2024

ANCIENT ROME LIVE
THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR ROMAN CULTURE

ANCIENT ROME LIVE
Annual Report




ANCIENT
ROME
LIVE

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

If you spent any time on social media in 2023 and 2024, you already know – the Roman Empire had a moment. The viral meme swept the internet and had everyone asking just how much they thought about ancient Rome. Add Gladiator II hitting theaters, and suddenly everyone was talking about Rome.

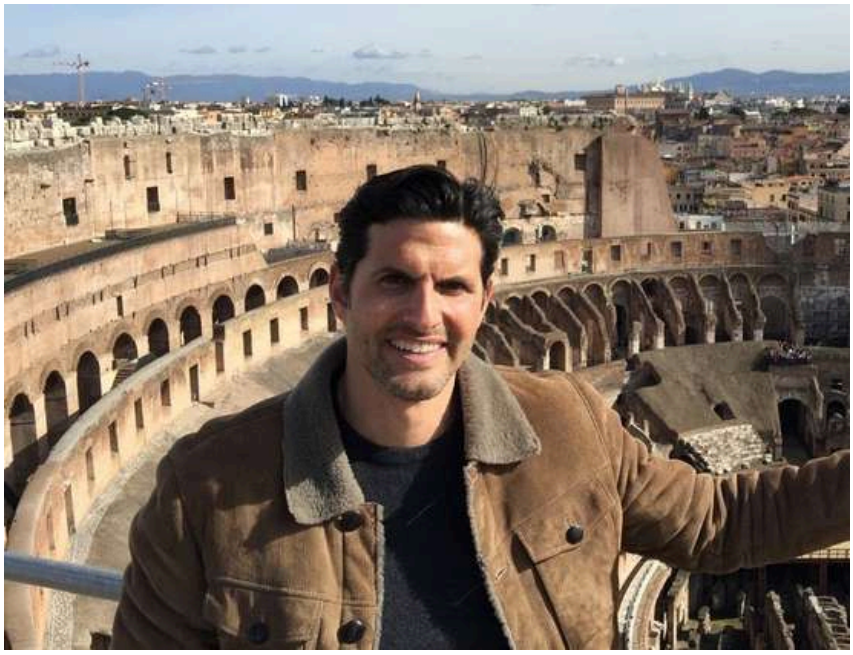
For us at Ancient Rome Live, this was vindicating and energizing in equal measure. We think about the Roman Empire all the time. It's what we do, and 2024 felt like the rest of the world was finally catching up.

2024 was a breakthrough year in every sense. Our YouTube content grew dramatically, and our free online lecture program expanded. New institutional partners stepped forward, and our donor community continued to grow. We are deeply grateful to A&E Networks and CAAS, and especially humbled by a landmark end-of-year contribution from the Musk Foundation, which will allow us to distribute grants for projects in archaeology, conservation, and new technologies applied to the ancient world. That last one still feels a little unreal, if I'm being honest.

Our travel programs have never been more in demand. What began in 2003 as on-site education for university students has grown into immersive journeys through the ancient Mediterranean for a community of curious, passionate people who want more than a museum visit.

Thank you for being part of this. The ancient world has never felt more alive, and neither have we.

Darius Arya
FOUNDER & DIRECTOR



ABOUT ANCIENT ROME LIVE

Ancient Rome Live, part of the American Institute for Roman Culture, is a free online learning platform dedicated to the ancient Roman world — and unlike most — we teach from inside it. Our original content is filmed on-site at museums, archaeological parks, and monuments across Italy and beyond, made possible by our ongoing partnerships with leading cultural institutions.

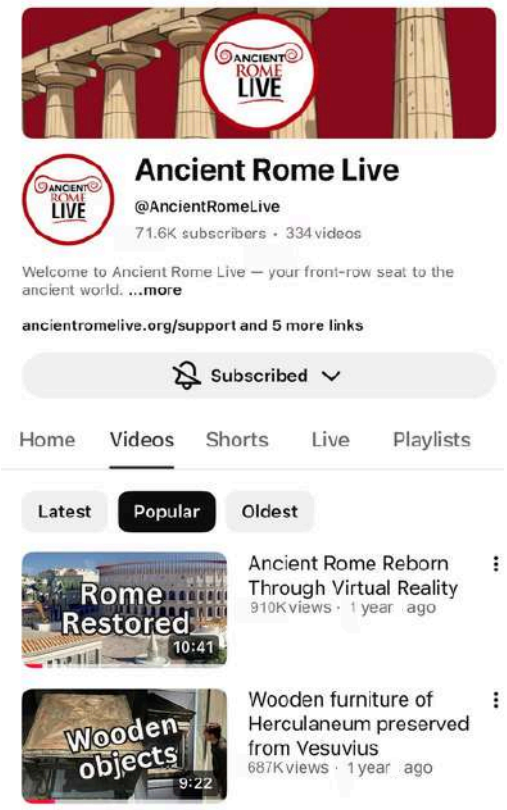
Our platform includes in-depth videos, published on the Ancient Rome Live YouTube channel (@AncientRomeLive), and a searchable topic index with more than 300 entries and articles. We host free monthly live stream seminars and Masterclasses open to anyone, anywhere. We also take it further and in the field with week-long, full-immersion travel courses in Rome and the Bay of Naples, studying ancient sites in person.

Bringing the ancient world to you- free, open, and built for everyone. That's the commitment behind everything we create and every collaboration we pursue.



Education & Digital Outreach

Over a decade of original video content, all in one place. Browse more than 300 videos filmed on location at archaeological sites, museums, and monuments across the ancient world — covering Roman history, archaeology, daily life, culture and news from every angle.



The Videos

On our Youtube channel **@AncientRomeLive** we produced and published:

- 33 original videos
- 1 live stream fundraising walk with 2.1K views

The Analytics

The numbers are in and 2024 was a great year!

- 3.8M views
- 20.4K new subscribers
- 213.2K watched hours
- 76.1K likes
- 2.K comments

Our three most-watched videos tell their own story about what resonates:

- *Ancient Rome Restored* (910,500 views) offered a virtual reconstruction of the city at its imperial peak — proof that audiences hunger for Rome not just as ruins, but as a living world.
- *Wooden Object from Herculaneum* (687,600 views) spotlighted rare organic artifacts preserved by the eruption of 79 CE — objects that almost no one survives to see, brought to nearly a million screens.
- *Miniature Rome* (348,400 views) explored Il Plastico, the extraordinary 1:250 scale model of Rome under Constantine I — a 4th-century city rendered in breathtaking detail.



Masciantonio Video Playlist

Produced with support from the CAAS Masciantonio Grant, this playlist traces the full chronology of Rome from its mythic founding to the modern era, while exploring the textures of Roman life through Latin inscriptions, childhood, religion, and more — all filmed on location. Created for students of Classics and Latin, and the teachers who bring antiquity to life in the classroom.

Foundation of Rome · Regal Rome · Republican Rome · Late Republican Rome · Faces of the Empire · Severan Rome · Life as a Slave in Pompeii and Rome · Newest Excavation in the Imperial Fora



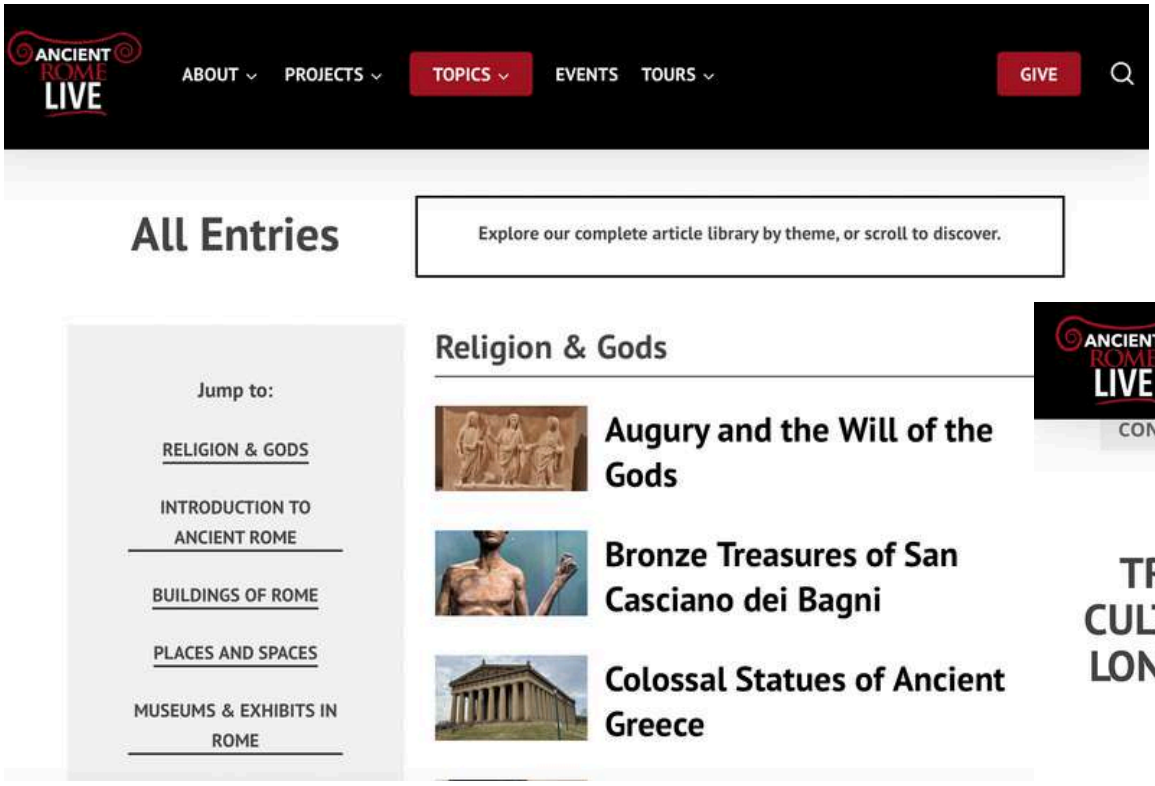


The Archive

In 2024, our editorial team of academics, journalists, and emerging scholars published more than twenty new articles and hundreds of topic entries for our growing online archive — ranging from accessible overviews of key figures, monuments, daily life and material culture, to in-depth scholarly articles tackling subjects with both academic depth and contemporary relevance.

Every entry and article is grounded in academic research and includes peer-reviewed sources, making them equally useful for curious readers and serious researchers. Many are paired with videos from the Ancient Rome Live YouTube channel, creating a multimedia experience that goes beyond the page.

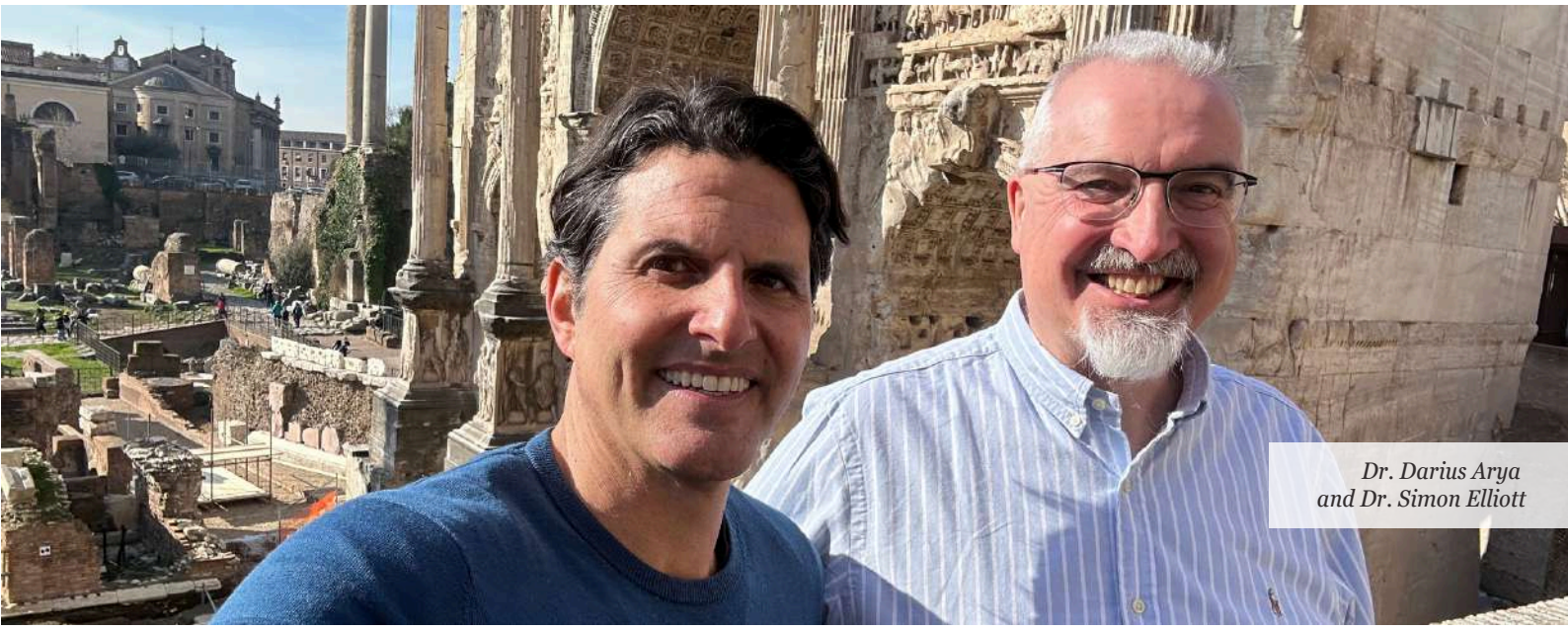
Our platform serves a single goal: a free, comprehensive, ever-expanding encyclopaedic hub where anyone can watch, read, and go deeper into the ancient Roman world. Everything is searchable and organized by topic — just explore or use the search bar to find exactly what you're looking for.





Seminars & Masterclasses

Every month, Ancient Rome Live hosts free live online expert-led conversations bringing leading scholars, archaeologists, and researchers directly to you, wherever you are in the world.



Dr. Darius Arya and Dr. Simon Elliott

JANUARY
- Ancient Cameos of the Roman Empire
- Masterclass: Wooden furniture from Herculaneum

FEBRUARY
- Regal Rome
- What did Romans Eat?
- Masterclass: Severan dynasty with guest Dr. Simon Elliott

MARCH
- Late Republic
- Gismondi's Great plastico of Rome
- Masterclass: Augustan Rome

APRIL
- Life as a boy in Rome
- Life as a girl in Rome
- Masterclass: The Julio-Claudians

MAY
- The Roman Army - an introduction
- Isis in Rome
- The Flavian Dynasty

JUNE
- Sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia
- Gods of Healing in Rome

JULY
- Masterclass: Curse tablets with guest Dr. Andrew Henry
- Late Antiquity in Rome
- Second century Rome

AUGUST
- Masterclass: Imperial crisis of the third Century

SEPTEMBER
- Western Sicily
- Romans in S. France
- Masterclass: Roman empire capitals

OCTOBER
- Seven pilgrim churches of Rome
- Ara Pacis in color
- Masterclass: reconstructing the life and battles of Roman gladiators with guest Alex Mariotti

NOVEMBER
- Converted churches in Rome
- Rome's greatest public baths- Baths of Diocletian
- Real vs. Movie Gladiators

DECEMBER
- History of Rome in 5 Roman inscriptions
- Masterclass: History of Roman France with guest Prof. Fred Kleiner
- Rome's earliest Churches

On-site Filming & Archaeological Work

Ancient Rome Live films original content on location — inside museums, archaeological parks, monuments, and active excavation sites across the ancient world. We don't just document these places; we partner with the institutions and teams that protect them, helping to amplify their work and bring it to a global audience.

Ancient Rome Live Gifts Video to City of Anzio

Anzio, Italy — As part of the “Percorsi 2024” cultural series hosted by the Museo Civico Archeologico, Ancient Rome Live’s Darius Arya proudly presented ARL’s latest video project, “Antium,” to the city of Anzio and gifted it to the museum.

This compelling 10-minute video features original footage that brings to life the rich history of the ancient port city of Antium. Renowned as one of the most significant cities of the Roman Empire, Antium was also the site of Emperor Nero’s villa. In the 20th century, Anzio gained prominence for its pivotal role in Operation Shingle, a fierce battle from January 22 to June 5, 1944, that facilitated the Allied forces’ advance into Italy and contributed to the liberation of Rome, as part of the broader strategy to free Western Europe. “Antium” not only celebrates the historical grandeur of Antium but also offers a glimpse of the vibrant city of Anzio today.

Special thanks to the Museo Civico Archeologico Anzio, Dottoressa Paolo Pistolesi, and Professore Clementi Marigliani for their support and collaboration.



Archaeological Projects

In 2024, Ancient Rome Live was proud to serve as an on-site collaborator at three active archaeological excavations across Italy — bringing the latest discoveries directly to our audience as they happened.



Prof. Vincent Jolivet and colleague conducting geo-radar survey of the site of Foligno

Foligno

In Foligno (ancient Fulginia), excavations continue at a newly discovered Roman amphitheater, one of the most exciting finds in recent Italian archaeology. Earlier seasons have already unearthed Roman roads, tombs, and a large domus, with more to come. Ancient Rome Live is a proud collaborator (and financial contributor) for the project, working alongside an exceptional international team that includes Prof. Vincent Jolivet, Prof. Filippo Coarelli, and l'Associazione Amici dell'Abbazia di Sassovivo as part of the FIAE — Fulginia International Amphitheatre Excavation.



Prof. Rachele Dubbini on-site feature

Via Appia 39

Along the Via Appia, the search is on for the Republican-era Sanctuary of Mars — one of Rome's most historically significant and elusive sacred sites. The Via Appia No. 39 excavation is led by director Prof. Rachele Dubbini, alongside excavation director Fabio Turchetta and archaeologist Luca De Angelis. Ancient Rome Live joined the team on-site to document the latest discoveries as they emerged from the ground.



Student excavators at Carsulae

Carsulae

Carsulae is one of Umbria's best-preserved Roman cities — founded between 220 and 219 BCE, traversed by the Via Flaminia, and quietly abandoned by the 3rd century CE. Ancient Rome Live was granted exclusive access to film the ongoing excavations as they unfolded.

The project brings together an exceptional collaborative team: the Musei Nazionali di Perugia, the Regional Directorate of the National Museums of Umbria, archaeologists Massimiliano Gasperini, Luca Donnin, and Valerio Chiaraluce, the Associazione Astra Onlus, and the Archaeological Park of Carsulae under the Italian Ministry of Culture.

ARL-Curated Travel Courses

This year, Ancient Rome Live brought the ancient world to life through five travel courses across Italy and Turkey, putting participants on the ground, in the sites, inside the history.



Spring 2024 *Building a Roman City* participants

Spring 2024 programming explored the foundations of Roman civilization through three week-long immersive travel courses. *Building a Roman City* examined the engineering and urban logic that made Rome possible, while *Vesuvian Cities* plunged into the extraordinary archaeological landscape of the Bay of Naples.

May also marked the fourth consecutive year of *History of Ancient Roman Architecture,* our academic partnership with the North Carolina State University College of Design, an in-depth study of ancient Roman architecture that has become a cornerstone of the program.

In Fall 2024, the program crossed the Mediterranean entirely. An eight-day journey through *Türkiye* guided participants across some of the region's most significant ancient sites, tracing the layered histories of Greek, Roman, and later civilizations written into the landscape. *Vesuvian Cities* returned as well, continuing to provide a deep dive into one of the most compelling archaeological regions in the world.

All of our travel courses combine immersive experiences, expert logistical planning, and academic depth brought to life and personalized by Ancient Rome Live.



Director Darius Arya and participants
Spring 2024 *Vesuvian Cities*

Spring 2024

- *Building a Roman City:* a five-day journey discovering the stories and engineering of the foundation of ancient Rome and more.

- *Vesuvian Cities: a* five-day exploration of the rich ancient history of the Bay of Naples including Napoli, Pompeii, Herculaneum and Oplontis.

- *History of Ancient Roman Architecture NCSU:* a five-day program for NCSU Collage of Design.



Dan Smith (standing), Prof. Tom Barrie(seated), students
Spring 2024 *NCSU Rome*





Director Darius Arya and participants
Fall 2024 *Türkiye*

Fall 2024

- *Türkiye:* Eight-day adventure exploring Türkiye's amazing history and ancient cities including Istanbul, Ephesus, Izmir and Pergamon.

- *Vesuvian Cities:* Five-day exploration of the rich ancient history of the Bay of Naples including Napoli, Pompeii,Herculaneum and Oplontis.



Fall 2024 *Vesuvian Cities*
participants visitng Pompeii

Academic Engagement

Ancient Rome Live participates in conferences, delivers lectures, and collaborates with researchers and institutions worldwide — bringing the latest scholarly thinking on the ancient world to audiences far beyond the lecture hall.

Vallertonda: Between the Past & Present

In May 2024, Darius participated in the academic conference *Vallertonda: Between the Past & Present* in Vallertonda, Molise. This gathering was dedicated to safeguarding and celebrating cultural heritage sites. Mayor Giovanni Di Meo of the Comune di Vallerotonda opened with a presentation on enhancing the cultural experience of the Vallerotonda area. Prof. Michele Raddi followed with an exploration of the region's ancient roads and settlements along the Via Romana, and Prof. Darius Arya spoke on the role of mass media and telecommunications in deepening public engagement with environmental, historical, and archaeological sites.



Prof. Michele Raddi (left), Mayor Giovanni Di Meo, and Dr.Darius Arya (right) with conference attendees

Grants

In 2024, Ancient Rome Live received three grants from organizations that share our commitment to bringing the ancient world to everyone — free, open, and without barriers.

A+E Networks
A&E Networks awarded Ancient Rome Live a **$12,000 grant** in support of original YouTube video content.

Masciantonio Grant Award
CAAS awarded Ancient Rome Live a **$25,000 Masciantonio Grant** in support of a new video series tracing the full arc of Roman history — from the city's mythical founding to the modern era.

The Musk Foundation
In December 2024, the Musk Foundation awarded Ancient Rome Live **$1 million** to develop *Expandere Conscientiae Lumen* (ECL), a grant program funding innovative archaeological and conservation work across the Mediterranean.



Director Darius Arya filming on the Colle Oppio and Terme di Traiano Park



Classical Association of the Atlantic States (CAAS)

Masciantonio Grant Award

In Fall 2023, the American Institute for Roman Culture was awarded a $25,000 Masciantonio Grant from the Classical Association of the Atlantic States (CAAS), a recognition of our commitment to free, accessible education through Ancient Rome Live.

This grant was earmarked for funding two new video series. The first traces the chronology of Rome itself, from its mythic foundation through the Fascist era — the full sweep of a city that has never stopped reinventing itself. The second explores thematic dimensions of Roman life: Latin inscriptions in the field, childhood in antiquity, religion, and more, all filmed on location.

Both series are designed with students of Classics and Latin in mind — and the teachers who bring that world to life in the classroom.





Expandere Conscientiae Lumen

The American Institute for Roman Culture (AIRC) is proud to announce that its flagship education platform, Ancient Rome Live, has been awarded a $1 million grant from the Musk Foundation for the Expandere Conscientiae Lumen initiative. This transformative funding reinforces Ancient Rome Live's mission to foster global understanding and appreciation of the ancient Roman world through education, research, and innovation.

"This grant marks a pivotal moment for Ancient Rome Live," said Darius Arya, Ph.D., Director. "We are deeply honored by the Musk Foundation's recognition of our work. It affirms the importance of our mission and opens exciting new opportunities for us to support innovative projects across the field."

The Expandere Conscientiae Lumen program supports groundbreaking projects dedicated to preserving and promoting Greco-Roman culture. This funding will enable Ancient Rome Live to expand archaeological research, cultural heritage initiatives, and public engagement on a global scale.

As part of this award, AIRC is launching an open call for applications to support innovative archaeological and cultural heritage projects led by archaeologists, university researchers, academics, architects, conservators, computer scientists, museums, and cultural operators. Selected projects will demonstrate innovation, sustainability, and measurable impact.



Donor Recognition

Ancient Rome Live exists because of people who believe in what we do. The following individuals, organizations, and institutions made that belief tangible in 2024, with generous contributions that keep our mission free, open, and moving forward. We are deeply grateful to each of them.



VISIONARIES $25,000+ - 2

PATRONS $10,000 – $24,999 - 3

SPONSORS $5,000 – $9,999 - 3

SUPPORTERS $1,000 – $4,999 - 9

FRIENDS $500 – $999 - 16

MONTHLY SUSTAINERS - 22 recurring monthly contributors with an average contribution of $25 per person, per month

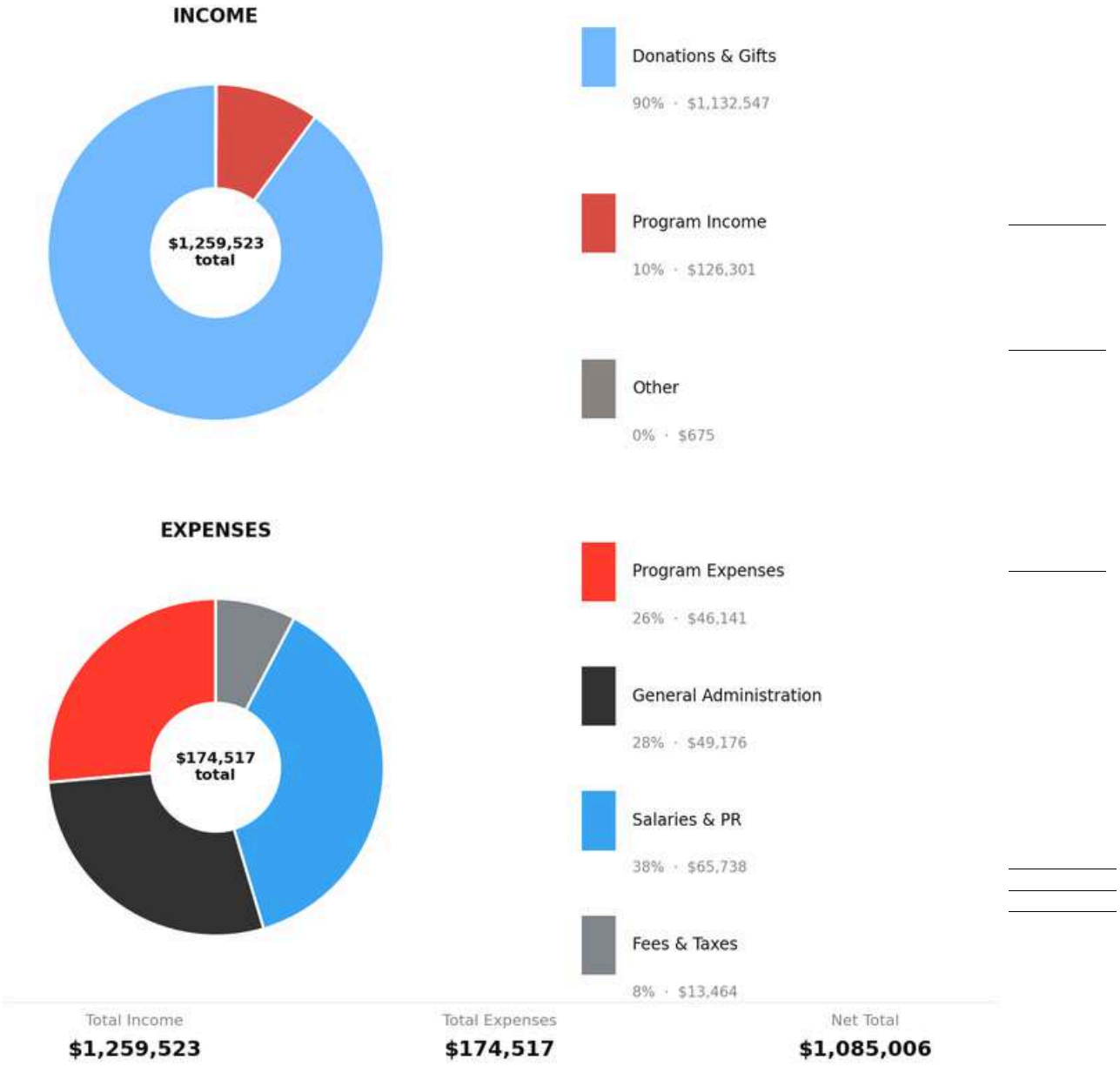
FOUNDATIONS
THE MUSK FOUNDATION $1,000,000
CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION OF THE ATLANTIC STATES (CAAS) $25,000

CORPORATE PARTNERS
A&E NETWORKS $12,000

Financial Overview

2024 was a remarkable year for Ancient Rome Live — and the numbers tell the story. Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our donors, including a landmark contribution from the Musk Foundation, we received $1,259,523 in total income. Our travel programs and online courses added another $126,301, a reflection of a community that doesn't just believe in what we do — they want to be part of it.

We invested $174,517 in the people, programs, and content that keep the ancient world alive and accessible to everyone. The result is a net total of $1,085,006 — a foundation that allows us to dream bigger, dig deeper, and do more in 2025.
None of this happens without you. Thank you.





The People Behind the Scenes



Direction



Board of Directors

- Dr. Darius Arya
- Prof. Fred Kleiner
- Lauro Lofaro

Scientific Committee

- Prof. Fred Kleiner, professor Emeritus at Boston University
- Jeanne Marie Teutonico, architectural conservator and former associate director Getty Conservation Institute
- Brent Lane, professor of Heritage Economics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



Team

- Darius Arya: Director
- Erica Firpo: Communications
- Mimi Palomino-Gamba: Projects
- Warren George: Webmaster
- Michael Bartlett: Editorial Contributor
- Jamie Heath: Editorial Contributor



Partners

- Pompeii Sites
- North Carolina State University NCSU College of Design
- Museo Nazionale Romano

LOOKING AHEAD:
Our Goals for 2025

Major Initiatives: Ancient Rome Live is in active discussions with the Musk Foundation for a second round of Expandere Conscientiae Lumen (ECL) grant funding. If awarded, this additional million-dollar investment would continue to support excavations, conservation efforts, and innovative archaeological projects across the Mediterranean.

New Filming Expeditions: In 2025, ECL grant funding will support new filming expeditions to document active excavations across multiple sites, bringing those discoveries directly to our global audience as they happen.

Tech Platform Upgrades: In 2025, Ancient Rome Live will upgrade its website, expand its library of original web articles on ancient Roman topics, and launch a dedicated image archive, building a richer, more searchable resource for students, educators, and enthusiasts worldwide.

More Travel Course Offerings:

- *Building a Roman City* (Spring 2025)
- *History of Ancient Roman Architecture NCSU* (Spring 2025)
- *Romans in Southern France* (Spring 2025)
- *Ancient Greeks in Western Sicily* (Spring 2025)
- *Ancient & Islamic Tunisia (*Fall 2025)
- *Imperial Palaces & Popes in Rome* (Fall 2025)

Free Monthly Seminars & Masterclasses: In 2025, Ancient Rome Live will continue its free monthly online seminars and Masterclasses — expanding the program to feature more distinguished guest scholars and making world-class expertise on the ancient world accessible to everyone, everywhere.

Our fundraising goal for 2025 is $60,000 — and every donation of $100 or more will be matched by five donors. Every dollar becomes two, directly supporting free education, original research, and on-the-ground archaeology across the ancient world.



WANT MORE ANCIENT ROME LIVE?



Join our newsletter!

Get the Roman world in your inbox!

Our newsletter delivers new videos, original articles, insights into daily life in antiquity, and updates on our live seminars and Masterclasses, plus exclusive offers on upcoming travel courses.

Don't miss out!

Ancient Rome Live

SUPPORT ANCIENT ROME LIVE

The ancient world doesn't preserve itself — and neither does the work of bringing it to life. Every donation, partnership, and act of support keeps Ancient Rome Live free, independent, and on the ground where history happens.

Your gift directly funds free lectures, articles, and videos produced through Ancient Rome Live, our multidisciplinary educational platform — making the ancient world accessible to everyone, everywhere. There are many ways to be part of what we do: a one-time gift, a monthly contribution, sponsoring educational content, a corporate partnership, joining one of our immersive travel courses, or giving your time through volunteering or an internship. Choose your donation method:

One-time Donation · Monthly Donation · Stocks, Bonds & Mutual Funds · Donor-Advised Funds · Giving with IRA

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