

Jodie Foster helps keep search for aliens alive

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The [Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence](#) (SETI) Institute in California, which got a direct hit from federal and California budget cuts, had to halt operations in April for its telescopes pointed toward outer space.

But after a public campaign launched on its website, SETI said it had received \$223,000 -- exceeding its \$200,000 goal -- from 2,557 donors, Foster among them.

The [Allen Telescope Array](#) (ATA) is "'good to go' and we need to return it to the task of searching newly discovered planetary worlds for signs of extraterrestrial intelligence," she said.

Recalling her role as an astronaut trying to get in contact with extraterrestrials in 1997's "Contact," Foster said the telescopes "could turn science fiction into science fact, but only if it is actively searching the skies. I support the effort to bring the array out of hibernation."

The amount of her donation was not revealed.

[Apollo 8](#) mission astronaut Bill Anders, who also funded the SETI campaign, said "it is absolutely irresponsible of the human race not to be searching for evidence of extraterrestrial intelligence.

Founded in 1984, SETI was due to relaunch its operations next month. But in order to ensure long-term research, it will have to find new sources of financing.

The group is putting its hopes behind getting a [US Air Force](#) contract to track orbiting space debris that could damage satellites and the [International Space Station](#).

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