

# FOUNDATION FAST FACTS

*Information through Dec. 31, 2024*

The **Greater Milwaukee Foundation** is Wisconsin's largest community foundation and among the first established in the world. As a civic leader and anchor institution, the Foundation cultivates philanthropic resources and cross-sector relationships to build a thriving Milwaukee for all. Through donor generosity, grantmaking, convening, partnership, advocacy, research and a focus on systems change, the Foundation addresses the region's greatest needs, most promising opportunities and overall well-being.

**Like an endowment dedicated to the public good**, community foundations house individual philanthropic funds established and utilized by donors to support their causes and nonprofits of choice. In addition to giving through the Foundation, donors have long contributed generously to the Foundation, powering its strategic investments and capacity to lead on the community's most pressing issues.



**Year founded:** 1915

**President & CEO:** Gregory M. Wesley, JD (2024)

**Number of staff:** 66

**Service area:** Milwaukee, Waukesha, Washington and Ozaukee counties

**IRS designation:** 501(c)(3) nonprofit public charity and community trust

**Accreditation:** National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations

**Website:** [greatermilwaukeefoundation.org](http://greatermilwaukeefoundation.org)



## Our transformational approach to philanthropy and community

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Building on generations of philanthropic service and community leadership, the Foundation is focused on innovating, collaborating and investing in our region's shared vision.

- **Reimagining Philanthropy** – Utilizing innovative tools, including diverse perspectives, and recognizing all forms of generosity – time, talent, treasure and ties – to grow resources and unify impact.
- **Catalyzing Systems Change** – Leveraging partnership, advocacy and focused investments around interrelated community priorities to support lasting solutions to structural inequities.
- **Building Inclusive Culture** – Ensuring the Foundation's policies, practices and strategies reflect and advance our North Star of racial equity and inclusion.
- **Convening & Following Community Voice** – Engaging residents and stakeholders with lived experience to discuss priorities and needs, co-create solutions and join in representative decision-making.

## Community outcomes

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Together with donors and partners, the Foundation applies the full strength of its reputation and resources to invest in solutions to interrelated issues, leading toward community and individual well-being.

- **Health equity** – Ensuring every community has the resources necessary to support healthy thriving lives by enhancing physical, mental and community wellness.
- **Educational opportunity** – Ensuring every child has access to a high-quality education from cradle to career, with specialized focus on increasing access, quality and affordability in early childhood education and strengthening the child care sector.
- **Housing security** – Ensuring every family has access to safe, affordable housing by increasing the supply of dignified, affordable rental units and owner-occupied homes; increasing homeownership; and preventing evictions, foreclosures and displacement.
- **Economic opportunity** – Ensuring every neighborhood benefits from thriving businesses and good jobs that contribute to economic mobility by supporting entrepreneurs and small businesses; investing in a well-trained workforce; and removing barriers to financial resources and participation in the economy.

The Foundation further contributes to a higher quality of life throughout the four-county region by using flexible resources to respond to urgent needs as well as supporting a wide range of key interest areas including arts and culture, youth and families, basic needs, the environment, animal welfare, violence prevention and more.

## Transformational initiatives

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Community-centered and place-based, the ThriveOn Collaboration of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Medical College of Wisconsin and Royal Capital invests in the

health, educational, social and economic wellness of Milwaukee's Halyard Park, Harambee and Brewers Hill neighborhoods and beyond. The Collaboration's centerpiece is ThriveOn King, a historic former department store transformed into a community hub featuring gathering spaces, multiple nonprofit partners, housing units and commercial offices, including the Foundation's headquarters.



Milwaukee Succeeds is the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's

strategic education initiative, focused on expanding access to early childhood education for Black and Brown families and improving the high school success trajectory for Black male youth. Milwaukee Succeeds is part of the national StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network and is a leading voice in the Wisconsin Partnership, a statewide effort to strengthen equitable educational systems for children of all ages.

## Philanthropic partnership

Giving to and through a community foundation offers tremendous flexibility for donors, ensuring their charitable investments meet their needs as well as the community's.

**Who:**

- Individuals
- Families
- Nonprofits
- Corporations
- Foundations
- Professional advisers

**What:**

- Donor advised funds
- Designated funds
- Flexible funds
- Agency endowments
- Scholarships
- Supporting organizations

**How:**

- Start or grow a fund – for philanthropic impact
- Coinvest – in Foundation priority funds at any level
- Leave a legacy – bequests and planned giving

**Partner foundations:**

- West Bend Community Foundation
- Oconomowoc Area Foundation
- Greater Cedarburg Foundation
- Cream City Foundation

## BY THE NUMBERS

### Philanthropic generosity

Impact at the Foundation is driven by the historic and ongoing generosity of donors who establish philanthropic funds and give to support community needs.

**IN 2024**

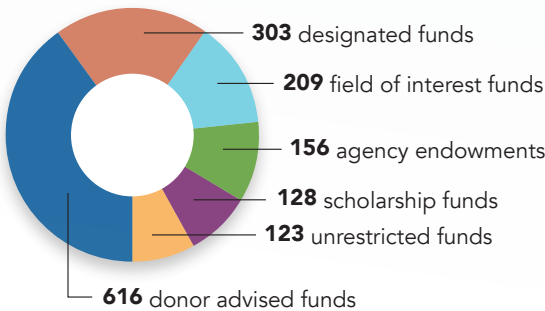
**\$46,758,660** total gifts

**1,837** total number of gifts

- **1,024** donors (made a gift)
- **508** new donors (made a gift)
- **50** new funds established
- **20** legacy commitments established

**AGGREGATE** (through Dec. 31, 2024)

- **\$1.193** billion assets under management
- **474** total legacy commitments
- **1,535** total charitable funds



### Impact Investing

The Foundation's impact investing program provides affordable access to capital in focus areas that generate economic opportunity including small businesses and entrepreneurship, housing and early childhood education.

**CUMULATIVE** (2017-2024)

- Total impact investing commitments: \$22 million
- Jobs created or retained: 852
- Leveraged investment: \$65 million
- Investments by type



Loans: **52** | Equity: **2** | Defaults: **2** | Guarantees: **1**

# Grantmaking

The Foundation administers several types of grantmaking to support the work of community nonprofits.

**Board-directed:** The Foundation’s Board authorizes strategic grants to qualified nonprofits selected through a series of annual grant cycles focused on addressing community priorities. Organizations in our service area can apply for funding, which comes from field of interest, unrestricted and other flexible funds.

**Donor-recommended:** Donors who partner with the Foundation for their philanthropy can make grants to organizations and causes they choose using funds they have established, including donor advised and designated funds. Donors also can align giving with Foundation strategic priorities for further impact.

**Agency endowments:** Nonprofit agencies that establish endowed funds at the Foundation can receive distributions as a source of added revenue.

**Scholarships:** Donor-created scholarships can support an area of study, geographic area, academic area or financial requirement.

**Supporting organizations:** Supporting organizations of the Foundation, including partner foundations, have distinct grantmaking programs that support local priorities.

## IN 2024

5,372 total grants

1,894 different agencies supported

\$75,021,514 total grants

- Grantmaking by organization type
  - Community development \$14,063,337
  - Education \$12,743,948
  - Human services \$10,500,790
  - Arts & culture \$9,548,029
  - Health \$7,380,375
  - Environment & animals \$6,831,535
  - Philanthropy \$5,854,596
  - Youth & family \$5,348,585
  - Religion \$2,044,148
  - Workforce development \$706,171

- Total grant awards by geography
  - Milwaukee County \$51,545,029 to 683 different agencies
  - Washington County \$3,349,778 to 195 different agencies
  - Waukesha County \$2,756,385 to 88 different agencies
  - Ozaukee County \$1,719,848 to 83 different agencies
  - Elsewhere in Wisconsin and beyond \$15,650,473 to 859 different agencies

- Grant dollars awarded by type



### GRANTS ALL TIME

(cumulative through Dec. 31, 2024)

118,949  
Grants

\$1.227 Billion  
in Grants