



tides

The Advancing Girls Fund 2025 Impact Report

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Advancing Girls Fund:

With Gratitude and Hope as We Look Ahead

It is with great enthusiasm that we present this report to our valued grantee partners, dedicated funders, steadfast allies, and esteemed colleagues.

We want to express our deep gratitude for your partnership and your continued commitment to girls, young women, and gender-expansive youth.

This year has not been an easy one. The conditions in which girls are growing up remain complex and, at times, deeply challenging. Yet through it all, your support has made it possible for organizations to meet girls where they are, respond to changing realities with thoughtfulness, and lead with courage and integrity.

We have been inspired by the ways our grantee partners center girls' voices, honor community wisdom, and hold space for joy even amid uncertainty. Their leadership reminds us that progress is not only measured in outcomes, but in relationships, trust built, confidence nurtured, and possibilities expanded.

In 2025, Advancing Girls Fund (AGF) has continued to learn from both our grantee partners and from our funders. Your investment reinforces our belief in the power of flexible funding, long-term partnership, and shared learning. Together, you are helping shape how we think about impact, equity, and what it truly takes to support girls to thrive.

As we look ahead to 2026, we do so with optimism, not because the road is simple, but because we are walking it together. We remain committed to listening closely, investing with trust, and stewarding your partnership in ways that strengthen the ecosystem surrounding girls.

Thank you for your partnership, your perseverance, and your belief in girls. We are honored to be in community with you.

With optimism for the year to come,
Shauné, Nancy, Siobhan, and Radha



How We Define Ourselves

The Tides Advancing Girls Fund invests in the power and leadership of adolescent girls and young women of color*, as well as their allies. These young visionaries are not just participants, they are agents of transformation, shaping everything from family dynamics to global social movements.

The Advancing Girls Fund is committed to nurturing leadership, supporting well-being, amplifying voices in advocacy, and empowering young people to create the futures they envision and deserve.

Despite their deep understanding of the solutions needed in their personal lives, communities, and broader societies, their contributions and potential are often underrecognized. Women and girls of color receive only **0.5% of the total \$66.9 billion given by foundations**, equating to less than 1% of total foundation giving**. To address this imbalance, the Fund champions girl-led, girl-centered and ally-driven initiatives that prioritize the health, well-being, and empowerment of girls of color and their allies.



*Please note: By "girls and young women," we include young people ages 11–25 who identify as girls, as well as non-binary and gender-expansive youth.

** Courtesy of the Pocket Change Report, Ms. Foundation

Empowerment Through Strategic Investment

Our grantmaking ethos is rooted in collaboration, sustainability, and inclusivity, guided by the following strategic pillars:



Cultivating Collaborative Philanthropy

We convene a collaborative pooled Fund to unite donors in supporting the empowerment of adolescent girls and young women of color globally.

Sustaining Impact through Flexible Funding

We provide unrestricted support to organizations that reflect the lived experiences of girls and young women.

Incorporating Diverse Perspectives

We actively involve young women of color in our decision-making processes to ensure our investments are truly reflective of their needs and aspirations.

Fostering Global Solidarity and Learning

We create spaces for girls, young women, and their allies to build cross-cultural relationships, share knowledge, and amplify their collective power for social justice.

Through these strategic funding priorities, the Tides Advancing Girls Fund is not just investing in projects but in the very future of young women of color, to reshape the world into a place where every girl can dream, learn, play, and lead without boundaries.

Core Guiding Pillars



Girl-Led Empowerment

We champion the inherent resilience, creativity, and leadership of adolescent girls and young women of color, alongside their allies, recognizing that investing in their power, voice, and agency is essential to advancing girl-centered empowerment and driving transformative societal change.



Intersectional Approach

Recognizing the complex interplay of identities and structural barriers that shape the lives of young women of color, we champion intersectional solutions that respond to the full breadth of their lived experiences.



Gender Inclusivity

Our community embraces all who identify with the journey of young womanhood including cisgender, transgender, and gender nonconforming individuals, affirming the self-determined and expansive nature of gender identity.



Holistic Support Systems

We are committed to advancing both direct services and systemic reform, working to dismantle structural barriers at the intersection of race, gender, and socioeconomic inequality.

Strategic Funding Approach

Our funding philosophy is grounded in feminist principles and a commitment to redistributing power. We recognize that adolescent girls and young women of color stand at the intersection of personal, community, and systemic inequities, while their lived expertise uniquely positions them to lead transformative change.

At the Tides Advancing Girls Fund, we:

- **Advance flexible, community-informed philanthropy practices**, which encourages a more reciprocal and equitable partnership between funders and their nonprofit partners.
- **Prioritize girl-centered and BIPOC-led leadership**, investing in initiatives led by girls of color and their allies, as well as community-rooted organizations.
- **Center lived expertise**, continually deepening our understanding of how frontline leaders drive meaningful and lasting change.
- **Reduce barriers to access**, streamlining processes to foster a more equitable and responsive funding ecosystem.
- **Apply an intersectional gender justice framework**, honoring the diverse and intersecting identities of the girls and gender-expansive youth we support.
- **Champion systemic reform alongside direct support**, strengthening safety nets while working to dismantle structural inequities.
- **Invest in creativity and innovation**, recognizing girls' imagination and leadership as powerful catalysts for social transformation.
- **Cultivate networked learning communities**, fostering collaboration, shared strategy, and mutual growth across our ecosystem.
- **Measure what matters**, prioritizing depth, quality, and long-term impact over purely quantitative outputs.

Reflecting on Our Impact



Since 2021, with core grantmaking support from NoVo, the Tides Advancing Girls Fund has committed more than \$125 million to more than 185 grantee partners. Across the United States and the Global South, these funds have been instrumental in empowering leadership, promoting well-being, and amplifying the voices of young women, adolescent girls, and non-binary youth of color and their allies.

Grantmaking

\$19,474,358.93

2021

\$26,386,641.82

2022

\$26,241,220.84

2023

\$25,758,216.00

2024

\$25,669,238.30

2025

2025 Year In Review:

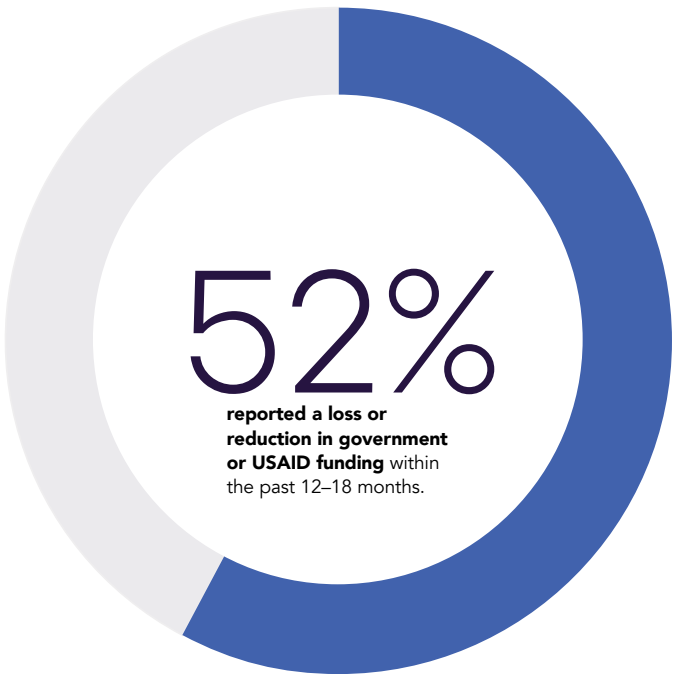
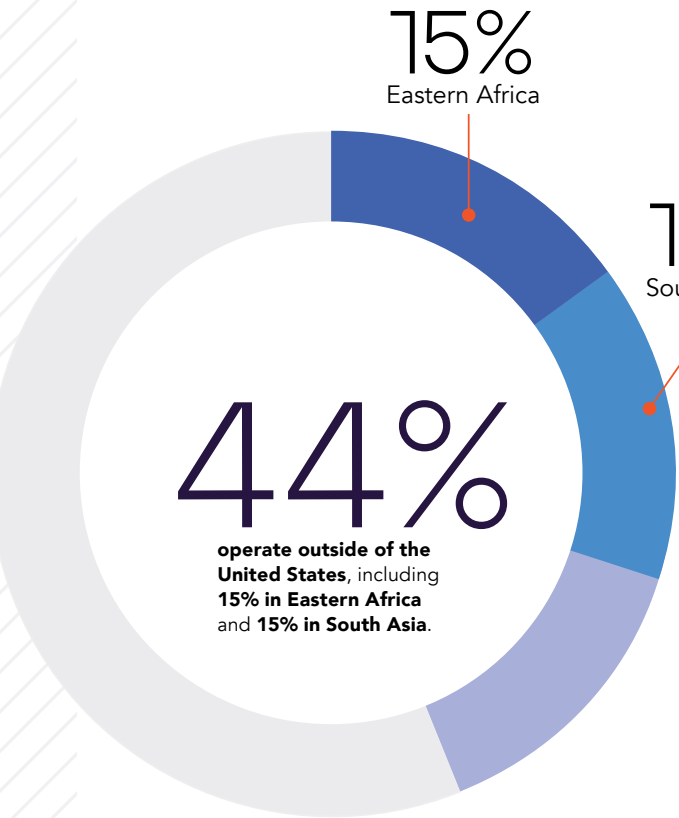
Impact of Shifting Funding Priorities on AGF Grantee Partners

In late 2025, Advancing Girls Fund (AGF) surveyed its active grantee partners to better understand how recent shifts in U.S. funding priorities have affected their work.

The survey was distributed to nearly half of AGF's 145 grantee partners, with 70 surveys sent. A total of 52 leaders responded,, representing a **74% response rate**.

Among survey respondents:

"Girl-serving organizations already represent less than 2% of philanthropic dollars, and with increased needs in so many other areas... I'm concerned about the sustainability of our organizations."
-Survey Participant

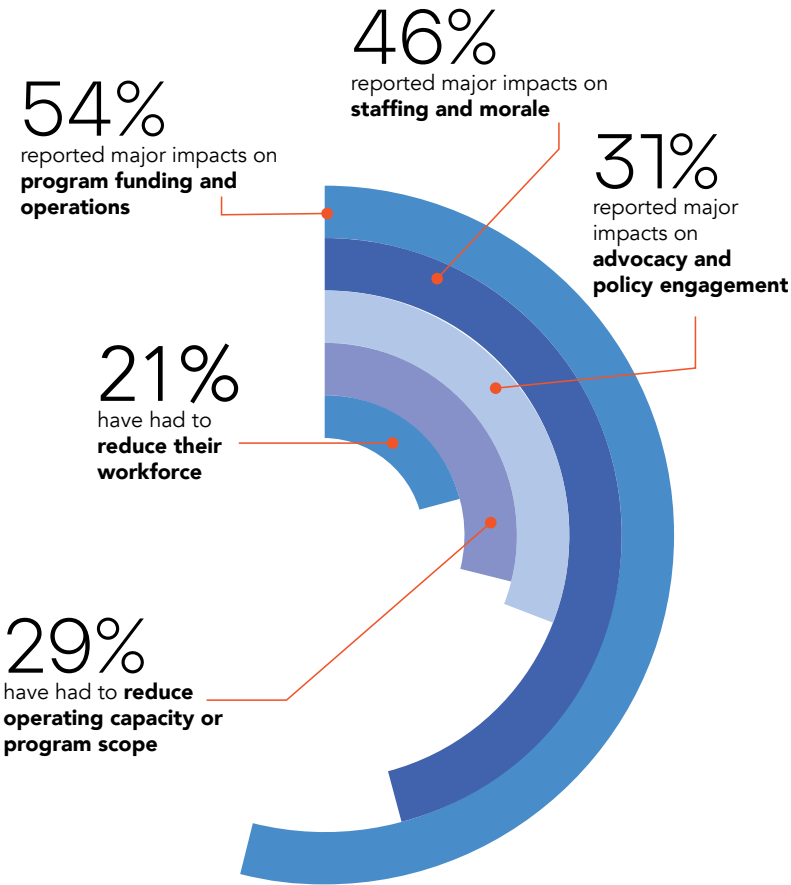


Key Findings

AGF grantees report significant financial and operational impacts amid the current funding environment in the United States and broader international aid landscape. Many organizations also described a growing sense of political risk.

Survey respondents reported the following impacts:

- **54%** reported major impacts on **program funding and operations**
- **46%** reported major impacts on **staffing and morale**
- **31%** reported major impacts on **advocacy and policy engagement**
- **29%** have had to **reduce operating capacity or program scope**
- **21%** have had to **reduce their workforce**



"The biggest risk over the next 12-24 months is a potential regression in the progress we've made toward advancing gender equality, driven by the current political landscape." -Survey Participant

Across the survey responses, the most pressing risks identified were **financial instability, political backlash and shrinking civic space, and threats to the safety and security of girls and organizational staff.**



Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls

"Capacity building is also critical. This includes training and tools for digital safety, trauma-responsive practices, mental health support, and meaningful participation in global and regional advocacy spaces." -Survey Participant

What Grantees Are Asking For

Grantee partners emphasized the need for increased philanthropic support to prevent backsliding on hard-won progress for girls. Key requests focused on:

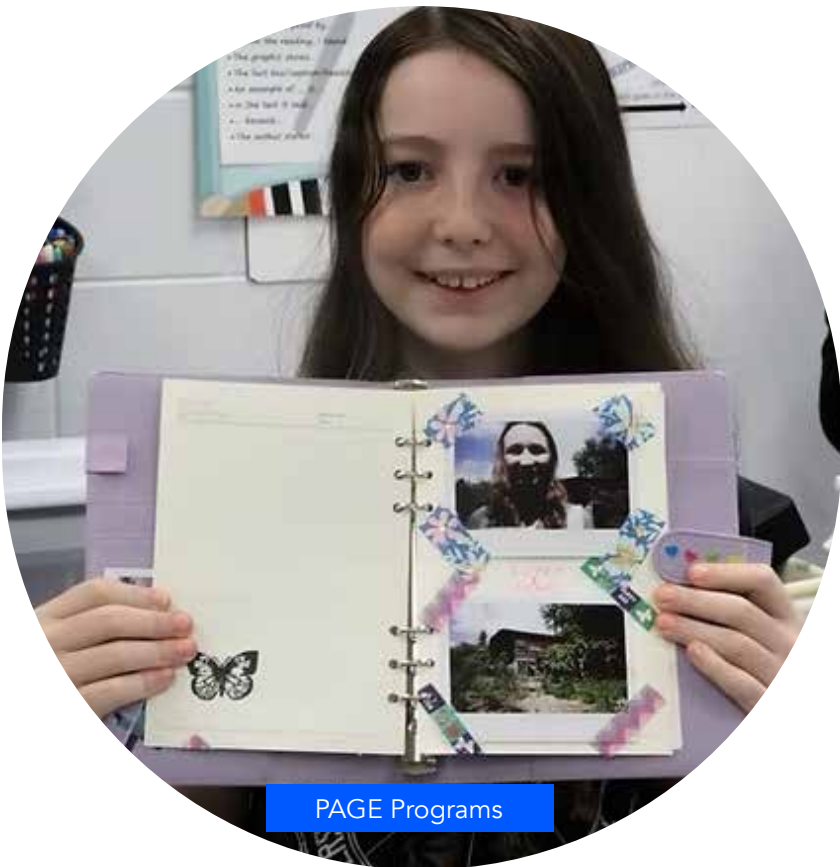
- **Increased funding and stabilization support** to offset lost public funding
- **Flexible, multi-year general operating support** to enable adaptation and long-term planning
- **Capacity building and organizational resilience**, including mental health support for staff and youth leaders
- **Convenings and peer learning opportunities**, particularly safe spaces that do not increase political or security risks
- **Field leadership and advocacy** to elevate the needs of girls and girls-serving organizations

How Organizations Are Adapting

Despite these challenges, AGF grantee partners are demonstrating resilience and adaptability.

- Organizations report increasing **communication and transparency with staff and community members**, creating **safe spaces and mental health supports** for staff and youth leaders, and adopting a **more flexible pace of work** that recognizes the human impact of the current moment.
- More than half of respondents are actively **diversifying their revenue streams**, cultivating new donors, and exploring alternative funding models such as **earned income**.
- Grantees are also strengthening collaboration, **sharing staff capacity and coordinating program delivery** across organizations to maximize limited resources.
- At the same time, many organizations are beginning to shift their strategies toward the long term. In the face of political uncertainty and funding cuts, partners are exploring **defensive advocacy strategies** and reframing their work from short-term policy wins toward **sustained civic engagement and movement-building**, particularly with and for young leaders.

"Connect us with other grantees so we can build a sisterly cohort and network—this will help us support each other and break through feelings of isolation and despair." -Survey Participant



PAGE Programs

Youth Advisory Council

Guiding Strategy. Shaping Impact.



Resourcing youth power. Sharing influence. Transforming systems.

The Advancing Girls Fund (AGF) Youth Advisory Council (YAC) advances our commitment to center girls, young women, nonbinary, and gender-expansive youth in philanthropy, not as beneficiaries, but as decision-makers.

This initiative marks a structural shift: youth voice is now integrated into AGF's strategy and governance.

What We've Implemented

- **Youth Advisory Council Launched**
A diverse group of youth leaders convenes regularly to inform AGF's strategic priorities, funding approach, and programmatic direction.
- **Youth Representation in Governance**
Two youth leaders are joining AGF's Independent Advisory Council, ensuring lived experience shapes high-level investment and long-term vision.
- **Formalized Engagement Model**
Clear structures for participation, compensation, mentorship, and accountability ensure meaningful, not symbolic, involvement.

Why This Matters

Traditional philanthropy often funds youth-centered initiatives without sharing power. AGF is intentionally changing that model. By embedding youth leadership into advisory and governance structures, AGF:

- Strengthens grantmaking relevance and responsiveness
- Enhances accountability to communities served
- Elevates lived expertise alongside institutional knowledge
- Models participatory philanthropy for the broader field

Youth leaders provide critical insight into education, economic opportunity, health, climate justice, and democracy, which are core systems AGF seeks to transform.

Early Results

Youth advisors have already:

- Informed funding priorities and strategy refinement
- Identified emerging challenges affecting girls and gender-expansive youth
- Strengthened relationships with justice-oriented organizations
- Increased AGF's credibility as a youth-centered fund

Our Commitment

The Youth Advisory Council is not just a program, it is infrastructure.

AGF is building a durable model of shared leadership that deepens impact, strengthens collaboration, and ensures young people help shape the decisions that affect their futures.

"I came into the space knowing very little about philanthropy and grantmaking. I appreciated the thought and attention that was put into each part of the grant process—from learning about accessibility to amplification strategies to funding distribution. This truly felt like an experience where I was not only learning...but creating opportunities for other girls of color and gender-expansive youth. Being part of this council has ultimately inspired me to continue pursuing philanthropy in the future." -Ahavah





Sydnie Collins
La Plata, Maryland



Samantha Cortez
Bronx, New York



Sumaya Ibrahim
Boston, Massachusetts



Peaches Robledo
San Jose, California



Kayla Shipman
Portsmouth, Virginia



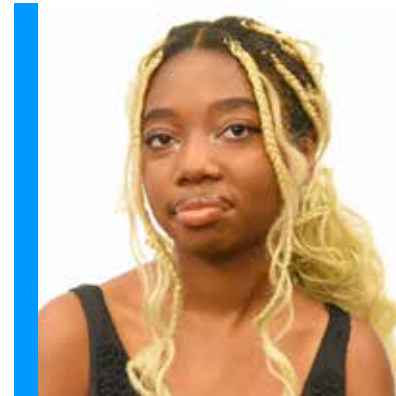
Brooklyn Starks-Murphy
Chicago, Illinois



Lupita Martinez
Oakland, California



Ahavah McClerklin
Richton Park, Illinois



Aadi Mckain
Brooklyn, New York



Emiko Stroud
New Orleans, Louisiana



Selena Yang
Madison, Wisconsin



Amel Mohdali
Atlanta, Georgia



Kaila Pouncy
Atlanta, Georgia



Chimdindu Okafor
Newark, New Jersey

Capacity-Building Cohort

Unlocking Potential: Strengthening Non-Profit Leadership and Sustainability



Premise

Focused on U.S. grantee partners, with plans to expand to partners in the Global South, this capacity-building initiative responds to a stark and urgent reality.

Nonprofit organizations are critical to addressing the complex, systemic challenges facing our society from economic inequality and educational gaps to gender equity, environmental justice, and public health. In today's

volatile geopolitical climate, their work is more vital and more vulnerable than ever. Political polarization, global conflict, shifting philanthropic priorities, and economic uncertainty have compounded pressures on the sector. Sustainability is no longer a luxury; it is a necessity.

Yet despite their indispensable role, nonprofits face persistent structural barriers: chronic financial insecurity and a widening leadership gap. For the second time in 2023, giving to women and girls' organizations reached 2.04% representing more than \$11 billion in giving each year*, which is a sobering reflection of the deep funding inequities facing gender justice movements. Funding volatility continues to rise even as demand for services accelerates. At the same time, many leaders, particularly those from historically marginalized communities, lack access to the training, mentorship, and flexible capital required to lead effectively in a moment defined by uncertainty and change.

The Advancing Girls Fund supports 80% grassroots organizations and recognizes the urgency of equipping nonprofit leaders with the tools, capital, and community they need to stabilize, innovate, and grow. This commitment is especially critical for organizations serving girls and women, who remain disproportionately impacted by both funding inequities and global instability.

Program Objectives

This 18-month program is a tailored, equity-centered leadership and sustainability initiative that addresses the nonprofit sector's most urgent needs by:

Leadership Development

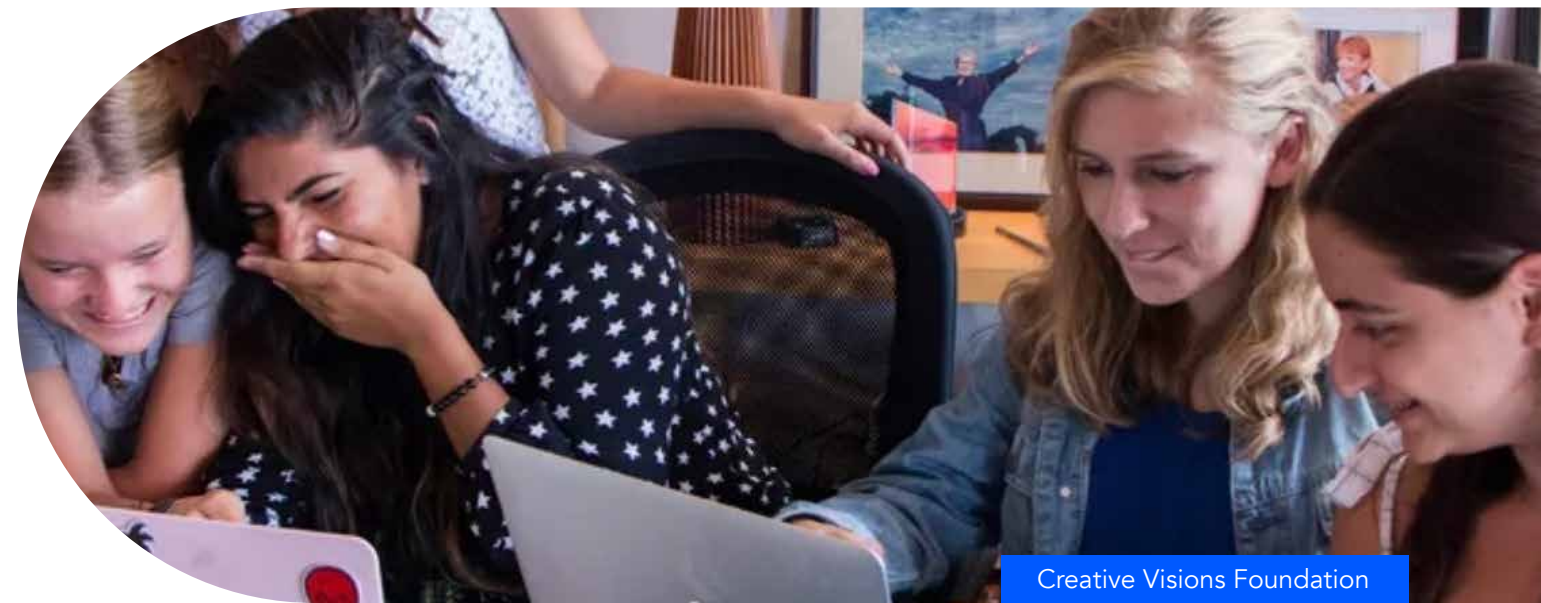
- Cultivating the strengths of emerging and seasoned leaders to build confidence, agency, and purposeful leadership.
- Providing individualized, monthly coaching and monthly group training in organizational management, governance, and strategic visioning.
- Fostering passion, resilience, and purpose-driven leadership to navigate uncertainty.

Fundraising Mastery

- Building capacity to develop and manage diverse, resilient funding strategies.
- Delivering practical, hands-on training in grant writing, donor cultivation, corporate partnerships, and digital campaigns that culminates with a Pitch Competition.
- Supporting creation of long-term revenue models tailored to each organization's mission and community.

Sustainability and Growth

- Equipping leaders to define and track metrics for impact, growth, and effectiveness.
- Cultivating partnerships with philanthropic institutions, corporations, and community stakeholders for long-term investment.
- Establishing an alumni network to foster ongoing collaboration, peer support, and shared learning.



Creative Visions Foundation



Oyatunde Amakisi

President
[Change is Reel](#)



Vivian Anderson

Founder
[EveryBlackGirl Inc](#)



Alondra Aragon

Program and Project Manager
[I Am Why](#)



Jen Jones

Partnership Relations Operative
[Tools & Tiaras Inc.](#)



Dominique Jones-Johnson

Founder & Executive Director
[Daughters Beyond Incarceration](#)



Christina Mallie

Executive Director & Co-Founder
[Colors of Connection Inc.](#)



Naika Belizaire

Co-Executive Director
[Code Switch Restorative Justice for Girls of Color](#)



Souta Calling Last

Founder & Executive Director
[Indigenous Vision](#)



Lara Davis

Impact Producer
[Visionary Justice StoryLab](#)



Denise Pines

Co-founder & CEO, Women in the Room Productions
President, Osteopathic Medical Board of California
[Creative Visions Foundation](#)



Isis Ponce

Founder & Executive Director
Southwest LatinX of El Paso LLC



Indiah Porter

Program Coordinator
[Girls Justice League](#)



Vashti Dubois

Founder & Executive Director
[The Colored Girls Museum](#)



Tanya Denise Fields

Executive Director
[Black Feminist Project](#)



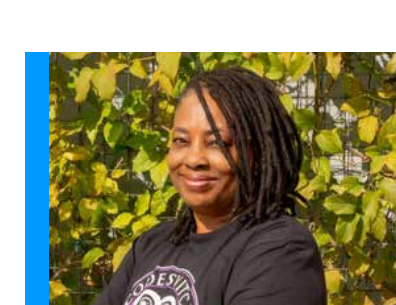
Victoria Gutman

Executive Director
[Chicxs Rockerxs South East Los Angeles](#)



Rebecca Stephens

Executive Director
[Partnership for Appalachian Girls' Education](#)



Dr. Tonya Walls

Co-Founder & Co-Executive Director
[Code Switch Restorative Justice for Girls of Color](#)



Catherine Williams

Development Officer,
[CABD Inc.](#)



Davelyn-Athena Hill

Executive Director
[Speaking Down Barriers](#)



Marilyn Hollinquest

Co-Founder & CEO of Finance/Operations
[Radical Monarchs](#)



Crystal Tennille Irby

Founder & Creative Visionary
[Creators Well Youth Fellowship](#)



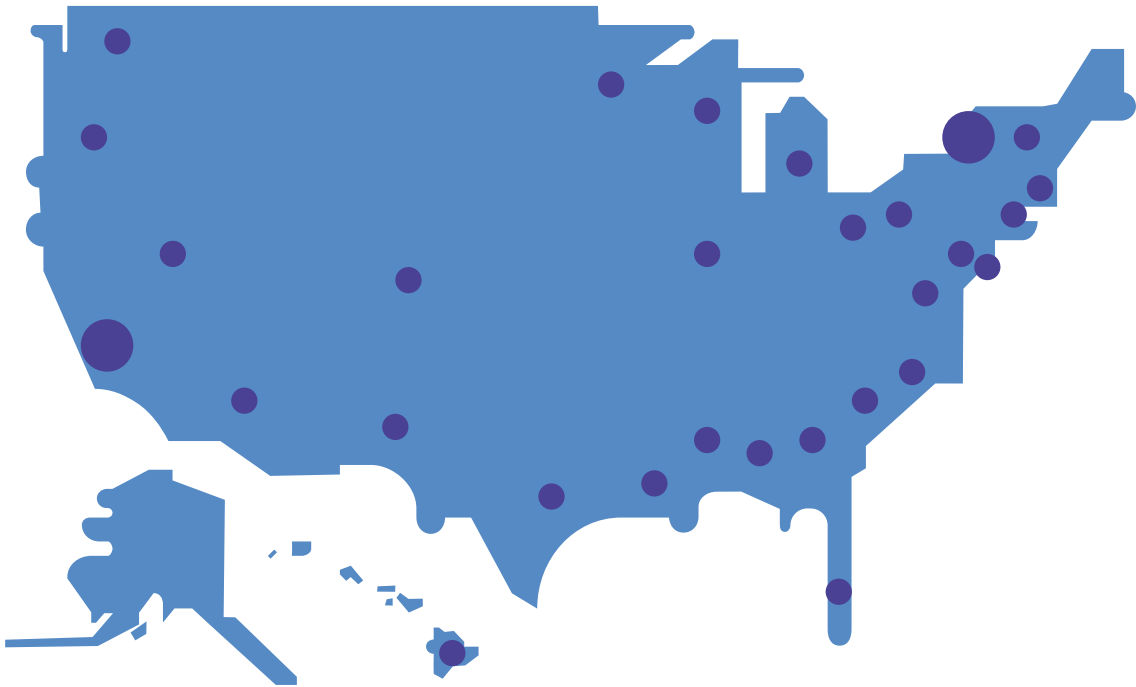
Xong Xiong

Executive Director
[Cia Siab Inc](#)

Advancing Girls Fund Grantee Partners

United States

Alabama	Southern Black Girls & Women Consortium	
Arizona	Indigenous Vision	
California	Alliance for Girls Chicas Rockeras South East Los Angeles Creative Visions Foundation Girls Leadership Institute Inc Khmer Girls in Action Music Is Extraordinary Inc	Radical Monarchs Realgirl Foundation Rise Up Together School of Unity and Liberation The Mentoring Center United Womens East African Support Team Young Women's Freedom Center
Colorado	Victim Offender Reconciliation Program of Denver Inc	
Delaware	Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres Foundation	
District of Columbia	Black Swan Academy Inc Children's Rights and Violence Prevention Fund Eduseed	Global Fund for Children Rights4Girls
Florida	Power U Center for Social Change Inc	
Georgia	Black Feminist Future Inc. Visionary Justice StoryLab	
Hawaii	Hawaii Women in Filmmaking	
Illinois	A Long Walk Home Communities United GirlForward Heart Women & Girls Project	
Louisiana	Daughters Beyond Incarceration Operation Restoration	
Massachusetts	ASAPROSAR Development Fund Inc. Boston Women's Fund Inc I Am Why	
Michigan	Change is Reel SOLHOT	



Minnesota	Women's Foundation of Minnesota	
Mississippi	Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative for Economic and Social Justice The Lighthouse Black Girl Project	
Nevada	Code Switch Restorative Justice for Girls of Color	
New Jersey	Girls Empowerment Summit Sierra Leone Inc Unchained At Last	
New Mexico	New Mexico Fund for Women & Girls	
New York	African American Policy Forum Black Feminist Project CABD Inc. Colors of Connection Inc Empower-Emerging Markets Foundation Girl Be Heard Institute Girls for Gender Equity Inc-G G E Ifetayo Cultural Arts Academy Inc Malikah Inc National Black Women's Justice Institute	New York Women's Foundation Sadie Nash Leadership Project Inc Sakhi for South Asian Survivors Inc. Vera Institute of Justice, Inc. viBe Theater Experience The Brotherhood Sister Sol Inc. Tools & Tiaras Inc. Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls Inc Women Deliver Inc.
North Carolina	Fannie Lou Hamer Institute of Advocacy & Social Action Partnership For Appalachian Girls Education The Beautiful Project Inc	
Ohio	Inclusive for Women Inc Women of Toledo	
Oregon	National Florence Crittenton Mission	
Pennsylvania	Education Law Center - PA Girls First Fund Girls Justice League	The Colored Girls Museum The Evolver House

South Carolina	EveryBlackGirl Inc Creators Well Speaking Down Barriers	
Tennessee	Historic Clayborn Temple	
Texas	Girls Embracing Mothers Inc Empower House SA	
Virginia	Girl Determined	
Washington	You Grow Girl Young Women Empowered	
Wisconsin	9 to 5 National Association of Working Women Cia Siab Inc Freedom Inc	Hmong American Womens Association PEARLS for Teen Girls, Inc.

Global

Afghanistan	Omid Foundation USA	
Barbados	I Am A Girl NGO	
Benin/Senegal	Batonga Foundation	
Bolivia	A Breeze of Hope Foundation	
Cameroon	Association de Lutte Contre les Violences Faites aux Femmes Extrême-Nord Cameroun Association pour la promotion de l'autonomie et de droit de la jeune fille	
Canada	FRIDA	
Egypt	Karama	
El Salvador / Guatemala	Glasswing International USA	
Haiti	Institute For Justice And Democracy In Haiti Inc.	
Honduras	Seattle International Foundation	
India	The Aangan Trust Pipal Tree	
Israel	The Arab Association for Youth and Adolescents	
Kenya	African Women's Development and Communication Network Akili Dada Boxgirls Kenya Carolina for Kibera Inc Centre for Domestic Training and Development	Kakenya's Dream Moving the Goalposts RefuSHE Resource Center for Women and Girls



Liberia	Liberian Feminist Forum
Mexico	Fondo Semillas, A.C.
Myanmar	Myanmar Trust UK
Nepal	Chhori Hamro Palo Raksha Nepal Women LEAD
Nicaragua	Asociación Movimiento de Mujeres por Nuestros Derechos Humanos
Nigeria	Girls Voices Initiative
Puerto Rico	Movimiento Ananse Inc Taller Salud Inc
Republic of the Congo	Fonds pour les Femmes Congolaises
Sierra Leone	We Are Purposeful Ltd
Somalia	Elman Peace and Human Rights Center
Tanzania, United Republic of	Amani Girls Organization Girls' Livelihood and Mentorship Initiative (GLAMI) MikonoYetu WoteSawa Domestic Workers Organization
The Gambia	Safe Hands for Girls
Uganda	Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa
United Kingdom	Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage



Grantee Spotlights: Transforming Visions Into Realities

Tides Foundation & EMpower:

Transforming Potential into Leadership
for Girls Across India



Since 2009, the Tides Foundation Advancing Girls Fund has partnered with EMpower to expand opportunity, agency, and leadership for adolescent girls across India. This enduring collaboration is grounded in flexible, long-term support that strengthens local organizations and the communities they serve, rather than funding isolated projects. By investing in EMpower's model, Tides has helped build the infrastructure, leadership, and learning ecosystems that allow girls not only to participate, but to lead.



From Participation to Leadership: Indra's Story

Indra credits the Learning Community with helping her prevent a forced marriage. Through this space, she built the confidence and collective power to challenge expectations and advocate for her own future. Alongside her peers, Indra moved from the margins of community life to its center, using advocacy to confront child marriage and redefine what is possible for girls in her region. Where others once determined girls' paths, Indra and her cohort now set the agenda for change.

Building Local Capacity, Lasting Presence

With consistent support from Tides, EMpower grew its India presence from a single representative to a team of eleven locally rooted experts. This expansion enables EMpower

to identify and nurture high-potential grassroots partners serving the most marginalized girls and young women. Each investment reaches young people precisely where impact is felt within their own communities, guided by leaders who understand local realities.

Support from NoVo, stewarded through Tides, helped embed girl-centered programming and authentic youth engagement as core organizational values. A pivotal outcome was the creation of the **EMpower Girls Advisory Council**, inviting girls into decision-making spaces as experts shaping strategy and accountability. This shift also catalyzed youth fellowships and field-shaping research, including *A Window of Opportunity*, *Moving the Needle*, and *COVID in Her Voice*, all grounded in lived experience.

Scaling the Learning Community Model

A hallmark of this partnership is the **Adolescent Girls Learning Community**, launched in Mumbai and expanded to Delhi and Rajasthan with Tides support. These communities equip girls to lead dialogue and action around education, safety, health, and well-being. The model's success has created a ripple effect: global organizations such as UNICEF and CARE have adopted similar approaches to strengthen their work with girls.

Ecosystem Influence and Policy Impact

The influence of this work now extends to national governance. Insights from EMpower's livelihoods programming are informing a forthcoming Government of India (NITI Aayog) publication, demonstrating how Tides' investment in community-rooted solutions contributes to systemic change at scale.

Kakenya's Dream and EveryBlackGirl:

TransNational Collaboration to Rewrite the Story for Girls in Rural Kenya

Gender inequality and gender-based violence remain global challenges, but they are often most severe in the Global South, where harmful social norms can position women and girls as property, valued more for bride price than for their potential. In rural southwestern Kenya, many girls are born into circumstances that expose them to overlapping forms of trauma: female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage, sexual and gender-based violence, limited access to education and employment, and entrenched poverty. These challenges are deeply interconnected. When families struggle to meet basic needs, marrying off a daughter at a young age can feel like the only viable option. FGM, long viewed as a prerequisite for marriage, often precedes child marriage and school dropout, cutting off girls' opportunities and perpetuating a cycle of poverty and violence.

While this is the reality for far too many girls, truly, even one is too many, it is not the only possible future.

Communities are beginning to say: *wait, there is another way.*

[Kakenya's Dream](#), a community organization which began as a girls' boarding school, has grown into a holistic and scalable model supporting girls from childhood through young adulthood. Through a continuum of programs, including safe boarding schools, a community health clinic, youth entrepreneurship and employability initiatives, community engagement, and emerging climate resilience efforts, Kakenya's Dream is working in depth, redefining what it means to be a girl in rural Kenya.



Central to this work is the organization's Health and Leadership Training program, currently active in 80 government schools in Narok and Kisii Counties and expanding. After more than a decade of program refinement, impact measurement, and external evaluation, Kakenya's Dream has developed a robust, evidence-informed curriculum for both girls and boys. The curriculum addresses body autonomy, sexual and reproductive health and rights, the harms of FGM and gender-based violence, and the importance of gender equality. It is delivered weekly over three years (grades 5–7) during structured extracurricular sessions, ensuring consistent, age-appropriate engagement at a critical stage of adolescent development.



EveryBlackGirl is a nonprofit organization based in South Carolina, USA that's dedicated to empowering girls and boys through education, leadership development, gender equity, and environmental conservation. In March of 2025, EveryBlackGirl established an organization to address inequities youth face in Kenya. The organization works across communities, schools, and partnerships, primarily in Kericho and Bomet Counties, to nurture talent, build confidence, and create pathways for Kenyan youth to reach their full potential as positive agents of change. EveryBlackGirl is committed to expanding educational opportunities and ending gender-based violence.

With a proven, results-based program, Kakenya's Dream is extending its training and curriculum to EveryBlackGirl Kenya. EveryBlackGirl Kenya will be able to implement as appropriate in their partner schools. By making evidence-informed tools, training, and lessons learned more accessible, this exchange supports broader ecosystem collaboration, where organizations learn from one another to expand opportunities for girls. While implementation approaches vary by organization and setting, the shared goal is to help more communities create environments where girls are safe, healthy, in school, and empowered to lead.

Justice + Joy National Collaborative: Fixing Democracy



Founded 143 years ago as the National Florence Crittenton Mission, Justice + Joy National Collaborative is now an intergenerational gender and racial justice organization advancing advocacy, research, organizing, and capacity building with and for girls, young women, and gender-expansive young people of color in 48+ states, DC, and Puerto Rico. Grounded in local communities and the lived expertise of young people, Justice + Joy rejects silos and single-issue approaches, addressing the root causes of marginalization across systems. All work centers collective impact, intergenerational activism, and civic engagement.

Fixing Democracy Initiative (FDI)

Launched in 2023 and led by youth leaders Genisus Holland and Addison Moore, FDI responds to a fragile democratic landscape by centering those most often excluded from civic discourse: Gen Z and Gen Alpha girls, young women, and gender-expansive youth of color impacted by chronic adversity and system involvement. FDI was designed as a five-phase national initiative to conduct original research, tailor messaging, educate and mobilize, build legacy, and transform civic participation.

Despite limited funding that allowed completion of only Phase 1, Justice + Joy partnered with Lake Research Partners and HIT Strategies to conduct 15 focus groups across four cities and virtually with system-impacted youth ages 16–25. The resulting report, *Fixing Democracy: Focus Group Findings* (July 2023), surfaced nine key insights, including deep anxiety about the nation's trajectory and clear visions of authentic leadership. As Celinda Lake noted, this study uniquely centers voices often included but rarely prioritized.

Rapid Response Education Fund (RREF)

In 2024, remaining FDI funds were reimagined by youth leaders into the Rapid Response Education Fund (RREF), a micro-grant program putting resources directly into young people's hands. Within three weeks before the election, nearly 100 applications were received and 70 youth in 25 states and DC were funded (\$50–\$500) to host community events promoting voting and long-term engagement. Activities ranged from voting parties to art gatherings and community dialogues, demonstrating that youth leadership flourishes when trust and resources are provided without gatekeeping.

RREF culminated in a post-election summit and produced a brief highlighting community impact. Youth leaders emphasized that “shifting power” requires removing barriers so young people can lead now, not someday.

2025 Learnings and the Road to 2028

In 2025, FDI hosted “Project 2026,” released the RREF summary, and convened a monthly youth-led town hall series blending political education, skill-building, and restorative community spaces. Participation trends and environmental challenges informed a strategic shift to preserve resources for 2026.

Priorities for 2026–2027 include:

1. **Refining communication** through new research and youth-led conversations to replace language like “civic engagement” with messages that resonate.
2. **Prioritizing in-person organizing** via regional connection and stronger on-the-ground relationships.
3. **Updating the RREF model** with larger grants, stipends for youth organizers, and integrated training/support.

Multi-Year Arc

- **2026:** Build community, reframe engagement, relaunch RREF ahead of midterms.
- **2027:** National training rollout at Justice + Joy's summit; expand RREF scale.
- **2028:** Assess environment, build long-term infrastructure, and scale.

Justice + Joy's work demonstrates that when youth leadership is trusted, resourced, and centered, it strengthens communities and reimagines participation in democracy for generations to come.



As we look to 2026 and beyond, our belief in girls is not a slogan—it is a strategy.

Across communities and contexts, girls, young women, and gender-expansive youth are leading with clarity, creativity, and courage. They are organizing for safer schools, engaging in civic life, designing solutions to climate challenges, building peer mental health supports, coding new technologies, creating art that shifts narratives, and caring for one another in ways that redefine leadership. They are not waiting to be invited into the future; they are already building it.

The role of philanthropy, then, is not to direct their path but to resource it with trust.

Belief in girls means investing in the conditions that allow their leadership to flourish:

- Flexible, long-term funding that responds to real needs as they arise
- Support for community-rooted organizations that girls know and trust
- Space for joy, creativity, healing, and rest alongside measurable outcomes
- Elevating youth voice not as a program element, but as a guiding force
- Supporting girls' civic engagement as advocates, organizers, voters, and decision-makers in their communities
- Learning alongside partners and adapting as girls' realities evolve

In 2026, Advancing Girls Fund will deepen this commitment by strengthening partnerships with organizations that center girls' lived experiences, expanding opportunities for shared learning across our network, and continuing to model trust-based philanthropy in action.

We believe impact is not only found in metrics, but in moments:

A girl discovering her voice.

A young person feeling safe enough to imagine a different future.

A young leader speaking up at a school board meeting or organizing her peers around an issue that matters to her.

A community recognizing girls as leaders today, not only tomorrow.

This is the future we are investing in.

Because when girls are believed in, supported, and trusted, they do more than thrive, they transform the world around them.

Belief in girls is belief in a more just, joyful, civically engaged, and possible future for us all.