



2024

IMPACT REPORT

January 1 - December 31

**Outside
The Lens**

We ignite confidence
in young people to
pursue creative
pathways and drive
social change
through the
transformative
power of
media arts.

OUR MISSION



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Last year I witnessed young people share their stories with journalists, participate in panel discussions, challenge their own narratives, and create change in their communities—all through media arts.

Young creators of all ages experienced the thrill of seeing their artwork displayed in a gallery setting at OTL's inaugural *Voice Out* youth media arts exhibition. At our annual *Open House*, community members asked to stay later because they were having so much fun—we even shared our playlist! During a showcase event a parent told me that Media Makers gave her daughter a safe place to be herself and try things she never imagined—like acting in a short film. This hunger for creative spaces is exactly what Outside The Lens provides.

More than half of OTL's staff consists of professional artists from San Diego and Tijuana, providing mentorship for emerging artists who don't typically have access to media arts education, paid leadership opportunities, or hands-on career skill development. The outcomes range from learning microentrepreneurship skills to simply making friends—we're helping young people experience and envision more possibilities.

I continue to be inspired by the young people who courageously share their work, and the many individuals and partners who make this possible. Thank you for believing that the power of storytelling can transform our world.

With deep gratitude,



Sarah E. Beckman
Executive Director



BUILDING A VIBRANT FUTURE IN 2024

Outside the Lens completed a new strategic plan, *Building a Vibrant Future: 2024-2027*, to deepen our impact and sustain our growth. The plan focuses our work around four pillars:

Organizational Excellence

Strengthening our people, systems, and funding so we grow sustainably.

Program Innovation

Refining and elevating our work using data, youth feedback, and interdisciplinary ideas.

Community Engagement

Growing partnerships and trust with an emphasis on mission-driven collaborations.

Youth Voice & Leadership

Expanding opportunities for young people to lead, create, and drive social change.

These pillars shape every decision we make as we build a more vibrant future alongside our students and partners.

OUR CORE VALUES

We
DRIVE CREATIVE IMPACT

We
EMBRACE CHANGE

We
FOSTER AGENCY +
ACTIVISM

We
AMPLIFY YOUTH VOICES

We
CREATE SUSTAINABLE
FUTURES

We
CULTIVATE BELONGING

OUR VISION IS A WORLD WHERE THE PERSPECTIVES OF THE NEXT GENERATION ARE DEEPLY VALUED, EMPOWERING THEM TO PURSUE THEIR UNLIMITED CREATIVE POTENTIAL FOR COLLECTIVE SOCIAL CHANGE.

With more than two decades of experience in media arts education, Outside The Lens (OTL) has pioneered a transformative approach to creative youth development in San Diego. Our team of Teaching Artists create brave learning environments that

combine cutting-edge technology with healing-centered practices and restorative justice principles. This framework allows us to uniquely serve marginalized youth, and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



OUR PROGRAMS

27,000+

Youth Served
Since 2001

Since our founding, we've remained committed to a simple truth: every young person deserves to be seen, heard, and celebrated. We create spaces free from hate and discrimination where creativity is a catalyst for growth—building confidence, critical thinking, and career readiness, while youth are empowered to express themselves, lead in their communities, and shape their own futures.

Media Arts Education

CONFIDENT FOUNDATIONS

Our in-school, K-12, media arts programs integrate photography, filmmaking, and digital media with California Core curriculum, engaging industry-standard tools and full-time Teaching Artists to build creativity, confidence, and ethical media and AI literacy.

37
Schools
Enrolled

Leadership & Creative Pathways

CREATIVE FUTURES

Out-of-school programs provide creative career pathways, paid youth leadership opportunities, and community-building experiences—empowering young people to grow as confident leaders and prepare for success in the creative economy.

44
Youth
Interns

Media Makers

EMPOWERED STORYTELLING

A hands-on media arts program empowering young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to share their voices, build creative and workforce skills, and foster confidence, and belonging through photography, filmmaking, and digital storytelling.

800
Hours Of
Engagement

OUR EVENTS

Each year, we welcome the San Diego community into our creative world through inclusive signature events, bilingual workshops, student exhibitions, film screenings, and guest speakers—creating unique opportunities for everyone to engage with media arts.

4,967

Community
Members
Reached

46

Outreach
Sites

Open House

Our annual *Open House* is a celebration of youth creativity and community, guests explore hands-on activities, view student films, and browse youth-created publications. Students and staff lead projects and conversations that demonstrate how media arts builds confidence, connection, and social change.

53

Youth Artists
Showcased

117

Community
Attendees

5

Youth
Event Leaders



Voice Out

Voice Out, launched in 2024, is our annual exhibition of youth photography and multimedia work. Young artists from across the region show their work—every submission is exhibited—alongside industry professionals, peers, and community. Through the juried competition, panel discussions, and official catalog, youth connect with mentors, gain recognition, and see their work presented in a professional setting.

129

Youth
Artists
Displayed

10

Youth
Recognized
by the Getty
Museum

225

Event
Attendees





OUR IMPACT OUR IMPACT OUR IMPACT OUR IMPACT

“

"Outside The Lens helped combine my passion for dance with photography and **empowered me to tell stories that matter**. I learned to capture the beauty of movement and discovered the power of storytelling using my camera. **My creative future really opened up**, after spending time with artists and professionals with OTL."

– **Geena**, OTL Participant

IN 2024, WE EXPANDED OUR REACH AND DEEPENED OUR IMPACT:

2,655

youth became creators, critical thinkers, and digital documentarians across **37 sites**, expanding equitable access to media arts education in **under-served communities** in over **20 zip codes**.

75

youth exhibitions and showcases reached families, educators, elected officials, and community members sparking dialogue, empathy, and **connection through storytelling**.

\$38K

invested in paid internships, providing **44 youth interns** with hands-on learning, **mentorship**, and income-building professional skills and financial mobility.

129

youth artworks showcased to **225 attendees** at *Voice Out*, our inaugural juried exhibition, launched in partnership with the **Getty Museum**, elevating youth voices to a world-class platform.

CONFIDENT CREATORS

Teaching Artist Elijah Theuret guides Media Makers participants in developing professional skills as they create powerful content. His own journey—from student to paid intern to lead 3D Animation instructor—exemplifies the transformative impact of this program. To produce an Ableism Awareness PSA for California’s Stop the Hate initiative, young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) took full creative ownership—from writing and directing to filming, acting, and editing, bringing their unique perspectives to the screen and confidently sharing their voices while making a meaningful impact on the community.



EMPOWERED ACHIEVERS

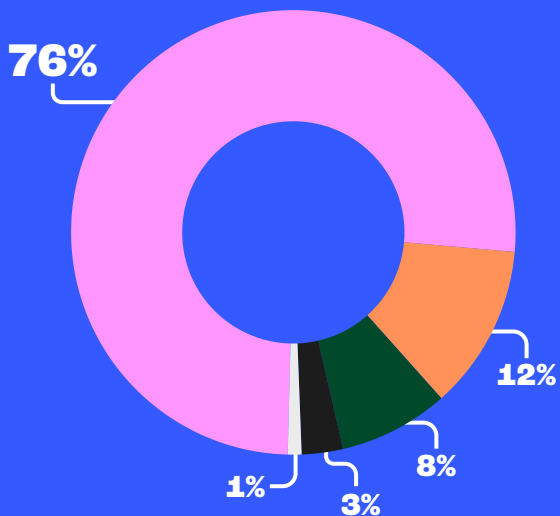
Youth in OTL’s *Lens of Liberation* program created a documentary and series of three multimedia exhibitions with community artists, exploring personal and collective forms of resistance. The filmmakers developed their vision collaboratively, building advanced storytelling and production skills, and presented their work at World Design Capital San Diego Tijuana 2024.

Check out the documentary:
**THE HUMANITY ACROSS
STORIES OF RESISTANCE**



- Hispanic/Latino
- Black/African American
- White
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Native American

YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS



97%

From Under-Resourced Communities

34%

English Language Learners

“

The artwork I created for Voice Out was about my own inner conflict and the changes I was going through. The process of making it helped me explore what I liked about myself, who I wanted to be, and how I wanted to present myself to the world.”

– June, Voice Out Youth Artist



39%

Experience Housing Insecurity

24%

Learning Or Developmental Differences

8%

In Foster Care Placement

ENGAGED CHANGEMAKERS

Through collaborations with I Love a Clean San Diego (ILACSD) and the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve (TRNERR), students from Ibarra Elementary in City Heights gained firsthand experience in environmental science and conservation, documenting local ecosystems and identifying plankton, birds, and salt marsh plants while learning about pollution’s impact on waterways. Armed with this knowledge and their cameras they created posters and videos to encourage awareness around environmental justice.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

January 1 - December 31, 2024

Ivy Gordon
Board Chair

Dr. Bibhu Mohanty
Board Treasurer

Caroline Harwood Nordquist
Board Secretary

Maite Benito Agahnia
Board Member and Co-Founder

Shelley Pierce
Board Member and Co-Founder

Chitra Gopalakrishnan
Board Member



OUR SUPPORTERS

Ackerman Foundation
Maite Benito Agahnia
Aida Alvarez Reyes
Amplified Partners
Anonymous
Beverly Beckman
Diane and Richard Beckman
The Beckman Matsui Family
The Beckman Schemenauer Family
Billingsley Foundation
California Arts Council
California Coastal Commission
Whale Tail
California Department of Social Services: Stop the Hate
California Public Utilities Commission: Digital Divide
Margaret Chin
City of San Diego
Karen Coutts
Janie DeCelles
Terri Egan
Foundation for Developmental Disabilities
Fox Foundation
French Foundation

Goodwin Family Memorial Foundation
Ivy Gordon
Frank Humphries
Karen Kinney
Joohyun Lee
Mid America Art Alliance
Creative Forces
Bibhu and Yana Mohanty
M.S. Grumbacher Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
Noble Intent
Caroline and Nick Nordquist
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
Shelley Pierce
Prebys Foundation
Qualcomm
San Diego County Board of Supervisors
San Diego County District Attorney
San Diego Foundation
San Diego Regional Center
San Marcos Community Foundation

Robert Smith
Sonia Steinway
Elisa and Kelly Thomson
James D. and Debra L. Tomcik
Alan Tung
VAPA Foundation
Paul Wright
Jessica Hanson York

*Gifts acknowledged from
01/01/24 - 12/31/24*



FINANCIALS

Fiscal year ending December 31, 2024

Funding Sources

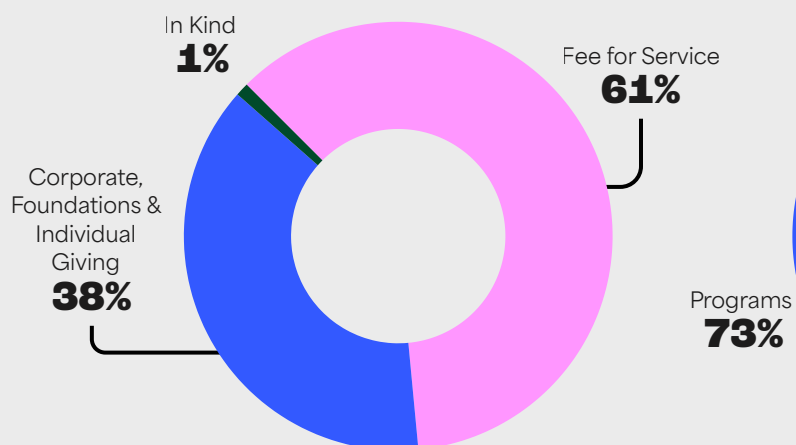
Fee for Service	\$1,592,643
Corporate, Foundations & Individual Giving	\$1,000,456
In-Kind	\$35,150
Other Income	\$2,125
Total Revenue	\$2,630,374

Expenses

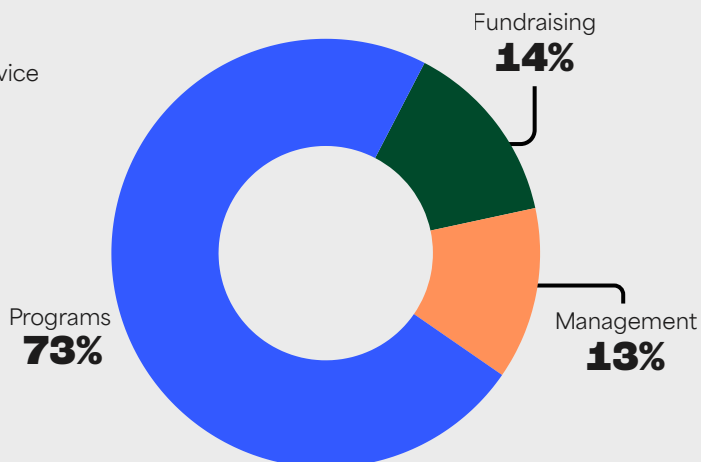
Programs	\$1,877,159
Management	\$328,845
Fundraising	\$352,538
Total Expenses	\$2,558,542

Change in Net Assets	\$71,832
Net Assets at Beginning of the Year	\$1,431,202
Net Assets at Year End	\$1,503,034

FUNDING SOURCES



EXPENSES





OTL is a private, nonprofit 501(c) (3) organization
Tax I.D. #26-4832772

(858) 349-7578
info@outsidethelens.org
www.outsidethelens.org
[@outsidethelens](https://www.instagram.com/outsidethelens)

