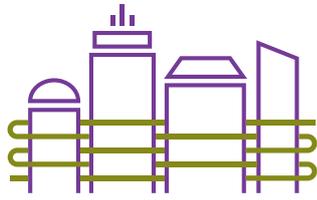


ROOTED + READY



SOCIAL
INNOVATION
FORUM

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



SOCIAL CHANGE COMMUNITY

NONPROFITS

Applicants to our 24-month Social Innovator Accelerator program.

134
VETTED

SKILLED VOLUNTEERS

Individuals serve as nonprofit evaluators, interviewers, advisors, and more.

145
MATCHED

ALUMNI & COMMUNITY

Our entire nonprofit network benefits from continuous learning and connection.

181
CONNECTED

INVESTORS

Over 17 years, foundations, donors, and in-kind partners have learned from and invested in vetted nonprofits.

\$40M
DIRECTED

Dear Friends,

It's been an extraordinary year. Our social change marketplace reinvented, reinvested, and dug deep to keep local communities supported in a time of tremendous challenge and loss. Our Social Innovators have been on the front lines, managing huge operational obstacles while continuing to serve communities disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and the persistent crises of racial and economic inequality.

The Social Innovation Forum (SIF) has held steady through all of it, nimbly adapting and expanding support to match our partners' emerging needs. We're proud of how so many of our funders and in-kind partners stepped up too, offering just-in-time funding and expertise that helped fill critical gaps.

We were ready for 2020 because we are rooted as a community.

For almost two decades, SIF has cultivated trust, connection, and learning across a growing network of investors and community-based leaders. That work—and those active, committed relationships—made all the difference in 2020.

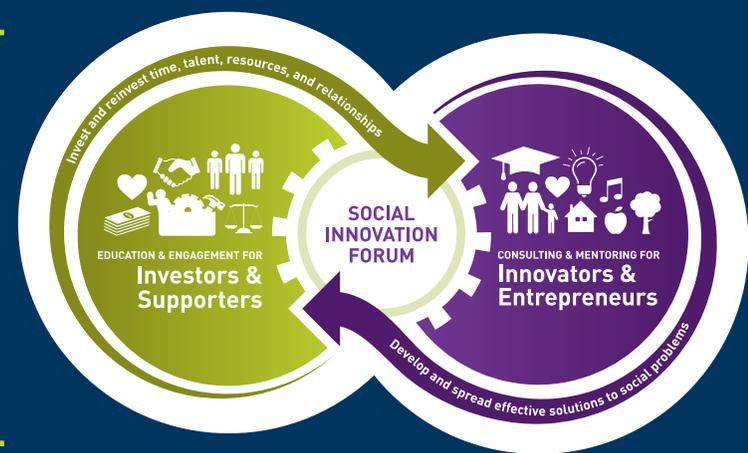
More recent investments paid off too: This year, we embarked on year one of a three-year strategic plan and rolled out a new set of core values to guide us. Those values and priorities provided the foundation we needed to meet the moment. They offer a map, too, as we move forward—especially as we continue the essential, ongoing work of addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of our internal and collective work.

We're thankful to all who showed up for change in a year that demanded so much from all of us. We were ready because of you.

With sincere gratitude,


Susan Musinsky
Executive Director


Ryan Dings
Chair, Board of Directors



4,904
ENGAGED
IN 2020

SOCIAL CHANGE MARKETPLACE

Nonprofits and supporters build connections and relationships that accelerate change.

The Social Innovation Forum catalyzes Greater Boston's change community by connecting nonprofits that are poised to accelerate with investors and skilled volunteers who can help get them to the next stage of impact.

With Thanks to Our Board

We're lucky to count on 11 dedicated board members who guide our work while keeping us rooted in the communities and sectors we collectively serve and represent. We're especially grateful to Ryan Dings, outgoing chair, who helped steer us through our first five years as an independent nonprofit with tremendous energy and commitment. Thanks to these leaders, we remain rooted and ready for the next phase.



ROOTED IN VALUES



“Partnering with SIF this year, we found such an immediate cohesion of values. Within my cohort and in our work with the SIF staff and consultants, we collectively built deep relationships and learned in a truly engaged community—it’s a community with a real human approach that has fostered fruitful connections and a more focused vision of Elevated Thought’s future.”

Marquis Victor, Elevated Thought, 2020 Social Innovator

We were ready to face 2020 because we have strong roots to sustain us. Over 17 years, the Social Innovation Forum has built trusting relationships and deep capacity across a diverse network of individuals and organizations. In 2019, we crafted five core values that define what we stand for and guide all of our work. In a time of great turmoil, these values keep us grounded as we rise to the moment and find bold new ways to serve Greater Boston’s change community.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION*

Diversity is an essential component of SIF, and our social impact marketplace; it broadens the lens through which we address the historic systems of oppression and exclusion that continue to affect the underrepresented members of our community. SIF embraces a broad definition of diversity that includes race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, education, language, mental or physical ability, and other identities/diversities that are named and unnamed. We recognize that an individual or group may affiliate with multiple identities.

Equity: At SIF we acknowledge that conditions of inequity are historically and currently present in Greater Boston and that these conditions oppress some groups and populations. Improving equity includes identifying and eliminating barriers that have prevented full access and participation. This can include taking proactive and intentional steps toward fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people.

Inclusion: SIF strives to create an environment that welcomes, respects, and affirms all people. Our approach to inclusion is grounded in the experiences of those that have been historically marginalized. Inclusion goes beyond diversity and allows all to participate fully so that a broad range of perspectives can influence our ability to realize our mission.

**Our team spent several months discussing and defining what diversity, equity, and inclusion mean for SIF’s work. In crafting our definitions we drew from those of Equity in the Center’s “Awake to Woke to Work,” Independent Sector, and the YWCA.*

CONTINUOUS LEARNING



Our team actively seeks to gain new knowledge and understanding from others, with others, and independently about the range of social issues in our region. We welcome feedback, engage in honest reflection, and focus on ongoing improvement. We also share our learning whenever possible.

DEEP RELATIONSHIPS



Fostering authentic and trusting relationships is core to how we do our work. SIF makes connections among stakeholders and facilitates the building of genuine relationships with intentionality.

ENGAGED COMMUNITY



SIF’s marketplace approach centers on a connected and collaborative community in which everyone puts their skills to work toward the shared goal of accelerating social impact.

NIMBLENESS



SIF is willing to take risks, test new approaches, and pivot in order to respond to emerging priorities. We are adaptable and recognize the need to continuously adjust and innovate in an ever-changing world.

READY TO GO THE DISTANCE

WITH NONPROFITS

The Social Innovation Forum (SIF) plays a unique role in cultivating Greater Boston's nonprofit community. We're best known for our two-year Social Innovator Accelerator and the annual showcase event that introduces a set of vetted nonprofits to funders.

This year, our 2020 Innovators were forced to adapt quickly to keep their doors open and communities supported as COVID-19 took a heavy toll. SIF provided rapid-response programming and valuable connections to help them transform and persist while we pivoted to deliver our flagship Accelerator program—including the annual Social Innovator Showcase—virtually. We've extended many of our resources to our full network of 181 nonprofits, who count on SIF for support and learning that address critical challenges at each stage of growth.

Mission Accelerated

SIF's nonprofit partners will tell you: We stick with them for the long haul. Our 2019 strategic plan formalizes and expands upon the support we've always provided to graduates, with offerings that meet nonprofits at each phase of growth and impact.

By late February, we'd launched multiple new alumni initiatives and an Alumni Council to guide the work. Then, COVID-19 hit. We opted to accelerate. The alumni structures

we'd created—and years of accumulated trust—meant we were proximate with our Nonprofit Network and could respond quickly. SIF staff and consultants offered a series of timely, remote webinars to guide nonprofit leaders through the first phase of the crisis: accessing small business loans, retooling budgets, and more. A few weeks later, we invited leaders to share best practices in virtual fundraising, and we brought our previously slated learning



cohorts online, integrating a timely "crisis leadership" component.

We moved quickly—adapting and extending a net to all who wanted in—because the situation called for it, our partners needed us, and it was the right thing to do.



"I know I can trust SIF, so when it came to Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funding, as crazy busy as I was, I knew that taking time to hear from whomever SIF tapped was going to give me great insights."

Danielle Kaplan, Director of Operations and Finance, InnerCity Weightlifting, 2012 Social Innovator

"It's an interesting time for nonprofits. There's a lot to manage and a lot of difficult decisions to be made. By convening people and bringing in content experts, SIF creates a type of brain trust that wouldn't be possible for a lot of smaller nonprofits."

Leon Smith, Executive Director, Citizens for Juvenile Justice, 2017 Social Innovator



"The executive coaching and other SIF opportunities are like work therapy. We've had at least five staff paired with a coach. It's really helpful and necessary, especially during COVID, to have a space to be open and say, 'Here are things we've been struggling with...' or 'How do you plan for this?'"

Melanie Torres, Executive Director, Project Citizenship, 2017 Social Innovator

"We participate in SIF offerings because we know they're going to be high caliber—with great trainers and other organizations that are doing amazing work. There are so many conferences I've gone to, where I've been like, 'Why am I here?' The SIF gatherings are always worth the time."

Roseann Bongiovanni, Executive Director, GreenRoots, 2018 Social Innovator



"When COVID-19 hit, SIF reached out and said, 'We know a lot of people that value your organization. Tell us what you need.' And they came back with \$55,000 in new grants. That's unheard of! With SIF, you feel like you have not just a resource but an ally and a friend."

Bior Guigni, Chief Executive Officer, Beat the Streets New England (formerly Boston Youth Wrestling), 2019 Social Innovator

SUPPORT AT EVERY STAGE

Social Innovator Accelerator

8 selected, 24 months

- ✓ **All receive:** cohort-based learning, focused consulting, executive coaching, in-kind services, evaluation support, preparation of pitch & prospectus, multiple opportunities to present to investors

Capacity Camps

15 nonprofits

- ✓ Customized **capacity-building programs** (up to a year)
- ✓ **Includes:** cohort-based learning, executive coaching, in-kind services

Alumni Network

106 portfolio organizations

- ✓ **All can access:** skill-building workshops, in-kind services, mentor office hours, multi-session topical programs

Nonprofit Network

181 total nonprofits

- ✓ **Includes** all above, plus Accelerator finalists and co-working organizations
- ✓ **All can access:** skill-building workshops, in-kind services, network events, mentor office hours

145 nonprofit leaders

engaged in capacity building through 62 SIF events this year, including 19 virtual events since the COVID crisis began

READY TO DEEPEN ENGAGEMENT

WITH FUNDERS



“The expertise around the table from co-funders helps me become a more discerning funder, opening my eyes to other ways of thinking about the social issue. It also exposes me to lots of organizations in our local community. I like having more smart heads around the table. I think it really results in better, more informed decisions.”

Martha Bacigalupo, Pine Lodge Charitable Fund, 2019, 2020, and 2021 Collaborative Track Sponsor



Our social change mission extends to funders. Each year, the Social Innovation Forum (SIF) partners with a group of committed investors to help select and sponsor our nonprofit Social Innovators. These “track partners” assist with our rigorous vetting process and cover two years of intensive support for the selected nonprofit, all while honing their own grant-making skills. Over the past eight years, we’ve explored collaborative variations on this model.

Collaborative tracks offer the chance for multiple funders to pool their resources in a shared giving model. As expected, they have also proven to be a powerful mechanism for strengthening learning and relationships as funders exchange expertise, form alliances, and explore emerging social issues with support from our experts, community leaders, and one another. Nonprofits, meanwhile, gain exposure to a larger group of donors, who frequently make additional grants separately.

**MORE VOICES
+ MORE ENGAGEMENT
+ DEEPER LEARNING
= A WIN-WIN FOR EVERYONE.**

The Gross Family Gives Together

In 2019, the Gross family came to us with an idea: Siblings Kelly and Anna had recently participated in our Next Gen collaborative track, an experience Anna described as “eye opening.” Kelly agreed: “We didn’t realize how much we would develop our own voice.”

With their mother, Liz, the two sisters wanted to create a similar experience for the women in their extended family that was focused on a passion they all share: the arts.

Nine women—two generations of sisters, aunts, and cousins—entered the process with their own artistic and philanthropic interests, but their perspectives changed as they reviewed applications together.

“As we learned more about the organizations,” Kelly said, “It was no longer just, ‘I like writing.’ We learned what actually mattered to us.” Liz added, “The layers of questioning and research through every section of the process really helped.”

The site visits were especially illuminating. During a visit to Elevated Thought, the Gross family crafted their own spoken-word poetry, and at OrigiNation, they learned and danced alongside youth. “I really loved meeting the people and hearing their story,” Liz reflected. Kelly agreed: “We said, ‘We can see the impact you have because you just impacted us.’”



In the end, moved by both experiences, the Grosses made a rare decision to select and fund two Social Innovators.

Anna and Kelly already see themselves applying lessons learned to their independent giving. Kelly said, “It’s very easy to feel overwhelmed by the number of organizations out there. This really gave me confidence that, even if it’s at a small scale, we can make an impact.”

Issue-Driven

Individuals, family funds, and foundations (typically new to one another) team up around a common social cause.

Family & Friends

Groups of family members, neighbors, and/or friends band together to fund a track.

A FLEXIBLE PARTNERSHIP MODEL

Next Gen

Newer donors learn the ropes of grant-making and build relationships while exploring an issue area together.

Looking Ahead: From Collaborative to Inclusive

We’re developing a next evolution of the collaborative track in which we’ll invite Social Innovator alumni to the table as co-decision makers, ensuring that community voices have a say in selecting programs that affect their lives.

READY FOR WHAT'S NEXT

We're ready to continue facing the challenges that emerged in 2020.

At the Social Innovation Forum, we're committed to cultivating a thriving social change sector whatever the future may bring. As we look ahead at the coming year, we are especially invested in expanding our efforts in four areas.

1 Sustained support for nonprofits: We will continue to be there for the nonprofits in our network, offering virtual (and, eventually, in-person) learning opportunities on timely topics and of varying levels of intensity and duration to meet their evolving needs.

2 Funder learning & connections: We will prioritize trust and collaboration in funder relationships with nonprofits and will develop new mechanisms to keep funders up to date on nonprofit needs in this fast-changing environment.

3 Expanding the network: We're ready to widen our web, providing more ways for nonprofits, investors, and others to join our social change marketplace. To that end, enhanced communications and outreach will be a major priority in the coming year.

4 Diversity, equity & inclusion: We continue to look inward with our board and staff to center diversity, equity, and inclusion in our mission and operations. In the year ahead, we will work to build a more racially diverse leadership team, emphasize racial equity within our organization, and continue learning as we work to become an organization that more fully embodies this closely held value.

READY TO HELP?

We're grateful to the community members who've sustained our work this year and all other years with their generous gifts of time, talent, and resources. We invite you to help us meet the moment with bigger and bolder commitments in 2021.

MAKE A GIFT: Gifts to the Social Innovation Forum ensure we can be there for Greater Boston's changemakers with transformative opportunities and connections.

LEARN WITH US: Attend one of our upcoming events to build your understanding of current social issues and to become a more engaged and capable agent of change.

MEET WITH US: We are always eager to connect with new and long-term partners. Let's schedule a virtual coffee!

SUPPORT A SOCIAL INNOVATOR: Review our Social Impact Investment Guide (available online!) to find vetted nonprofits working on issues that matter to you.

PROVIDE IN-KIND SUPPORT: We're eager to build relationships with businesses and organizations ready to invest significant time and expertise in creating social change.

SOCIAL INNOVATORS

2020 SOCIAL INNOVATORS

- 1647
- Adaptive Sports New England
- Boston HERC (Higher Education Resource Center)
- Elevated Thought
- OrigiNation Cultural Arts Center
- PAARI (Police Assisted Addiction & Recovery Initiative)
- Vital Village Network
- WHALE (Waterfront Historic Area League)



2020

We tip our hats to our 2020 Social Innovator cohort for their leadership, resilience, and collective commitments to the community in a challenging year. The support you have given one another and those you serve is inspiring!

SOCIAL INNOVATOR ALUMNI

2019 Beat the Streets New England (formerly Boston Youth Wrestling) | Disability Policy Consortium | Dream Out Loud Center, Inc. | English for New Bostonians | LEAP for Education | Paige Academy | The Urban Farming Institute | Y2Y Network

2018 ACT Lawrence | Community Boating Center | Fathers' UpLift | GreenRoots | Political Asylum Immigration Representation Project (PAIR) | Partners for Youth with Disabilities | The Renew Collaborative, a program of HomeStart | Strategies for Youth

2017 Boston CASA | Citizens for Juvenile Justice | Community Economic Development Center | Institute for Nonprofit Practice | Julie's Family Learning Program | Project Citizenship | Room to Grow

2016 African Community Education | Budget Buddies | Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association | Dorchester Community Food Co-op | Hale | Louis D. Brown Peace Institute | MassCOSH | SMART Team at JRI

2015 Catie's Closet | Company One Theatre | Courageous Parents Network | Massachusetts Public Health Association | Mystic River Watershed Association | Transformative Culture Project | Waypoint Adventure

2014 Coaching for Change | Doc Wayne Youth Services, Inc. | Mill City Grows | Silver Lining Mentoring | Veterans Legal Services

2013 AgeWell West Roxbury | GRLZradio | Groundwork Lawrence | Dorchester Youth Collaborative | Shelter Music Boston

2012 Cooking Matters | InnerCity Weightlifting | LGBT Aging Project | Science Club for Girls | Tempo Young Adult Resource Center | WorkExpress

2011 Fiscal Health Vital Signs | Future Chefs | Massachusetts Senior Action Council | MathPOWER | Smart from the Start

2010 Generations Incorporated | Massachusetts Housing & Shelter Alliance | Medicine Wheel Productions | My Life My Choice | Playworks New England | Project Hope

2009 Bessie Tartt Wilson Initiative for Children | Hearth, Inc. | Maritime Apprenticeship Program | More Than Words | RAW Art Works | uAspire

2008 CitySprouts | Cradles to Crayons | Girls' LEAP | ReVision Urban Farm | The Theater Offensive | UTEC

2007 Boston Urban Youth Foundation | Building Impact | Actors' Shakespeare Project | Strong Women, Strong Girls

2006 Boston Black Women's Health Institute | Roca | Treehouse Foundation | WriteBoston | Zumix, Inc.

2004 Boston Children's Chorus | Boston Health Care and Research Training Institute | Close to Home | Common Impact | Rediscovery House | VietAID

2003 Madison Park Development Corporation | Boston Learning Center | Eagle Eye Institute | Haley House | Social Capital Inc. | Year Up

Stay Connected!

To stay up to date and learn with us, subscribe to our newsletter:

www.socialinnovationforum.org/mailling-list

Get in Touch!

To learn more about SIF or to discuss your next commitment, please send a note to Carolyn Shaughnessy (she/her/hers): cshaughnessy@socialinnovationforum.org

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(JULY 1, 2019 - JUNE 30, 2020)

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READY TO INVEST TOGETHER



INVESTORS & SUPPORTERS

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SOCIAL INNOVATION FORUM ALUMNI COUNCIL

Jonathan Gay, *Playworks New England, 2010 Social Innovator* | Bior Guigni, *Beat the Streets New England (formerly Boston Youth Wrestling), 2019 Social Innovator* | Natalie Martinez, *Strong Women, Strong Girls, 2007 Social Innovator* | Heather McMann, *Groundwork Lawrence, 2013 Social Innovator* | Danielle Piskadlo, *Budget Buddies, 2016 Social Innovator* | Aziza Robinson-Goodnight, *Transformative Culture Project, 2015 Social Innovator* | Sarah Roxburgh, *Veterans Legal Services, 2014 Social Innovator* | Raymond Santos, *Ethos, 2013 Social Innovator*

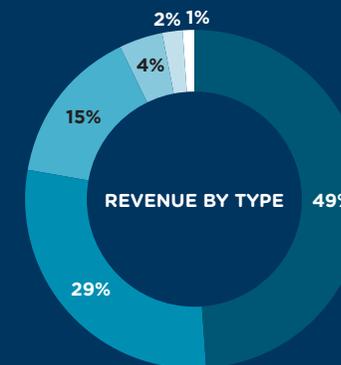
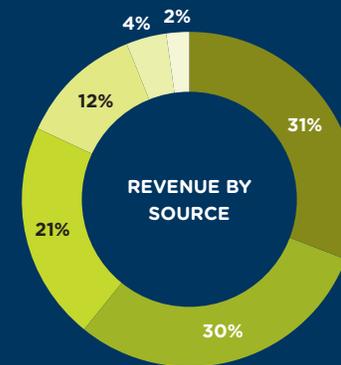
SOCIAL INNOVATION FORUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Julia Satti Cosentino, *Nutter* | Ryan Dings (Chair), *Greentown Labs* | Yasmin Cruz Ferrine, *Visible Hands* | Katherine Gross, *The Charlotte Foundation* | Weston (Tony) Howland III, *Howland Capital Management* | David Howse, *ArtsEmerson* | Jordan Krasnow, *Goulston & Storrs* | Susan Musinsky, *Social Innovation Forum* | Vikram Punwani | Nageeb Sumar, *Fidelity Charitable* | Colby Swettberg, *Silver Lining Mentoring*

SOCIAL INNOVATION FORUM STAFF

Sarah Dingee, *Program Manager* | Melissa Duggan, *Director of Strategy and Operations* | Cassandra Goncalves, *Communications and Events Coordinator* | Tanya Inwald, *Director of Programs* | Michelle Lineberger, *Senior Coordinator, Strategy and Operations* | Abigail Melagrano, *Program Co-op* | Susan Musinsky, *Executive Director* | Jenna Nackel, *Program Manager* | Syed Raza, *Development Co-op* | Carolyn Shaughnessy, *Director of Network Engagement*

FINANCIALS



OPERATING REVENUE • \$2,109,402

EXPENSES • \$2,195,678

REVENUE BY SOURCE

- 31% Foundations
- 30% In-kind support
- 21% Individuals
- 12% Corporations
- 4% Coworking fees
- 2% Special events

REVENUE BY USE/PURPOSE

- 49% Net assets released from restrictions
- 29% Contributed goods & services
- 15% Contributions & grants
- 4% Coworking fees
- 2% Special events
- 1% Other income

EXPENSES

- 74% Program services
- 16% Fundraising
- 10% General & administration

Due to COVID-19, SIF shifted the timing of some of its FY20 programming into FY21 and rolled the restricted program revenue forward into FY2021. SIF also secured a \$156,918 Paycheck Protection Program loan in FY20. SIF will apply for and anticipates receiving full loan forgiveness in FY21.



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“Especially this year, being a Social Innovator in a cohort of similar organizations was absolutely invaluable. I’m grateful that we’ve been able to learn from each other. I grew to really respect how each of us faced the challenges of this COVID-19 crisis with such grit and grace.”



Sam Acevedo, Executive Director, Boston HERC (Higher Education Resource Center), 2020 Social Innovator



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