

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

A YEAR OF BUILDING

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Letter from Our Founder & CEO



There's a moment I live for. A girl finishes the thing she was sure she couldn't build. That moment, the one where she realizes she can, is why we exist. It's also why I can't stop thinking about the number 20,000.

That's how many girls we have set out to reach by 2028. It's the most ambitious goal we have ever named, and I believe it's both completely attainable and absolutely necessary. The girls are already doing the work. What's missing is the room built around them. We know how to build that room now, and we know how to build many more of them.

This year deepened my conviction. I watched girls graduate with their degrees in STEM. I watched girls have their moment on stage, then come back, year after year, to have it again. Every one of them is proof that when a girl is given the room, she owns it.

What you'll read in these pages is not a finished story. We are one year into a three-year plan, mid-build, learning as we go. But I have never been more sure of where we're heading, or what it means for these girls, their families, and a world that needs every one of them.

Let me show you what we're building.

Yamilee Toussaint
Founder & CEO

A handwritten signature of Yamilee in black ink, located at the bottom left of the page.

Message from Our Board Chair



I grew up a Black girl in the Bronx and Harlem. So when I stand in a STEM From Dance program and a girl looks up at me, I get to tell her the truest thing I know: I'm you.

That's why I'm here. I saw this mission up close in 2019, at the Haitian Roundtable Trailblazer awards, where Yamilée was on stage telling the STEM From Dance story. By the end of the night I'd walked over to her. I didn't have a title or a plan. I just knew I should be helpful, and I told her to put me to work. She did.

I believe boards are culture carriers, but only when leaders make space for them. What I've valued most is being invited into the programs, the team, and the room to witness our mission in action. I've stood in our summer Camp and watched 10-year-old girls solder the circuit boards that power their own dance performances. I've seen a girl show up on day one unsure she belongs, and come back a week later witnessing how her confidence has increased by the number of times she raises her hand.

That is what we are building, and it's why I'm asking everyone reading this to give what they have. Your dollars, your story, your network, the doors only you can open. All of it moves this work forward. We are at a real moment of growth. Come build it with us.

Nakia James-Jenkins

Board Chair

A handwritten signature of Nakia in a dark, cursive script.

Building the Future of STEM

Walk into any STEM From Dance program and you'll see girls building something. An LED-lit costume they've programmed. An AI model they've trained themselves. A performance choreographed to data they collected. We teach AI, computer science, data science, and engineering through dance in communities where talent is most often overlooked.

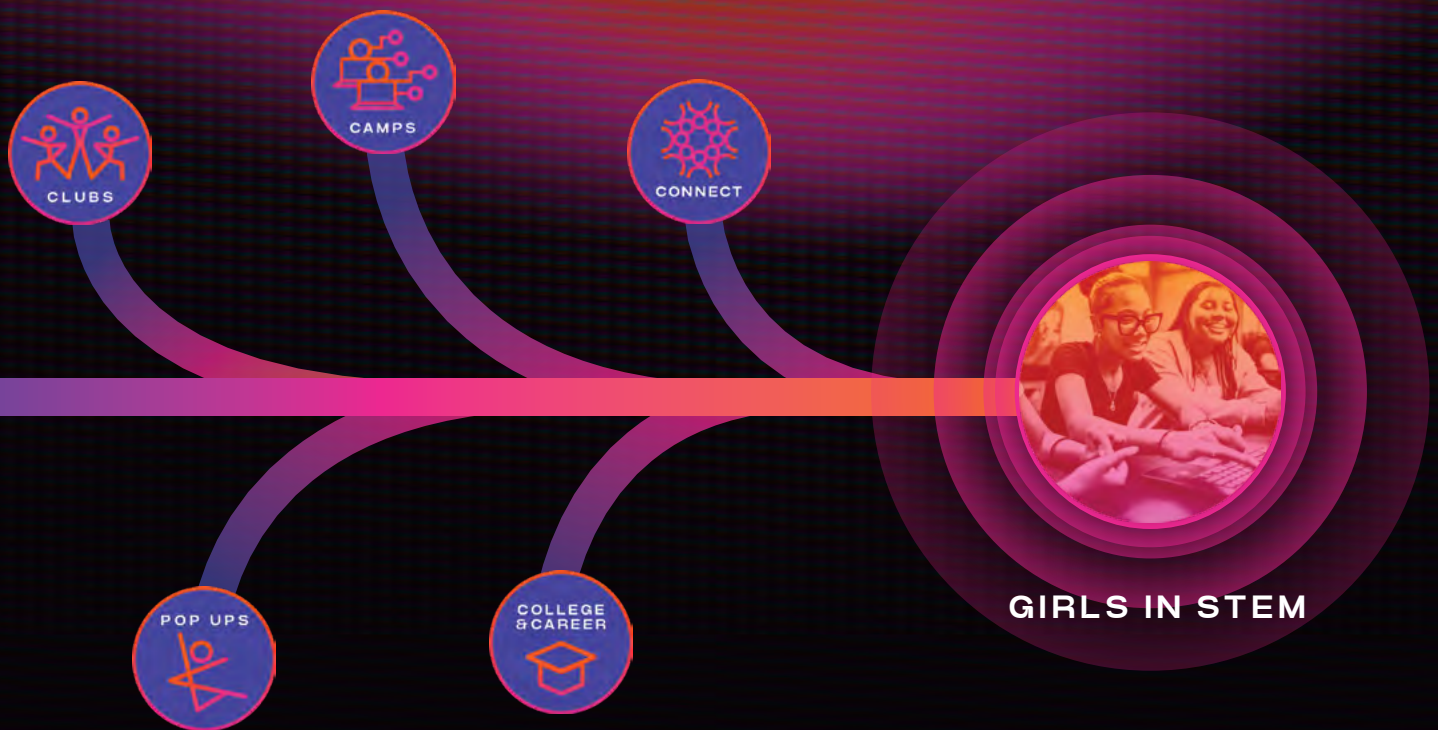
Dance opens the door and powers the learning that follows. Most of the girls in our programs love to dance and have been told, often without anyone saying it out loud, that STEM is not for them. Inside a dance, the conditions in the room shift. There is less intimidation, more joy, and a more direct line between what they are doing and who they are. The concepts move through their bodies as well as their minds. By the time a girl performs the lighting sequence she coded, the learning has already taken hold.

Rooms where girls are treated as the future of computer science, AI, or engineering are still rare. The girls themselves are already doing the work. What has to be built is the room around them. STEM From Dance is building those rooms, wherever the girls already are, and equipping them to become the innovators, engineers, and creators the world needs. On the other side of those rooms are careers in STEM and the kinds of lives those careers make possible — for the girls and for the families and communities they come from.



One Approach, Multiple Connections

Every girl deserves to discover her power in STEM, whether she dreams of it today or hasn't yet imagined the possibilities. Through groundbreaking programs like our new Pop Ups and Clubs, we're making our transformative curriculum accessible to more girls nationwide. Now, every girl can discover her STEM potential through dance, whether for a day, a season, or a life-changing journey. Our expanded program ecosystem meets girls wherever they are, igniting confidence and creating lasting pathways to STEM success.



CLUBS

Ten Months Inside Schools and Communities

Programs that run across the 10-month school year, embedded in schools and community organizations. STEM From Dance trains the adults already in girls' lives in a free, dance-integrated STEM curriculum. Facilitators set the schedule and run it in the format that fits.



POP UPS

One Day, Brought to the Community

One day with STEM From Dance, traveling wherever the need is. Pop Ups welcome new girls into the program, give returning girls another opportunity to build, and show up alongside other work being done in the community.



CAMPS

Three Weeks of Daily Building

Three weeks of full-day programming in the summer. Girls program LED-lit costumes, code computer-generated animations, and design data visualizations across the three weeks. Each Camp closes with a showcase: the girls perform choreography featuring the technology they built, in front of their families and communities.



COLLEGE & CAREER

Where Girls Take Over

STEM From Dance serves as a navigator. As girls near high school graduation, we connect them with advanced programs, internships, college pathways, and career accelerators that fit their interests. The relationship continues past graduation; girls choose the next step with STEM From Dance still in the room.



CONNECT

Personalized Pathways, Powered by AI

An AI-powered platform that produces custom recommendations for each girl's next step. Connect sees what she has done, what interests her, where she lives, and where she is in school. Recommendations include events, courses, content, and organizations, inside STEM From Dance and beyond.



Why Dance Works and What it Teaches.

WHY DANCE?

Movement Is The Mechanism.

Embodied Learning

Processing STEM concepts through physical movement creates deeper cognitive retention than instruction alone. When participants code a lighting sequence and then perform it, the understanding lives in the body as well as the mind.

Cultural Belonging & Identity

Dance forms rooted in participants' cultural traditions create an immediate sense of belonging that counteracts the stereotype threat research shows drives girls out of STEM. Participants see themselves reflected in the work from day one.

Joy as a Learning Accelerator

The emotional engagement of dance lowers anxiety and increases motivation, creating the conditions where STEM learning sticks. Joy is not a bonus; it's a mechanism of the model.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Three Skills Mapped from Dance and Applied to STEM.

Choreography

Breaking Movement Into Ordered Steps



Computational Thinking

Breaking Complex Problems Into Patterns and Logical Steps

Constraints

Music, Timing, Group Size, Tech



Engineering Design

Weighing Tradeoffs to Build the Best Solution Under Real Limits

Ensemble Performance

Synchronizing Many Independent Parts Into One Whole



Creative Collaboration

Building, Testing, and Refining a Shared Solution as a Team

A Club Inside The School Day



Meet Jamie

Jamie, a K-8 dance teacher in Brooklyn, attended a STEM From Dance showcase and left thinking differently about what skills she could incorporate into her classes. How could she move from audience member to facilitator?



The Principal's "Yes"

Jamie discovered SFD Clubs, a free curriculum run by local facilitators. She walked her principal through the materials. He gave her an enthusiastic "yes" the same day.



Going Viral

One standout lesson was Going Viral. Girls analyzed the videos they already loved, decoded the patterns that make content spread, and built their own choreography around what they found.



Student-led Transformation

A girl named Samantha started out shy, says Jamie, but Going Viral lit a spark and made her the group's leader. Another, Callie, is a talented choreographer who coached the other girls and made sure everyone felt good about their dance.



Code, AI, and Music

In Jamie's Club, third- and fifth-graders learned coding, AI, music technology, and the science behind breakdance battles. The curriculum "takes you everywhere," says Jamie.



Guide on the Side

One Club highlight, says Jamie, is that the kids take the lead, choosing themes, working in groups, teaching each other. "I'm no more the sage on the stage," she observes. "I'm the guide on the side."



The Next Cohort

Jamie's first Club cohort performed at Community Circle, the schoolwide showcase. Next year's cohort already wants in. "They saw it and were like, I want to do that," Jamie says.



A Teacher's Testimony

"This has been life-changing for me," Jamie says. "These girls are our future. They deserve to know they can do well in those spaces, just like everyone else."



KAYA'S STORY

From Camper to Coder

When she joined STEM From Dance, Kaya was eleven, just out of COVID, and afraid to talk to anyone. "I was very introverted back then," she admits. "I was really scared of making friends." Coding and dance were vague interests, not pathways.

Then came Camp.

In three weeks at her first STEM From Dance Camp, Kaya did things she didn't think she was capable of. She performed choreography she helped create. She built costumes that lit up in response to the movement of her own body. "I'd never used a drone before, and I coded one," she says, remembering the astonishment she felt.

The love of coding took hold. Kaya came back the next summer. And the next. And the next. In between STEM From Dance Camps, she joined an after-school coding club. She picked up JavaScript. She began learning Python in a Saturday class. The girl who was scared to go to Camp was now writing the language to power machines.

In eighth grade, Kaya toured her dream college and brought home an MIT sweater. She's worn it ever since. Now in ninth grade, she devours every opportunity to prepare for college and a career in "anything that has to do with programming, computer programming, or computer engineering."

Kaya sees herself as the future of tech. Her vision is the pipeline made real. This is what STEM From Dance was built to do.

FORWARD

Our Three-Year Plan in Progress

2025 was year one of a three-year strategic plan. The work is mid-stream. The following is what we set out to do, what we have built, and what year one has taught us.



Reach 20,000 girls across programs by 2028.



Triple the national average in STEM confidence and belonging.



Build the team, systems, and financial model to lead at scale.

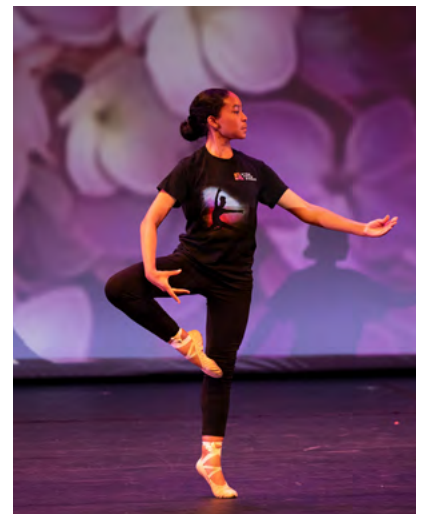
PROGRESS

The cultural explosion of AI in 2025 reinforced a long-held commitment that continues to guide our planning.

STEM From Dance prepares girls to shape the future of AI, because AI is already shaping their world. Our programs build career pathways to the rooms where AI is engineered.

We teach girls to prompt AI video generators, train machine learning models, and create AI-generated music alongside their choreography. Across modules, they learn what AI is, how it works, where its limits sit, and how to use it responsibly.

The skills necessary to both use and develop AI models are skills we have taught through dance for years: computational thinking, pattern recognition, and creative problem-solving. The field will keep evolving, and the foundation underneath does not change: the girls who learn to build with AI here are learning to shape the technology shaping their generation.



STEM From Dance participants use AI to design complementary background images and animations for their showcase performances.

READ MORE: stemfromdance.org/articles/funding-ai-literacy/

What We Learned in Year One

These are the three things year one has clarified about how the work actually scales, where it gets harder, and what the data is telling us. They are working hypotheses, sharpened by the first twelve months of building and tested against what we are seeing on the ground.

Clubs Are the Engine of Growth

Year one sharpened the case for Clubs. The facilitator-powered design features the same dance-integrated curriculum our team delivers in person. The rigor is just as deep, but the reach compounds. Schools and community organizations host Clubs using existing infrastructure, and girls learn from adults they already know and trust. Every facilitator we train becomes a lasting resource for STEM learning in their community, and the cost per girl is far lower than the cost of in-person programming run by our own team. Clubs are how the work grows.



Quality at Scale is Built Deliberately

Year one clarified that quality at scale is something we can build deliberately, not something we trade away as we grow. The clearest predictors of whether a Club succeeds are two things we control: how strong and accessible the content is, and how well the facilitator has been trained to teach it. So we hold every site to the same bar, no matter where programming happens or who leads it. Shared measurement tools track quality across all our locations, and the data feeds a continual refinement of both the content and the approach. With a new facilitator training platform in place, that consistency travels, letting us grow the number of Clubs while raising, not lowering, the quality inside them.



Sustainability Means Planning for Change

STEM From Dance has historically been funded primarily by philanthropic institutions that share our vision and commitment to innovation. That mix has built the organization to where it is, and it has also meant that priorities at any one funder can shift the ground under us. Year one has been a year of adapting to those shifts. What it has shown us is the value of multi-year commitments that let us plan past one grant cycle, flexible funding that can move where the work most needs it, and the networks and relationships that open doors when one closes. The work has to be fundable through the shifts.



2025 by the Numbers

STEM From Dance tracks what changes for the girls in our community: where they find belonging, how they see themselves in STEM, and what their families are seeing alongside them. These are the leading indicators research links to whether a girl enrolls in a STEM degree and enters a STEM career years later.

76%

of participants report belonging in STEM spaces, more than double the national average.

82%

of girls leave confident in their ability to improve in STEM, 40% higher than peers nationally.

98%

of caregivers overwhelmingly say their girls find a strong sense of belonging in the program.

THE SPOTLIGHT

Be part of a movement transforming STEM's future. Join our vibrant community of changemakers, discover breakthroughs, and help us empower the next generation of innovators. Connect with us today.



On the Jennifer Hudson Show

On **The Jennifer Hudson Show**, Yamilée Toussaint shared STEM From Dance's story and the girls building the next generation of STEM talent.



Physics Today Profile

Physics Today profiled Yamilée Toussaint and STEM From Dance, charting her path from MIT engineer to founder of a national STEM organization for girls.



Science News Explores Feature

In a **Science News Explores** feature on how movement and culture expand who participates in science, STEM From Dance was profiled as a leading example.

NYU and STEM From Dance: A Seven-Year Research Partnership

For seven years, Dr. Kayla DesPortes, Assistant Professor of Human-Computer Interaction at NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, and her research team have conducted an NSF-funded investigation of STEM From Dance as a model for culturally sustaining computing education. Their methodology is Design-Based Research: iterative, collaborative, and built alongside SFD's instructors, students, and leadership. In collaboration with Dr. Kathleen McDermott of the NYU Tandon School of Engineering, Dr. DesPortes has conducted formal interviews, curriculum co-design, custom technology development, and in-situ studies with students across multiple cohorts. Published findings appear in leading peer-reviewed venues in computing education and human-computer interaction, including CHI and TEI, establishing an evidence base that is rare for organizations at SFD's scale and stage.

Creativity Drives STEM Learning

Dr. DesPortes was drawn to STEM From Dance because it places art and STEM on equal footing. She took note early on that Yamilée takes dance just as seriously as code and didn't want the arts content introduced as an afterthought. "The future of STEM is creativity," she says. "STEM From Dance has been consistently ahead of the curve in understanding this."

Learning Through the Body

The NYU team grounds SFD's model in two well-established learning frameworks: embodied learning and constructionism. Students learn by doing, making, and physically connecting ideas. When a girl codes LEDs to respond to her own movement, she integrates body, sensor, electronics, and code into a single experience. To support this, the research team developed and tested two purpose-built tools in direct collaboration with SFD: danceON, a culturally responsive creative computing environment, and DanceBits, a wearable electronics kit built with locking connectors, the first of their kind designed to withstand dance movement.

Identity, Confidence, and Skill

Across multiple qualitative studies, the research team documented consistent findings: girls experience STEM From Dance as an exceptional bonding experience and an exceptional amount of growth in their confidence and technical skills. The mechanism, Dr. DesPortes explains, is STEM identity: the internalized belief that "you ARE a STEM person," which research links directly to persistence in the field.

High Stakes, High-Growth Learning

The NYU team characterizes SFD as a "high-stakes learning environment," parallel to competitive robotics teams, which have historically skewed male. The final performance is both a huge motivator and a stressor for everyone involved. Dr. DesPortes identifies this tension as part of what makes STEM From Dance unique.

Building for Scale

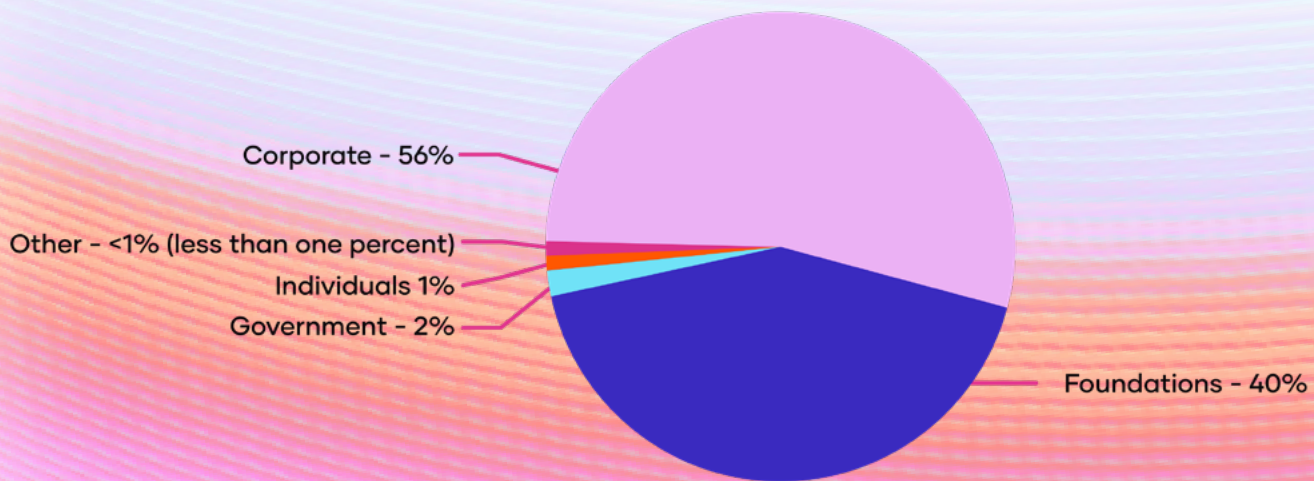
As SFD scales its Clubs program nationally, the NYU team is focused on how the model's rigor, community-building, and culture can travel to new sites. Their current work centers on curriculum documentation and hardware outcomes for first-time facilitators, areas where stronger infrastructure protects the quality that drives results. Science News Explores featured this research in January 2026, placing SFD's model among a broader effort to expand what computing education can be and who it can reach.



2025 Financials

Every dollar fuels our mission: expanding opportunities for girls of color in STEM.
Our financials reflect a strong foundation and the momentum
to grow our impact even further.

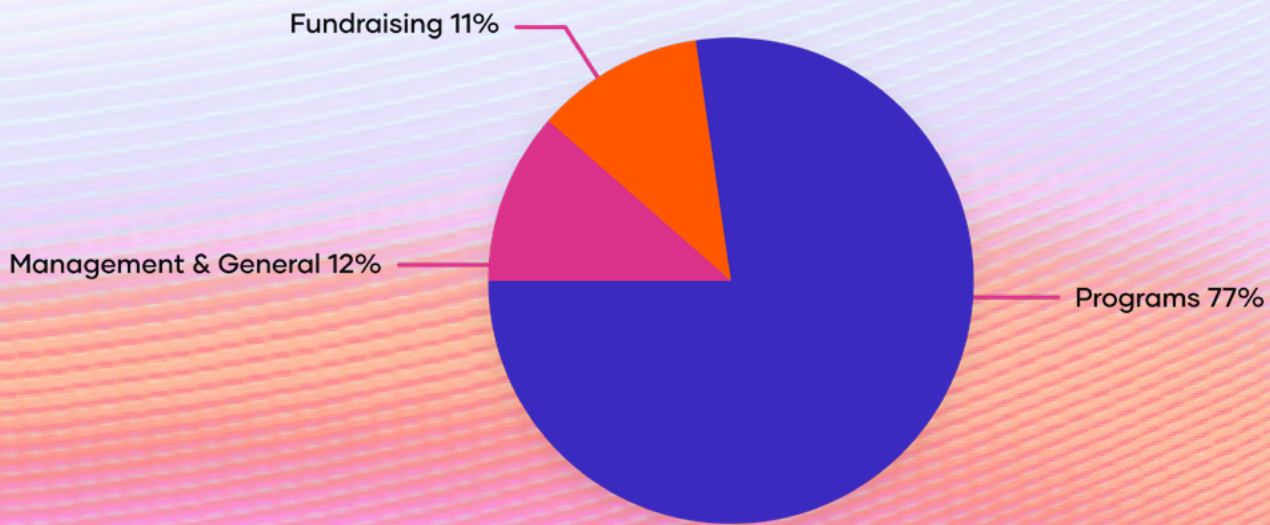
Revenue Summary



Total Revenues for the Year Ended June 30, 2025	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Corporate contributions	\$1,521,426	\$0	\$1,521,426
Foundation contributions	\$673,651	\$400,000	\$1,073,651
Individual contribution	\$41,724	\$0	\$41,724
Government grants	\$66,474	\$0	\$66,474
Program service fees	\$9,185	\$0	\$9,185
Interest income	\$368	\$0	\$368
Net assets released from restrictions	\$868,334	(\$868,334)	\$0
TOTAL REVENUES	\$3,181,162	(\$468,334)	\$2,712,828

FY24 revenue included \$3M+ in multi-year grants recognized upfront under GAAP;
FY25 reflects current-year contributions plus continued program execution.

Expenses Summary



Total Expenses for the Year Ended June 30, 2025	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Program Services	\$2,332,656	\$0	\$2,332,656
Management & General	\$371,441	\$0	\$371,441
Fundraising	\$321,099	\$0	\$321,099
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,025,196	\$0	\$3,025,196
Change in Net Assets	\$155,966	(\$468,334)	(\$312,368)
Net Assets Beginning	\$1,041,496	\$3,002,263	\$4,043,759
Net Assets Ending	\$1,197,462	\$2,533,929	\$3,731,391

Supporters

The foundations, companies, and government partners listed here invested in STEM From Dance this year. We are grateful for their commitment and their belief in the girls we serve.

- ⇒ ADP Foundation
- ⇒ Akamai Foundation
- ⇒ Altman Foundation
- ⇒ Amgen Foundation
- ⇒ Booth Ferris Foundation
- ⇒ Camelback Ventures
- ⇒ Central New York Community Foundation
- ⇒ Chloé
- ⇒ Con Edison
- ⇒ Elevate Prize Foundation
- ⇒ Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation
- ⇒ ELMA Philanthropies
- ⇒ Every Page Foundation
- ⇒ Find Your Light Foundation
- ⇒ Google.org
- ⇒ Harman Family Foundation
- ⇒ Hornblower, Operator of NYC Ferry
- ⇒ I. S. Wong Foundation
- ⇒ Ichigo Foundation
- ⇒ Infosys Foundation USA
- ⇒ Jack & Jill of America, Inc.
- ⇒ L'Oreal Foundation
- ⇒ Laureus USA
- ⇒ Lawrence Foundation
- ⇒ Lyda Hill Philanthropies
- ⇒ Marshall Frankel Foundation
- ⇒ Mosaic Network & Fund
- ⇒ National Science Foundation
- ⇒ NYC Department of Cultural Affairs
- ⇒ OpenAI Foundation
- ⇒ PDT Partners
- ⇒ Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation
- ⇒ Principal Foundation
- ⇒ Siegel Family Endowment
- ⇒ Simons Foundation
- ⇒ Snap Foundation
- ⇒ Spark Youth
- ⇒ The CAFE Group
- ⇒ The Obama Foundation
- ⇒ Thompson Family Foundation
- ⇒ Universal Music Group
- ⇒ William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust

Give with Confidence

Our top nonprofit transparency ratings reflect our dedication to accountability and efficient mission-driven impact. We have earned Candid's Platinum Seal of Transparency and a Four-Star rating from Charity Navigator with a score of 94%.

Supporters can give knowing their contributions will be managed responsibly to create meaningful change.





2025 Annual Report

VIEW THE REPORT ON OUR WEBSITE: stemfromdance.org/about-us/annual-report-2025