Wallace®

2024 REPORT

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THE YEAR IN REVIEW, 2024

Wallace strove in 2024 for greater coherence and collaboration in our work. Two developments stood out: an updated mission statement and increased integration among our three focus areas.

We heard from many sources, both within the foundation and beyond, that our mission statement was somewhat confusing and didn't fully explain our work. We therefore spent months consulting with our board, staff, grantees, and other stakeholders to help us better articulate what we seek to do and for whom. The new statement does not change the work we do. It seeks instead to clarify our objectives, the beneficiaries we seek to serve, our focus areas, and our commitment to serving all people, especially those that society has frequently left behind.

The new mission: to help all communities build a more vibrant and just future by fostering advances in the arts, education leadership, and youth development.

Efforts in our three focus areas are increasingly contributing to each other in the fulfillment of this mission. What we have learned in our youth development work, for example, is helping us devise a new initiative in youth arts. What we have learned about school leadership has helped us understand how we can support partnerships between schools and out-of-school programs to support youth development. These closer collaborations helped us navigate new challenges in 2024 and we hope they will continue to do so in years ahead.

Photo credit: Melissa Rogers
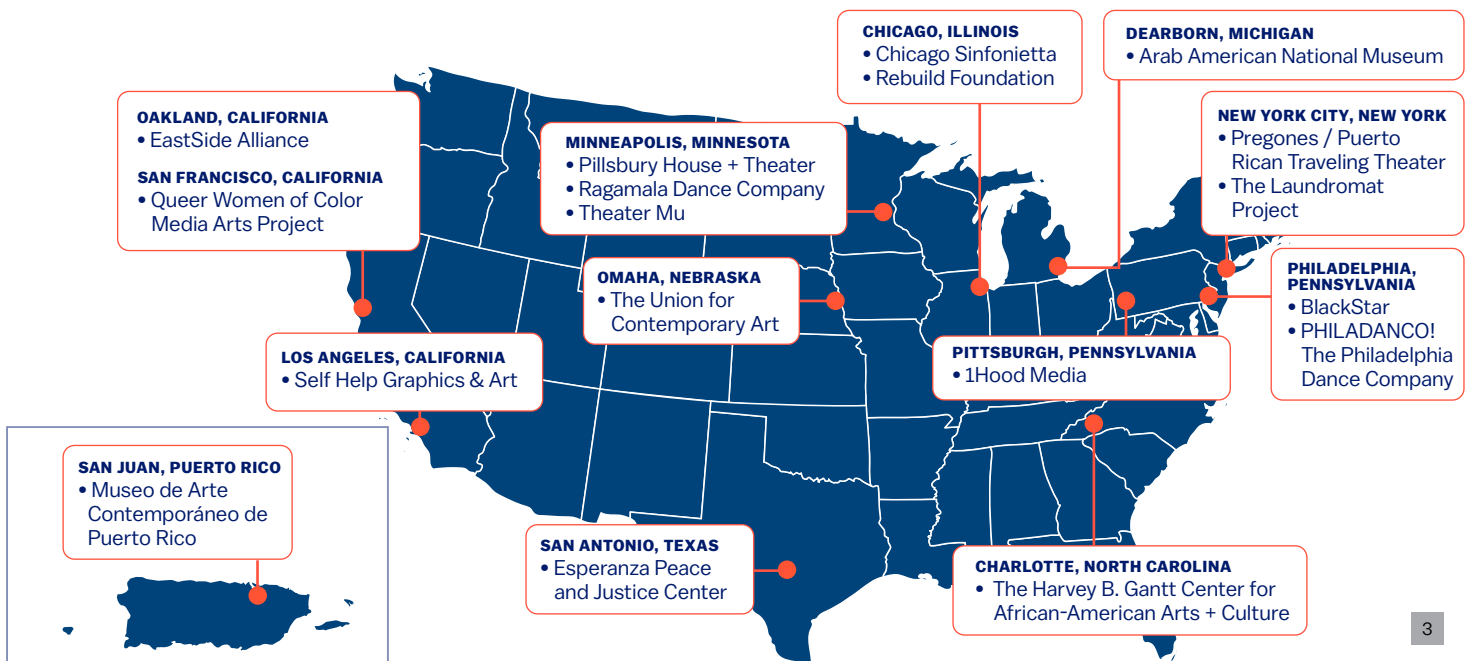
EFFORTS IN OUR THREE INTEREST AREAS

Arts

Our current arts initiative, which seeks to support and learn with arts organizations rooted in communities of color, continued into its fourth year. The initiative is supporting three cohorts of organizations.

The first is a group of 18 arts organizations (see map) with budgets larger than $500,000. These organizations are working to strengthen operations and management, establish or upgrade public creative spaces, and preserve and promote their communities' cultural heritage, among other projects. Research fellows, placed with each organization by the Social Sciences Research Council, are studying and documenting the organizations' work. They began wrapping up their research in 2024; we expect to begin publishing their findings, which we believe will be of interest and benefit to all types of arts organizations, in 2025. This cohort also devised a name for the initiative in 2024: the Advancing Well-Being in the Arts initiative.

The second cohort comprises two groups of arts service organizations (see map, next page) we convened to regrant Wallace funds to smaller arts organizations. The first group consists of six regional arts intermediaries set up in the 1970s by the National Endowment for the Arts. The second is a nascent coalition of arts service organizations that are also rooted in and support communities of color. The first group began disbursing funds in 2024, while the new coalition is designing its grant program. Researchers will study both groups' programs to document strategies they use to direct funds where they are most needed.
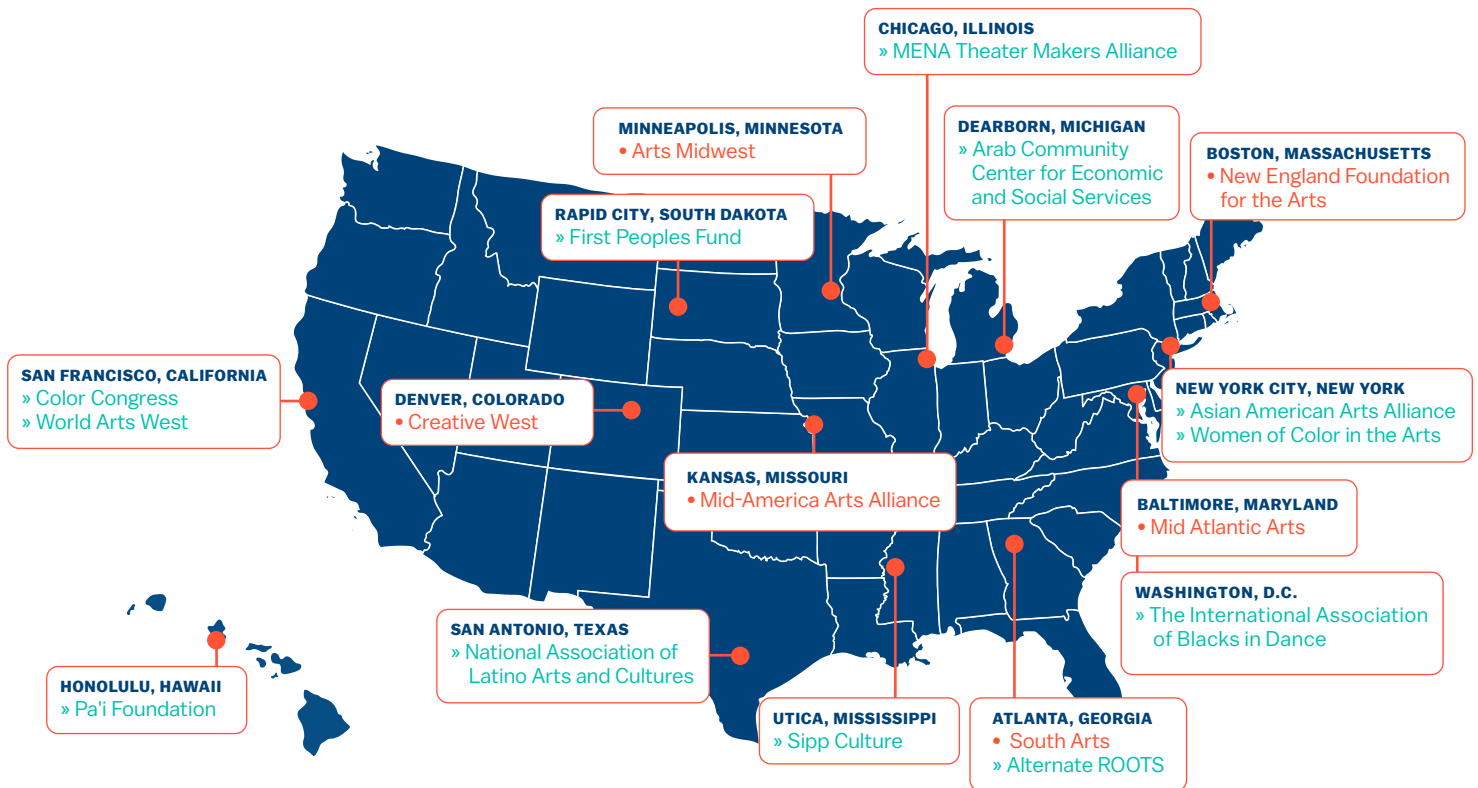
The third cohort is made of arts service organizations, community-based arts organizations, and researchers who have proposed their own research to answer key questions in the sector. We have funded 19 studies that are collecting essential data, exploring ways to address structural disparities, and developing tools to help artists support communities of color. We expect to fund more such studies in 2025.

ADVANCING WELL-BEING IN THE ARTS INITIATIVE, COHORT 1

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
• Chicago Sinfonietta
• Rebuild Foundation

DEARBORN, MICHIGAN
• Arab American National Museum

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA
• EastSide Alliance

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
• Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA
• Pillsbury House + Theater
• Ragamala Dance Company
• Theater Mu

NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK
• Pregones / Puerto Rican Traveling Theater
• The Laundromat Project

OMAHA, NEBRASKA
• The Union for Contemporary Art

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
• BlackStar
• PHILADANCO! The Philadelphia Dance Company

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
• Self Help Graphics & Art

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
• 1Hood Media

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO
• Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Puerto Rico

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
• Esperanza Peace and Justice Center

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA
• The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture

ADVANCING WELL-BEING IN THE ARTS INITIATIVE, COHORT 2

• Regional Arts Organizations
» Arts Service Organizations

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
» MENA Theater Makers Alliance

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA
• Arts Midwest

DEARBORN, MICHIGAN
» Arab Community
Center for Economic
and Social Services

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
• New England Foundation
for the Arts

RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA
» First Peoples Fund

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
» Color Congress
» World Arts West

DENVER, COLORADO
• Creative West

NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK
» Asian American Arts Alliance
» Women of Color in the Arts

KANSAS, MISSOURI
• Mid-America Arts Alliance

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
• Mid Atlantic Arts

WASHINGTON, D.C.
» The International Association
of Blacks in Dance

HONOLULU, HAWAII
» Pa'i Foundation

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
» National Association of
Latino Arts and Cultures

UTICA, MISSISSIPPI
» Sipp Culture

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
• South Arts
» Alternate ROOTS

Youth Arts

We spent much of 2024 designing a new youth arts initiative. We commissioned research and consulted experts to determine ways in which the arts could support young people's personal development and help them thrive as adults. We are continuing to refine our ideas and expect to announce a major new initiative in 2025.

Research and Publications

The most significant publication emerging from our work in the arts was *In Search of the Magic Bullet: Results from the Building Audiences for Sustainability Initiative*. The report highlights lessons from our most recent initiative in the arts, which sought to determine whether and how audience-development efforts could support arts organizations' financial health. It found that organizations did reach new audiences, but the efforts did not improve their finances. Audience-development efforts, it suggests, may be better suited to support an organization's mission than its balance sheet.

School Leadership

A Wallace initiative in the 2010s funded districts who worked to build principal pipelines that work on several fronts to strengthen school leadership. (See the infographic for a summary of what these pipelines entail.) Research found that these pipelines produced statistically significant benefits in student achievement. That finding spawned two additional school leadership initiatives, both of which continued in 2024.

The first, the Equity-Centered Pipeline Initiative (ECPI), supports eight large school districts as they work to produce school leaders that can ensure all students succeed, regardless of their backgrounds. The districts made considerable progress in strengthening hiring processes and defining leadership standards. They continued work to bolster partnerships with principal preparation programs, deliver the support principals need on the job, and develop systems to track principals' strengths and challenges.

The second is the Rural District Learning Community. Many of Wallace's school leadership initiatives have focused on large, urban districts. In 2024, we brought together smaller, rural districts to help determine whether they could benefit from lessons emerging from larger districts. The learning community has just gotten off the ground. We are eager to report on its progress in the years ahead.

Research and Publications

We kicked off three school leadership-related research efforts in 2024. The first investigates the measures districts take to retain school leaders of color. Many districts have made strides in attracting aspiring principals of color, but there has been limited progress in keeping those principals in their positions. This study seeks to document how districts beyond ECPI are supporting and retaining principals of color.

A second study explores how principals learn on the job. A 2022 research synthesis suggested that evidence of on-the-job learning by credentialed principals is thin. This study is exploring how principals learn on the job, how they consume information, and the formats in which the information is helpful.

The third studies mechanisms for principal support. A recent RAND survey of school districts found that few districts offer principals support such as mentorships and executive coaching. Support they do provide often focuses on new principals, not on those who have been in the role for a while. This study will help determine features and attributes of successful principal support programs, the challenges to their effective implementation, and how programs might differ depending on their contexts.

Youth Development

Our youth development work in 2024 was largely trained on two broad goals: (1) to encourage adoption or adaptation of promising practices identified in previous Wallace initiatives, and (2) to better understand youth-development concerns so we can devise future initiatives.

Two efforts helped us work toward the first goal. First, we continued support for the District Summer Learning Network. The network engages more than 100 districts, six state education agencies, and several community organizations to encourage the adoption of evidence-based summer learning practices. Its work was set to end in 2023. We extended it into 2025 to allow districts more time to institutionalize practices and find long-term funding to continue their efforts.

Second, we continued to support out-of-school-time efforts in Texas. The state's legislature recently made funding available to bolster such efforts. We seized the opportunity to help districts and out-of-school-time programs direct that funding towards evidence-based practices that support student achievement and well-being. We also worked to increase awareness of such practices among state policymakers and advocacy organizations. In October, for example, we partnered with three Texas-based groups to host an out-of-school-time event that drew more than 100 educators, researchers, funders, students, and policymakers. Participants discussed what's working in out-of-school-time efforts in Texas, what's not, and how Wallace-supported insights could help improve results for young people.

A third effort helped us chart new paths for future work. We wrapped up an exploratory phase of Advancing Opportunities for Adolescents, a project to help shape our next major youth development initiative. The project seeks to learn more about partnerships that can remove barriers that keep middle- and high-school-age youth from partaking in high-quality out-of-school-time programs. Its exploratory phase engaged 30 cross-sector partnerships in 28 states. Lessons we are learning from our work with these partnerships and from research into the project are helping us devise our next initiative.

Publications

Our partners produced several research products to support youth development efforts. A research team studying work in the District Summer Learning Network, for example, released the first two installments of its Summer Snapshots series about the network's efforts. One shows how school districts are reimagining the way students make up credits in summer. The other looks at how rural districts and their partners create exciting summer learning opportunities.

Another report, Responding, Reimagining, Realizing: Out-of-School Time Coordination in a New Era, explores ways in which intermediary organizations could help out-of-school-time providers address heightened needs of children and their families in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. Researchers interviewed educators, caregivers, funders, government officials, out-of-school-time intermediaries, and the providers they support in 12 cities. They find that out-of-school-time providers played an essential role in supporting young people as they emerged from the pandemic. They further suggest that out-of-school-time intermediaries and programs could continue to provide key support for young people's well-being in the years ahead.

DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION AND IDEAS

As we do every year, we supported the production and dissemination of insights produced through our initiatives. In 2024, we took an additional step: to more carefully measure whether those insights affect the work of organizations beyond those we fund.

Our efforts to measure our impact have largely relied on surveys, citations of Wallace-commissioned reports and downloads from our website. Now, we are exploring ways to measure not just whether people see or read reports we publish, but also whether they use them. Several concepts are guiding our exploration, including: whether Wallace-produced insights could have contributed to a particular outcome; whether that outcome was what we intended; and who ultimately benefits from it.
We expect to finalize new measurement metrics and rubrics in coming months and begin using them in 2025.


Top middle photo by Melissa Rogers. Remaining photos courtesy of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

NEW PUBLICATIONS AND MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES FROM WALLACE

Downloadable for free at www.wallacefoundation.org

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

How School Districts Prepare and Develop Principals: Selected Findings from the Spring 2024 American School District Panel Survey. A survey of 156 school districts finds that the infrastructure to prepare and support principals varied widely by district size.
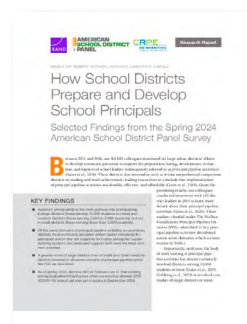
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Applying Summer Learning Evidence: How Texas State Policy Supports Strong Programming. A report from Texas shows how the state has adopted policies to help districts design high-quality summer programs.

Responding, Reimagining, Realizing: Out-of-School Time Coordination in a New Era. During the pandemic, out-of-school time intermediaries helped support OST programs to address the heightened needs of children and their families. This work suggests an expanded role these organizations could play going forward.

Summer Snapshot Series. Two data briefs capture trends, challenges, and outcomes in summer learning participation and quality. One looks at how rural districts and their partners create exciting summer learning opportunities. The other shows how school districts are reimagining the way students make up credits in summer.

Unlocking the Potential of Summer Learning. What does it take to run a high-quality summer program that young people want to attend? A documentary short shows how communities in Woodward, Okla., and Akron, Ohio, are working to find out.

A Hot Time for Summer Learning, a podcast, saw two new installments this year. One spotlights how Alabama's Tuscaloosa City Schools and New Jersey's Newark Public Schools re-imagined their summer learning programs. The other examines how Texas districts are finding ways to sustain high-quality and engaging summer learning programs in the face of funding changes.

ARTS

In Search of the Magic Bullet: Results from the Building Audiences for Sustainability Initiative. Arts organizations found it is possible to engage both new and current audiences, but it takes time and might not happen on their desired terms

The Organizations Spearheading the Advancing Well-Being in the Arts Initiative. A series of videos highlighting organizations working to build thriving cultural communities, in the organizations' own words.

Connected Arts, Creative Kids, Thriving Communities. An audio interview with two musicians who are using the Wallace-commissioned Connected Arts Learning Framework to engage young people and help them discover identities and communities.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW[1]

INVESTMENT ASSETS
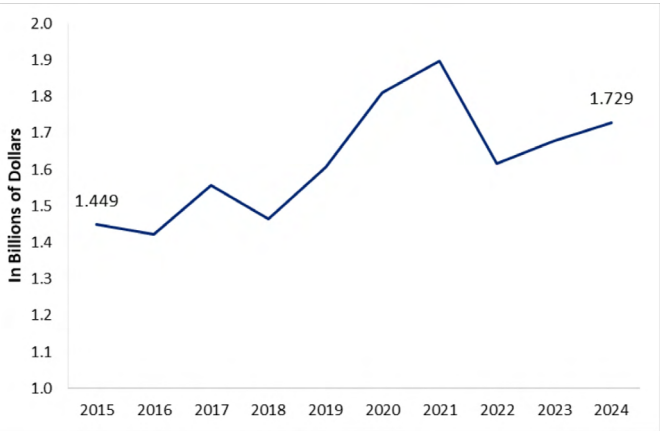
Our endowment totaled an estimated $1.729 billion on December 31, 2024, which was $50 million more than our portfolio of $1.679 billion on December 31, 2023. The increase reflects the net market appreciation of our investments after deducting grants and expenses of $92.4 million paid in 2024.

Our portfolio value on December 31, 2024 was $280 million higher than our assets of $1.449 billion on December 31, 2015, on a nominal basis. We paid a total of $672.3 million in grants and expenses over that 10-year period.
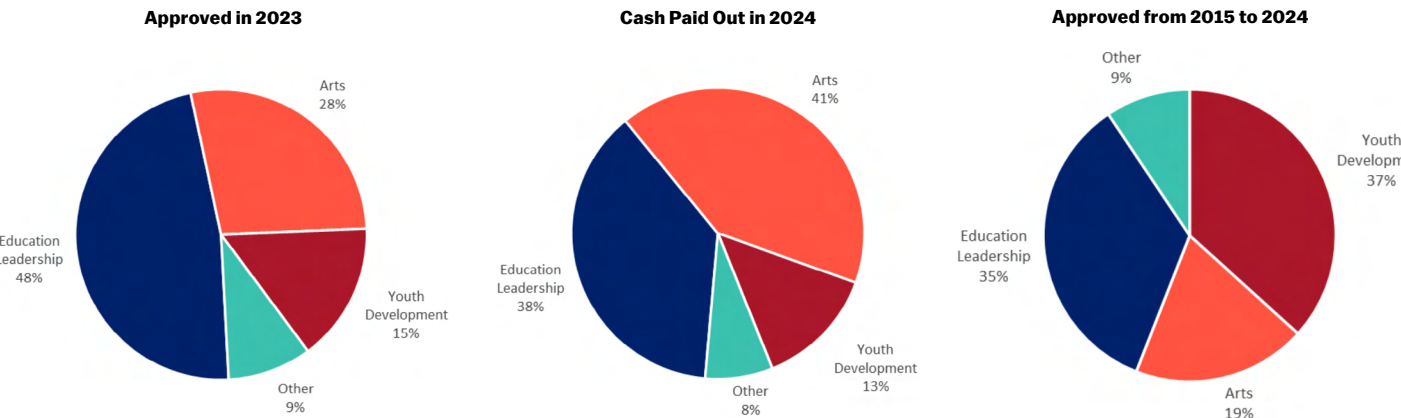
WALLACE'S EXPENSES OVER A DECADE
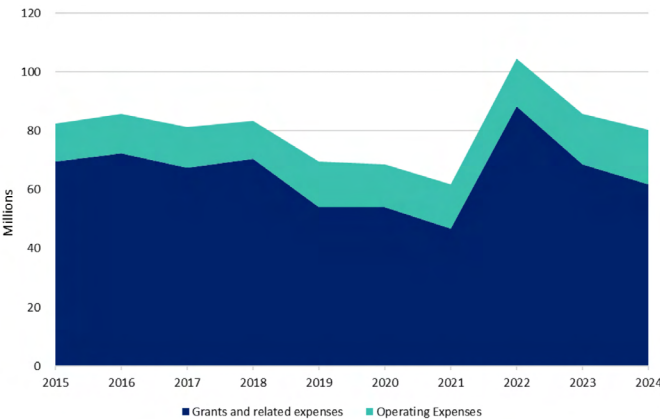
The bulk of expenditures under "grants and related expenses" goes to education, arts, social service, and similar nonprofit organizations. Also included is spending for research and communications. This chart reflects expenses on an accrual basis, meaning expenses are reported in the year they are incurred, which is not necessarily the year in which the expenses are paid.

GRANT/PROGRAM EXPENSES BY FOCUS AREA

The pie charts below show spending, by percentage, in Wallace's areas of interest. The first shows program grants and expenses approved in 2024; the second shows grants/expenses paid in 2024 (including grants approved in earlier years); the third shows the total grant amounts approved since 2015. Please visit our website for a full listing of our grants since 2000.

Approved in 2023
- Arts 28%
- Youth Development 15%
- Other 9%
- Education Leadership 48%

Cash Paid Out in 2024
- Arts 41%
- Youth Development 13%
- Other 8%
- Education Leadership 38%

Approved from 2015 to 2024
- Other 9%
- Youth Development 37%
- Arts 19%
- Education Leadership 35%

[1]All 2024 figures are estimated pending an independent audit.

Our mission is to help all
communities build a more vibrant
and just future by fostering advances
in the arts, education leadership, and
youth development.