

# LEVER FOR CHANGE



# IMPACT REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2022

# Big Bold News

## “We have surpassed our initial goal of driving \$1 billion in funding.”

I am delighted and humbled to share the news that we have surpassed our initial goal of helping donors award \$1 billion in funding! Since Lever for Change launched as a pilot project in 2019, our mission has been to help donors find and fund bold solutions to some of the world's biggest problems. Our initial hope was to drive \$1 billion for bold solutions by 2023. Thanks to the initial commitments of 11 donors who sponsored customized challenges and dedicated efforts to leverage additional philanthropic capital, we have exceeded that goal a year early! So far, the sponsors of our challenges have given a total of \$413 million to outstanding organizations. Ninety additional donors have contributed \$651 million to finalists and other highly rated proposals.

This progress would not have been possible without the interest and support of [our many partners](#): investors in Lever for Change who help subsidize our operations, donors who provide the funding for challenges we design and manage, judges who help evaluate proposals, key advisors who help us design and manage the process behind the scenes, strategic consultants who help finalists revise their proposals and strengthen their case for support, and, of course, the many problem solvers who share their vision for a better future. We are also grateful to [our team](#) of

experts who work tirelessly behind the scenes to make these partnerships possible with dedication and passion.

Our problems as a nation and as a global community are not insurmountable if we work together to achieve ambitious goals, but \$1 billion is one small step. Our goal is to build a philanthropic sector that is as bold as the change it seeks to achieve. To that end, we have set our sights on a new target: we plan to leverage a total of \$2.5 billion in funding by 2025. We believe this goal is both possible and necessary.

Achieving this new target will require that we build on what we have learned, adapting our services to meet both the needs of donors and the organizations they support. [Sign up for our newsletter](#) to receive regular updates about our work and to stay informed about our learnings.

We are confident that the future is bright for Lever for Change and the many donors and problem solvers in our network who want to change the world. We hope you will join us.



Cecilia Conrad  
CEO, Lever for Change



## Helping donors to find and fund solutions to accelerate social change.

### Purpose

Lever for Change was founded in 2019 as a nonprofit affiliate of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Our mission is to help solve the world's biggest problems—including issues of racial equity, gender equality, access to economic opportunity, climate change, and more.

We embolden donors to think big and increase their philanthropic impact. We understand that solving big problems requires ambition, urgency, scale, and significant resources.

Our organization was born of the success of MacArthur's [100&Change Challenge](#), which awarded its first \$100 million grant in 2017, spurring the philanthropic sector to rethink its approach to achieving impact at scale. MacArthur launched Lever for Change as an affiliate to apply this model to help other funders run large-scale challenges.

By connecting donors with problem solvers—through [customized challenges and tailored funding opportunities](#)—Lever for Change helps donors to find and fund bold, effective solutions to accelerate social change.

What sets Lever for Change apart from other philanthropic advisors is our emphasis on open and equitable sourcing of ideas, funding at scale, and trust in grantees' to define solutions. We are changing who and what gets funded.



- **11 Customized Challenges**
- **\$10 to \$100 Million** in grants on behalf of donors
- **6,000 Applicants** from **130 countries**
- **145+ Members** in our Bold Solutions Network

## Results

In the past three years, we have designed and managed **11 customized challenges** on behalf of a variety of donor partners and their advisors—from high-profile donors including Pivotal Ventures (Melinda French Gates' investment and incubation company) to institutional funders like the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, corporate funders such as the LEGO Foundation, and philanthropic advisors like ICONIQ Impact, as well as new and anonymous donors.

We center our work on the core values of openness, transparency, equity, and inclusion. We take intentional steps to ensure these values are represented throughout the services we provide and in each of our challenges. Using an inclusive, equitable model and due diligence process, we have supported grants of \$10 million to \$100 million on behalf of donors.

To date, we have received proposals from approximately 6,000 **applicants** from 130 countries. Every Lever for Change challenge generates more impactful proposals than any single donor can fund. In 2020, we created the **Bold Solutions Network**—a growing global network of highly rated proposals from our challenges that are well-positioned to accelerate social change.

Our team continues to curate and share these bold solutions with **multiple funders**, as we simultaneously help network members improve their case for support. To this end, we work with experts—especially those who experience firsthand the personal, community, and social consequences of the world's biggest problems. The Network includes inspiring proposals from more than 145 organizations and their partners ready to accelerate social change.



- **20,640 New entrepreneurs** in Uganda and Ethiopia will **establish 6,880 new businesses**
- **1 Million Refugees** are gaining support to **thrive**
- **10 Million Texans** will have access to **mental health care**

## Impact

We are excited to share the impact of the funding that we have helped activate so far—from the 20,640 new entrepreneurs in Uganda and Ethiopia who will establish 6,880 new businesses, to the million refugees across at least 10 countries who will gain the support they need to survive and thrive over the next five years, and the 10 million Texans who will have access to the mental health care they deserve. These are just some of the people who are benefitting from the connections we have made between funders and problem solvers. Find more examples of impact in our timeline on pages 5-8.

This year, we started a series of articles about the impact of the challenges we have facilitated for donors, including the inspiring stories of [Per Scholas](#), [NEST360](#), and [HarvestPlus](#). Look forward to more installments in this series in the coming months, and [let us know](#) if you are interested in supporting any of our Bold Solutions Network members.



# Learning is vital to everything we do.

## Learning

Learning is vital to everything we do. Lever for Change exists and operates within the larger context of philanthropy, a field that is changing fast, in many ways, all over the globe. The challenges that we design and manage generate lots of information, knowledge, and feedback. For the past three years, our team has supported projects, often in partnership with others, that have shared **important insights** and influenced the practice of philanthropy:

- In coordination with Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, we helped develop a **guide on prize philanthropy**.
- In collaboration with the Center for High Impact Philanthropy at the University of Pennsylvania, we developed a toolkit called “**Choosing Change**: How to Assess Grant Proposals for Their Potential to Address Structural Inequality.”
- Working with Candid, MIT, Charity Navigator, and the Philanthropy Data Commons, we helped set new norms on data-sharing in philanthropy.



2020

## CHICAGO PRIZE

**\$10M Award +**  
\$32.97M Additional Funding**Pritzker Traubert Foundation**

The Chicago Prize was designed to invest in collaborative initiatives to improve residents' safety, well-being, and economic mobility in Chicago's South and West sides. The Prize Awardee, the [Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation](#), has supported the Auburn Gresham neighborhood with development projects aimed at creating a new green economy while adding over 600 jobs and supplying up to 26,000 pounds of fresh food per year.

2020

## ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY CHALLENGE

**\$10M Award +**  
\$28.18M Additional Funding**Economic  
Opportunity  
Challenge****Anonymous Donor**

The Economic Opportunity Challenge was created to improve the economic health of low-income families in the United States. With the award, [Per Scholas](#) will support 13,000+ diverse adult job seekers interested in tech careers. U.S. urban communities will see a collective impact over the three-year project of at least \$386 million in first-year earnings.

2021

## 100&amp;CHANGE

**\$100M Award +**  
\$260.85M Additional Funding**MacArthur Foundation**

*100&Change* is a challenge for a single \$100 million grant to fund a proposal that promises real and measurable progress in solving a critical problem of our time. In 2021, the grant was awarded to a public health approach to accelerate an end to homelessness. The leading proposal, from [Community Solutions](#), will affect 75 geographically and politically diverse communities in the United States that will reach functional zero homelessness for one or more populations within five years.

2021

## LARSEN LAM ICONIQ IMPACT AWARD

**\$12M Award +  
\$81.1M Additional Funding****Chris Larsen, Lyna Lam, the Sea Grape Foundation, ICONIQ Impact**

The Larsen Lam ICONIQ Award was launched to transform the lives of refugees and displaced people worldwide and in the long term. Thanks to the [Resourcing Refugee Leadership Initiative](#), one million refugees in ten countries will gain the support they need to survive and thrive over the next five years while strengthening the capacity of refugee-led organizations.

2021

## LONE STAR PRIZE

**\$10M Award +  
\$3.06M Additional Funding****Lyda Hill Philanthropies**

The Lone Star Prize was developed to improve the quality of life for the people of Texas by building healthier, stronger communities. The recipient, [Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute](#), will enhance the quality of life and mental health care access for communities across the state, particularly for people of color, people with disabilities, and people living in poverty. The result will reduce barriers for all Texans with depression, detect their needs earlier, and serve them more effectively through community-based care.

2021

## 2030 CLIMATE CHALLENGE

**\$10M Award +  
\$75K Additional Funding****2030  
CLIMATE  
CHALLENGE****Anonymous Donor**

The 2030 Climate Challenge was designed to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in buildings, manufacturing, and transportation in the United States by 2030. The awardee, the [Renewable Thermal Collaborative](#), which is jointly managed by the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, David Gardiner and Associates, and World Wildlife Fund, aims to lower industrial thermal emissions by 30% by 2030 from 2018 levels, reducing 250 million metric tons of CO2 emissions.



2021

## EQUALITY CAN'T WAIT CHALLENGE

**\$40M Award +  
\$9.5M Additional Funding**
**Pivotal Ventures, MacKenzie Scott  
and Dan Jewett, and Charles and  
Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies**

The Equality Can't Wait Challenge was a call to action to accelerate the pace of progress towards gender equality in the U.S. The four awardees (National Domestic Workers Alliance & Caring Across Generations; Ada Developers Academy; Girls Inc.; Native Women Lead & New Mexico Community Capital) seek to transform the caregiver economy, increase economic opportunities for Indigenous women, and provide college and technology career pathways for women across the country.

2022

## STRONGER DEMOCRACY AWARD

**\$12M Award +  
\$10.5M Additional Funding**
**Additional Ventures, The Patchwork Collective,  
Cipora and Vlado Herman, and ICONIQ Impact**

The Stronger Democracy Award hopes to address systemic barriers and advance structural reforms in three key areas: voting and elections, policymaking, and civic engagement. The Award's recipients, Ballot Freedom Project, City Bureau, and Accelerate Change, Inc., seek to increase political awareness and create networks of politically engaged communities across the country.

2022

## RACIAL EQUITY 2030

**\$90M Award +  
Ongoing**
**racialequity2030**

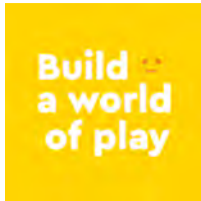
A Call for Bold Solutions to  
Drive an Equitable Future

**W.K. Kellogg Foundation**

The Racial Equity 2030 Challenge will award \$90 million to help build and scale actionable ideas for transformative change in the systems and institutions that uphold racial inequities. The Challenge aims to unleash transformative solutions to improve the lives of children, families, and communities worldwide. Five awardees will be announced in the fall of 2022.

2022

## BUILD A WORLD OF PLAY

**\$143M\* Award +**  
Ongoing**LEGO Foundation**

The Build a World of Play Challenge will fund transformative ideas that help solve the most significant global challenges children face from birth to age six. Up to ten finalists will be selected in the fall of 2022. From among the finalists, up to five awards will be announced by the end of 2022.

*\* The total award is DKK 900 million which was equivalent to USD 140 million at the time of publication.*

2023

## MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH AWARD

**\$10M Award +**  
Ongoing**Maternal & Infant**  
Health Award**The Patchwork Collective**

The Maternal and Infant Award will source and scale bold solutions that aim to improve and accelerate equitable maternal and infant health outcomes among marginalized communities across the globe. Up to five finalists will be selected in early 2023, and the award recipient will be announced in the summer of 2023.



# **We are committed to becoming more ambitious as we grow**

## **Our next goal is to leverage \$2.5 billion in funding for as many bold solutions as possible by 2025.**

Although we have reached our initial goal of leveraging \$1 billion in funding from donors, which is certainly cause for celebration, we will not rest on our laurels. This is only the beginning.

Encouraging as this progress is, it is modest compared to the scale of the problems the world faces and how they affect the lives of people and communities everywhere. Therefore, we are committed to becoming more ambitious as we grow: our next goal is to drive \$2.5 billion in funding for as many bold solutions as possible by 2025.

We are so thankful for all of you and the important part you play in helping Lever for Change accelerate social change. We recognize our place in an ecosystem of philanthropic partners and networks, all working towards the same goals of tackling complex issues, leveraging funding, and taking risks on big, bold ideas.

We are grateful that so many effective, innovative individuals and organizations are working to solve the world's biggest problems. We feel honored to work with you all every day.




We would not have been able to achieve this important milestone without the generous support provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, MacKenzie Scott and Dan Jewett, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Lever for Change Board member Reid Hoffman.






Since our launch, we have partnered with exceptional funders and advisors to create customized challenges tackling the world's biggest problems. We want to extend special thanks to:













As the world continues to face significant problems, applicants to Lever for Change challenges and our [Bold Solutions Network members](#) are stepping up. We are always impressed by the ambition and passion of this growing global community of problem solvers who imagine and articulate big ideas to seemingly insurmountable problems. Their remarkable work is driving toward a more just, equitable, and sustainable world.

Many people have made all this possible, including highly regarded professionals who serve as judges and evaluators, scoring proposals, and providing applicants with insights into the strengths and weaknesses of their ideas. While they are too numerous to list individually, we are deeply grateful for their service and expertise, as these challenges would not be possible without their passion and participation.

Lever for Change collaborates closely with many organizations to design and manage challenges, and strengthen applicant proposals. Our team works hard to ensure that every submission is well-positioned for grant funding from our donor partners. We want to thank the caring and expert teams at the following organizations for their continued support for Lever for Change and our Bold Solutions Network members: [The Bridgespan Group](#), [CAF America](#), [Carrot](#), [Catchafire](#), [Dalberg Advisors](#), [FundJoy](#), [Herald Advisors](#), [Imaginary Landscape](#), [IMAGO Global Grassroots](#), [Marts&Lundy](#), [Mobility International USA](#), [MSI](#), [Mt. Auburn Associates](#), [Nonprofit Finance Fund](#), [Nonprofit Utopia](#), [Open Tech Strategies](#), [Rehmah Kasule Consultancy Services](#), [Sattva](#), [Submittable](#), and the [TCC Group](#).

Last but not least, we would like to recognize our [Board of Directors](#), who have been instrumental in providing guidance and counsel, and [our own team of experts](#) who bring decades of experience across the philanthropic spectrum and passion to their daily work.





# Thank you

**LEVER FOR  
CHANGE** 

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