

NOTHING CAN DIM OUR LIGHT

2024 RECAP REPORT
FUNDERS FOR LGBTQ ISSUES



Message from the President

2024 was a hard and beautiful year.

We continued to witness devastating attacks against our communities domestically and globally, large scale displacements of people across the world due to climate change and political violence, **We also witnessed powerful organizing, our movements centering deep care and love.** I continue to hold on to our tremendous capacity for hope and joy— this is our wealth.



In the days after the U.S. presidential election, over eighty movement groups joined together and [released an open letter](#). The constant refrain was this, we got this, we got us. **As philanthropy, we must heed the call of movement, trust their wisdom, and be there as radically honest and faithful partners, dedicated to practicing the discipline and love this moment requires.**

We have so much to give each other - we need each other desperately. We have the blueprint to build the world we want, no matter what far right forces attempt in the midst of global attacks on our bodily autonomy and agency.

As I reflect on our work over the past year, what emerges is a deep affirmation of our skill, power and beauty. **In 2024, we welcomed fifteen new members, attesting to the value of our network in a time when queer and trans rights are under constant assault.** We also released our new strategic plan introducing a bold new vision and mission for our work.

You'll find in the pages that follow reporting about the incredible work of our network in the past year - but most importantly, you will find a path to lead us forward. **To quote our movement, "we've got this, we've got us".**

To close, I want to leave you with joy. **At the 2024 Pride in Philanthropy, we got to celebrate luminaries like Katherine Acey, Campaign for Southern Equality, the Queer Mobilization Fund, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.** As I go back and look at the [video of the night](#) - the speeches, the dancing and the fashions - what I am left with is this: we are a beautiful people.

Nothing can dim our light.

In love,
Saida Agostini Bostic

Looking Back at 2024

At the start of 2024, we released our new strategic plan. This three year strategy represents the collective vision and brilliance of Funders for LGBTQ Issues' staff, board, members, stakeholders and wider community and was built from the question: what does it mean to be an organization that mobilizes the philanthropic sector on behalf of LGBTQ liberation?

The 2024-2027 strategic plan clarifies a new mission for the organization, building off over forty years of philanthropic organizing. It also names for the first time an organizational vision. **As we move forward in our work, in service of our mission and vision, we orient ourselves under the Plan's four strategic directions:**

1. We organize philanthropy to increase the resources directed towards LGBTQ communities and movements across the United States.
2. We are a home where LGBTQ leaders and allies can gain the knowledge, relationships, and skills to advance philanthropic organizing in service of movement-building.
3. We tell the story of our work and impact through research and strategic communications centered on philanthropic organizing and power-building.
4. We meet the needs of the moment through internal capacity building that enables staff and board to thrive.



Strategic Direction 1

We organize philanthropy to increase the resources directed towards LGBTQ communities and movements across the United States.

In March of 2024, **Funders for LGBTQ Issues'** Programs team gathered in Houston, TX for the first ever Q Summit, an invitation-only joint convening of our three program areas aimed at creating community across philanthropy and fostering a deeper collective understanding of our external program areas. The convening brought together the steering committees of Out in the South and the Trans Futures Funding Campaign, as well as Out in the South Fund grantee partners, and the fifth cohort of GUTC Leaders Fellows for the first time.

The Q Summit provided a critical space for:



TRANS
FUTURE
FUNDING
CAMPAIGN



OUT
IN THE
SOUTH
AN INITIATIVE OF
FUNDERS FOR LGBTQ ISSUES



GUTC
GRANTMAKERS UNITED FOR
TRANS COMMUNITIES
AN INITIATIVE OF FUNDERS FOR LGBTQ ISSUES

- The **TFFC** Steering Committee to strategize and build deeper trust, map out key stakeholders, and develop a plan for the year to come.
- The **Out in the South** steering committee to hold a needs assessment with grantee partners to identify their own organization needs as well as that of their ecosystems and networks.
- **GUTC** Fellows to convene for their first fellowship retreat of the year and co-create the rest of their fellowship.





Over the past nine years, the **Out in the South (OTS) Fund** has awarded over **\$4.3 million dollars** to catalyze locally-driven Southern funds committed to building the capacity of LGBTQ movement work.

In 2024, the Out in the South Fund awarded \$650,000 to 12 LGBTQ and allied grassroots intermediary funds throughout the US South.

Out in the South's unique strengths lie in its deep understanding of the Southern context, as well as the relationships, lived experiences, and institutional capacity it has built over time.

Under the leadership of our new Project Director, we welcomed **two new grantee partners: María Fund and Appalachian Community Fund**. We also increased our awards to all grantee partners by 30% to account for inflation and an increasingly hostile legislative landscape for our communities. In addition to building an accompaniment fund of an additional \$50,000, to provide tailored support that caters to the specific needs of each of our grantees.

In 2024, we were thrilled to bring on the fifth cohort of Grantmakers United for Trans Communities (GUTC) Leaders Fellows. The GUTC Leaders Fellowship provides ongoing support, peer networking, and leadership and professional development to a cohort of trans and gender nonconforming professionals in philanthropy over a 12-month period.

The seven fellows of the fifth cohort brought many experiences and goals to the program, exemplifying Funders for LGBTQ Issues' commitment to furthering racial equity and gender justice in philanthropy. They had ample opportunities to network and build relationships with each other through two in-person retreats and regular virtual convenings. Additionally they were supported through one-on-one coaching with experts in the field.

Our GUTC Pledge campaign also welcomed three new signatories in 2024: WITH Foundation, Texas Pride Community Foundation, and Disability & Philanthropy Forum.



The Disability & Philanthropy Forum strives to dismantle ableism in all of its forms. Signing the Grantmakers United for Trans Communities pledge is necessary for our organization's commitment to Disability Justice. Disabled trans people are essential to collective liberation from ableism, and signing onto this pledge ensures our work is held accountable to trans justice. We believe that the philanthropic sector plays a vital role in promoting a culture of inclusion – now more than ever.

— Sandy Ho, Executive Director of the Disability & Philanthropy Forum

Strategic Direction 2

We are a home where LGBTQ leaders and allies can gain the knowledge, relationships, and skills to advance philanthropic organizing in service of movement-building.

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QTPIES has been an invaluable space for connecting with other queer folks in philanthropy—not just for collaboration on field-related initiatives but also for building meaningful personal relationships. The connections I’ve made in the space have sparked new connections that reinforce the power of community in this sector.

— **Jaime Sharp, Program Manager at Grantmakers in the Arts**

In 2024, we launched [Queer & Trans People in Emergent Space \(QTPIES\)](#), a new affinity space for LGBTQ+ philanthropic professionals. Over the course of the year, QTPIES hosted four meetings, creating opportunities for participants to build community and provide mutual support.

This space has experienced significant growth, now engaging over 200 participants – a testament to the strong demand within our network. We are thrilled to have met this need and to continue fostering connections and support among LGBTQ+ philanthropic professionals.



Strategic Direction 3

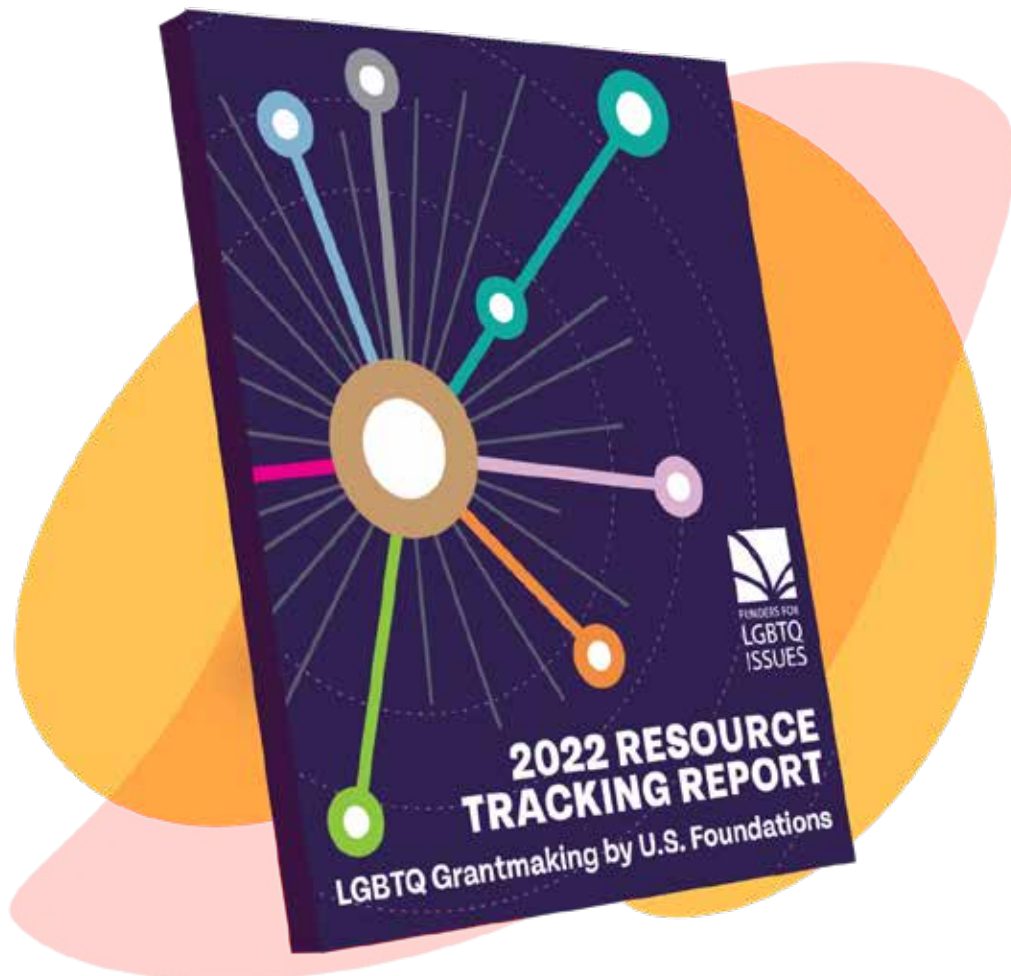
We tell the story of our work and impact through research and strategic communications centered on philanthropic organizing and power-building.

In 2024, we celebrated two research milestones:

- We hired our new **Director of Research**, increasing our capacity to produce new reports and other timely research items for the sector. **Sammy Luffy** comes to us from Fos Feminista, with over a decade of experience in research.
- We released our **20th Resource Tracking Report**.

The Resource Tracking Report is the foundation of our research portfolio at Funders for LGBTQ Issues. It monitors philanthropic support for LGBTQ communities and causes in the United States and identifies trends, gaps, and opportunities to increase strategic grantmaking to advance the liberation of queer communities across the country.

Our most recent report found that while foundation funding for domestic LGBTQ communities and causes had a slight nominal increase in calendar year 2022 (reaching \$258.1 million from \$250.8 million in 2021), there was a real-dollar decrease in total funding due to the impact of inflation. Read more in the [2022 Resource Tracking Report: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Grantmaking by U.S. Foundations.](#)





Let us continue on the trails that have been forged by our movements and keep pushing philanthropy to rise to the challenges of this moment. It'll be worth it: I heard there's a double rainbow at the end of the trail.

— **Rickke Manazala, recipient of the Reed Erickson Award for Trailblazing Philanthropic Leadership**

As highlighted in our 2024-2027 Strategic Plan, joy is one of the six organizational values guiding Funders for LGBTQ Issues' work. **In September 2024, we were excited to gather our network for our fourth Pride in Philanthropy Awards in New York City.**

The Pride in Philanthropy Awards celebrate the work of individuals and institutions who have been trailblazers and change makers in LGBTQ philanthropy. It can be hard in uncertain times to make room for celebration but that makes it all the more imperative to do so.

Each of our six awardees have led strategic, intentional, and impactful work in service of a more responsive and responsible sector. In honoring them, it was our hope to celebrate what they have taught us. That is: what philanthropy can be.



This award isn't just a recognition of what we've accomplished—it's a reminder of the work still ahead. The path to true equality in the South may be long, but we are as determined as ever to continue walking arm in arm with our community.

— **Allison Scott from Campaign for Southern Equality, co-recipient of the Out in the South Leadership Award**

In 2024, Funders for LGBTQ hosted a number of timely and critical conversations through our funder briefings, member convenings, and podcast, Justice Ain't Cheap.

Highlights from this work included:

- Our annual **State of LGBTQ Philanthropy** event to highlight the findings and celebrate the release of our latest resource tracking report. This year's conversation spotlighted trans philanthropic leaders moving money rapidly and creatively to frontline organizing and change work and featured speakers Allison Scott (Campaign for Southern Equality), Steph Perkins (Gill Foundation) and Ola Osaze (Trans Justice Funding Project).
- The webinar **Our Work Doesn't End on Election Day** which featured panelists Sanjiv Rao (Democracy Fund), Trishala Deb (CGRE), and Eugenio Smith (Movement Voter Project) offering action steps funders can take to break the boom and bust funding cycle around elections and center trans justice in their democracy and civic engagement funding work.
- **The public release of four episodes of our podcast:**
 - **"We Should All Be Organizers"** features guests Representative Kim Abbott (MT, HD 83), Representative Mauree Turner (OK, HD 88), and Emmett Schelling (Transgender Education Network of Texas: TENT), who are organizing against the tide of anti-trans hate.
 - **"The Time We've Been Waiting For"** features Glo Ross (Arcus Foundation) and Lisa Owens (Hyams Foundation) discussing what liberation truly looks like and means in philanthropy.
 - **"The Proving Ground"** brings together Shaena Johnson (Funders for LGBTQ Issues), Kelli King-Jackson, and Míchél Macklin (Texas Pride Community Foundation) to talk about the state of LGBTQ philanthropic organizing in the South.
 - **"Philanthropic Organizers Making Waves"** provides tangible examples of philanthropic organizing in practice from Mike White (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation), Zev Lowe (Tikkun Olam Foundation), and Farrah Parkes (Gender Justice Fund).
- **Rooted & Ready**, a dedicated space for transgender, gender non-conforming, and gender-expansive professionals working within philanthropic organizations to engage in grounding and resilience planning through creative reflection practices, gentle movement, music, and breathing exercises.



Strategic Direction 4

We meet the needs of the moment through internal capacity building that enables staff and board to thrive.

In 2024, we invested in our capacity— making four critical hires to ensure the long term impact and strategy of our work. We welcomed:

- Sammy Luffy, as our new Director of Research
- Hala, as our new Communications & Storytelling Officer
- Shaena Johnson, as the permanent Out in the South Project Director
- Ashe Helm-Hernández, as the permanent Philanthropic Organizing Project Director



As an organization committed to building an inclusive, caring and joyous internal culture, it has been an honor to build together as a team, through our annual staff retreat and virtual home weeks. Our recent hires have also allowed for a heightened level of coordinated programmatic and cross-departmental partnership

CLOSING

To read more about our work in 2024, please see the following articles:

- [LGBTQ Funding Doubled in a Decade, Yet Falls Short Amid Rising Attacks](#) by Sara Herschander for The Chronicle of Philanthropy, June 11, 2024
- [Pride is a Protest](#) by Russell Roybal from the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy (NCRP), June 12, 2024
- [Funders for LGBTQ Issues' Latest Grantmaking Report Details the "Ground We're Afraid to Lose"](#) by Dawn Wolfe for Inside Philanthropy, June 24, 2024
- [Ten Questions for Saida Agostini Bostic, President of Funders for LGBTQ Issues](#) by Michelle Dominguez for Inside Philanthropy, June 28, 2024
- [We Can Still Be Hopeful, Talking Trans Funding with Funders for LGBTQ Issues Deputy Director, Alex Lee](#) by Dawn Wolfe for Inside Philanthropy, June 28, 2024
- [Toward nimble and creative funding for LGBTQ communities through a time of crisis](#) by April Bethea and Sammy Luffy from Funders for LGBTQ Issues for Candid Insights, July 10, 2024

Funders for LGBTQ Issues' Staff

Saida Agostini-Bostic
President

Luna Moreta Avila
GUTC Project Director

Hala
Communications & Storytelling Officer

Shaena Johnson
Out in the South Project Director

Alexander Lee
Deputy Director

Amara Reese-Hansell
Membership Engagement Officer

Cleopatra Jach Acquaye
Director of Programs

April Bethea
Director of External Affairs

Ashe Helm-Hernández
Philanthropic Organizing Project Director

Alyssa Lawther
Senior Research Officer

Sammy Luffy
Director of Research

Funders for LGBTQ Issues' 2024 Board Roster

Cynthia Renfro, Chair
Civic Consulting

Karen Appelbaum, Treasurer
Northwest Area Foundation

Katie Carter
Pride Foundation

Ana Conner
Emergent Fund

Desiree Flores
General Service Foundation

Cathy K.K. Kapua
Trans Justice Funding Project (TJFP)

Maria Miranda
Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation

Lane Sugata
Ford Foundation

Eugenio Smith
Movement Voter Project

Paulina Helm-Hernández, Vice Chair
Foundation for a Just Society

Jonathan Jayes-Green, Secretary
Philanthropic Consultant

Namita Chad
Nebula Fund

Trishala Deb
Collaborative for Gender & Reproductive
Equity (CGRE)

Aldita Gallardo
Philanthropic Consultant

Kelli King-Jackson
Philanthropic Consultant

Glo Ross
Arcus Foundation

William (Bill) Smith
May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust

Judy Yu
Wellspring Philanthropic Fund