



RGME 2024 Anniversary Appeal

RESEARCH GROUP ON MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE
A NEW JERSEY NONPROFIT CORPORATION

Dear Friend of the Research Group on Manuscript Evidence (RGME),

We write to you to ask for your support for our nonprofit educational corporation in its 25th year.

In 2023, we undertook a variety of activities in support of our mission, including the following:

- Holding our Spring & Autumn Symposia on “Materials and Access”, plus Pre-Symposium, with published booklets
- Hosting episodes 10–14 of our online presentation series, “The Research Group Speaks”
- Sponsoring and co-sponsoring five sessions at the 58th International Congress on Medieval Studies (ICMS)
- Launching our RGME Library & Archives project, phase 1, funded by The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation

In anticipating 2024, in addition to funding such ongoing programs as “The Research Group Speaks”, conference sessions, and publications, plus the invited Spring Symposium at Vassar College, we have five main goals:

- Expanding our very modest endowment (only \$2,500) to stabilize our ability to cover ongoing costs
- Building “The Constable Fund” (so far \$2,250) for work by the RGME on manuscript and related studies, to honor Giles Constable (†2021), medieval historian, Honorary Trustee, and long-time mentor for our organization
- Maintaining our website and providing its operating costs (previously donated by our WebMaster, now retired)
- Augmenting donations (about \$5,000 in a good year) so as to meet annual expenses of about \$10,000
- Supporting our overworked, unpaid Director with funded administrative assistance, needed now more than ever

For details, please see <https://manuscriptevidence.org/2023-and-2024-activities> and Appendix.

The RGME retains no full-time staff, and uses no professional fund-raisers. We are run almost entirely by volunteers. Given our lean operating budget and low overhead, your donations can make a large impact directly on our mission. We would be delighted if you would consider contributing whatever amount of funds you can, such as on a regular basis or perhaps from Qualified Charitable Distributions or bequests. The RGME is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization; your donations are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

We extend our warmest gratitude to those who have made financial donations to RGME in the past; we hope you will renew and extend that support. For those who have not yet made such donations, we hope that you'll do so for the coming year. With your help, RGME can become better able to develop a sustainable platform, one that can continue our mission of connecting and supporting scholars and research work for years to come.

To donate, please fill out and return the enclosed form by mail, or visit our web page here:

<https://manuscriptevidence.org/wpme/contributions-and-donations/>

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Appendix: Purpose and Plan

For years, without buildings of its own, the RGME has provided an alternate space or ‘oasis’, gathering participants from the academic world at various levels, on its fringes, and in the wider world. Regularly it provides a forum, with publications, for students, junior academics, independent scholars, established scholars, and others to promote and develop their work. It stands parallel to, and works with, like-minded initiatives by various organizations and individuals on behalf of medievalists and other interests, in academic realms and beyond.

The RGME retains no full-time staff, and uses no professional fund-raisers. Its form of nonprofit organization is “without Members” as such, so we receive no membership dues. We depend upon voluntary donations. Some grants, when available, support specific program activities. We are run almost entirely by volunteers and contributions in kind, including pro-bono services and expertise.

Until our modest endowment might support operating expenses and program activities, we must seek donations (about \$5,000 in a good year) to defray the annual expenses of about \$10,000. At present, they comprise about \$800 for fund-raising, \$4,500 on operating expenses of the corporation (federal and state filing fees, subscriptions, office supplies, and postage and shipping), and the rest on program activities.

To this customary budget, we need now also to find 1) support for maintaining our website (after our pro-bono First WebMaster’s retirement), and 2) part-time administrative assistance for our volunteer Director’s responsibilities of carrying out most of the organizational work (management of the corporation, fund-raising, and program activities), by providing secretarial, accounting, and related services to release some of her time, while our activities have expanded in multiple ways, to focus on the longer-term sustainability of the organization. Together these needs come to about \$5,000 for 2024, in a total budget of \$15,000.

For our 2024 Anniversary Appeal, we seek an aggregate of donations of \$18,000 in order to cover the next year’s budget and grow our endowment. This approach is the first step in a three-year plan to reach a goal of \$55,000.

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