

MEDIA KIT

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**SPIRIT OF ST. LOUIS
WOMEN'S FUND**

Turning Good Into Greater Good, That's Why We Give Together

About Us

At the Spirit of St. Louis Women's Fund (SOS), we pool our resources, invest as a group and award grants to smaller St. Louis-area non-profits. By investing collectively, we achieve greater impact.

We are a diverse group of women from nearly every corner of the St. Louis region, Since our founding in 2006, SOS has been a quiet but mighty force for change, delivering over \$3.1 million in focused and informed grants to more than 95 small nonprofits throughout the community.

SOS is a component fund of the St. Louis Community Foundation and a member of Philanos, a growing international movement of women-powered philanthropy.

Our Mission

The Spirit of St. Louis Women's Fund (SOS) educates and inspires women to engage in informed, collective grantmaking by investing in Greater St. Louis' small nonprofits to positively effect change in our communities.

Our Purpose

To support vital work that creates safer, healthier and equitable communities.

Our Core Values – Our “How”:

- JOINING TOGETHER as EQUALS in giving and voting. One woman – one vote
- Actively WELCOMING to all individuals and communities to engage at your desired level
- Investing with ACCOUNTABILITY to impact
- RESPECTING that grantees know their communities best
- Providing DISCOVERY opportunities and
- EMPOWERING members to create new connections
- Continuously EVALUATING our approach

How We Work

Everyone gives an equal amount of money. Everyone has an equal voice. Our members commit to an \$1,200 annual contribution. \$1,080 of each member's annual contribution goes directly to make grants and \$120 to help support our educational programs and operations.

Our Grantmaking Process

The Spirit of St. Louis Women's Fund (SOS) grants are awarded annually in May and are selected by a thorough internal vetting process and a final vote of the SOS membership.

SOS focuses its grantmaking on smaller non-profits. In this way, SOS acts as an incubator for promising programs that help the most vulnerable among us and supports efforts to sustain and beautify our natural environments.

SOS believes that a healthy community requires strong programs and services in a variety of areas. SOS currently funds grants in each of five focus areas: arts & culture, education, environment, health, and social services.

Grants range from \$5,000-\$25,000. Since 2017, SOS has awarded two multi-year Impact grants, each totaling \$100,000 over a three year period. The vast majority of our grantees over the past ten years have been working in the area now designated as the St. Louis Promise Zone.

Many agencies credit early funding from SOS as a critical component of their long-term success including Home Sweet Home, Saint Louis Story Stitchers, St. Louis HELP, Lydia's House, The Soulfisher Ministries, The Little Bit Foundation, Mildred Brady Eye and Rena Martin Charitable Eye Foundation, and CHADS Coalition.

To learn more about our past grantees and the impact they are making in the Greater St. Louis community, [view our interactive impact map.](#)

Collective Giving FAQ

Collective Giving: A Growing Movement That's Changing Philanthropy

- Donors in giving circles give more, give more strategically, and are more engaged in their communities.
- Giving circle participants gain greater knowledge of philanthropy and a better understanding of the nonprofits operating in their communities as well as an understanding of the issues these nonprofits face in serving their constituencies.
- Giving circle members are more likely to believe in the positive impact of giving on the health of a community, that government should do something to reduce income differences, and that government should ensure that everyone has a decent standard of living. Circle members described themselves as feeling “more capable to participate in community change,” that an individual can have more of an impact, and that they were having a bigger impact than they would individually.
- Giving circles also serve as a path to developing women as leaders offering members more meaningful work in a democratically run organization.
- Giving circles prioritize member equality through equal monetary giving, equal voting on funding decisions, and cycling on and off various committees, which can make a leadership role seem less intimidating due to the absence of an entrenched hierarchy.
- Giving circles are increasing in number, with studies documenting at least 225 giving circles in 2005, growing to more than 500 today, which distribute more than \$1.29 billion annually. Over half of the giving circles in the U.S. have been identified as women-only groups.
- Women who participate in a philanthropic network are four times more likely than women who do not participate in a network to volunteer or offer other involvement with a nonprofit.

Community Recognition

2022 Philanos Spotlight Award in Recognition of Dream Builders grant awarded by SOS

Eye Thrive's Volunteer Organization of the Year

Girls In The Know "Community Empowerment Champion"

The Association of Fundraising Professionals Community Philanthropy Award

The Little Bit Foundation's 15th Anniversary Award

SoulFisher Ministries - Philanthropy in Action Award

Niagara Foundation Peace & Dialogue Awards - Community Service Award

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