



ANNUAL REPORT 2021





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LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Community,

While the country has begun rebuilding from the deepest throes of COVID-19, there is still much work to be done. Communities of color have been disproportionately affected by the social, economic, and health consequences of the pandemic. The GGE staff and community have responded to these challenges with an admirable level of dedication, innovation, and partnership.

We have navigated an ever-evolving political and funding environment to work intergenerationally, through a Black feminist lens, to center Black girls and nonbinary and gender-expansive young people of color

through policy and advocacy, youth-led programming, and culture change work to achieve gender and racial justice. Responding to the impact of the pandemic and massive political upheavals, our team deepened our commitment to people by reinforcing and creating programs that focus on care, healing, support and joy.

GGE and partners advocated for NYC school reopening plans that focused on safety and well-being instead of policing and punishment. At the state level, we called for Andrew Cuomo to resign his governor post and face full accountability for his actions. GGE program participants also effected change at the national level, participating in listening sessions and giving input into the recent National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality.

The accomplishments of this year represent the latest in a long



her/theirstory of movement building. Our Sisters in Strength (SIS) program has been an anchor to GGE's youth organizing work, encouraging young people to assume leadership roles and address the impact of sexual abuse and social injustice on cis and trans girls and gender non-conforming youth.

This program served as the first iteration of "me too," and when the #MeToo movement was amplified in 2017, it was GGE who publicly named next steps. Our Young Women's Advisory Council (YWAC) is in its sixth year and continues to work with city and national movement leaders to inspire adoption of local young women's initiatives throughout the country.

GGE's movement building and policy work centers the voices and needs of cis and trans girls of color and gender-nonconforming youth, and often those needs are at school. In 2016, we released The Schools Girls Deserve report, which was informed by a participatory action research (PAR) with over 100 New York City public school students and lays

out policy strategies to create school environments that foster safety, equity, and learning.

In 2019, we won the battle to add more Title IX coordinators to NYC schools, giving students more access to resources that protect their civil rights. This impressive dedication has drawn attention and support: GGE's work, staff and youth organizers have been featured in an increasingly diverse array of news and popular media outlets.

As Girls for Gender Equity enters its 20th year, we are at a critical inflection point. We know that we are part of a bigger herstory, and I am thankful to be in community with you. Without your continued support we would not be able to serve our mission. I hope that we can count on you during this upcoming Season of Giving. I invite you to go to our Brooklyn Gives webpage and give what you can.

Onward,

Founder, President and CEO
Girls For Gender Equity



ABOUT GGE

Our Mission

Girls for Gender Equity (GGE) works intergenerationally, through a Black feminist lens, to center the leadership of Black girls and gender expansive young people of color in reshaping culture and policy through advocacy, youth-led programming, and narrative shift work to achieve gender and racial justice. We believe this is the moral and economic imperative of our time.

Our Vision

We are co-creating a world where Black girls and gender-expansive young people of color have

opportunities to lead in the design of policies in their schools and in government to withstand and dismantle structural barriers that prevent them from succeeding and thriving on their own terms. By affirming and investing in the leadership of communities who have long been ignored and sidelined by public policy, we as a nation can bring our values to life. We do this work because we know young people will lead us to a radically different world where we all experience freedom, safety, and joy in our lives – a world that is possible and within reach.



BOARD MEMBERS



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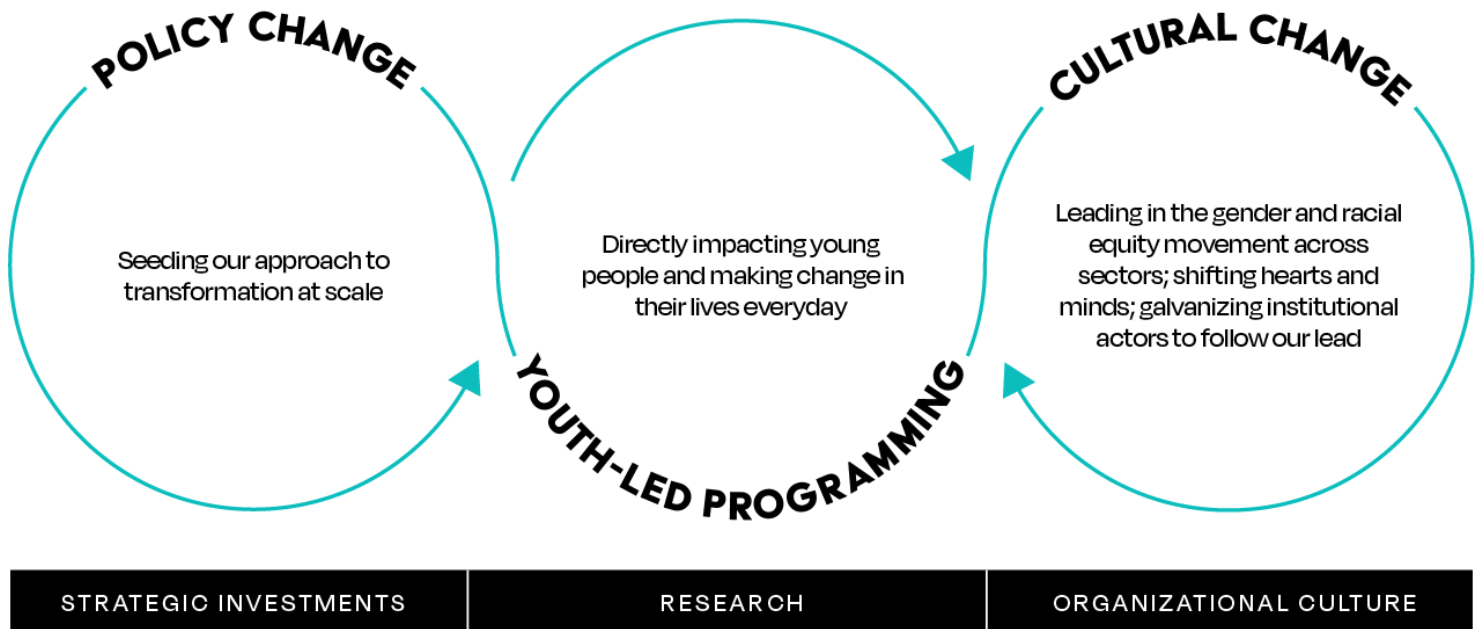
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Development

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HOW WE APPROACH CHANGE



Impact Model

Girls for Gender Equity (GGE) works intergenerationally, through a Black feminist lens, to center the leadership of Black girls and gender-expansive young people of color in reshaping culture and policy through advocacy, youth-led programming, and narrative shift to achieve gender and racial justice. We believe this is the moral and economic imperative of our time.

Theory of Change

IF we center and uplift cis and trans girls of color and gender nonconforming youth of color through programs, campaigns, and initiatives grounded in 1) Black feminism, 2) a strengths-based

and intergenerational eco-systemic social work approach, 3) positive youth development model, and 4) popular education

THEN an emerging critical mass of folks dedicated to gender and racial justice will lead an intergenerational movement to end structural, raced-gender based violence, exclusion, and discrimination

BECAUSE we believe supporting the positive, holistic, and critically conscious leadership development of young folks with a gender lens will help young folks use their expertise to spur transformative change for individuals, schools, communities, cities, and states, with national and global impact.



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Something I appreciate, respect, and love about our community is the openness and sense of community that I have felt since the first day of program. One gift our community has given me is to feel comfortable sharing my voice and my thoughts with a group. One time I felt especially close to our community was when we played family feud before we went on Christmas break, we all had our food together, and we laughed and had so much fun. –A.J.

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YOUTH PROGRAMMING

JUSTUS



JustUs, launched in December 2020, is New York City's first gender-responsive diversion program for Brooklyn-based trans and cis girls and LGB/GNCNB young people involved in or at risk for involvement in the juvenile justice system. In collaboration with...ACS, STEPS to End Family Violence, GGE will deliver the 3-year program to shift the framework around the experience.

SIS



Sisters In Strength (SIS) began in 2004 as a program introducing cis and trans girls of color to the basics of community organizing and training youth to investigate the inequities in their own communities and organize for change. SIS' programmatic goal has evolved and now SIS provides space for survivor-centered, healing justice approaches in the movement to end gender based violence, sexual violence, and child sexual assault.

YWAC



Young Women's Advisory Council (YWAC), created in 2015 during the groundbreaking NYC Young Women's Initiative, is a year-long, paid program where cis and trans women and girls and gender non-conforming young people of color ages 16-24 work to inform policy, program, research, and funding recommendations for New York City. YWAC members engage in youth organizing and civic engagement strategies to push for transformative change.

ALL



In response to the pandemic, mass uprisings, calls for racial justice, and the upcoming NYC mayoral and city council elections, the GGE community came together to assess and create a response that would support the advocacy and healing of young people in our NYC-based programming. A Liberation Legacy (ALL) is a time-limited joint project between Sisters in Strength (SIS) and the Young Women's Advisory Council (YWAC) to amplify the voices of young people during this critical, pandemic time in NYC.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

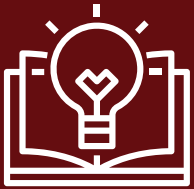


55

Individual youth programming sessions for A.L.L.

2600+

collective hours of youth programming delivered



1

Virtual Meeting Facilitated Entirely by Young People for NY City Council

2

Town Halls organized by youth



148

Youth Served

100+

COVID Care packages sent to young people



\$120,780

Amount spent on individual stipends to youth participants

includes crisis-based stipends that supported legal aid and mental health counseling

2

"So We Can Thrive" Survivorship Round Tables





Civilian Complaint Review Board Rulemaking

Launching the State of Black Girls in New York State & Passing Incurable

Influencing the NYC Racial Justice Commission

9

Center For Urban Pedagogy Public Access Design project

In March 2020, GGE partnered with Center for Urban Pedagogy Public Access Design project, a collaborative process for generating visual public policy tools alongside a graphic artist. "Hey That's Not OK", was created: a pamphlet breaking down gender-based violence, how to report it, where to get support, and the importance of consent. Following the release, the NYCDOE Office of School Wellness Programs reached out to GGE to collaborate and bring 1,500 pamphlets into nurses' offices and school-based health programs in middle and high schools.

A National Agenda For Black Girls

A National Agenda for Black Girls (NABG) was launched in November 2019 to build political momentum and center the voices and policy priorities of Black girls and gender expansive youth as the 2020 presidential election approached. Alongside organizational partners, GGE recruited 100 youth organizers representing over 20 states to engage in political education, storytelling and narrative shift work, and federal organizing.

The White House

GGE youth organizers created the Presidential Candidate Questionnaire and engaged several campaigns to complete the questionnaire. This led to a conversation Joe Biden's Senior Advisor where GGE could probe the campaign on its commitment to supporting Black girls and women. GGE youth engaged in five White House listening sessions, leading and

conversations centered on Black girls, exploring systems that impact youth of color, trans and LGBTQ youth. NABG created a comprehensive policy memo to the White House Gender Policy Council with recommendations for expanding education justice and opportunity, ending gender-based violence and building a culture of consent, immigration justice, and passing a Black Girl Bill of Rights. This memo influenced the first National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality.

National and Local Engagement

GGE youth, alongside Audre Lorde Project, NYC Anti-Violence Project, Public Science Project, and NYCLU, led the LGBTQ+ Town Hall to Redefine Community Safety for Communities United for Police Reform. GGE was also a panel participant for the United Nations International Day of the Girl Virtual Forum.

Youth Engagement

NABG youth organizers developed an affirmation card deck for Black girls and gender expansive youth. These cards, alongside other self-care items, were distributed to organizers to promote community building, rest, and joy.

GGE forged a new partnership with the Center for Law & Social Policy (CLASP). An NABG organizer is serving as a "change maker" for their "A New Deal for Youth" campaign, a youth-led, youth-centered effort advocating for the creation of new systems, policies, investments, and structures that reimagine life for young people in America.



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“I'm most proud of leading two town halls: I wondered what advocacy would look like in a virtual setting, and we accomplished that work. In these sessions, I learned about body liberation from an intersectional lens and about the impact Black women have on music. I developed a critical view on how we have contributed to justice movements and the rap game. Finally, learning how NYS policies are passed was impactful since I knew more about federal policy prior to GGE.” LR

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CULTURE SHIFT

GGE shifts the narrative in philanthropy, media, and the public sphere to center Black girls and gender expansive youth of color. We do this work through elevating partner organization, adding our voice and expertise by authoring written works, and organizing public events that shed light on emergent issues and strategies of community building.

GGE Published two Op-Eds: *Black Women Don't Need Praise, We Need Leaders* and *What Kamala Harris And Amanda Gorman Mean To Black Girls Like Me*

Joy as Resistance

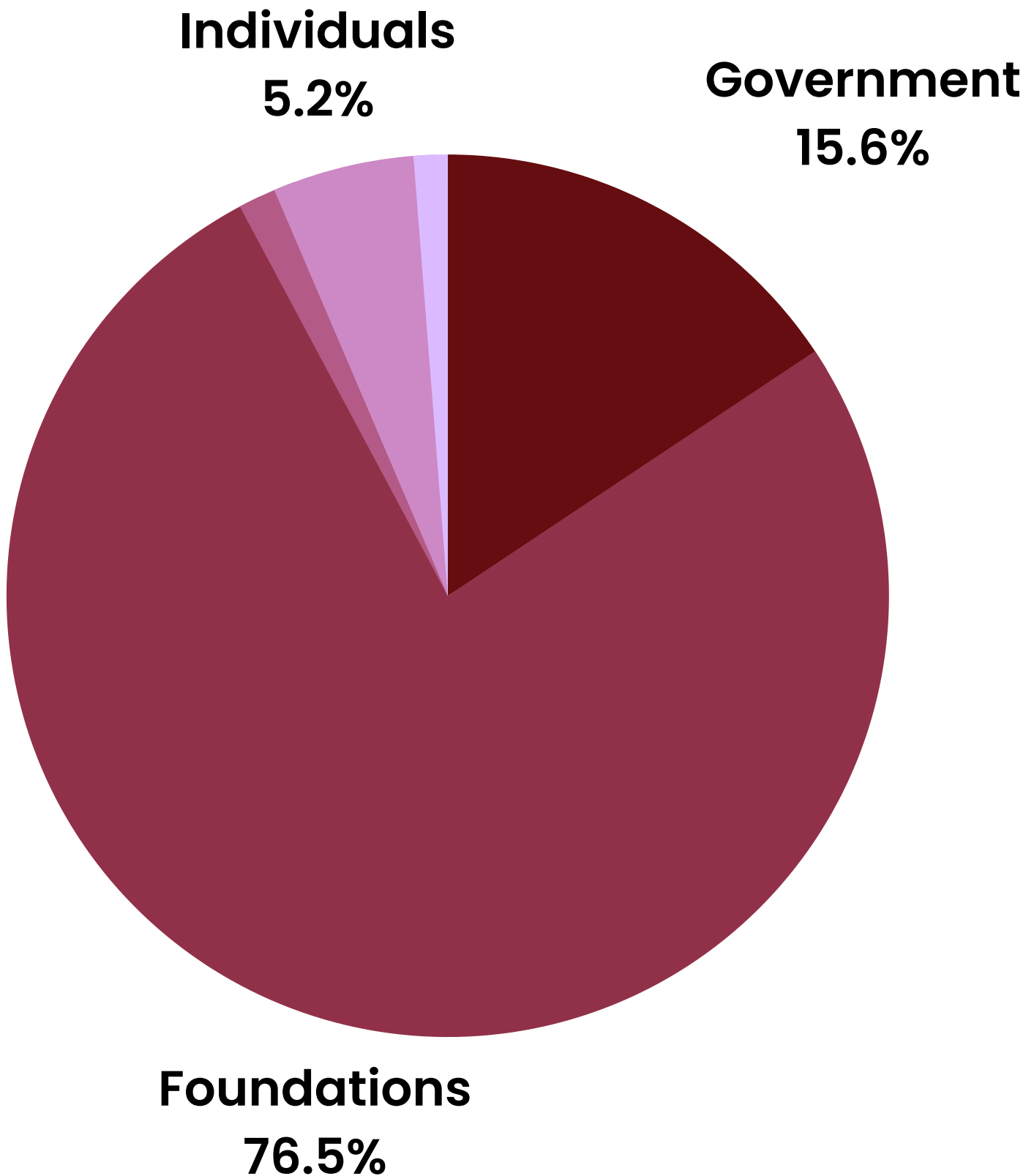
NABG youth organizers led a public event honoring and acknowledging the role of joy as an act of resistance by centering it in youth-led conversations on liberation. Joined by poet Jasmine Mans and nationally recognized journalist Danielle Young, over 75 youth attendees took part in the dynamic event.

Black Girl Freedom Fund

In September 2020, GGE founder Joanne N. Smith joined Dr. Monique W. Morris and a group of Black women leaders to launch the Black Girl Freedom Fund (BGFF) and the #1Billion4BlackGirls campaign, a call for the philanthropic investment of \$1 billion in Black girls over the next

decade. The fund supports work that advances the well-being of Black girls and their families, including work that centers and advances the power of Black girls and gender expansive youth through organizing, asset mapping, capacity-building, legal advocacy, and narrative work that seeks to eradicate structural violence enacted against Black girls and gender-expansive youth. Grants will be strategically made to organizations led by Black women and girls, as well as non-Black led organizations that seek to build their capacity to better respond to the needs of Black girls. Grantmakers for Girls of Color is engaging Black girls and gender-expansive Black youth to inform and co-create their grantmaking process.

FINANCIALS





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One thing that I appreciate, respect, and love about our community is the ability to see things from the perspective of others. A gift that they have given me is knowledge which I believe is the best gift of all because I can carry it with me forever. –M.M.

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A LOOK FORWARD

Take a quick peek at what is on the horizon for GGE!

Youth Speakers Bureau

The Youth Speakers Bureau will provide an opportunity for GGE program alumni to continue to develop a critical analysis around social justice issues and stay engaged with themes in the GGE curriculum. This program will serve participants by preparing them for various speaking engagements, including but not limited to media interviews, panel participation, providing testimony at policy hearings, and representing GGE on coalitions. The Speakers Bureau will provide a vehicle to prepare and connect participants to future paid internship programs in the social justice world while providing transferable training, skill development and educational experiences to support their future career development.

Research

Current research shows it is challenging for Black girls to sustain policy gains and leverage support as they age, but more research is necessary to fully understand and address the issues Black girls and gender expansive youth of color face.

GGE will engage in ethical research alongside social policy researchers to develop an economic and social analysis, which we will use to inform national, state, and local policy and budget demands. Our research will increase long-overdue reporting in the field and shift the focus on girls of color. We will partner with researchers at the Racial Equity Analytics Lab, who are using innovative data analytic tools in original storytelling to appeal to policymakers. Working with Masters students from CUNY Youth Studies programs, we will codify and expand our participatory practices, including participatory action research and participatory governance, as tested models that yield better results for cis and trans girls of color and gender expansive youth.

As an offering to the field, GGE will codify and evaluate our curriculum and develop toolkits for each of our programs. We will also codify GGE's internal program evaluation process, so that partners and like-minded organizations can develop best practices and expand their reach.



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