

Bridging a Legacy:

A 30-Year
Longitudinal
Impact Study of
The Lenny Zakim
Fund



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“The [Lenny Zakim] Fund was with us as we nearly tripled our impact and supported our leadership transition so our founder was able to retire in 2017. You helped us become a stronger, more self-sufficient organization...a steady source of guidance, fuel that also helped us gain credibility with new funders and donors.”



The South Coast LGBTQ Network (funded 2020-2024) provides case management, home visiting, and mentoring for LGBTQ+ youth, elders, trans folks, and their families, across New Bedford, Fall River, Taunton, and the South Coast.

Preface from The Lenny Zakim Fund

In 1995 after being diagnosed with multiple myeloma, an incurable form of bone marrow cancer, Lenny Zakim chose to spend the time he had left focused not on himself, but on his community. With the support from a group of his friends, supporters, and admirers, Lenny founded The Lenny Fund (later renamed The Lenny Zakim Fund, LZF) to support “under the radar” grassroots nonprofits and their leaders in underserved, under-resourced communities throughout eastern Massachusetts.

Thirty years later, Lenny’s founding belief that communities know what they need still drives everything we do. As an early practitioner of trust-based, community-driven philanthropy, we are proud of the authentic relationships we have built and nurtured. These partnerships have empowered our work supporting grassroots organizations and their leaders to advance social, racial, and economic justice.

These relationships are the foundation of Lenny’s legacy, and they have also been a challenge for LZF as an organization: **how do you talk about impact that’s fundamentally relational, not driven by dollar figures?** Ben Echevarria, an LZF board member, former grantee partner, and now co-chair of our Community Investments Committee, put it simply: “LZF taught me how to be an ED.” Ben went on to lead several other nonprofits and mentor many more new executive directors. That’s the kind of impact that doesn’t show up in a grant total.

In 2025, we commissioned a 30-Year Longitudinal Impact Study, led by Julia Gittleman and Rae Negron, to better understand and articulate LZF’s impact, not only on the organizations we’ve partnered

with but also on Greater Boston’s nonprofit and philanthropic community. Beyond the (as of 2026) more than \$14 million in grants LZF has given to 435 grassroots organizations since 1996, what this study reveals is that our deepest impact lives in the stories and testimony of our grantee partners, their leaders, like Ben, and hundreds of others who’ve built something lasting because LZF believed in them early on and supported their continued growth.

As the current and incoming executive directors of The Lenny Zakim Fund, we are pleased to share with you LZF’s 30-Year Longitudinal Impact Study report. LZF’s relational approach to impact is even more needed and relevant today, as we face growing inequities and a fraying of the connections that hold communities together. Thanks to the words of our grantee partners that you will read in the coming pages, we remain optimistic and committed to our vision for a more just and equitable world where communities thrive because of the contributions and leadership of grassroots organizations.

Lenny started a revolution of thought and spirit when he founded this Fund. We hope you’ll join us in carrying it forward.

Allison E. Picott
Executive Director

Tiffany Lau
Deputy Director &
Incoming Executive Director

Report Highlights

The Lenny Zakim Fund’s 30-Year Longitudinal Impact Study reveals five major themes from the analysis of survey responses, interviews, and historical grant data:

Finding #1:
Trust-Based, Relationship-Centered Philanthropy Is the Foundation of LZF’s Impact and Multi-Year Funding is Transformative.

Finding #2:
Early-Stage and Grassroots Organizations Depend on LZF in Ways No Other Funder Replicates.

Finding #3:
Capacity Building Is Among LZF’s Most Valued Contributions, Especially When It Is Personalized.

Finding #4:
LZF’s Community and Network Building Is Inseparable from Capacity Building and Creates Lasting Value.

Finding #5:
LZF’s Field Leadership is Highly Valued and is an Opportunity for Change.

Taken together, they offer a comprehensive picture of what makes LZF distinctive, what its grantee partners value most, and where opportunities for growth and deepened impact lie. The findings of this study documents about what trust-based, relationship-centered philanthropy produces when practiced with consistency over decades. It empowers organizations that grow into thriving community institutions.

In addition, this study is an invitation to consider how LZF can sustain and deepen what it has built by developing clearer impact measures, by strengthening the transitions that grantee partner organizations navigate as funding relationships evolve, and by stepping into the field leadership role that its thirty-year track record has earned.

Key Grantee Survey Statistics

93% said LZF helped their organization become successful

89% said they had become more sustainable as a result of LZF funding

89% reported that their staff gained knowledge that allowed them to work more effectively

78% said as a result of participating in LZF capacity building activities, their leaders feel more confident, supported, and empowered to care for the communities they serve

73% have been able to build lasting connections with peers through the LZF community

Introduction

For thirty years, The Lenny Zakim Fund (LZF or The Fund) has occupied a distinctive position in the philanthropic ecosystem of Greater Boston.

LZF has functioned simultaneously as a capacity-building funder, a community convener, and an intermediary practicing trust-based, community-centered philanthropy in sustained partnership with grassroots social justice and human service nonprofits. In a funding landscape often characterized by short grant cycles, restrictive requirements, and limited access for the smallest organizations, LZF has consistently done something different: it has shown up for the organizations that other funders overlook, and it has stayed.

LZF's work with grassroots organizations is organized around three united areas of activity. Through its grantmaking, The Fund has directed more than \$13.5 million to 428 organizations over three decades, prioritizing early-stage, under-resourced nonprofits working on social, economic, and racial justice in eastern Massachusetts. Through capacity building, LZF has offered

grantee partner organizations access to legal support, leadership development, skills training, and individualized coaching that builds lasting organizational strength. And through community building, LZF has cultivated a network of peer relationships among grassroots organizations that extends beyond individual grant cycles. In addition, LZF engages in the 4th area of field building through its collaborations with philanthropic partners and donors.

This study arrives at an important moment. As LZF celebrates its 30th year, the organization is engaged in active reflection about its impact and future. Three strategic priorities are driving this work: building organizational visibility, developing more concrete impact measures, and contributing to the broader philanthropic dialogue as a thought leader and field-builder. This report is an account of what LZF has built, grounded in the voices of the people who have experienced it directly.

We Are Better Together Warren Daniel Hairston Project (funded 2020-2024) connects and heals women and girls affected by homicide and incarceration to prevent the cycles of violence and victimization.



Background and History of The Lenny Zakim Fund

The organization that would become The Lenny Zakim Fund was established in 1995 as The Lenny Fund, named in honor of Lenny Zakim, the civil rights leader and longtime New England executive director of the Anti-Defamation League. Six years later, in 2001, the organization was renamed The Lenny Zakim Fund to fully reflect his legacy and values.

The Fund's growth over three decades has been significant. In 1996, LZF awarded its first grants, a total of \$49,752 distributed to 11 nonprofit organizations. By 2025, that number had grown to more than \$650,000 awarded to 53 organizations in a single year. Across the full 30-year span, LZF has made grants totaling more than \$13.5 million to 428 grantee partner organizations, with the average grant per organization growing from \$4,500 in 1996 to \$12,456 in 2025.

The Fund's programmatic scope also expanded over time. Beginning in 2007, LZF offered capacity building services to grantees through pro bono legal support provided by the law firm DLA Piper. In 2009, LZF launched The Lenny Zakim Fund Leadership Forums, providing structured learning opportunities for nonprofit leaders. That same year, LZF launched its Young Leadership Group, deepening its commitment to community building and the development of the next generation of civic leaders.

LZF's mission is to listen to those most impacted by inequity and provide the funding, essential resources, and support they need to create lasting change.

The Fund pursues this mission by developing deep relationships and building bridges among people and communities to advance



Founder Lenny Zakim pictured with a representative from Young Graffiti Masters (funded 1997-2000) at an early Awards Ceremony.

"In addition to providing the program with funds and in-kind gifts to help us sustain and expand activities, The Lenny Fund also helped to dramatically increase the program's visibility, helped us to leverage matching funds, and put us in contact with people and institutions to which the teens would not normally be exposed."

-Young Graffiti Masters

social, economic, and racial justice. Its vision is a more just and equitable world where communities thrive because of the contributions and leadership of grassroots organizations.

Historical Timeline

(1995 to Present)

1995

Lenny Zakim founds The Lenny Fund (TLF). TLF is fiscally sponsored, managed and advised by The Philanthropic Initiative (TPI).

1996

The Lenny Fund establishes funding priorities:

- To promote secular and religious educational efforts
- To promote the Jewish tradition of social justice and programs supporting civil and human rights
- To combat illiteracy and poverty
- To advance the causes of medical research and healthcare

TLF awards its first grants – \$49,752 to 11 nonprofits.

TLF hosts its first Annual Awards Ceremony, LZF's longest standing annual event.

1999

TLF awards matching grants to grantee partners for the first time. Douglas and Judi Krupp announce a \$1 million challenge grant. This grant raises \$2 million to establish an endowment.

Lenny Zakim passes away at the age of 46 on December 2, 1999. TLF publishes its first business plan, which describes The Fund's

model as a giving circle rooted in the emerging concept of venture philanthropy.

TLF publishes its first community newsletter, celebrating The Fund's early impact and its distinctive practice of listening and responding to the community – an approach that would later become central to trust-based philanthropy.

2000

The Lenny Fund receives its 501(c)(3) status from the IRS.

Mary Carty becomes TLF's first Executive Director.

2002

TLF hosts its first No Show Ball fundraiser, an annual tradition in which donors are invited to "show up" for The Fund with a gift, rather than showing up to an event.

2004

The Lenny Fund is renamed as The Lenny Zakim Fund (LZF).

2006

Jude Goldman begins as LZF's Executive Director.

2007

DLA Piper begins offering pro bono legal assistance to all of LZF's grantee partners.

2010

LZF's Young Leaders hosts its first Casino Night, raising both

dollars and awareness for LZF. For ten years, Casino Night is LZF's flagship fundraiser, collectively raising approximately \$1.5 million by its final year in 2019.

2012

LZF receives its first 2 Boston Marathon bibs. As of 2026, over 20 runners have run for Team LZF, raising hundreds of thousands of dollars.

2013

For the first time, LZF awards over \$500K in grants, including \$40K for summer programming that provides jobs for teens.

2014

LZF approves its first 5-year strategic plan with the goals of ensuring a current and clear mission statement, increasing organizational impact, increasing financial capacity, and ensuring ongoing sustainability and excellence.

2015

LZF updates its funding priorities, supporting organizations that:

- Improve educational opportunities for children, youth, and immigrants
- Promote positive youth development and prevent violence
- Promote social and economic justice, and human and civil rights
- Serve people facing medical challenges and/or physical or cognitive disabilities

LZF celebrates its 20th Anniversary with a fundraising event featuring twenty grassroots leaders, each representing one year of LZF's existence, and a performance by Sting.

2018

LZF establishes seven funding categories:

- Access to Food, Housing, and Economic Opportunity
- Child and Youth Development and Education
- Civil and Human Rights Advocacy and Support
- Health Promotion and Accessibility for All
- Organizing and Support for Immigrants and Refugees
- LGBTQIA Community Support and Organizing
- Violence Prevention, Criminal Justice Reform and Family Outreach

2019

The Transformational Leadership Cohort (TLC) Program which supports grantee partner leaders with executive coaching launches. As of 2026, LZF has supported 56 leaders of current and former LZF grantee partner organizations through five TLC cohorts.

LZF welcomes Eric Esteves as its third Executive Director.

"I believe that our early days as an LZF grantee were absolutely formative for us and that your support enabled us to make it through much turbulence and uncertainty all these years. We also cherish that we are still able to attend workshops and kept informed about resources."



2020

LZF launches COVID-19 Emergency Response and Recovery Fund for its current and former LZF grantee partners.

LZF celebrates its 25th Anniversary.

By December, LZF awards over \$1 million in grants, the largest total dollar amount awarded in a single year.

2022

LZF's approves its newest 5-year strategic plan, in which it reaffirms LZF's existing mission statement and values and adopts a new vision statement for The Fund of, "a more just and equitable world where communities thrive because of the contributions and leadership of grassroots organizations."

Allison Picott is named as LZF's fourth Executive Director.

2023

LZF begins offering weekly Office Hours for grantee partners led by LZF Board Member Deborah Seidel.

In October, LZF receives a \$666,000 gift from the former Temple B'nai Israel of Revere to establish an endowed fund

to support LZF grassroots organization partners in Revere, Chelsea, Lynn, and along the North Shore over the next 18 years.

2024

LZF launches its Catalytic Consulting Program, which provides access to high-quality consulting support for grantee partners to work on a specific project.

LZF hosts its inaugural annual fundraiser: Light the Night at Alcove Boston, under the shadow of the Zakim Bridge.

2025

LZF celebrates its 30th Anniversary.

Rob Sherman, the last of LZF's founding board members, retires from the LZF board.

2026

LZF's annual fundraiser rebrands as The Zakim Light.

LZF completes its 30-Year Longitudinal Impact Study

In November, Tiffany Lau begins as LZF's fifth Executive Director.



Current Context

LZF operates within a philanthropic landscape that is undergoing significant change, and the need for the kind of trust-based, relationship-centered funding that defines LZF's model has never been more important.

Across the country, small and grassroots organizations working on social and racial justice face growing challenges: a difficult funding environment, shifting political priorities, reduced federal investment in community-based programs, and a philanthropic sector unsure about how to reduce transactional grantmaking practices in favor of transformational investments.

Drawing from data compiled by LZF staff from studies of the state of the nonprofit sector, there is plenty of reason for concern. Recent field research indicates that only 43% of U.S. nonprofits ended fiscal year 2025 with a surplus, while 69% experienced funding reductions and over 30% reduced staff size. 39% of nonprofits reported a deficit in FY25, up from 22% in FY22. At the same time, over 90% of nonprofit leaders report concerns about staff burnout, highlighting the strain on organizational capacity.

Against this backdrop, LZF grantee partner organizations demonstrate unusual resilience. Compared to sector benchmarks, LZF-supported organizations are significantly more likely to maintain financial stability, with 63% reporting a surplus and only 8% reporting deficits. Despite operating in high-need, community-based contexts, 87% of grantee partners expanded programming in response to increased demand, while

only 2% reported reductions in services. These findings suggest that LZF's approach through investing and supporting grassroots organizations enables both financial health and programmatic growth, even in a more limited funding environment.

Within Greater Boston, LZF occupies a distinctive niche. While larger foundations typically require established infrastructure, multi-year track records, and extensive reporting before awarding grants, LZF intentionally funds organizations at their earliest stages when access to flexible, unrestricted funding is most transformative. The Fund's model of multi-year grantmaking, light-touch reporting, and sustained relational engagement stands in contrast to most funders.

This context is important to consider in relation to this study and the relevance of the questions it seeks to answer. As the current political and funding climate places increased strain on the organizations LZF serves, The Fund's role as a trusted early funder, capacity builder, and community connector becomes increasingly critical. The findings of this study offer both a retrospective account of LZF's impact and also a basis for thinking about how to sustain and increase that impact in the years going forward.

1 Grundhoefer, Seara, et al. "State of Nonprofits 2026: What Funders Need to Know." The Center for Effective Philanthropy, 2026, cep.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/CEP_State_of_Nonprofits_2026_FNL.pdf.

Goals of the 30-Year Longitudinal Impact Study

This study was designed to answer three overarching questions:

Goal #1	Goal #2	Goal #3
What has LZF accomplished over the past 30 years, and how should its impact be understood and measured?	How do LZF grantees define success and what role has The Fund played in helping them achieve it?	How can LZF sustain and deepen its impact as it moves into its next chapter?

These questions were chosen because they align directly with three organizational priorities LZF identified at the outset of this study. First, The Fund aims to build greater organizational visibility, both to strengthen its fundraising capacity and to ensure that its distinctive model is clear and communicable to both current and new audiences. Second, LZF seeks to develop more concrete impact measures that can support its strategic plan, deepen its capacity building offerings, and support its communications with funders and partners. Third, the organization sees an opportunity to contribute more actively to philanthropic priority-setting by sharing what it has learned over 30 years in ways that advance field-level thinking about trust-based, intermediary philanthropy and capacity building for grassroots organizations.

Together, these goals frame this report as a document intended to help LZF understand where it has been, articulate what it stands for, and think clearly about where it is going.



Former LZF Executive Director Jude Goldman pictured with Dr. Gerald Gabeau of Immigrant Family Services Institute (funded 2015-2020) at Jude's retirement celebration in 2019.

"The world you see from your office is not the same as the world people see in their neighborhoods. Your thoughts about how to help get distorted if you don't get out and talk to people about how to create change."

—Lenny Zakim

Methodology

The study drew on three research methods, each designed to capture a dimension of LZF's work and impact.

The Lenny Zakim Fund staff selected Julia Gittleman Ph.D of Mendelsohn, Gittleman & Associates, LLC (MGA) to design and implement the longitudinal impact study. Rae Negron from Strategy with Intention, LLC was a member of the project team and a key partner in the study.

Grantee Survey (N=94)

A 26-question survey was developed and distributed to grantee partner organizations spanning the full 30 years of LZF's grantmaking history. The survey was designed to capture grantee organization's perspectives on their relationships with The Fund and to assess the impact of LZF's work across its three program areas: grantmaking, capacity building, and community building. The survey was distributed by LZF staff via SurveyMonkey and was open from January 12 to March 4, 2026. Ninety-four individuals began the survey; between 84 and 89 organizations completed the majority of questions.

Interviews (N=26)

In-depth interviews were conducted with 26 key partners to gain qualitative insight into the partnerships and relationships LZF has cultivated over three decades. Interview participants included philanthropic partners and collaborators, past and current grantee partner organizations, and past and current board members. Interviews focused on the nature and quality of LZF's relationships, the perceived impact of its grantmaking, capacity building and community building work, and perspectives on The Fund's role and potential within the broader philanthropic ecosystem.

Secondary Data Analysis and Historical Review

A quantitative analysis of LZF's complete grant history was conducted to document the depth and breadth of The Fund's grantmaking over 30 years. LZF staff coordinated an extensive data collection process covering all 428 current and former grantee partner organizations. The analysis examined grantmaking patterns year by year including total dollar amounts, number of grantee partner organizations, number of grants distributed, and average grant size, as well as multi-year grantmaking trends and total grant amounts across funding categories.

Grantee Partner Case Study

Fathers' UpLift

The country's first mental health and substance use treatment organization for fathers and families.
(Funded 2015-2017)



Co-founded in 2011 by husband-and-wife team, Dr. Charles Daniels, Jr. and Samantha Fils-Daniels, **Fathers' UpLift's** mission is to empower fathers striving to be a positive force in their children's lives. Having experienced fatherlessness as a child himself Dr. Daniels set out to help men show up for their children. While Fathers' UpLift primarily serves men, approximately 89% of whom identify as Black and/or Hispanic, the organization supports people of all backgrounds through direct services, reentry support, mother and father allyship, and workforce development.

Upon becoming a grantee partner in 2015, the organization was completely volunteer-run, operating with a \$31,000 annual operating budget and aspirations of serving 20 families that year. In their 2016 renewal application to LZF, Fathers' UpLift reflected on the capacity-building support they had received during their first year:

"We've benefited from the pro bono legal assistance from DLA Piper. We received guidance in obtaining our office space in Roxbury, MA. This was a challenging process. Nonetheless, the assistance we received from the attorney we were assigned was great. He was patient with us, explained the process, and represented our interests... We also received some great advice and support from Mrs. Beth Dill (LZF Board Member). She gave us

some helpful fundraising and budgeting tools that we plan on implementing this year. Another benefit would be the information that was shared at the spring training. Asking for money can be a difficult task. The presenter helped us look at fundraising in a different manner. This was a huge takeaway for our organization."

Fathers' UpLift received three years (2015-2017) of grant funding from LZF totaling \$50,000. By the end of 2017, their total reported operating revenue had grown to a little over \$200,000, allowing them to employ a paid staff of three who were responsible for serving 70 fathers and families. In 2018, Fathers' UpLift was chosen by the Social Innovation Forum as one of their 2018 Social Innovators; soon after, Dr. Daniels was named a 2019 Obama Foundation Fellow.

As of 2024, Fathers' UpLift employed a staff of 36 people and reported operating revenue of a little over \$2.8 million. Since their founding, Fathers' UpLift has served over 18,000 fathers and family members between its Dorchester office in Boston and Cincinnati, Ohio office, which opened in September 2025.

Key Findings

Five major themes emerged from the analysis of survey responses, interviews, and historical grant data. Taken together, they offer a comprehensive picture of what makes LZF distinctive, what its grantee partners value most, and where opportunities for growth and deepened impact lie.

Think Outside the Vox (funded 2024-Present) collaboratively builds Disability Justice and Disability Joy in the arts and culture sector by elevating disabled creatives through training, educating, consulting, and expanding sustainable employment opportunities.



Key Findings

Finding #1

Trust-Based, Relationship-Centered Philanthropy Is the Foundation of LZF’s Impact and Multi-Year Funding is Transformative.

A hallmark of what makes The Lenny Zakim Fund unique and what grantee partner organizations spoke to in interviews and in survey responses alike, is the deeply personal quality of their relationship with LZF. LZF’s model is rooted in genuine partnership: knowing grantee partner organizations and their leaders by name and by situation, engaging them as experts in their own communities, and maintaining a presence that is consistent, accessible, and non-judgmental. In a sector where many funder relationships feel transactional or evaluative, grantee partners describe LZF as something completely different. This culture of relationship-first philanthropy is not incidental to LZF’s impact, it is the mechanism through which impact flows.

In addition, LZF’s multi-year, unrestricted funding model is widely recognized by grantee partner organizations as a distinctive and powerful form of support that provides the stability that short-cycle project grants rarely allow. Over the 30-year history of The Fund, the structure of multi-year grantmaking has evolved and expanded, reflecting LZF’s ongoing effort to align long-term support with organizational readiness and field needs. LZF currently funds organizations for 5 years. Of the 428 grantee partner organizations in The Fund’s history, 97 organizations (22.7%) received 3 years of grants (the most common duration) while 15 organizations (3.5%) received between 10 and 20 years of LZF funding. At the same time, grantee partner organizations and partners raised thoughtful questions about transitions, particularly about what happens when multi-year support ends, and how organizations are prepared to be sustainable beyond the funding relationship.

“LZF leads with trust, accessibility, and a deep understanding of grassroots organizations, making the relationship feel collaborative rather than transactional.”

88% of survey respondents said they had built a trusting relationship with LZF through its multi-year grantmaking approach. Grantee partner organizations described this trust as both practically enabling and emotionally sustaining, a combination that is rare in their experience of philanthropy.

Finding #2

Early-Stage and Grassroots Organizations Depend on LZF in Ways No Other Funder Replicates.

LZF fills a critical and largely unoccupied niche, as it funds the smallest, most under-resourced organizations, which are often the ones that are too new or too small to meet the requirements of larger funders. For many grantee partners, LZF was not just helpful early on, it was essential for their survival and growth. Beyond the financial support itself, LZF’s endorsement functions as a form of social capital, a signal to other funders that an organization is credible, vetted, and worth backing.



Mayor Michelle Wu pictured with co-founders Priscilla Rwandarugali and Octavia Nankunda of **P&O Behavioral Health Initiative** (funded 2022-2026) at LZF’s 2022 Untold Stories event.

“It was like the first stamp of approval, if the Lenny Fund thought you were worth a shot, even if you were teeny tiny and scrappy, it meant something to other funders.”

Survey data demonstrates how central LZF has been to grantees’ organizational progress. 56% of respondents identified LZF as their first, or among their first, institutional funders. The ongoing effects of that early investment are clear.

95% of organizations rated LZF’s grantmaking opportunities as extremely valuable.

93% of respondents said LZF helped their organization become successful.

93% reported that LZF funding enabled them to better support underserved communities in Eastern Massachusetts.

89% said they had become more sustainable as a result of LZF funding.

Finding #3

Capacity Building Is Among LZF’s Most Valued Contributions, Especially When It Is Personalized.

Grantee partners consistently identify LZF’s capacity building offerings as transformative. What distinguishes LZF’s approach is the combination of practical skill development, individualized coaching, and a genuine responsiveness to where each organization actually is in its development. For many grantee partners, especially those led by first-time executive directors or community-rooted leaders without formal nonprofit training, LZF’s capacity building fills a gap that no other resource in their environment addresses. In addition, grantee partner organizations value this support because it is embedded in a relationship with LZF; it does not feel like a compliance requirement, but like genuine investment in their growth.



Heart of a Giant Foundation (funded 2023-Present) is a community health organization rooted in Mattapan, Dorchester, and Roxbury, offering free cardiometabolic screenings, blood pressure checks, and health education from local health workers.

“Beyond the grant dollars, the trainings, workshops, peer learning spaces, and capacity-building resources provided by LZF have been exponentially invaluable. The guidance has strengthened our fundraising strategy, governance practices, storytelling ability, and long-term organizational stability.”

Survey data confirm that the value grantee partner organizations place on capacity building is both widespread and deep.

85% of respondents rated LZF’s capacity building opportunities as extremely valuable.

89% reported that their staff gained knowledge that allowed them to work more effectively.

78% said as a result of participating in LZF capacity building activities, their leaders feel more confident, supported, and empowered to care for the communities they serve.

Over 70% reported they are in a position to grow, sustain operations, and have raised additional funds as a result.

Finding #4

LZF's Community and Network Building Is Inseparable from Capacity Building and Creates Lasting Value.

While grantmaking, capacity building, and community building are often described as three distinct pillars of LZF's work, grantee partner organizations experience them as fully interwoven. The relationships formed in community settings, for example at annual gatherings, award ceremonies, and convenings, are themselves a form of capacity building. Grantee partner organizations gain knowledge, referrals, and partnership opportunities through peer connections that would not exist without LZF creating the space. For executive directors of small organizations who often work in isolation, these connections are both professionally useful and personally sustaining.



Executive Director Allison Picott pictured with Founder Gordon Donkoh-Halm and Board Chair Susanne Curry of African Community Center of Lowell (funded 2025-Present) at LZF's 2025 Awards Ceremony.

“I have direct relationships now with several people who I would not have known about or met. I can email them directly and say, what do you think about this situation?”

Survey data confirm that the community building dimensions of LZF's work generate lasting, concrete outcomes for participating organizations.

73% of organizations rated LZF's community building opportunities as extremely valuable.

79% have been able to broaden their personal networks, reaching more people in their communities and beyond.

75% reported that their leadership and staff benefited from peer knowledge and resource sharing with other LZF grantee partners.

73% have been able to build lasting connections with peers through the LZF community.

Finding #5

LZF's Field Leadership is Highly Valued and is an Opportunity for Change.

Grantee partners, community partners, and funder peers consistently described LZF's model as exemplary and called for it to be replicated, written about, and advocated for. Given the current political and funding climate, where trust-based, grassroots-centered philanthropy is more necessary than ever, interviewees and grantee partner organizations expressed a clear desire to see LZF step into greater field-level visibility and assert a stronger public voice on behalf of the organizations and communities it serves.



Cultural Exchange Through Soccer - CETS (funded 2023-Present) seeks to empower youth from diverse communities to become leaders who will improve the city of Worcester through the playing, sharing, and teaching of soccer.

“LZF invests in the organization behind the work. They merge funding, capacity building, and ecosystem development. By combining leadership development with practical skills, LZF provides support that addresses the real challenges small, community-centered nonprofits face. The staff is engaged and accessible, and the peer cohort model enhances support. Together, these elements could not be replicated by any single funder relationship. This delivers confidence, connection, and capacity. That understanding, and their model to deliver on all three, sets this relationship apart.”

Implications *and* Next Steps

The findings of this study point toward several clear strategic opportunities for LZF as it moves forward. What follows are areas to consider related to the three priorities that motivated this study.

Influencing the Field Through Leadership

The clearest implication of this study is that LZF has earned a more prominent public role in shaping philanthropic practice. At a moment when trust-based philanthropy is gaining national attention and the needs of grassroots organizations are serious, LZF is positioned to be a leading voice. This might take the form of published thought leadership, participation in national philanthropic convenings, strategic partnerships with peer funders, or more proactive public communication about LZF's approach.

Strengthening Grantee Partner Transitions

The study surfaced a recurring question about what happens when multi-year funding relationships end. Grantee partner organizations who had received sustained support described the transition period as a vulnerable time, particularly for smaller organizations whose capacity gains during the funding period have not yet been fully institutionalized. LZF might consider developing more transition planning as part of its multi-year grant relationships. This could include structured conversations in the final year of a grant about sustainability, alumni network integration, and continued access to capacity building resources, as several grantee partners mentioned that capacity building resources were still available to them after they were no longer funded. Another suggestion heard from grantee partners was LZF connecting them to other potential

funders, whether that be through referrals, convenings or private communications.

Deepening and Communicating Impact

This study confirms that LZF's model generates significant, multi-dimensional impact but much of that impact has been invisible because it has not been systematically documented or communicated. A priority for the future should be developing a clear, accessible impact narrative that translates the findings of this study into language that resonates with funders, partners, board members, and potential donors. The quantitative data on grantee outcomes, combined with the qualitative richness of grantee voices, provides a powerful foundation for that narrative.

At the same time, LZF has an opportunity to move toward more ongoing, systematic impact measurement to build an evidence base that strengthens The Fund's credibility and enables continuous learning. Having the goal of not being burdensome for grantee partner organizations, simple, relationship-based data collection embedded in existing touchpoints such as annual convenings, could go a long way toward this goal.

Grantee Partner Case Study

Boston Cancer Support

One-stop cancer resource from diagnosis through treatment, by way of multi-organizational collaboration. (Funded 2018-2021)



Founded in 2014 by Susan Lebovits, [Boston Cancer Support](#) (BCS) was a nonprofit in Massachusetts created for the people who have been touched by cancer, whether as a patient, friend, caregiver, or healthcare professional. BCS provided information on financial aid opportunities, resources for clinical trials, free or subsidized lodging, support groups to fit various needs, and free transportation to treatments; as well as educational opportunities to patient navigators, nurses, social workers, community health workers, and organizations that supported cancer patients and their families.

LZF provided BCS with four years of grant funding totaling \$27,500. BCS credits LZF's capacity-building program with helping them make improvements, as described in their 2018 year-end written self-evaluation:

"The LZF workshops have made a huge difference in BCS's continued goal toward autonomy. As a result of attending the meetings we have spent more time focusing on donor relations, donor stewardship and program management. The workshops have helped us become more efficient and validated the need to eventually hire part-time staff..."

Similarly, in Boston Cancer Support's 2019 grant renewal application to LZF, the organization wrote about the meaningful

connections BCS has made with other LZF grantees and how they've continued to benefit from LZF's educational offerings:

"We have met so many wonderful, supportive grantees at the various seminars where we've been able to exchange ideas... Each event brings us closer to other grantees. The amount of support and education that we have received so far from The Lenny Zakim Fund has been tremendous."

During the course of BCS' tenure as an LZF grantee partner, its total net assets grew from \$83,729 at the beginning of 2018 to \$160,935 at the beginning of 2021. By the end of 2021, BCS transferred \$162,928 in its remaining total assets to the Joe Andruzzi Foundation in advance of the organizations' merger in early 2022.

The Joe Andruzzi Foundation (JAF) was founded in 2008 by and named for former New England Patriots three-time Super Bowl-winning offensive guard Joe Andruzzi and his wife, Jen. Located in Attleboro, MA, JAF helps cancer patients and their families throughout New England through its financial assistance program as well as BCS's Treatment Transport and Randi Friedman Wellness Programs. BCS Founder Susan Lebovits went on to found MA nonprofit Ease Into Aging, which continues to operate today.

Kids in Tech

Giving kids the skills they need to succeed in the 21st century and beyond. (Funded 2018-2022)



In 2013, Olu Ibrahim set out to do something simple and ambitious at once: get kids in Lowell, Massachusetts excited about technology before the world convinced them it wasn't for them. [Kids in Tech's](#) mission is to excite, educate, and empower children ages 8 to 14 to use technology, fostering a lifelong interest through free, hands-on STEM programming. Working alongside organizational and educational partners, the organization brings volunteers directly into classrooms to connect science with students' interests, teaching everything from coding and robotics to wearable tech and audiovisual production. The program reaches kids from low-income households who might otherwise have no access to this kind of education.

Kids in Tech became an LZF grantee partner in 2018, when the organization was still finding its footing: one full-time and five part-time staff, working alongside volunteers to serve 95 students. The organization continued to grow through their time with LZF, taking advantage of capacity-building support and receiving a total of \$69,000 in grants. In their 2018 year-end report, they wrote:

["\[LZF\] helped us move towards independence and self-sufficiency in a number of areas from strategic planning to marketing to building financial infrastructure and much more. As a young nonprofit, these capacity-building opportunities enabled](#)

[our organization and our leaders to develop competencies and skills that make us more effective and sustainable, thus increasing the potential for Kids in Tech to enrich lives of youth in the Greater Lowell area."](#)

Thanks to LZF capacity-building seminars, Kids in Tech was able to update their employee handbook, build a strategy for net-asset-based language in donor communications, and draft volunteer liability waivers. In 2020, Kids in Tech was named a partner of Massachusetts STEM Week, a role that's now an annual fixture for the organization. By 2022, Kids in Tech's annual revenue had grown by \$512,313.

Two years after their final LZF grant, Kids in Tech honored The Fund with their inaugural "Philanthropic Partner Award." In 2024, Kids in Tech was named one of the Social Innovation Forum's Social Innovators. Today, Kids in Tech calls itself a "statewide organization." As Kids in Tech prepares to launch a STEM Innovation Lab in Boston's Seaport, Olu remains committed to giving back to future generations of LZF grantee partners, participating as an application evaluator in LZF's annual grant cycle.

Conclusion

Thirty years ago, The Lenny Zakim Fund began with a simple but radical premise: that the smallest organizations, doing urgent work, in under-resourced communities, would benefit from a funder who believes in them before anyone else does.

That premise has not changed. What has changed is the scale of The Fund's impact, the depth of its relationships, and the data that makes the case that its model is more compelling than ever.

The findings of this study documents about what trust-based, relationship-centered philanthropy produces when practiced with consistency over decades. It empowers organizations that grow into thriving community institutions. It empowers leaders who are more confident, skilled, and connected. It empowers a network of grassroots nonprofits that support one another, learn from one another, and collectively move the needle on social, economic, and racial justice in eastern Massachusetts.

The organizations in LZF's grantee partners community have said, in both the survey and

in interviews, that what The Fund provides cannot easily be replicated or replaced. The work now is to ensure that more organizations and communities can access what LZF has spent three decades learning how to offer, and to communicate why that kind of partnership matters.

In addition, this study is an invitation to consider how LZF can sustain and deepen what it has built by developing clearer impact measures, by strengthening the transitions that grantee partner organizations navigate as funding relationships evolve, and by stepping into the field leadership role that its thirty-year track record has earned.

LZF began as a bridge between funders and grassroots organizations, between aspiration and capacity, between isolation and community. Thirty years later, that bridge is stronger than ever.

[Mercy Meals and More](#) (funded 2023-Present) provides free meals, clothing and foot care to neighbors in need, while working to create a healthy atmosphere that builds networks of friends and a stronger community in New Bedford.



African Bridge Network

Supporting Skilled Immigrants and Turning Potential Into Reality (Funded 2018-2022)

Founded in 2015 by a group of African immigrants, **African Bridge Network (ABN)** works to build a supportive community which values and strengthens the qualifications and experiences of Africans and other skilled immigrants, helping them reach their full career potential. Massachusetts' fast-growing African-born immigrant community, despite being highly proficient in English and highly educated, statistically end up in jobs that underutilize their skills.

In 2018, after piloting their program successfully, ABN became a LZF grantee partner. In their 2019 Renewal Application, African Bridge Network reflected on the importance of LZF's support:

"As ABN transitions from the first three years of our pilot phase, the knowledge gained at LZF trainings on budgeting, program evaluation, individual donor campaigns, among others, have been tremendously helpful to our transition process. LZF has been a real champion of our mission."

African Bridge Network received five years (2018-2022) of grant funding from LZF totaling \$55,000. In this period, ABN's total reported annual operating revenue grew by over \$200,000, enabling them to begin paying staff members, including hiring founder Emmanuel Owusu as Executive Director. Owusu participated in the first cohort of LZF's Transformational Leadership

Cohort (TLC) Program. Midway through his experience, Emmanuel reflected:

"This transition was and still is a big leap of faith into the unfamiliar waters. I needed to make sure I got my role right the first time, and that requires some form of executive coach. TLC is meeting this need for me, and even more. I count myself to be fortunate to be surrounded by other Executive Directors whom I can learn from and receive support. I don't need to engage in trial and error practices, as they are more than willing to share their experience, tested methods, and templates with me... I look forward to the monthly training sessions, to the community and the knowledge... There aren't enough programs like LZF's TLC out there."

In 2025, African Bridge Network celebrated their 10th Anniversary. In this past decade, they've gone from serving 50 clients to 450 clients annually; with over 2,300 skilled immigrants served in total. Their programming now includes certification programs, apprenticeships, and fellowship opportunities. ABN remains an active member of the LZF community, with Emmanuel Owusu serving as a member of The Lenny Zakim Fund's Board of Directors since 2024.



Neighbors United for a Better East Boston - NUBE (Funded 2017-2020, 2022-2026) is a civic engagement grassroots organization that cultivates a diverse group of residents who gain concrete skills in electoral organizing and a common understanding of the challenges facing their community.

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The Lenny Zakim Fund

Grantee Partner Organizations 1996 – 2025

2Gether We Eat
365Dad
3rd EyE Youth Empowerment
A Better Tomorrow Services
A Different September Foundation
A Suitable Image
Aaron’s Presents
Adaptive Sports New England
African and American Friendship
African Bridge Network
African Community Center of Lowell
African Community Economic Development of New England (ACEDONE)
Africano Waltham
AfterSchool Partners
Aid to Incarcerated Mothers
Albert D. Holland High School of Technology
All Dorchester Sports & Leadership
Alray Scholars Program
American Chinese Christian Educational and Social Services (ACCESS)
Amplifyme
Angkor Dance Troupe
Ansaar of Worcester Inc
Apprentice Learning
Asian American Support and Resource Agency (AASRA)
Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence
Asian Women For Health
Association of Haitian Women in Boston
Association of Liberians of the Merrimack Valley
Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative
Autism Sprinter
Backyard Growers
BalletRox
Beantown Society
beheard.world
Berea Seventh Day Adventist Academy
Bethel A.M.E. Church
Bird Street Community Center
Black and Pink Massachusetts
Black Economic Justice Institute
BMT Support Online
Bobby Mendes Peace Legacy
bodhi & mind yoga
Bosnian Community Center for Resource Development (BCCRD)
Boston Affordable Housing Coalition
Boston Aging Concerns – Young & Old United (BAC-YOU)
Boston Area Gleaners
Boston Cancer Support
Boston Center for Independent Living
Boston Children Services
Boston Children’s Chorus
Boston City Singers
Boston Explorers
Boston GLASS Community Center
Boston Healthcare For Homeless
Boston LesBiGay Urban Foundation
Boston Medical Center
Boston Missionary Baptist Community Center (BMBCC)
Boston Neighborhood Community Land Trust
Boston Raiders Youth Football & Cheer (BRYFC)
Boston Workers Alliance
Boston Youth Wrestling
Bottom Line
Brazilian Women’s Group
Brazilian Worker Center
Bread & Roses Housing Development
Bread of Life
Brockton Interfaith Community (BIC)
Brockton Neighborhood Health Center
Brockton Workers Alliance
Brookview House
Bryce’s Journey
Building Bridges Through Music
Cape Ann Art Haven
Cape Verdean Association of Boston
Cape Verdean Community Unido (CVC Unido)
Career Collaborative
Caribbean U-Turn
Casa Myrna
Catholic Charities Boston
Center for Cooperative Development and Solidarity (CCDS)
Center for Economic Democracy
Center To Support Immigrant Organizing
Centro Comunitario De Trabajadores (CCT)
Centro Latino de Chelsea
Centro Presente
Charles River Health Center
Charlestown Youth Ministry
Chica Project
Children’s Services of Roxbury
Chinese Culture Connection
Chinese Progressive Association
Circus Up
Citizens For Safety
City Life/Vida Urbana
City Mission Society of Boston
City School
City Stage Company

City Strings United
City Year
CityKicks
Cleaveland-Marshall Community Center
Coaching For Change
Coalition for Social Justice Education Fund
CodeSquad
Codman Academy Charter School
Colonel Daniel Marr Boys and Girls Club
Committee for Boston Public Housing
Communities Together
Community Caring Clinic
Community Cooks
Community Economic Development Center of New Bedford (CEDC)
Community Educational Center Of The North End and East Boston
Community Servings
Concerned Citizens Committee
Cooperative Artists Institute
Cooperative Economics for Women (CEW)
Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries
Council of Churches of Greater Springfield
Countdown to Kindergarten
Cultural Exchange Through Soccer (CETS)
Dana Farber Cancer Institute
DEAFinitely
DeeDee’s Cry: Suicide Prevention & Family Support
Dennis McLaughlin House
Dimock Community Health Center
Disability Policy Consortium
Discover Roxbury
Doc Wayne Youth Services
Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation
Dream Out Loud Center
DREAMFAR High School Marathon
Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative
East African Community Outreach
East Boston Adult Education Center
East Boston Community Council
East Boston Community Soup Kitchen
East Boston Social Centers
East End House
Educational Development Group
Empowering People For Inclusive Communities (EPIC)
Encuentro Diaspora Afro
English at Large
Eritrean American Civic Association
Essex County Community Organization (ECCO)
Etgar L’Noar
EV Kids

Express Yourself
Families Creating Together
Families First
Families For Justice As Healing
Fathers’ Uplift
Feminine Empowerment Movement Slam
Firelech Theater
First Five Project
Food Link
For Kids Only
Found In Translation
Franklin Park Coalition
Friends Of The Rafael Hernandez School
Friends of the William E. Carter School
Friends of Yemin Orde
Friends of Youth Opportunity Boston
FriendshipWorks
Fuller Craft Museum
Future Chefs
Gateways Organization
Generations After
Genuine Voices
Girls’ LEAP
Global Ministries Christian Church
Global Village Farms
Grace Renaissance Academic Studies Program (GRASP)
Gratis Healthcare
Greater Boston Food Bank
Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO)
Greater Boston Morehouse College Alumni
Greater Boston PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)
Greater Four Corners Action Coalition
Greater Lawrence Family Health Center (GLFHC)
Groundwork Southcoast
Haddis Girma Continuity Forum
Haitian American Youth Soccer
Haitian Coalition of Somerville
Haitian Multi-Service Center
Haley After School Program
Hands To Heart Center – Yoga for the People
Haven Project
Hawthorne Youth & Community Center
Health Care for All
Health Care Without Walls
Healthy Malden
Healthy Waltham
Heart of a Giant Foundation
Hearts and Noses Hospital Clown Troupe
Hebron Food Pantry
HomeStart
HopeWell
Horizons for Homeless Children
Hospitality Homes
Hull Lifesaving Museum
Hyde Square Task Force
I Have A Future
Immigrant Family Service Institute (IFSI)
InnerCity Weightlifting
Inquilnas Boricuas en Accion (IBA)
Institute for Asian American Studies at Umass Boston
Institute for Global Youth Development Programs

Institute for Pan African Cultural Education (PACE)
Island of Hope
Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation (NDC) / Jobs for Jamaica Plain
James P. Timilty Middle School
JCC of Greater Boston
Jewish Family and Children’s Services
Jewish Organizing Institute and Network for Justice (JOIN for Justice)
John Andrew Mazie Memorial Foundation
John W. McCormack Middle School
Joseph C. Cremona Horticultural Therapy Program (JCCHT)
Journeys Of Hope
JOYweavers
Justice At Work
Kids Can Cook
Kids In Tech
KodeConnect
La Colaborativa
La Piñata – The Latin American Cultural Family Network
Lamplight Women’s Literacy Center
Latin American Health Institute
Latin American Planning and Development (LAPD)
LEAP for Education
Learning Works
Legendary Legacies
Lena Park CDC
Level Ground Mixed Martial Arts
Literations
Living Independently for Equality (LIFE Center)
Louis D. Brown Peace Institute
Love Life Now Foundation
Lucy’s Love Bus
Lynn Neighbor To Neighbor
Lynn United For Change Empowerment Project
Lynn Worker Center
Lynn Youth Street Outreach Advocacy (LYSOA)
Madison Park Development Corporation
Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy
Massachusetts Coalition of Domestic Workers
Massachusetts Temporary Protected Status Committee
Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition
Matahari Women Workers’ Center
Mattapan Youth Soccer League
Mercy Meals & More
Merrimack Valley Food Bank
Merrimack Valley Project
Mill City Grows
Mission Hill Youth Collaborative
Mission Main Resident Services
Mission Works
MissionSAFE
Mobile Diagnostics Services (MDS)
Moreland Affordable Housing Corporation
Most Precious Blood Church
Mount Olives Community Center
Multi-Service Center

Multicultural Dropout Outreach Collaborative
musiConnects
Muslim Athletic League
Muslim Justice League
My Brother’s Keeper 617
My Life My Choice
Mystic Learning Center
Neighborhood Counseling and Community Services
Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH)
Neighborhood School
Neighbors United for a Better East Boston (NUBE)
Neighbors Who Care
New England Coalition For Cancer Survivorship
New England Community Project
New England Medical Association
New England Youth Soccer
New Lynn Coalition
New Start Project
Nigerian American Multi-Service Association (NAMSA)
Notre Dame Cristo Rey High School
Notre Dame Education Center
Ohketeau Cultural Center
On Common Ground
On The Rise
One Can Help
ONE Lowell
Open Door Immigration Services (ODIS)
Our Deaf Survivors Center
Our Place Theater Project
Our Restorative Justice
Our Space Our Place
OUT MetroWest
OutstandingLife
P&O Behavioral Health Initiative
ParentChild+
Parenting Resource Associates
Partakers
Partners in Health
Peace At Home
Pediatric Respite Task Force
Phillips Brooks House Association
PieRSquared
Pinnacle Partnerships
Pleasant Street Neighborhood Network Center
Political Asylum / Immigration Representation Project (PAIR Project)
Prep Solutions
Pride Productions
Project 10 East
Project FREE
Project Hip-Hop
Project R.I.G.H.T.
Queer History Boston
Quincy-Geneva Housing Corporation / New Vision CDC
Rachel’s Table
Raising Our Children’s Children
RAW Art Works
Reclaim Roxbury
Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center (RIAC),



Vòng Tay Cha Mẹ Việt – The Circle of Vietnamese Parents (Funded 2025–Present) empowers and uplifts Vietnamese-speaking families of children with disabilities by providing the resources, education, and advocacy needed to navigate the complexities of healthcare, education, and social support systems.

Refugee Immigration Ministry (RIM)
Refugees & Immigrants Cultural
Empowerment Massachusetts (RICEMA)
Resiliency for Life
Resilient Coders
Resilient Sisterhood Project
Revive In Action
Rian Immigrant Center
Right to the City Boston
Rise Above Foundation
ROCA
Roxbury Comprehensive Community Health
Center
Safe City Dorchester
Safe Haven Project
Safe Havens: The Interfaith Partnership
Against Domestic Violence
Saheli
Saint Paul's Victory Assembly of God
Church
SCIboston
Science Club For Girls
Secret Treasures Are N Demand (S.T.A.N.D.)
Si, Se Puede
Sibling Connections
Sister Mary Hart Children's Programs
Sisters Unchained
Sitters for Scholars
So The Arts Never Die (STAND)
Social Capital (SCI)
Sociedad Latina
Solutions at Work
Somali Development Center
Somali Parents Advocacy Center for
Education (SPACE)
Somerville Commission for Women
Somerville Community Corporation
Songbird Sings
South Boston en Acción
South End/Lower Roxbury Youth Workers
Alliance
South Sudanese Enrichment for Families
Southcoast LGBTQ+ Network
SpeakOUT Boston

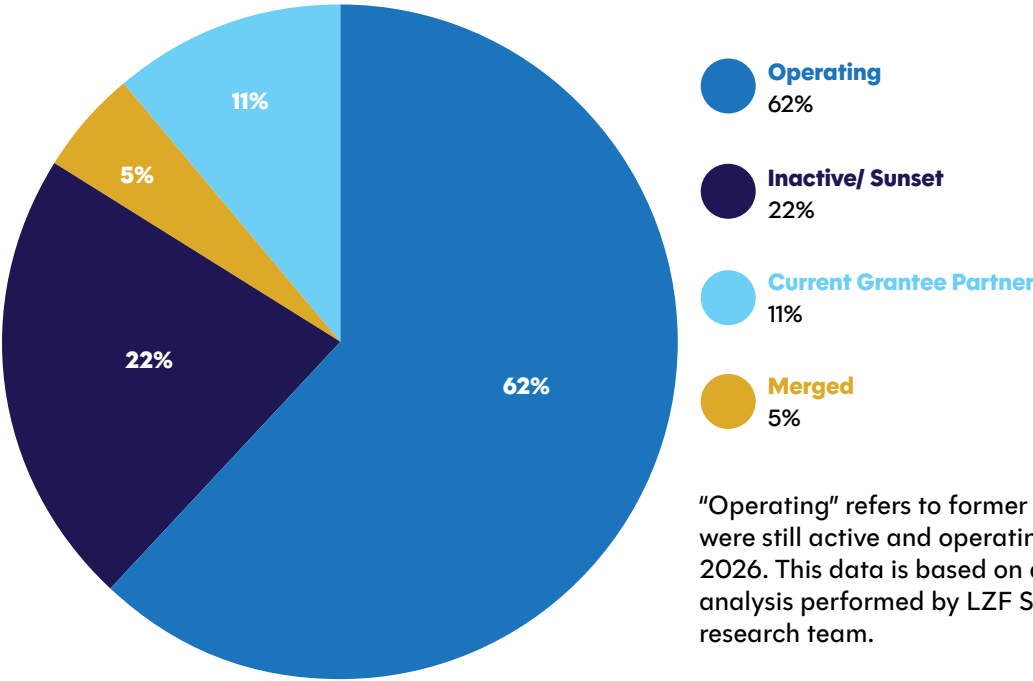
SpeakSooner
SPOKE
Spontaneous Celebrations
Sportsmen's Tennis Club
St. Anthony's Parish
St. Mark Community Education Program
Starlight Children's Foundation
Steps to Success (STS)
Stories Inspiring Movements (SIM)
Street Peace
Talking Information Center
Teen JUST-US at Temple Israel
Teen Voices
Teens Against Gang Violence
The BELL Foundation
The Boston Foundation
The Boston Project Ministries
The Bridge Center
The Children's Room Center for Grieving
Children and Teenagers
The Dream Network
The Food Project
The Knight News
The Resolution Center
The Resource and Reclamation Center
The SAMFund for Young Adult Survivors of
Cancer (Surviving and Moving Forward)
The TRUST Project
The Upward Project
The Welcome Project
Think Outside the Vox
THRIVE Communities Massachusetts
To the Moon and Back
Top Notch Scholars
Transformational Prison Project
Transition House
Translate Gender
Troubadour
Union of Minority Neighborhoods
United Interfaith Action Of Southeastern
MA (UIA)
United Methodists Urban Services
United Teen Equality Center (UTEC)
Universal Human Rights International

Up You Mighty Race Performing Arts
Urban Dreams
Urban PowerHouse
Venturing Out
VietAID
Virginia Thurston Healing Garden
Vong Tay Cha Me Viet
Waypoint Adventure
We Are Better Together Warren Daniel
Hairston Project
WEATOC
West End House Boys and Girls Club of
Allston-Brighton
What's Up Magazine (Spare Change News)
Whittier Street Health Center
Women Encouraging Empowerment (WEE)
Women's Institute for Housing and
Economic Development
Women's Supported Housing And
Empowerment
Women's Theological Center (WTC)
Worcester Interfaith
Worcester Refugee Assistance Project
(WRAP)
WordPowered
Yad Chessed Fund
Yellow Brick Road Project
Yellow Jackets Youth Organization
Yemin Orde Youth Village
Young Graffiti Masters
Youth and Family Enrichment Services
(YOFES)
Youth Hub
Youth Justice and Power Union
Youth on Fire
YWCA Malden
YWCA of Lawrence
ZUMIX

Data Analysis Highlights

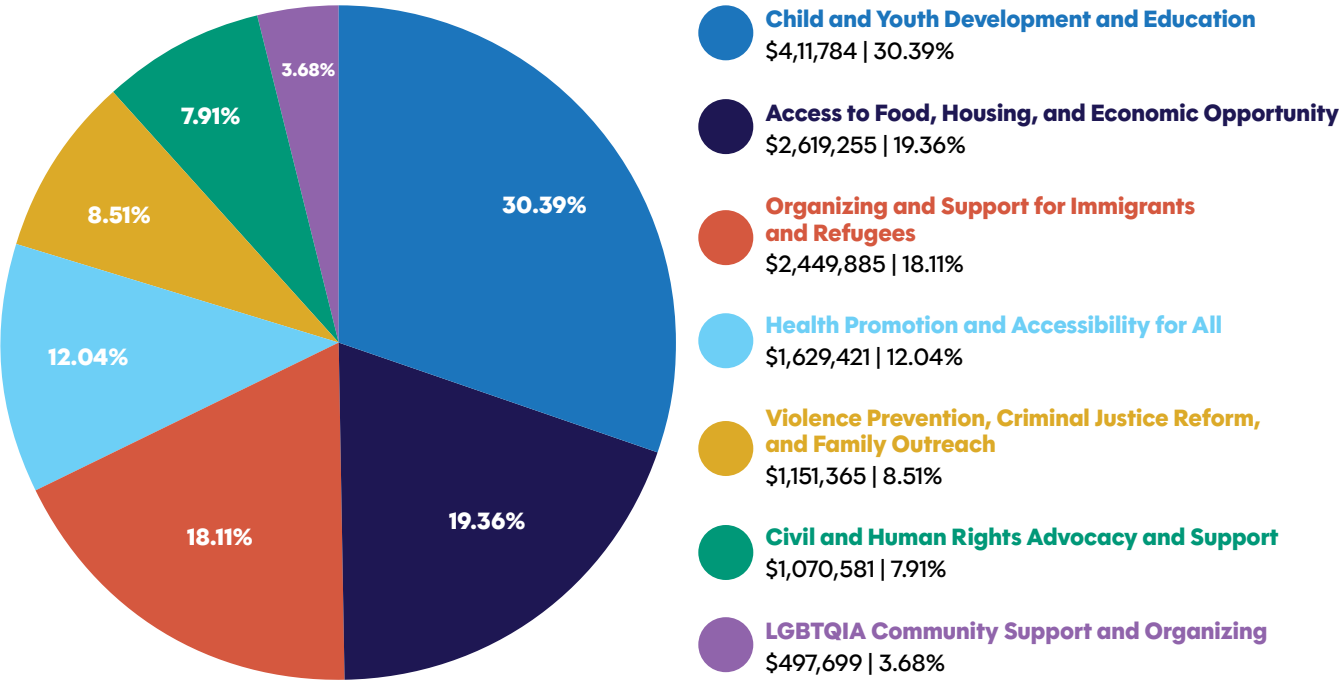
Below are highlights from the data analysis of LZF's 30-year grantmaking activity.

Grantee Partner Outcomes



"Operating" refers to former grantee partners who were still active and operating as nonprofits as of July 2026. This data is based on an additional internal data analysis performed by LZF Staff, not by this report's research team.

Total Funding per LZF Funding Area



Survey Quantitative Data Analysis Highlights (N=94)

Below are highlights of the quantitative data analysis of the LZF Grantee Survey for 30 Year Longitudinal Impact. The analysis includes descriptive data, participation in LZF opportunities and organizational impact.

Identifies as Black, Indigenous, or a Person of Color	CEO or Executive Director (N=90)	Senior Leadership Team (N=89)
Yes	52%	84%
Top Grantmaking Opportunities		Top Capacity Building Opportunities
Challenge Match	87%	Seminars95%
		Annual Institute Learning Day68%
LZF was the first (or among the first) institutional funder		Tranformational Leadership Cohort (TLC)39%
Yes	56%	Top Community Building Opportunities
		Annual Awards Ceremony84%
LZF helped my organization become successful		Annual Grantee Gathering66%
Yes	93%	Virtual Welcome Sessions39%

The Lenny Zakim Fund Additional Grants

In addition to annual grant making, LZF has distributed funding for special programs, to celebrate milestones and to meet urgent needs in critical times.

1996 - 2004 (estimated)

Matching grants with funds sourced by LZF through referral of grantee partners to philanthropic partners. This has since evolved into LZF’s current “Challenge Match” program where LZF matches new and increased donations achieved by the grantee partner.

2006 - 2010

- Young Leaders (2007 - 2010)
- Summer Youth Programming (2008 - 2009)
- Donor Advised Grants (2009 - 2010)
- Summer Scholars Grant (2010)
- Caturano Regrant (2010)
- Summer Grants (2008 - 2018)

2011 - 2015

- Young Leaders (2011 - 2013)
- Donor Advised Grants (2011 - 2013)
- Rashi School Regrant (2015)
- Special Anniversary Grants (2015)
- Summer Grants (2008 - 2018)

2016 - 2020

- LGBTQ+ Grants (2016)
- Temporary Protected Status and DACA Grants w/ Hyams Foundation (2016 - 2019)
- COVID Emergency Grants (2020)
- TLC Executive Coaching Program Grant (2020)
- Summer Grants (2008 - 2018)

2021 - 2026

- COVID Emergency Grants (2021 - 2022)
- Catalytic Consulting (2024 - 2026)

Additional Special Grants

- Hull Life Saving Museum Grant
- MA Transgender Political Coalition



The Lenny Zakim Fund

BRIDGING COMMUNITIES

The Lenny Zakim Fund works to develop deep relationships and builds bridges among people and communities to advance social, economic, and racial justice. Our mission is to listen to those most impacted by inequity and provide the funding, essential resources, and support they need to create lasting change. We envision a more just and equitable world where communities thrive because of the contributions and leadership of grassroots organizations.

thelennyzakimfund.org

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