



LIVES, NOT GRADES

A FEATURE DOCUMENTARY FILM
PROJECT REPORT

12.01.19



Prepared for:

**United
Engineering
Foundation**

uefoundation.org

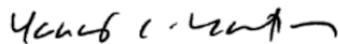
1650 Market Street, Suite 1200
Philadelphia, PA 19103

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THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING US

This project represents the continuation of a now five-year relationship with the United Engineering Foundation. Our new film, “Lives, Not Grades,” follows a unique course at USC that aims to teach engineering students how to design products, services and technologies using a human-centered approach to solve the needs of real people in the middle of serious human crises. The course had one of the most diverse enrollments for an engineering course, with students from as many as 13 disciplines and 7 USC schools. It demonstrated the power of engineering in solving grand challenges. It uplifted the recipients of our outreach, the inhabitants of the camps, and the local residents of the island. Moreover, the course helped restore trust to the mission of universities, trust to its engineering students, and charted a new transformative path for engineering in solving real people’s problems.



YANNIS C. YORTSOS

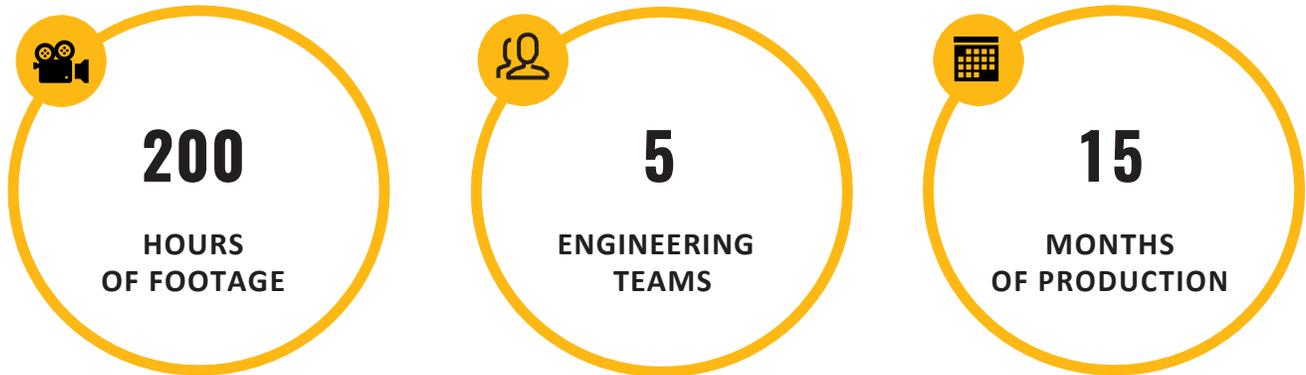
Dean, USC Viterbi School of Engineering



ABOUT THE FILM

Filmed over the course of one year, "Lives, Not Grades" is a 75 min documentary film that follows 5 teams of student engineers and faculty across two continents – North America and Europe – as they race against the clock and uncertainty to design and build solutions that will impact the lives of refugees fleeing war and natural disasters.

QUICK FACTS



ACCESS

Filming involved 3 overseas trips with engineering students inside the notorious Moria refugee camp on the Greek island of Lesbos with additional filming in Athens, Berlin, Frankfurt and Los Angeles. Working with UNHCR and Greek authorities, we were given unprecedented access to the camps, the refugees, their living spaces, and the NGOs. At a time when most documentaries are sprawling labors of love, filmed over the course of 5-10 years, this was a maximum effort to compress so much work in the course of a single academic year.

AUTHENTICITY

This film was built on trust. Our crews were embedded with the engineering students and faculty throughout the journey, resulting in a refreshingly authentic film that captures the intimate moments, the failures, the uplifts, the drama and the complexity of this undertaking. From the onset, we decided that this is not a propaganda piece for the university. We get to know the students and the faculty in a way that college courses have not been yet documented on film. It is a truthful look at the innovation process and the role and relevance of education itself.

OUR TIMELINE



OUR TEAM

Representing an international diverse group of filmmakers spanning 3 continents and 4 timezones who have worked on a variety of award-winning projects from documentaries to feature films, shorts and VR/AR.

FILMMAKERS



DANIEL DRUHORA

Director, Producer

An award-winning screenwriter and filmmaker, Daniel has worked on the development and post-production of “The LEGO Movie” and “Gangster Squad” for Warner Brothers Studios. His next feature doc “I Am Sarah” will be distributed by Focus Features.



ADAM SMITH

Co-Producer

Adam has produced award-winning content covering topics from urban centers to remote corners of Earth, the depths of the oceans to space and the modern heroes tackling 21st century challenges. He is the writer of the anticipated film “Superman vs. KKK”.



DENNIS LEE

Associate Producer

Dennis has written and directed critically acclaimed films “Jesus Henry Christ” and “Fireflies in The Garden” starring Ryan Reynolds and Julia Roberts. Growing up in a “science family” he is currently producing science documentaries.



TEODORA TOTOIU

Director of Photography

Passionate for both narrative and documentary, Teodora has lensed a variety of award-winning short films, music videos, fashion editorials and documentary films. She is currently completing a film about the history of women cinematographers.



ROMMEL VILLA

Editor

Born and raised in Surce, Bolivia, Rommel edited over 10 short films and 2 feature films, as well as many commercials, music videos, animations, and AR/VR content. He is the recipient of a Sloan Grant and holds degrees in both Systems Engineering and Film.



CHARLY FELDMAN

Assistant Producer

Charly has produced current affairs TV documentaries, tackling topics from refugee stories to human trafficking, cryptocurrency and climate change. Her film “This is Exile” won the Jury Prize at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA).

OUR OBJECTIVES

We are creating a unique, feature-length documentary film for international distribution, chronicling the leading role of engineers in addressing one of the greatest humanitarian crises of our time.

HUMAN AND FLAWED, ENGINEERS AS THE ENABLING HEROES OF OUR ERA



SEE THE CURRENT CUT

<https://vimeo.com/376607508>

Password: lives



A DOCUMENTARY ABOUT ENGINEERS FOR A WORLDWIDE AUDIENCE

When people think about solving or mitigating global humanitarian crises, they naturally turn to politicians, diplomats and overloaded humanitarian workers. We believe that engineers, in many ways, must reclaim their rightful place as the natural global problem solvers. This documentary reflects that.

Some will succeed. Others will fail. But the heart and intelligence of engineers will be on full display.



CAPTIVATING WORLDS

From LA to Lesbos Island

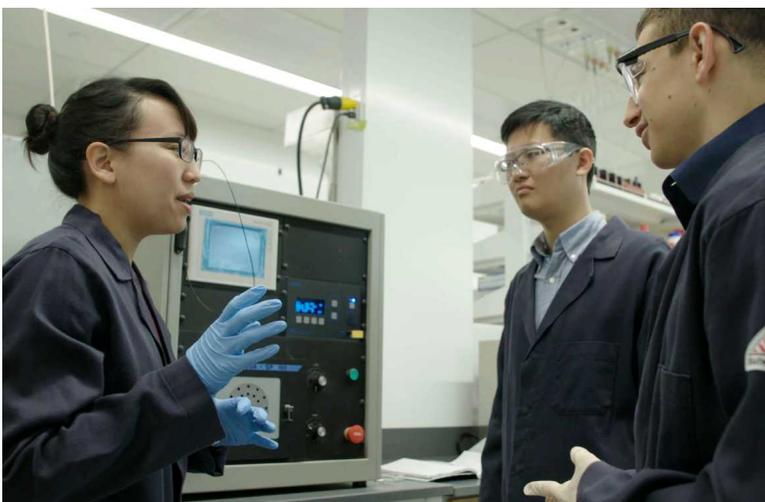
The film moves between the high-tech world of Los Angeles - the world of SpaceX and Hollywood - to remote and idyllic Lesbos island to the jungle world of refugee camps. This contrast heightens the “fish-out-of-water” conflict the engineers face as they try to contextualize the problems and solutions. It is a study in juxtaposition: the tech world meets the painful realities of island life in a refugee camp.



ENGAGING CHARACTERS

The heart of engineering

We meet student refugees who are trying to bring solutions to their own communities, students who have never been outside of the U.S. and students who have fled war. The story is told through the eyes of a colorful cast of characters including a Turkish engineering professor who designs buildings that “talk”, an engineer who designed the world’s fastest wheelchair, and a student who started his own granola bar company.

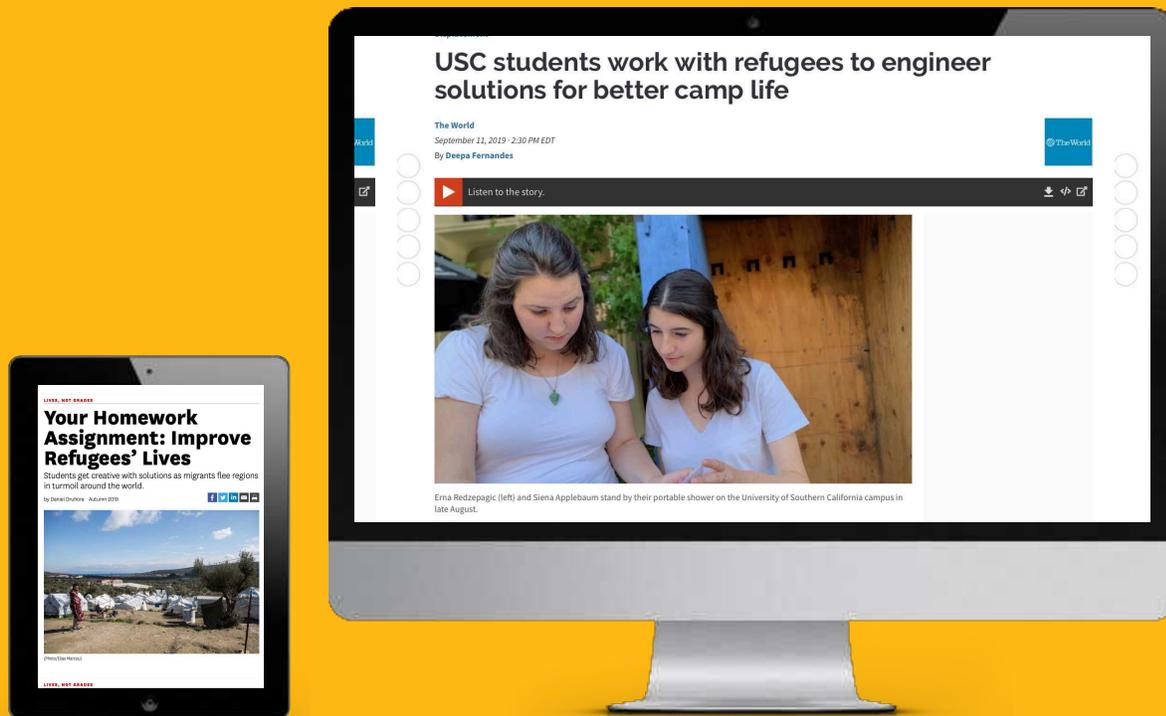


A GRIPPING CHALLENGE

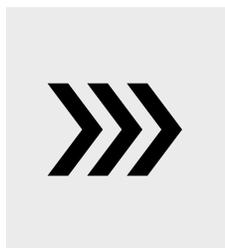
“A problem bigger than us”

Engineers live to solve complex problems, but this problem will humble even the brightest of minds and break the hardest of characters. As time runs out, our engineers also run out of resources and options. The choices they make under pressure reveals not only the depth of the challenge but also something intrinsically true to life and the spirit of engineering.

IN THE NEWS



GAINING MOMENTUM



We've already started promoting the film even before our scheduled wide release in Feb 2020. We were invited to present at Hot Docs, one of the biggest documentary film markets in Canada as well as Eurodoc in Europe. Film Independent invited us to participate in their prestigious Documentary Lab in March 2020. On Dec 2nd, 2019, we are invited to pitch to PBS executives. A clip was shared with several media outlets resulting in [this story](#) gaining worldwide distribution through NPR, PBS and BBC.

PROJECT MILESTONES TO DATE

01. Pitched at forums including Hot Docs (Canada), Dok Leipzig (Germany) and Film Independent (Los Angeles)	Aug 2019
02. Featured on The World, an internationally distributed radio show on PRI, NPR, BBC	Sept 2019
03. Pitching to PBS executives	Dec 2019



Objective 2: A broadcast quality film

On December 2, scenes from the film will be screened for PBS executives. There has been strong interest to share the completed film on **PBS' acclaimed POV platform**, which can be seen by over 97% of the American viewing public, with a cumulative audience average of 2.5 million per program. In addition, POV works with thousands of educators and community groups, reaching over 15,000 people directly.

Objective 3: Reach students worldwide

Our primary audience for this film is high school and college-aged students. We believe the stories of our engineering protagonists will inspire millennials and gen Z'ers everywhere stirring up dialogue and debates about the role of engineering in our society; about the power of young people to make a dent in the world's problems; about what the future of engineering education should look like and about the power of embracing uncertainty and learning lessons from failure.



The film has the potential to touch young audiences everywhere in a time when young people are rapidly changing our world.

But this film can also be a catalyst for a deeper and more thought-provoking conversation about the role of technology in addressing the most unseen and unheard people on our planet. You've picked a poignant and timely theme.

MARK HARRIS

Consulting Producer

[Oscar-winning documentary filmmaker and Academy member.](#)

DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY



THREE AVENUES, ONE DESTINATION

We are partnering with NGOs for a global impact strategy. Per our conversation with Patrick Natale, (UEF executive director), we hope to work closely with the UEF’s five engineering societies — IEEE, ASCE, AIChE, ASME and AIME — to promote on all relevant platforms as it enters the festival circuit.

In the short term, we want the film to be seen by as many young people (aged 14-25) as possible. We plan to organize screenings at our peer institutions where we have great partners and discussions, and even teaching materials (such as a rapid prototyping kit for teachers) to go along with the film. We plan to submit the film to all major film festivals around the world in 2020 where it has the potential to be picked up for major distribution on digital platforms such as Hulu or Netflix or a national broadcaster such as PBS, ARTE or BBC.



IMPACT PARTNERS



NETWORKS IN CONSIDERATION



PARTNER INSTITUTIONS



As independent filmmakers we will rely on a hybrid distribution plan in which festivals, broadcast, educational, non-theatrical, and VOD rights are split. While this requires more work and resources, the rewards are the development of a long-term audience.

STEP 1

Premiere & Festival Release

Beyond our premiere in Los Angeles, we are beginning to submit the film to festivals such as Berlinale, Sundance, IDFA, Palm Springs, Hot Docs and Thessaloniki among others. The festival cycle takes about a year from application to screening so our strategy will run in parallel.

STEP 3

Event Screenings

We plan to organize event screenings and discussions at universities around the world. The U.S. State Department has requested to include the film as part of their [American Film Showcase](#). To quote senior diplomat Natasha Basley: “this film is exactly what the State Department has been looking for to showcase American innovation abroad.”

STEP 2

Network / VOD Distribution

We are already in discussion with several networks who are interested in the film, in particular PBS and Vice, who have expressed a strong interest. Our goal is to eventually have the film picked up by a major network or digital platform so it can be seen worldwide.

STEP 4

Education

We are creating more than just entertainment; we’re creating a powerful tool for educating young students about what is possible to do with engineering. We want to partner with our K-12 outreach program to screen the film and help teachers create lesson plans around its themes.

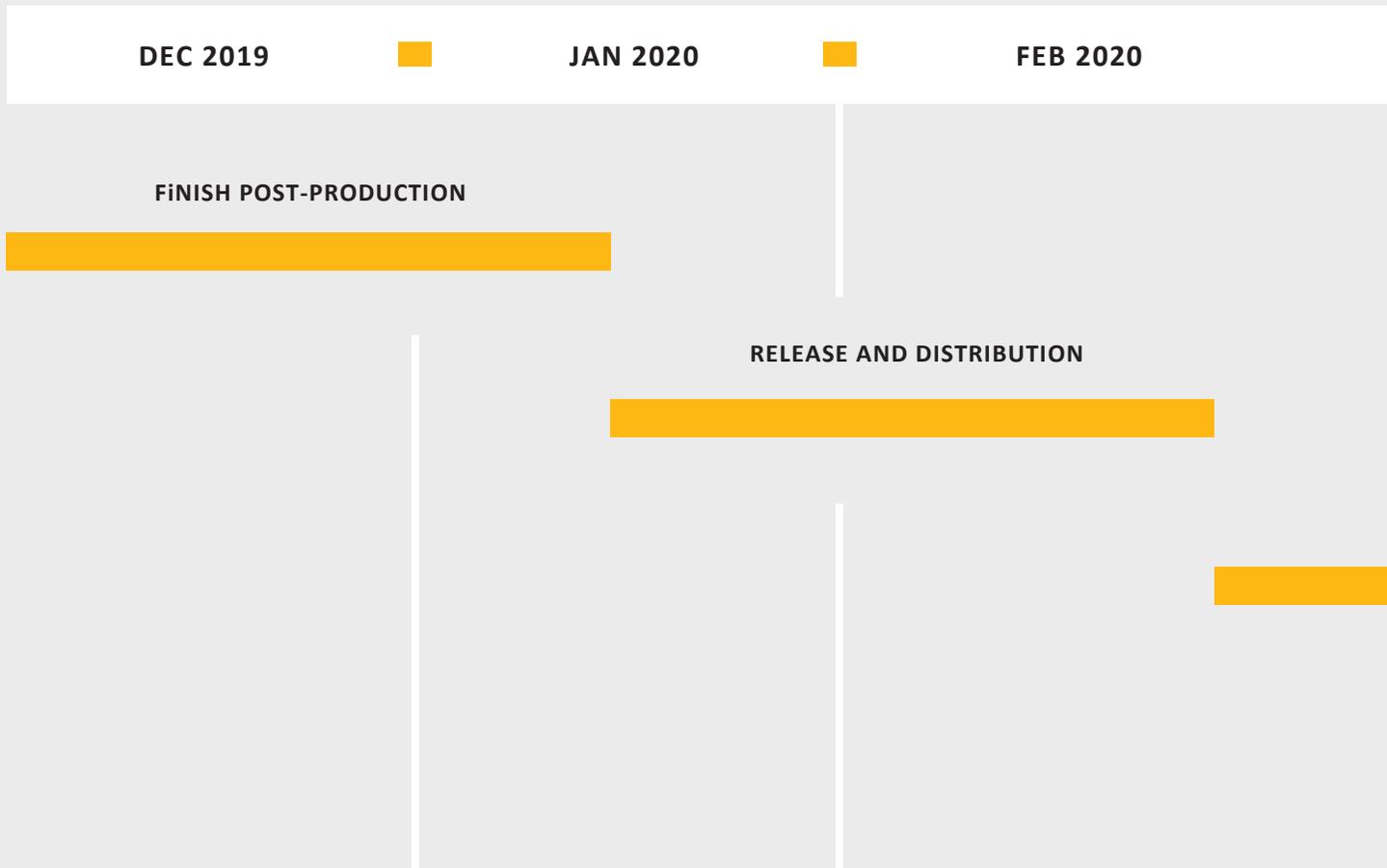


OUR VISION

As Oscar-winning director and our consulting producer said, we made this film to be a catalyst for change: 1) in the way universities deliver engineering education. 2) how young people think about engineering. **We want the next generation, especially middle and high school students to cite this film as one of the reasons why they decided to pursue engineering as a profession.**

We want the film to provoke engineering schools to adopt similar courses at their institutions. **UC-Boulder, University of South Florida, George Fox University, University of Haifa and the National University of Athens are already in discussions with USC to replicate the program.**

PROJECT TIMELINE



FINISHING POST PRODUCTION

We continue to work on post-production for the film through the month of December to ensure maximum quality. Edited in the renowned labs of [USC's School of Cinematic Arts](#), the final product has to be broadcast quality and ready for theater screenings at festivals.

Tasks :

- 1 : Title cards, graphics and captioning
- 2 : Sound design, scoring and final mix
- 3 : Color correction



RELEASE AND DISTRIBUTION

A major premiere in Los Angeles in February 2020 will be followed by a premiere in Athens, Greece. Meanwhile, the film will be submitted at film festivals and privately screened to potential distributors.

Tasks :

- 1 : LA and Athens premiere
- 2 : Submit to festivals and pitch forums
- 3 : Event screenings

We are going to leverage all of the corporate, foundation and peer institution support we have received for the course to promote the film. The U.S. State Department plans to include the film in their American Film Showcase to be screened by American embassies and diplomatic missions around the world.

MAR 2020

JUNE 2020

DEC 2020

IMPACT CAMPAIGN

FESTIVAL RUN



IMPACT CAMPAIGN

Leaders of major NGOs, such as UNHCR are also depicted in the film and have been excellent partners in our course. We will ask them to share the trailer for film on their social media platforms, to hold special screenings and to promote the project to their constituents.

Tasks :

- 1 : UNCHR screens film at festival in June, 2020
- 2 : NGOs share the trailer for film with their supporters
- 3 : Start college and K-12 outreach



FESTIVAL RUN

Having the film screen at a major film festival such as IDFA (Nov. 2020) in Europe, or Telluride (Aug. 2020) in the U.S. will help to generate buzz, gain more media coverage and attract bigger distributors. The goal is to have the film travel to as many film festivals as possible in 2020.

Tasks :

- 1 : The film accepted at at least 2 major festivals (Europe, U.S.)
- 2 : If it wins awards, grow momentum with more screenings
- 3 : Media coverage in at least 3 major industry publications

TESTIMONIALS

From academic thought leaders to managers of humanitarian response to film producers and educators, the film has already attracted the attention and endorsement of influential allies for our distribution strategy.



ANTJE BOEHMERT

Award-winning German executive producer

After hearing about your work at Dok Leipzig and discussing your amazing project “Lives, Not Grades,” I would like to discuss how the film can fit on our ARTE slot “Society” or even on a feature length documentary slot at the First German Television Channel, with our colleagues if you are still looking for a German broadcaster.



ASTRID CASTELEIN

Head of UNHCR
Lesvos, Greece

Rarely do we see the intersection of engineering, technology, education and humanitarian work. I hope this film will inspire other universities to embark on the same journey these USC students have embarked on. We need fresh ideas and new ways of thinking about our world if we are to even begin to solve these challenges.



GLENN SCHWEITZER

National Academy of Sciences
Author of Techno-Diplomacy

The film and these students are addressing one of the most difficult problems currently on the international scene, and they should be commended. Many technological and policy/process innovations for deployment in refugee camps have been on the table but pushed aside. The world is eager to learn about the ideas of fresh eyes on the ground.





THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel.”

— Maya Angelou

CONTACT US

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P : (619) 961-6633

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
SPONSORED PROJECTS ACCOUNTING
3500 S. FIGUEROA STREET, SUITE 102
LOS ANGELES, CA 90089-8001
(213) 740-5381

11/23/2019
Voucher No.: 1 (FINAL)

United Engineering Foundation
1650 Market Street, Suite 1200
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Attention: Patrick J. Natale

Subject: Contract/Grant No.: 010350-00001
USC Account No.: 54-4501-0350
Period: 1/1/2019 to 12/31/2019

The above referenced contract has terminated. Our records indicated expenditures and payment received during the contract period for the subject account are as follows:

Total Expenditures:	\$75,932.16
Total Payments:	\$0.00
Outstanding Balance:	\$75,932.16

Enclosed is the final report of expenditures. We would appreciate your prompt attention in remitting the outstanding balance.

I hereby certify that all payments requested are for appropriate purposes and are in accordance with the agreements set forth in the award document.

Sincerely,



Cindy M. Lee
Accounting / Financial Manager
Sponsored Projects Accounting

PLEASE SEND YOUR CHECK WITH REMITTANCE COPY TO THE ADDRESS BELOW:

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
SPONSORED PROJECTS ACCOUNTING
3500 SOUTH FIGUEROA STREET, SUITE 102
LOS ANGELES, CA 90089-8001



**USC University of
Southern California**

**Sponsored Projects Accounting
3500 S. Figueroa Street, Suite 102
Los Angeles, CA 90089-8001
Phone: (213) 740-5381 / FAX: (213) 740-7798
Federal Tax ID Number: 95-1642394**

To: United Engineering Foundation
1650 Market Street, Suite 1200
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Date: 11/23/19
Voucher No: 1 (FINAL)
USC Document No: 9400564
USC Account No: 5445010350
Subcontract/Award No: 010350-00001
Task Order:

Attention: Patrick J. Natale

Award Amount: \$ 75,940.00
Reimbursable Expenses From: 1/1/19 to 12/31/19

Project Period: 1/1/19 to 12/31/19

Current Amount Due: \$ 75,932.16

P.I. Name: Yannis Yortsos

Project Title: Virtual Refugee Exchange Initiative documentary film

Payment request for costs incurred for the period stated above, in accordance with the agreed terms of the award.

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>PAYMENT AMOUNT</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE</u>
Salaries and Wages, subject to Fringe Benefits	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Salaries and Wages, not subject to Fringe Benefits	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Fringe Benefits	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Professional Services/Consultants	\$ 34,304.92	\$ 34,304.92
Subcontract	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Student Aid/Fellowship - Stipends	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Student Aid/Fellowship - Tuition and Fees	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Materials and Supplies	\$ 28,406.22	\$ 28,406.22
Facilities/Utilities	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
ODC - Common Billing	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
ODC - Computing Services	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Lease	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
In/Out Patient Care	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Equipment > \$5,000	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Equipment < \$5,000	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Travel - Domestic	\$ 468.18	\$ 468.18
Travel - Foreign	\$ 12,752.84	\$ 12,752.84
Travel - Local Mileage	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Vacation	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Total Direct Cost	\$ 75,932.16	\$ 75,932.16
Total Indirect Cost	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Total Cost	\$ 75,932.16	\$ 75,932.16

I hereby certify that all payments requested are for appropriate purposes and are in accordance with the agreements set forth in the award document.

Certified By:

Cindy M. Lee
Accounting/Financial Manager

REMITTANCE PAYABLE TO:

By Check:

University of Southern California
Sponsored Projects Accounting
3500 South Figueroa Street, Suite 102
Los Angeles, CA 90089-8001

By Electronically via ACH:

Name: Bank of America
Address: 315 Montgomery St., 13th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94104

Nine-Digit Routing Transit No: 122000030
Depositor Account Title: Sponsored Projects Accounting
Depositor Account Number: 14597-11429