

propel
nonprofits



Fiscal Year
2025

April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

Image: A camper at AuSM's Camp Discovery gaining confidence at the ropes course; courtesy of AuSM

Letter from the President & CEO



Dear Propel Nonprofits Community,

Events in the last year have highlighted the value of Propel Nonprofits' work building nonprofit capacity through capital, guidance, and expertise. Nonprofits continue to meet our needs for community, food, safety, childcare, art, and connection. Over the last year, as everything from dangerous rhetoric targeting the most vulnerable among us to climate disasters became ever more common, I felt my commitment to investing in the nonprofit sector grow.

Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) like Propel exist to invest capital and resources in people and communities who have been underinvested in. This year, we worked with 577 nonprofit organizations through 730 engagements and made 73 loans totaling over \$17 million.

We launched the Community Asset Builder loan program to ensure nonprofits led by Black people, Indigenous people, and/or people of color can acquire or renovate their own facilities and provide long-term, stable, and quality services to their communities.

Through our capacity building services that include training, strategic consulting, accounting and finance consulting, fiscal sponsorship, and re-granting programs like the Nonprofit Infrastructure Grant Program and Seeding Cultural Treasures, we provided 99 trainings, led 183 consulting engagements, and distributed \$2,338,306 in pass-through funds to nonprofits.

In this annual report, you'll find deeper stories than what these impressive numbers can tell us. The political and economic climate is not easy for nonprofits to navigate, yet they do. Most of our colleagues are being faced with difficult decisions or are being impacted personally by actions from our government. I remain hopeful because of the resilience found in stories in this report and across our sector: stories of people showing up and trying to make something better for their communities.

We appreciate the investments of our funders and investors in our work. We are also grateful to anyone who liked a social media post, attended a training, or showed up to our free office hours. The durability of our sector relies on us and our work. I know my team is up to the task, and I hope you'll join us as a supporter, a client, or both.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Henry Jiménez', written in a cursive style.

Henry Jiménez
Propel President & CEO

Mission

Fueling the impact and effectiveness of nonprofits with guidance, expertise, and capital

Vision

A diverse network of mission-driven nonprofits building a healthy, vibrant, and more just community

Propel Nonprofits (Propel) is a nonprofit lender, consultant, and capacity builder. For almost a decade, Propel has provided capacity building services and access to capital to support nonprofits in achieving their missions. As a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), Propel manages a \$50 million loan fund. Since our inception, we have provided more than \$315 million in financing to support over 3,320 projects in our service area. To learn more, visit propelnonprofits.org.

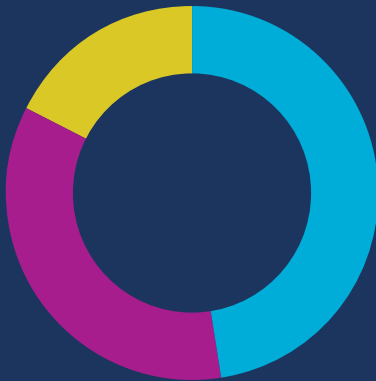
FY 2025 by the Numbers

577 nonprofits served



730 professional services engagements*

Out of the 730 professional services engagements:



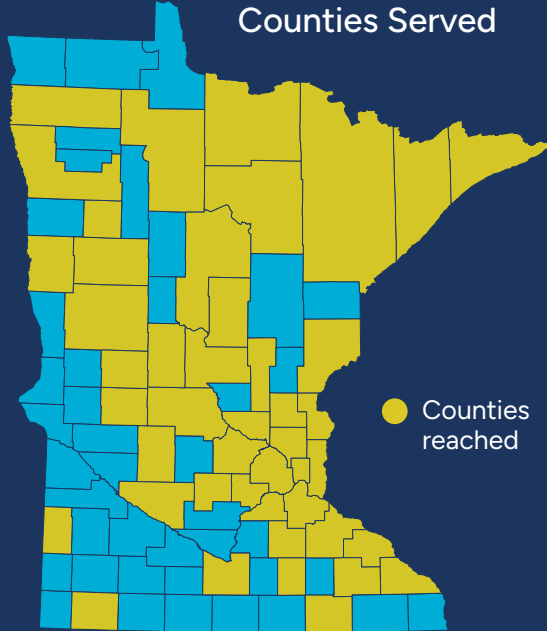
- 47.5% of organizations were BIPOC-led
- 35% of organizations were not BIPOC-led
- 17.5% unknown demographics

418

nonprofits received 1,498 hours of free technical assistance



Minnesota Counties Served



- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| Anoka | Mille Lacs |
| Becker | Morrison |
| Beltrami | Mower |
| Blue Earth | Nobles |
| Carver | Olmsted |
| Cass | Otter Tail |
| Chisago | Pine |
| Clay | Polk |
| Cook | Pope |
| Crow Wing | Ramsey |
| Dakota | Renville |
| Douglas | Rice |
| Goodhue | Scott |
| Hennepin | Sherburne |
| Isanti | St. Croix |
| Itasca | St. Louis |
| Kandiyohi | Stearns |
| Koochiching | Steele |
| Lake | Todd |
| Lincoln | Wabasha |
| Mahnomen | Washington |
| Marshall | Winona |
| McLeod | Wright |

Map includes all professional services engagements and pass through grants, but does not include public training data.



- | | |
|-----|-----------------------|
| 187 | Human Services |
| 129 | Arts and Humanities |
| 101 | Community Development |
| 84 | Education |
| 74 | Youth Services |
| 58 | Other |
| 41 | Health Care |
| 28 | Affordable Housing |
| 20 | Environmental |
| 8 | Animal Welfare |

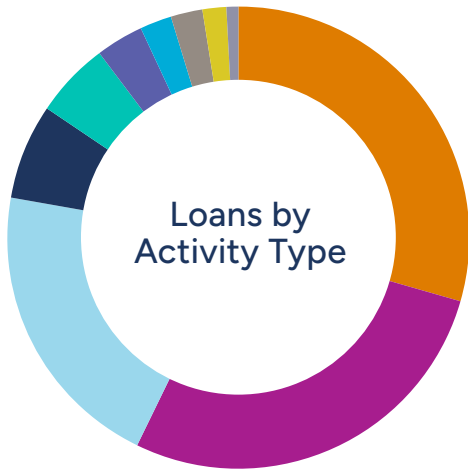
*Professional services include accounting & finance consulting, strategic consulting, lending, contract trainings, leaders circles, cohort learning, fiscal sponsorship, and regranteeing programs.

Capital

Our loan fund supports nonprofit organizations with financing to remodel, acquire, or build facilities, bridge late or unpredictable government contracts, manage daily operations, and fund growth.

FY 2025 Nonprofit Lending by the Numbers

\$17,120,090
total in new financing



- \$5,034,694 ● Community Development
- \$4,742,781 ● Education
- \$3,495,578 ● Human Services
- \$1,146,652 ● Arts and Humanities
- \$899,000 ● Youth Services
- \$571,385 ● Health Care
- \$400,000 ● Affordable Housing
- \$380,000 ● Animal Welfare
- \$300,000 ● Environmental
- \$150,000 ● Other



The Work



69
organizations served



38%
BIPOC-led clients


74% 
of loans support low-to-moderate income communities

Client Outcomes and Portfolio Impact



283,678
square feet of community facility space acquired or held across 16 facility projects

259,107
clients, students, patrons, and other individuals benefit from new lending in FY25

\$34,272,005
portfolio outstanding at the end of FY25 via 151 loans 



A young girl with ear protectors on poses with a princess cosplayer at AuSM's annual Steps for Autism walk and resource fair; courtesy of AuSM
©AlmaHueso-12775: credit to Alma Hueso



Campers at Camp Hand in Hand making connections while they enjoy waterfront time with a tube ride; courtesy of AuSM



AuSM's Policy Director Jillian Nelson speaks at the annual Disability Day on the Hill; courtesy of AuSM

Enhancing the Lives of All Who Are Part of the Minnesota Autism Community

Business model support with flexible working capital

The Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM) is a nonprofit membership organization that creates connections, empowering everyone in the autism community with the resources needed to live fully.

In 2025, the CDC reported that 1 in 28 8-year-olds in Minnesota had an autism diagnosis. The same data underscored the systemic disparities in timely and equitable diagnosis in children from Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous communities. This highlights barriers in access, clinician bias, and lack of culturally responsive care.

AuSM seeks to enhance the lives of all who are part of the Minnesota autism community, with a fundamental commitment to advocacy, education, support, collaboration, and community building.

Executive Director Ellie Wilson is leading AuSM's team to remain steadfast in its commitment to center autistic voices, uphold dignity, and combat misinformation with truth, empathy, and science.

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“The Minnesota Autism Community is diverse, complex, and deserving of acceptance, inclusion, and meaningful support. AuSM's mission extends far beyond the statewide community of autistic individuals and families to all kinds of professional and community stakeholders. With the help of Propel's extremely diligent staff, leadership programs, and lending services, we are supported to enhance the impact that our community desperately needs. From our own volunteer Board Treasurer to our amazing lending officer we are profoundly grateful for the time, talent, and skill that we can access through Propel. We cannot thank the team enough for the ways it makes AuSM stronger!”

- Ellie Wilson, Executive Director of AuSM

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Propel's Work with AuSM ●●●●

Propel is a longtime partner of AuSM through technical assistance and accounting and finance services. In FY25, AuSM got its first working capital line of credit with Propel to assist the organization in managing cash flow.

Additionally, Propel Senior Accounting and Finance Consultant John Skillings serves on AuSM's board.

Consulting and Training

Consulting

Through expert consulting, Propel guides nonprofits in developing strategic plans, accounting and finance skills and tools, board leadership, and effective governance models. Nonprofits are the experts in solving some of the most challenging problems in our communities, and our consultants work closely with them to cultivate the tools and skills needed to meet their missions.

Propel Nonprofits offers comprehensive consulting and training services designed to empower and strengthen nonprofit organizations.

Training

Propel's robust training curriculum covers financial management, board governance, and advanced nonprofit leadership topics. Whether through engaging workshops or interactive webinars, Propel's trainers equip staff and board members with practical skills, confidence, and a strategic mindset. By participating in these services, organizations gain the tools to align mission with financial sustainability, proactively adapt to change, and build long-term capacity for greater impact.

Cultivating Nonprofit Leadership in Southwestern Minnesota

Training and connection for nonprofit leaders and board members

The Southwest Initiative Foundation (SWIF) hosted sessions in partnership with Propel to provide training, community, and connection to nonprofits in the region.

SWIF's generous sponsorship allowed Propel to provide Fundamentals of Nonprofit Board Governance and Fundamentals of Nonprofit Finance trainings to 42 nonprofit board and staff members in Willmar and Worthington, Minnesota.

Engagements like these ensure nonprofit leaders and board members have the information they need to govern effectively and strengthen the nonprofit ecosystem in the region.



Nonprofit board and staff leaders gather for trainings in Willmar, MN



In FY25, Propel provided 30 contract trainings like the ones mentioned here to organizations and companies across Minnesota. Over 500 people attended these trainings and increased their capacity to lead nonprofit organizations at a board or staff level. Learn more about contract trainings by visiting propelnonprofits.org/trainings.



Suburban Metro Area Continuum of Care (SMAC) members pose for a photo, courtesy of MESH



Suburban Metro Area Continuum of Care (SMAC) members pose for a photo, courtesy of MESH

Improving Minnesota’s Response to Homelessness & Housing

Strengthening Financial Leadership

Minnesota Engagement on Shelter and Housing (MESH) assists regions, communities, and organizations in designing strategic, evidence-based solutions to end homelessness, drawing on nearly two decades of expertise and a broad network. Their approach focuses on ensuring that solutions are tailored to each community’s needs, recognizing that one size does not fit all.

In 2024, there were more than 9,000 people experiencing homelessness in Minnesota according to the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count conducted by Minnesota’s 10 Continuums of Care and reported on by the State of Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness. Since it was founded in 2000, MESH has expanded its services to serve all of Minnesota through:

- **Education & Training**
- **Research & Assessment**
- **Policy Advisory & Advocacy Work**
- **Technical Assistance & Collaboration Support**

MESH’s value and expertise lie in their commitment to ensuring those with lived experiences are a part of program design, implementation, and decision making.

Due to an increased demand for services, MESH has grown their statewide training program and now provides an average of 40 trainings per year. Additionally, they

helped serve as fundraisers and as a fiscal host for the SMAC Directors Council (a group entirely comprised of people with lived experience of homelessness) and for the Minnesota Tribal Collaborative (10 tribes from across Minnesota who work together to end homelessness). They often support lived experience groups across the state—and this year they provided compensation to 22 individuals with lived experience of homelessness.

“**At MESH, we’ve always aimed to be responsible stewards of the funds entrusted to us. As we grew rapidly in 2022, we recognized the need to strengthen our accounting systems. Propel and John Skillings guided us through this transition, helping us improve our practices and become a stronger agency. Propel’s support has been invaluable.**”

– Mike Manhard, Executive Director of MESH

Propel’s Work with MESH ●●●●

Executive Director Mike Manhard worked closely with Propel Senior Accounting and Finance Consultant John Skillings through Propel’s Financial Insights Coaching. Through this monthly engagement, MESH transferred their accounting systems from cash to accrual-based systems and prepared for and completed two successful audits with no major findings.

John’s partnership with the organization has also inspired Propel to explore new products and services to further support clients who need financial management capacity building.

FY 2025 Training & Consulting by the Numbers

 **102**
trainings

183
consulting
engagements



3,544
nonprofit leaders trained
through trainings and
conference sessions

121
nonprofit leaders
participated
in cohort learning



Outcomes Spotlight

Over the past eight years, Propel has conducted 23 Financial Leadership Cohorts engaging 377 nonprofit leaders. These cohorts cultivate financial leadership in nonprofit organizations with budgets under \$3,000,000. Topics include understanding business models, communicating financial information, and building relationships with staff and board around finance.

Post-cohort survey respondents report:

 **86%**
experienced improvement in their
knowledge and understanding of
nonprofit financial and management
concepts

 **83%**
increased their financial knowledge
needed to fully engage in financial
discussions and decision making

 **79%**
identified more strongly as a
financial leader



"This cohort has empowered me and given me tools that I know I will return to again and again. I'm so grateful for this experience, it's been the best professional development that I've engaged in."

- Riley Burns, Managing Director,
Tofte Lake Center



The view of Tofte Lake from the Tofte Lake Center (TLC), courtesy of TLC



Friends of ASANDC attend the Walker West Grand Opening, courtesy of ASANDC



Courtesy of ASANDC

Strengthening the Future of St. Paul's Communities

Supporting Leadership Transitions and Strategic Planning

This year, 2025, marks Aurora/St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation's (ASANDC) 45th anniversary.

ASANDC is a neighborhood development organization that drives economic and social progress in St. Paul's Rondo, Frogtown, and Summit-University neighborhoods. Rooted in the legacy and resilience of the Rondo neighborhood, the organization strives to support transformational change that centers the vibrancy of the community, fosters educational excellence, and incubates economic opportunity across all of St. Paul.

After the departure of their Executive Director in 2024, the board of directors engaged Propel's strategic consulting team to support the development of a scenario plan to help them understand their positioning and key assets within the community they serve. The scenario planning report helped them identify the organizational impact needs that would drive the expectations for their new leader. This proved to be a pivotal moment to invest in leadership development and to look to the community to help guide the organization into the future.

In the summer of 2024, ASANDC's board of directors hired and welcomed Tatiana Freeman as the organization's Executive Director, who immediately saw the importance of seeking and listening to the needs and ideas of

residents in the community, building a board with and from the community, and investing time in building her skills as an organizational leader.

"I see my role as a stabilizing force that is centering our work around the tenets of collaboration, trust, bold thinking, advocacy and collective power," Freeman said.

Freeman has been working to build strong partnerships across St. Paul to ensure the stability of the communities ASANDC serves.

— “

"I can't tell you how much it has helped me to have a partner that I can be honest with about the challenges we are facing; it's been rewarding to engage other leaders, and I look forward to building on that experience through the Financial Leadership Cohort. Through Propel, I've been able to access resources at every stage of me and my organization's leadership development."

- Tatiana Freeman, Executive Director, Aurora St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation

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Propel's Work with ASANDC ●●●●

Through a funding partnership with the Target Foundation, Propel supported Freeman in a review of ASANDC's existing bylaws and worked with her to create a board development guide to help with onboarding new board members. This funding made it possible for ASANDC to build strong materials to support strong leadership.

Fiscal Sponsorship

Propel's fiscal sponsorship program works with mission-driven organizations, projects, and collaborations that do not yet have their 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status and are looking to advance charitable causes and uplift their communities.

In FY25, Propel was fiscal host to

62 projects that raised **\$5,111,256**

Emerging Organizations Cohort

In early FY25, we wrapped up the Emerging Organizations Cohort. The cohort provided a more immersive learning experience for organizations on a path to becoming a nonprofit. Thanks to philanthropic partnerships, organizations received a \$5,000 grant and a cohort learning environment focused on infrastructure building.

— “
“This cohort is filled with people who are dedicated to making change in their communities.”

“[The cohort gave me] a chance to get a better grasp of the basics of nonprofit leadership. It feels like a crash course masters in nonprofit management, but you don't have tests or grading. And you get to connect more in depth with your peers.”

- Emerging Organizations Cohort participants

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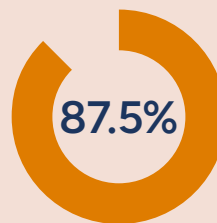
In FY25, we announced that our fiscal sponsorship program would sunset at the end of FY26. More information about the fiscal sponsorship program's impact will be available on our website in 2026.



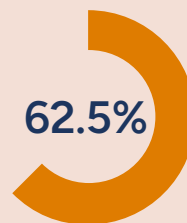
Outcomes Spotlight

We conducted a survey at the beginning and end of the cohort to understand more about the participant organizations' infrastructure.

Post-cohort survey respondents report:



said that their organizations had a board that understood their responsibilities as opposed to 40% at the start of the cohort



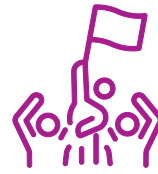
said that their organizations had a system in place to manage and track finances as opposed to 30% at the start of the cohort



said that their organizations had prospects for grants, sponsorships, and/or other sources of funding as opposed to 40% at the start of the cohort

Capacity Building Initiatives

Propel's intermediary capacity building initiatives, the largest of which are the Nonprofit Infrastructure Grant Program (NIGP) and Seeding Cultural Treasures, provide funding and relevant infrastructure supports to nonprofits. The 2023-2025 round of the Nonprofit Infrastructure Grant Program was made possible through a \$4 million appropriation through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.



213 clients served in FY25

\$2,338,306

paid in grants to CBI clients in FY25



100% of grantees BIPOC-led

Closing the Opportunity Gap for Latine Youth, Families, and Community

Training and connection for nonprofit leaders and board members

The Park Place exists to close the opportunity gap for Latine youth, families, and community members in Minneapolis through equitable access to leadership, education, advocacy, and preservation.

Founded in 2021, the organization hosts four programs that highlight their belief that the gap in education is not an achievement issue, but an opportunity issue. The programs fall into four categories that are created in a response to a different opportunity and include Leadership, Education, Arts Access, and Parent Support.

With their 2023- 2025 NIGP grant award, The Park Place increased program staff hours and added full time employees. Their executive leadership underwent financial training, and board members received trainings to better understand their roles and responsibilities.

In FY26, the grant periods and funds available for regranting initiatives have ended or will end, respectively. More information about their final impacts will be shared on our website in 2026.



The Park Place youth and families, courtesy of The Park Place



"NIGP helped us build a strong foundation that led to two new staff, two new programs, and a building we can work from. Without NIGP I genuinely do not know where we would be as an organization today."

- Bekah Simpson, Executive Director of The Park Place



Propel Nonprofits recognizes and thanks our partners for investing capital in the loan fund and for generous grant support for program services and growth. These organizations and individuals make it possible for us to provide guidance, expertise, and capital for nonprofits.



Visit our website to see a full list of Propel's donors, funders and investors.

[propelnonprofits.org/
about/funders-investors/](https://propelnonprofits.org/about/funders-investors/)



Our annual reports, audited financials and Form 990s are available at our website.

[propelnonprofits.org/
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