around the forms community takes particularly at the Russell Street Deli, a 30-year-old heritage restaurant in Detroit's Eastern Market, which Hall owns and operates as a long-term, sited project dealing with labor structures, how capital routes itself and hierarchical power structures. As a chef Hall produced the first fully integrated, serially repeated, chef-driven school meal in a major municipality producing a vegan, soy-free, gluten-free soup, at cost, for children at Detroit Public Schools where 55,000 students eat for free and 88% are financially eligible for school lunch. Hall is in the process of repeating this in Houston, Texas where 165,000 children will eat three different soups every two weeks under the federally mandated nutritional and financial guidelines. Hall worked specifically on those guidelines as an active grassroots lobbyist for the Child Nutrition Re-authorization Act. Additionally, he has been repeatedly active as a lobbyist primarily working on wage rights for low wage workers including giving congressional briefings and also lobbying on the Global Food Security Act with Oxfam.
As an artist, Hall most recently presented a solo exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit and performed at the Moers Jazz Festival as a core member of Nate Wooley's Seven Storey Mountain orchestra project. As a music producer and organizer, he produced over 300 performances in Detroit for visiting artists at Entropy Studios, a performance project for experimental sound artists. Using the recording studio there he also produced 60 recordings for numerous artists and performers on the brokenresearch record label. Hall also founded and organized Bap-tizum.com, the largest Black/AfAm spiritual music archive in the world. He is a member of the American Folklore Society.

Dr. Agnieszka Chalas, Director

Dr. Chalas has over a decade of experience working in the arts and culture sector both in Canada and the United States where she was responsible for educational and public program development and delivery, exhibition curation, as well as conducting and using research and evaluation information to improve teaching and learning. She is an Assistant Professor in the Museum Studies program within the Faculty of Information (iSchool) at the University of Toronto.

Dr. Manu Samriti Chander, Director

Dr. Chander is Associate Professor of English at Rutgers University-Newark. He holds an MFA from the University of Michigan and a PhD from Brown University. His first monograph, Brown Romantics: Poetry and Nationalism in the Global Nineteenth Century, examined the appropriation of British Romantic tropes by colonial poets throughout the nineteenth century. He has also edited a collection of short fiction by the nineteenth century Guyanese author, Egbert Martin, and co-edited, with Tricia A. Matthew, a special issue of European Romantic Review on generic experimentation in Romantic abolitionist literature. Professor Chander is currently working on The Collected Works of Egbert Martin, with the support of a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Grant, and developing a second monograph, Art Fights: Aesthetic Controversy and the Lessons of Modernity, which traces a trajectory from the controversial poems of Wordsworth and Coleridge to the films of Griffith and Kubrick and the novels of Nabokov and Rushdie.

Looking Forward /

MHz Curationist is a novel, interactive, and trustworthy open access web platform that provides various authorship and dialogue opportunities with arts and culture from the Commons. MHz Curationist's roadmap in 2021 sees it building upon and contributes to the Commons of arts and culture.

Our operations plan as we build out our Curationist 2.0 platform is built around embracing, and leaning into, these key differentiators that make what we are doing unique in the open access communities we are building our place within.

Differentiator 1:
- seeks to combine efforts of different stakeholders from open access communities to do good.
- builds on collaborative global work of open access communities, and who've contributed millions of data and digital assets to the Commons.
- offers a fresh start for community building.

Differentiator 2:
- will be a manifold platform for subject experts of different perspectives to curate culture with their interpretations.
- will have collaborative workflow access for educators and experts to frame and reframe narratives.
- is committed to ensuring equity in access and dialogue.

Differentiator 3:
- will provide users centralized access to expansive cultural objects in one platform for editorial, learning, and research purposes.
- will draw upon CC and PD content shared by GLAMs plus third-party aggregators and community content hubs

Any other ideas? We would be thrilled to explore what is possible!

For all partners, the following list of tools and resources are at your full disposal for means of collaboration:

- API search tool
- Rest API
- Editorial features
- New metadata
- User contributed content

MHz Curationist can, and is ready, to take the reins to be the leading platform and publisher of open access cultural content globally. By harnessing the expertise of the MHz Foundation contract staff, in earnest collaboration with the community of partners and collaborators that we have built, in a cultural zeitgeist defined by climate change challenges, public health, political, social, and economic chaos, MHz Curationist can be "some good news", for the world that is hungry for new approaches and perspectives on our shared cultural humanity.