

# Shared Philanthropic Data and Gaps Analysis: 2025 Report





# Foreword

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In 2018, a group of Frederick County funders got together to explore new ways to collaborate, with a desire to increase the collective impact of our grantmaking in the region. What began as an effort to identify funding gaps and foster transparency has since evolved into a robust annual report that participating funders use both individually and collectively to inform strategic grantmaking decisions across the local nonprofit sector.

More than six years of shared data now offer some meaningful trendlines in this year's report, with particular emphasis on the three years of consecutive data housed within Data Driven Frederick (which took on this project in 2023). We can trace the arc of arts and culture funding from 5.4% of giving in 2023 to 11.2% today. We can see how grants to programs supporting ALICE<sup>1</sup> households have grown from a third to nearly half of all awards. We can begin to see how funding has evolved over time, aligning with community needs surfaced by research, collective action, and needs assessments.

2025 was a year marked by uncertainty, especially as federal funding shifts threatened the short- and long-term sustainability of so many core services in our community. The collaborative infrastructure in place across local funders allowed for rapid analysis and response, with grantmakers working both independently and collectively to support Frederick County nonprofits. We talk more about the specifics of this throughout the report, but want to highlight both the steadfast commitment to existing grant partners in this data, as well as remarkable growth in a year of upheaval.

Total philanthropic investment across participating funders in this project reached \$18.5 million in 2025, representing a 23.3% increase over 2024. Some of this growth reflects a growing pool of participating funders sharing their data in this project: the Rotary Club of Carroll Creek is represented in this year's report for the first time, bringing the total number of participating funders up to 13. But a large majority of that growth represents substantially increased giving from the 12 returning funders between the 2024 and 2025 reports.

In this 2025 report, the sixth of its kind, we are excited to share some of the trends we're seeing in the data, how we see them fitting into other work happening across the county, and offer a bit about what we're still learning and what we're most curious about. We're grateful to have you here to learn and question alongside us.

Sincerely,

*Data Driven Frederick and the Frederick County Philanthropic Funders Collaborative*

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1. [United for ALICE](#) offers the following definition of the ALICE population: "ALICE is an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, and represents the growing number of families who are unable to afford the basics of housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and technology. These workers often struggle to keep their own households from financial ruin, while keeping our local communities running." ALICE households typically do not qualify for most benefit programs due to their income level, while not making enough to afford the cost of living in specific geographic areas.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Record Growth: How Frederick County's funders deployed \$18.5 million while navigating a federal funding freeze.

In 2025, Frederick County's philanthropic landscape experienced its most dramatic year of change since the collaborative began tracking shared data. Total funding reached \$18.5 million, a 23.3% increase over 2024, while the number of grants made grew by 10.6% (to 1,480). Nearly all of this growth came from the 12 returning funders from 2024 to 2025, who increased their combined giving by 22.9%. The collaborative also expanded to 13 members with the addition of the Rotary Club of Carroll Creek, marking the first service club to join the initiative.

Metric	2025	2024	2023	YOY Change
Total Funding	\$18,485,551	\$14,989,419	\$14,382,166	+23.3%
Number of Grants	1,480	1,338	1,434	+10.6%
Organizations Funded	339	374	351	-9.4%
Average Grant Size*	\$11,497	\$10,349	\$10,043	+11.1%
Participating Funders	13	12	12	+1

**\$18.5M**

TOTAL FUNDING

+23.3% from 2024

**1,480**

GRANTS AWARDED

+10.6%

**339**

ORGANIZATIONS

-9.4%

**\$11,497**

AVG GRANT SIZE\*

+11.1%

\*Average grant size excludes the Community Foundation's \$1.48M pooled scholarship entry, which represents many individual awards bundled into a single record. Including it would yield an average of \$12,490.

A note on year-over-year comparisons: The collaborative grew from 12 to 13 members in 2025 with the addition of the Rotary Club of Carroll Creek. Rotary contributed 18 grants (\$60K) – all to organizations already funded by other members – so the organization count is unaffected. However, multi-funder percentages are modestly boosted by the 13th funder, since each of Rotary's 18 grantees gained an additional source. Where possible, this report notes trends among the 12 returning funders to provide consistent baselines.

This year's story is one of both resilience and response. The federal funding freeze of early 2025 disrupted grant flows nationwide, and funders stepped up to fill gaps where possible while continuing to advocate for additional funding streams to support vital community services. Both Frederick City and Frederick County Government opened new grant cycles in direct response to Federal cuts offering critical bridge funding as a safety net in our community that will show up in 2026 reports. Separately, the Community Foundation of Frederick County posted a 22.9% increase in giving year over year, while the Ausherman Family Foundation increased giving by 44.7%. Arts and culture funding continued its three-year rebound to 11.2% of total giving. And the share of grants serving ALICE households rose to 44.1%, reflecting a community that recognizes working families need support alongside those in deep poverty.

A 9.4% decline in unique organizations served—from 374 to 339—suggests that the funding surge was channeled primarily toward existing grantees rather than expanding to new projects and programs. Given the economic uncertainty of the year, as well as statements made by several of the participating funders explicitly noting an increased commitment to existing grantees, this is not surprising, though it is something to pay attention to in the future as the collaborative continues to plan for 2026 and beyond.

# Chapter 1: The Funder Landscape

13 funders. \$18.5 million. One collaborative.



In 2025, the Frederick County Philanthropic Funders Collaborative grew to 13 members with the addition of the Rotary Club of Carroll Creek. Together they deployed \$18.5 million across 1,480 grants.

## The 2025 Collaborative Members

Funder	Grants	Investment	Share
Community Foundation of Frederick County	690	\$7,489,143	40.5%
Ausherman Family Foundation	254	\$3,656,048	19.8%
Delaplaine Foundation	118	\$2,705,400	14.6%
Frederick County Government	128	\$1,197,500	6.5%
The Kahlert Foundation	15	\$840,000	4.5%
City of Frederick	81	\$750,806	4.1%
United Way of Frederick County	47	\$712,054	3.9%
Cross Foundation	60	\$361,600	2.0%
Women's Giving Circle	18	\$280,000	1.5%
Loats Foundation	17	\$214,000	1.2%
Helen J. Serini Foundation	14	\$130,000	0.7%
Will Group Foundation	20	\$89,000	0.5%
Rotary Club of Carroll Creek	18	\$60,000	0.3%

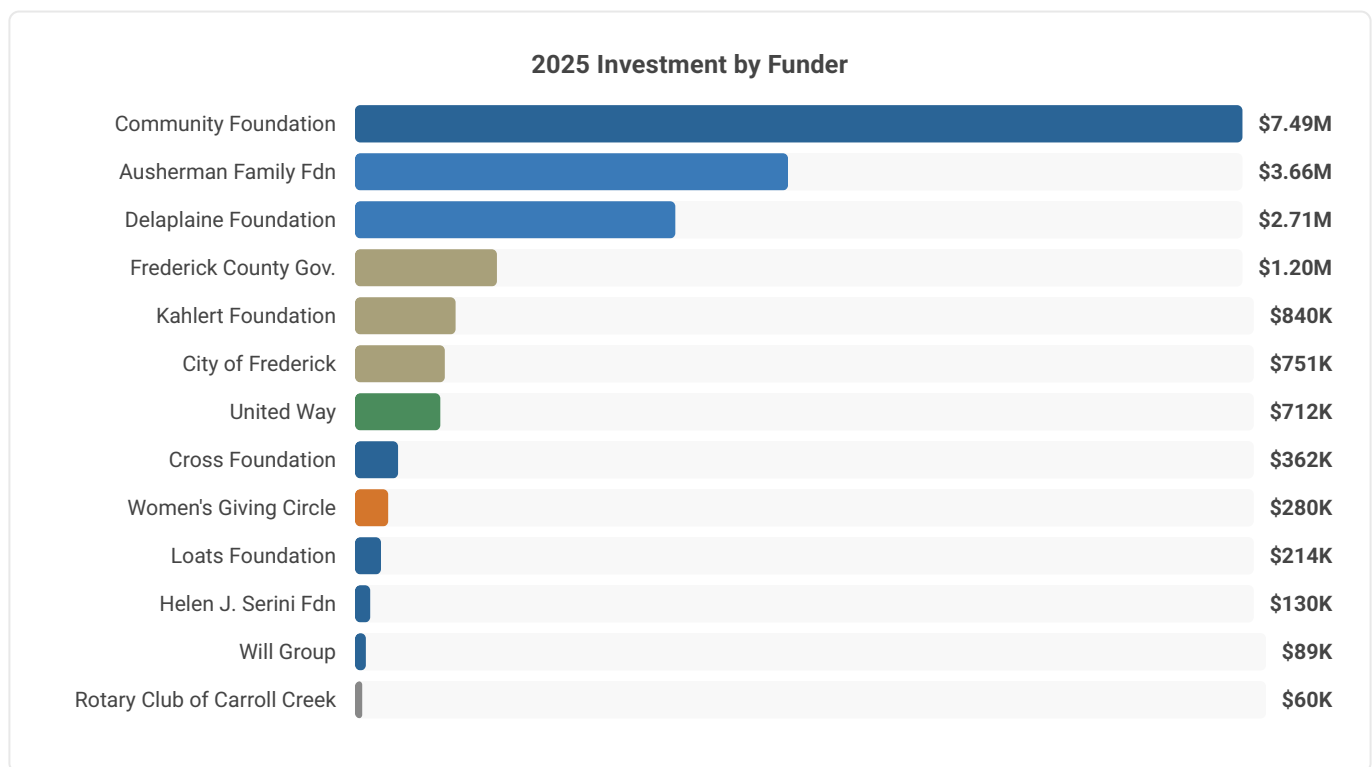
Three funders account for nearly 75% of all giving: the Community Foundation of Frederick County (40.5%), Ausherman Family Foundation (19.8%), and Delaplaine Foundation (14.6%). This concentration ratio has been remarkably stable across all three years of data collection, ranging from 73% to 75%.

## The Roster by Type

Funder Category	Funders	Grants	Investment	% of Total
Private Family Foundations	7	498	\$7,996,048	43.3%
Community Foundation	1	690	\$7,489,143	40.5%
Government Sources	2	209	\$1,948,306	10.5%
United Way	1	47	\$712,054	3.9%
Giving Circle	1	18	\$280,000	1.5%
Service Club	1	18	\$60,000	0.3%

*New in 2025: Rotary Club of Carroll Creek joins as the collaborative's first service club member.*

These 13 funders span a range of institutional types, with participation from private family foundations, the Community Foundation, the local United Way, government entities, and now, with the addition of Rotary, a service club.



It is important to note that several of the grantmakers in this list award grants to entities beyond Frederick County. This data report is intended to reflect only grants directly supporting Frederick County, so may not paint a full picture of an individual philanthropy's funding. Additionally, some entities (like Frederick County Government and the City of Frederick) have Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), contracts, or other agreements in place with various nonprofits in the county. These are not included in these totals.

The Community Foundation of Frederick County continues to award the highest number of grants annually, with 690 grants (nearly half of all grants in this report) and \$7.5 million invested in the community. The Ausherman Family Foundation posted the largest percentage growth among established members, increasing from \$2.5 million to \$3.7 million, a 44.7% jump. Notably, The City of Frederick more than doubled its reported giving from \$356K to \$751K.

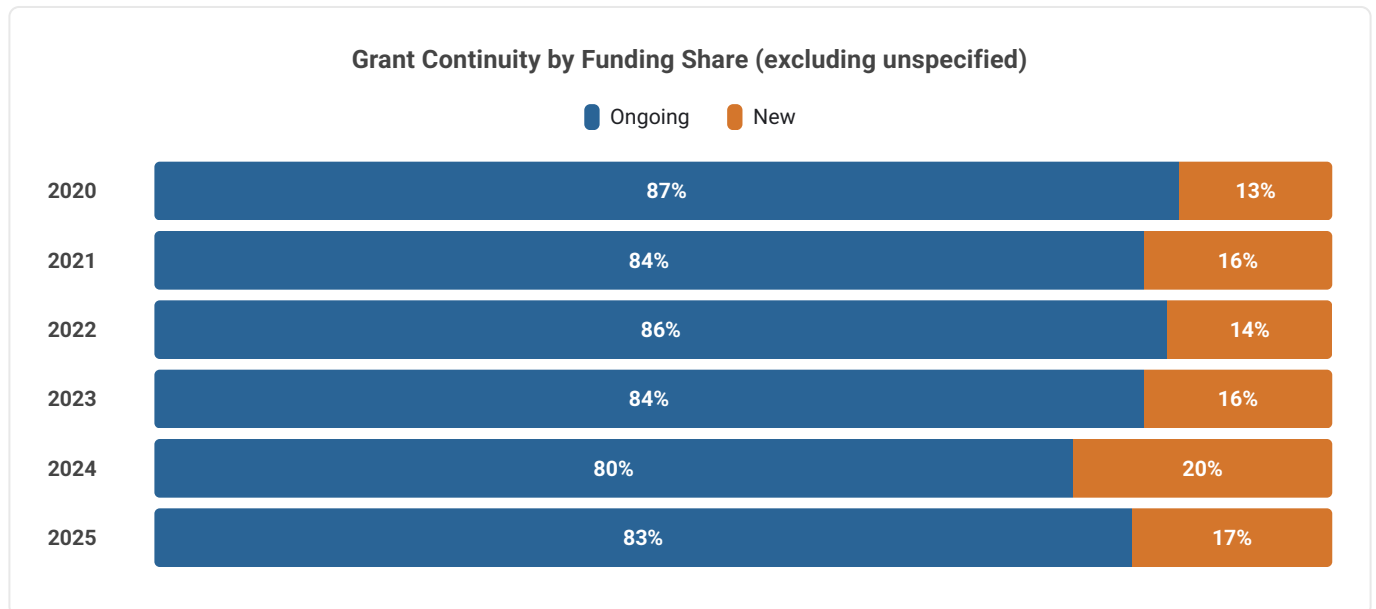
# Chapter 2: Where the Money Goes

## Funding by Continuity

One of the most telling dimensions of grantmaking is the balance between sustaining existing programs and launching new ones. Taking the six-year view reveals that a sharp uptick in support of new programs in 2024 appears to be an outlier. In 2025, the pendulum swung back toward ongoing support after 2024's notable increase in new initiative funding.

Category	Grants	Amount	% of Total
Ongoing Programs	1,152	\$15,065,428	81.5%
New Initiatives	288	\$3,048,067	16.5%
Unspecified	40	\$372,056	2.0%

## Six-Year Continuity Trend



Percentages are of specified funding only, excluding grants where continuity was not recorded. Unspecified grants dropped from 7.8% of total in 2023 to 2.0% in 2025, reflecting improved data quality. The 2020-2022 figures are drawn from the 2023 Frederick Funders Grantmaking Report.

From 2020 through 2023, ongoing funding hovered in a narrow 84-87% band while new initiative funding ranged from 13-16%. In 2024, that balance shifted sharply: new initiative funding increased to 20%, the highest in the series. In 2025, the pendulum swung back to 83% ongoing and 17% new, closer to the historical baseline. Notably, the \$3.0 million in new initiative funding held steady in dollar terms from 2024 to 2025, but the increase in total giving in 2025 means this same investment amount represents a smaller percentage of total giving. This pattern is consistent with what you would expect during a period of uncertainty: funders prioritized keeping existing programs operational rather than launching new ones.

## Funding by Purpose

Purpose	Grants	Amount	% of Total
Programs/Services	840	\$8,181,845	44.3%
General Operations	425	\$5,984,648	32.4%
Capacity Building	53	\$1,202,017	6.5%
Planning & Evaluation	10	\$78,500	0.4%
Advocacy/Policy	4	\$35,676	0.2%
Other/Not Applicable	148	\$3,002,866	16.2%

Programs and Services continues to receive the largest share of grants at 44.3%, followed by General Operations at 32.4%—a slight decrease from 2024's General Operations percentage at 33.5%. Capacity Building declined from 9.1% to 6.5%, which may warrant attention as the sector continues to grow.

### KEY FINDING

Input collected from area nonprofits at various points throughout the year (including the 2025 Nonprofit Summit, Meet the Funders virtual events, and one-on-one conversations) have raised a desire for more unrestricted/general operating support funding. This is a potential area of growth for participating funders, offering sustained support but with increased flexibility to organizations working to keep doors open during uncertain times.



# Chapter 3: The Human Needs Imperative

## \$9.1 Million: 49% of all funding flows to human needs

Nearly half of all philanthropic dollars in Frederick County address human needs. The \$9.1 million flowing to human needs programs and organizations in 2025 represents a 15.1% increase over 2024's \$7.9 million, confirming the philanthropic community's sustained commitment to the most vulnerable members of the community. Notably, while human needs' share of total funding (49.2%) is lower than 2024's 52.8% share, this is because other categories (particularly arts and education) grew even faster, not because human needs funding declined.

### Funding by Topic Area

Topic Area	Amount	% of Total Funding
Human Needs	\$9.1M	49.2%
Education	\$3.3M	17.7%
Arts & Culture	\$2.1M	11.2%
Historic Preservation	\$981K	5.3%
Religion	\$977K	5.3%
Other/Unknown	\$2.0M	11.3%



## Human Needs Deep Dive

\$9.1 million flowed to human needs organizations, distributed across critical subcategories:

Subcategory	Amount	% of Human Needs
Multiple/Complex Needs	\$3,463,438	38.1%
Housing	\$1,029,818	11.3%
Health - Physical	\$893,310	9.8%
Health - Mental	\$759,953	8.3%
Substance Use/Addiction	\$504,950	5.5%
Food Security	\$406,510	4.5%
Transportation	\$401,312	4.4%
All Human Needs	\$399,466	4.4%
Personal Care	\$276,665	3.0%
Family Stability	\$234,999	2.6%
Personal Safety	\$187,753	2.1%
Employment/Job Training	\$149,147	1.6%
Other (Navigation, Financial, Rights)	\$393,038	4.3%
<b>TOTAL HUMAN NEEDS</b>	<b>\$9,100,359</b>	<b>100%</b>

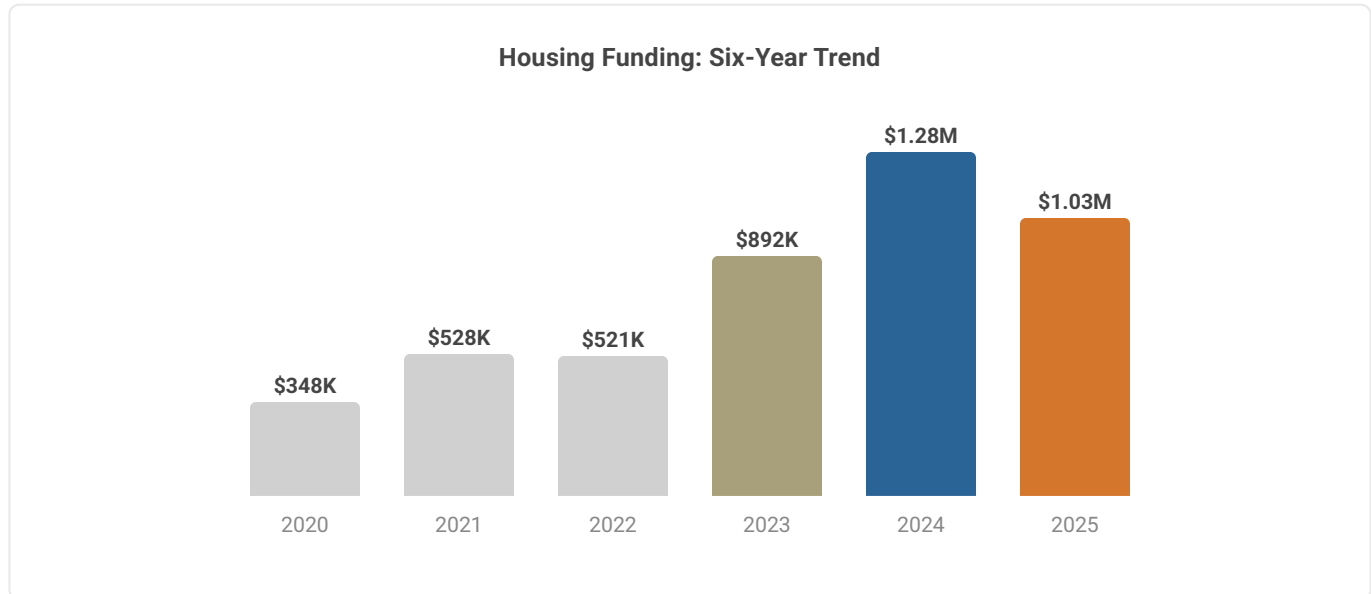
### The Continued Rise of Multiple/Complex Needs

The "Multiple/Complex Needs" subcategory has grown from 28.6% of human needs funding in 2024 to 38.1% in 2025. This trajectory confirms what the 2024 report first identified: funders increasingly recognize that community challenges do not fit into neat boxes. Homelessness intersects with mental health. Poverty intersects with healthcare access. Transportation affects employment. Food insecurity connects to child development. This complexity is reflected in community conversations, such as the recognition of the social determinants of health in the 2025 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA).<sup>2</sup> The growing dominance of this category reflects a maturation in how the philanthropic community thinks about impact. Given the number of grants in this single category, **there is opportunity for improved data coding and collection in future years to allow for more clear disaggregation of data within this important, interconnected bucket of "Complex Needs."**

2. More information on the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and the Local Health Improvement Plan (LHIP), including how the plan is being moved into action, can be found via Coalition for a Healthier Frederick at <https://healthierfrederick.org/priorities>.

## Housing Remains Critical

Housing-focused organizations received \$1.03 million across 93 grants in 2025. While this represents a modest decline from 2024's \$1.28 million, housing remains the second-largest human needs subcategory. The six-year trend tells the longer story of growing commitment:



Importantly, this 2025 dip may reflect some housing grants being recategorized under "Multiple/Complex Needs" as funders recognize the interconnected nature of housing challenges.

Since the initial data collection began in 2020, housing funding has nearly tripled, reflecting both the escalating affordability crisis in the region<sup>3</sup> and the philanthropic community's deepening commitment to addressing it.

The collaborative is not alone in recognizing the importance of affordable housing in our county:

- In early 2026, Frederick County, in partnership with the City of Frederick, released a new housing needs assessment and strategic plan, finding a gap in housing supply and increasing cost burden on households.<sup>4</sup>
- The 2025 CHNA also identified "Inadequate affordable housing supply" as a key community health priority for 2025-2028.
- A 2022 update to the Community Foundation of Frederick County's Human Needs Assessment<sup>5</sup> identified access to affordable housing as a key priority area guiding both the foundation's strategy as well as other stakeholders in the county.

## Mental Health Funding Picks Up

Mental health funding reached \$760K in 2025, up from \$414K in 2024, an 83.6% increase. Combined with substance use/addiction funding (\$505K), behavioral health now accounts for 13.9% of all human needs spending. This growing attention to behavioral health represents one of the clearest shifts in funder priorities over the three-year period, and, like housing above, aligns with identified community needs surfaced in the 2022 Human Needs Assessment, 2025 CHNA, and ongoing community conversations.

3. [Realtor.com via FRED® data](#) reflects an increase in median home price in Frederick County from \$349,900 in July 2016 to \$544,500 in March 2026.

4. The full housing Needs Assessment and Affordable Housing Strategic Plan can be found at <https://frederickcountymd.gov/6366/Housing>.

5. View the full 2022 update to the Human Needs Assessment at <https://www.frederickcountygives.org/learn/#human-needs-assessment>.

# Chapter 4: Beyond Human Needs

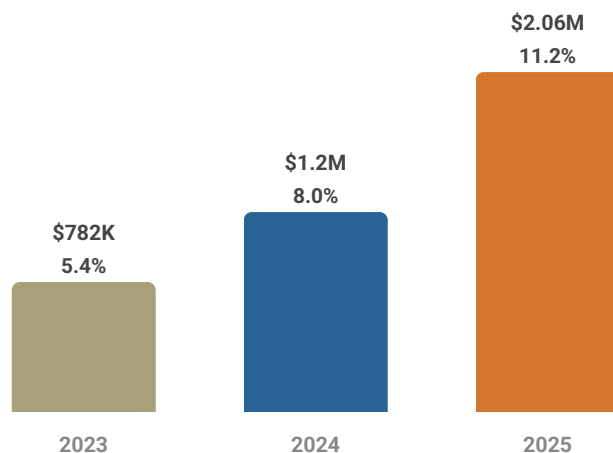
## Arts, Education, Faith and Heritage Emerge as Largest Categories of Giving



### The Arts Revival Continues

The most striking cross-sector story over three years has been the sustained increase in arts and culture funding. From \$782K (5.4% of total) in 2023 to \$2.06 million (11.2%) in 2025, arts funding has more than doubled, representing a 164% increase over three years.

Arts and Culture Funding: Three-Year Trajectory



#### KEY FINDING

**+164% in three years.** Arts and culture funding has gone from one of the smaller focus areas to the second-largest non-human-needs category. With 153 grants in 2025, the arts sector is receiving broader support from more funders, not just larger individual gifts. While some of this growth may be attributed to a shift in how grants are coded by each funder, growth of this size is noteworthy and likely reflects the area's commitment to arts and culture as a key pillar of what makes our community unique.

## Education at All Levels

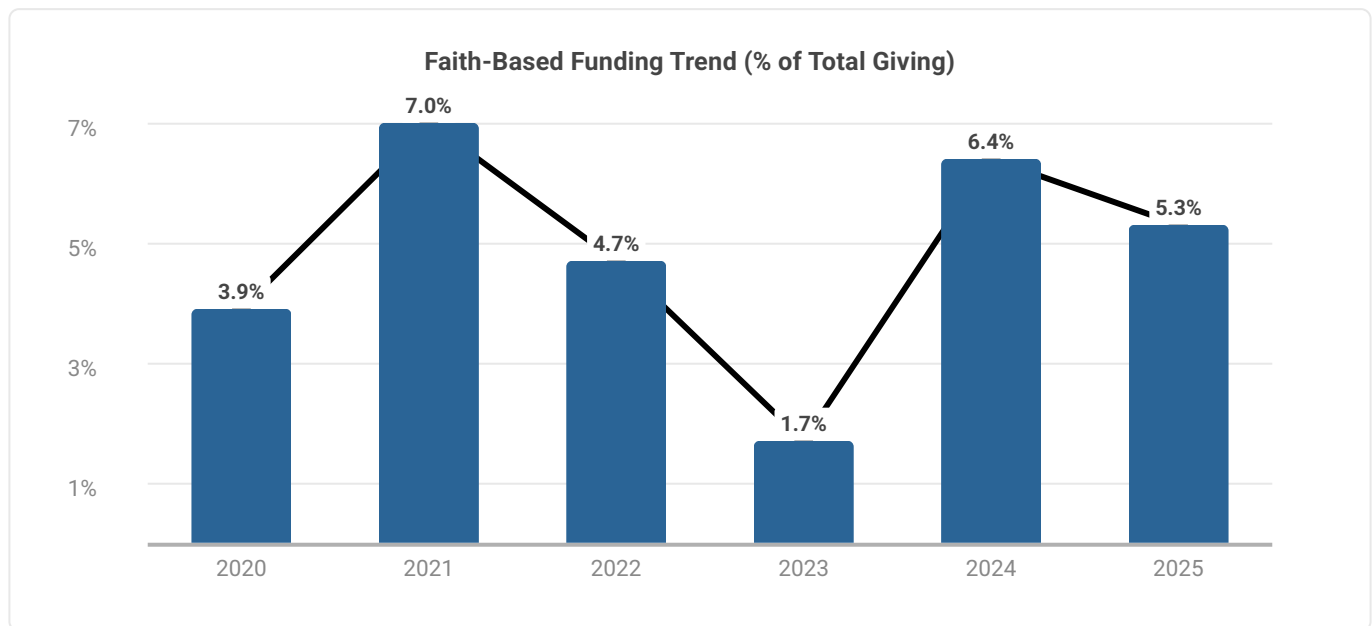
Education funding totaled \$3.3 million in 2025, up from approximately \$2.4 million in 2024, distributed across multiple levels:

Education Level	Amount	% of All 2025 Giving
Multiple/General Education	\$1,762,337	9.5%
K-12 Education	\$713,862	3.9%
Higher Education (College)	\$708,922	3.8%
Early Childhood	\$96,320	0.5%

The "Multiple/General Education" figure of \$1.76 million is dominated by the Community Foundation's \$1.48 million pooled general education scholarship entry, which represents hundreds of individual awards bundled into a single record. Excluding that pooled entry, general education funding was approximately \$281K. K-12 education funding grew 54.4% from \$462K to \$714K, suggesting increased funder attention to primary and secondary education needs.

## The Faith Sector

Religious and faith-based organizations received \$977K across 48 grants in 2025 (5.3% of total). The multi-year pattern continues to show volatility in this category, driven largely by the timing of major capital projects.



As noted in the 2024 report, faith communities serve as critical community infrastructure, operating food pantries, counseling services, after-school programs, and emergency response operations. Depending on how funders classify their grants, support for these community-serving functions operated within religious institutions may appear under other categories, making the true philanthropic footprint of faith-based organizations larger than the Religion category alone suggests.

**Many faith communities also distribute resources directly to nonprofits -- activity that is not currently included in this analysis. This may be a place to focus future efforts in expanding collaborative participation.**

## Historic Preservation

Frederick County's commitment to its heritage shows in the \$981K (5.3%) directed to historic preservation, more than double the \$477K reported in 2024. This growth reflects ongoing investments in the maintenance and restoration of historic sites, buildings, and cultural landmarks that define Frederick's identity.

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## Chapter 5: The Convergence Effect

When multiple funders independently decide to support the same organization, that convergence is a powerful signal about community priorities. In 2025, this pattern deepened significantly, with three nonprofit organizations each receiving support from 10 of the 13 collaborative members.

### NPO Funding Diversity

Number of Funders	NPOs 2025	% of Total	NPOs 2024	% of Total
1	208	61.4%	257	68.7%
2	50	14.7%	52	13.9%
3	26	7.7%	30	8.0%
4	14	4.1%	9	2.4%
5	11	3.2%	11	2.9%
6+	30	8.8%	15	4.0%

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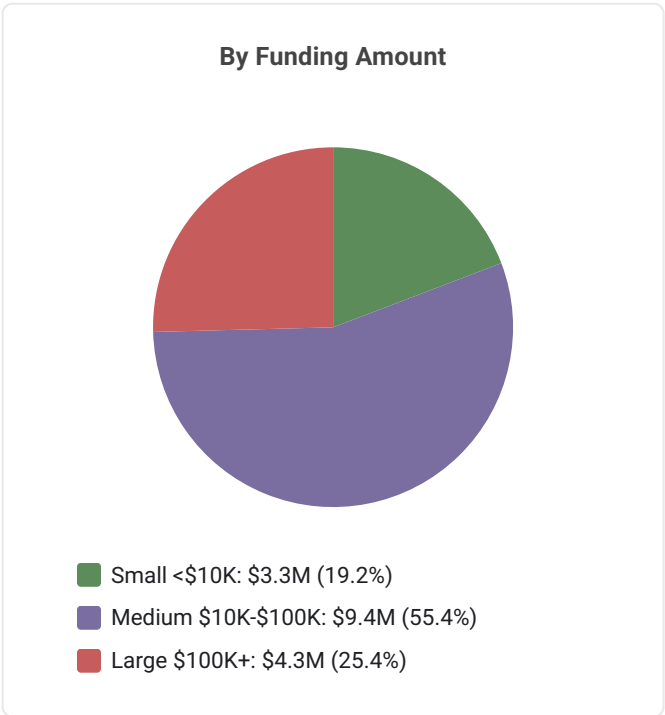
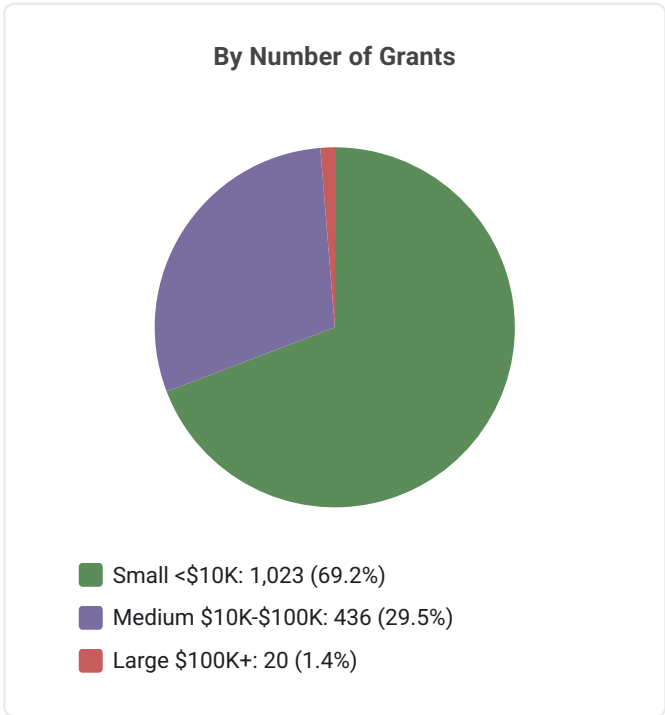
#### KEY FINDING

**38.6% of nonprofits included here now receive grant funding from more than one participating funder in the collaborative**, up from 31.3% in 2024 – a meaningful jump. The number of organizations receiving funding from 6 or more participating funders doubled from 15 to 30. Part of this increase reflects the addition of Rotary Club of Carroll Creek as a 13th funder; all 18 of Rotary's grantees were already funded by other members, which nudged their funder counts upward. Even so, the breadth of multi-funder support is growing, suggesting the collaborative's members are increasingly recognizing and investing in the same organizations.

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## Chapter 6: Grant Size Analysis

The size distribution of grants reveals how the philanthropic community balances breadth of support with depth of investment. In 2025, an uptick in large grants was the most notable shift, driven by a small number of six-figure investments that significantly shifted these data trends. **We believe these represent one-time gifts, but this is an area to pay attention to in future years, especially as inflation drives prices up across the board.**



Note: The Community Foundation's \$1.48M pooled general education scholarship entry is excluded from grant size analysis below, as it represents many individual awards bundled into a single record. Including it would overstate the large grant category.

### Three-Year Grant Size Trend

Category	2023		2024		2025	
	Grants	Funding	Grants	Funding	Grants	Funding
Small (<\$10K)	75.0%	19.9%	71.2%	21.5%	69.2%	19.2%
Medium (\$10K-\$100K)	23.8%	55.2%	27.9%	58.9%	29.5%	55.4%
Large (\$100K+)	1.0%	24.8%	0.7%	19.6%	1.4%	25.4%

Excluding the pooled scholarship entry, large grants (\$100K+) doubled from 10 to 20 in 2025, and their share of total funding grew from 19.6% to 25.4%. The steady decline in small grants as a share of the total (75% to 69%) over three years, paired with growth in medium and large grants, points to funders making larger, more strategic investments.

Metric	2023	2024	2025
Average Grant Size	\$10,043	\$10,349	\$11,497
Median Grant Size	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Largest Single Grant	\$973,898	\$976,824	\$942,414

## Chapter 7: Intervention Scale

This dimension describes the level at which grants aim to create impact, from individual beneficiaries to entire communities.

Scale	Grants	Amount	% of Total
Organization	413	\$5,820,785	31.5%
Individual	430	\$5,463,601	29.6%
Community	145	\$2,202,502	11.9%
Group	211	\$1,450,594	7.8%
Family	94	\$1,041,638	5.6%
All Scales	9	\$156,000	0.8%
Unknown/N.A.	178	\$2,350,431	12.7%

Grants intended to support organizations edged ahead of those provided to programs or services for whom individuals are the primary beneficiary for the first time, suggesting a shift toward institutional support and capacity building. The most dramatic change was in group-level funding, which surged from \$593K in 2024 to \$1.45 million in 2025, a 144% increase. This growth meant to support groups, rather than individuals, reflects funder investments in cohort models, peer support groups, and collective impact approaches that serve multiple beneficiaries through structured programs.

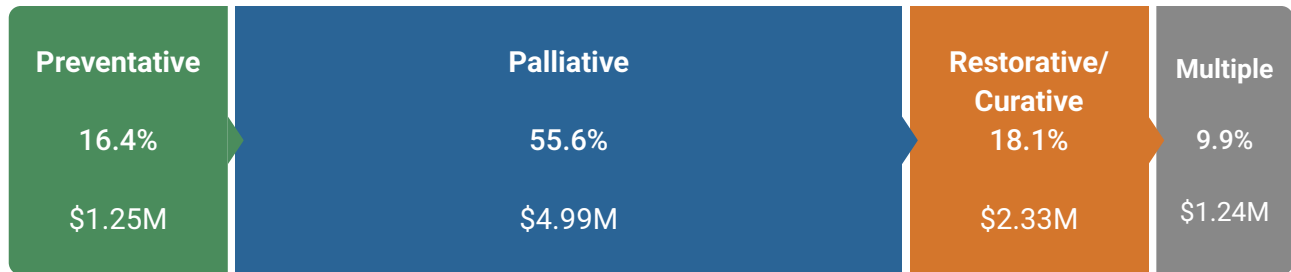
Together, organization and individual-level grants account for 61.1% of all philanthropic investment, maintaining the balanced approach identified in 2024 where funders recognize that effective philanthropy requires both direct support for people in need and sustained investment in the organizations that serve them.



## Intervention Type

Each grant in the dataset is classified by its intervention approach along a continuum from upstream prevention to downstream treatment. Among the 846 grants with a specified intervention type in 2025, the distribution reveals a community that leans heavily toward palliative and restorative approaches:

Intervention Continuum (2025, % of specified grants)



Based on 846 grants with specified intervention type (57% of all 2025 grants). Some grants are coded for multiple adjoining types along the continuum.

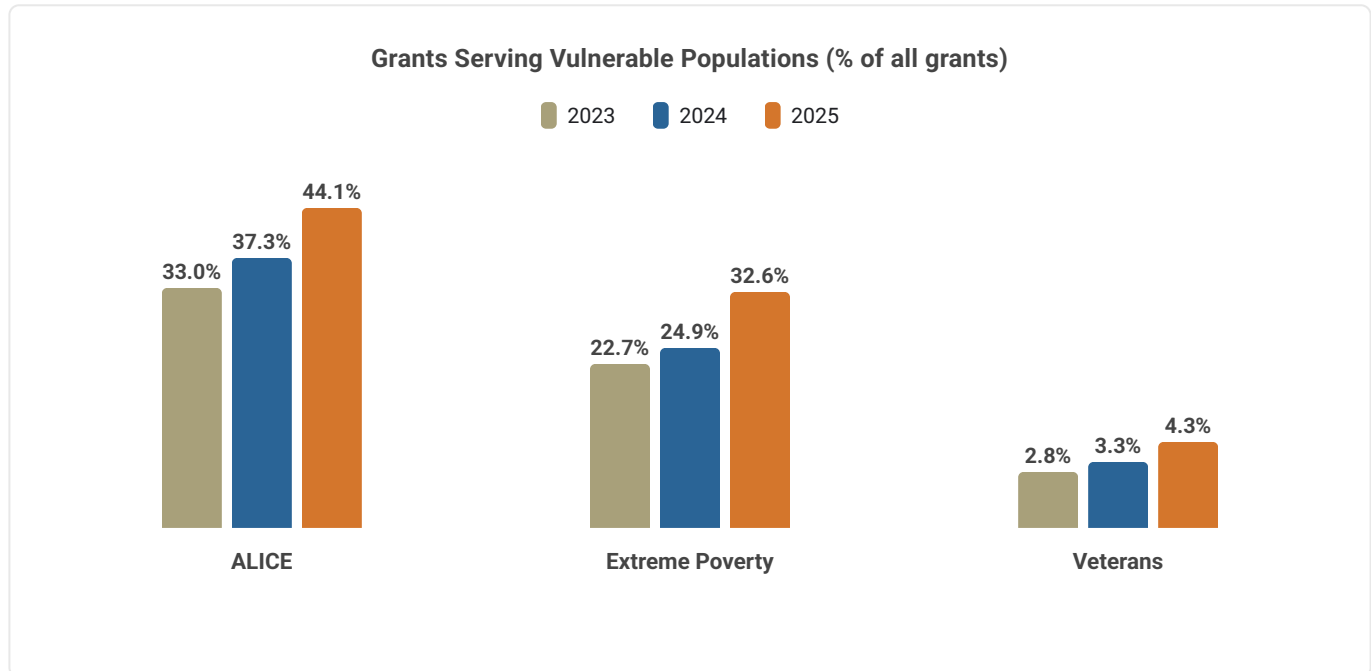
Over half of specified grants (55.6%) are classified as palliative, meaning they address immediate symptoms and provide ongoing support to individuals and families in need. Restorative and curative interventions, which aim to repair harm and resolve root causes, account for 18.1%. Preventative grants, the upstream investments that aim to stop problems before they start, represent 16.4%. The remaining 9.9% of grants span multiple intervention types, reflecting programs that operate across the continuum. This distribution is consistent with a philanthropic community that is primarily in a responsive posture, meeting urgent needs as they arise rather than investing proportionally in prevention. **This classification may be revisited in future years to determine if and how the category may be both helpful and accurate.**

## Chapter 8: Who Benefits?

Tracking where philanthropic dollars go by sector tells only half the story. The other half is understanding who those dollars ultimately reach. Frederick County's funders direct their resources toward a range of populations, but the data reveals clear and growing concentrations among economically vulnerable households.



## Economic Vulnerability Focus



ALICE households, those who are Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed, received the largest targeted share of philanthropic investment. With 653 grants totaling \$7.1 million (44.1% of all grants), the community's attention to working families who earn too much for public assistance but too little for basic necessities grew substantially from 2024's 37.3%. In dollar terms, ALICE-focused funding increased 32.4% from \$5.4 million to \$7.1 million. The United Way of Frederick County has documented an increase of at least 2,000 households identified as ALICE between 2022 and 2023, and this number is anticipated to be rising still, especially as our area faces layoffs and workforce challenges following rapid shifts in federal employment and federal contracting.<sup>6</sup>

Grants intended to support populations facing extreme poverty totaled \$5.3 million across 483 grants (32.6%), up from \$3.6 million (24.9%) in 2024. These dollars reach the county's most vulnerable residents, supporting emergency shelter, food assistance, healthcare access, and crisis intervention. Veterans-serving grants grew modestly to \$728K (4.3% of grants), maintaining a steady presence in the portfolio.

### Demographic Insights

Race-specific data shows grants explicitly serving Black or African American communities at \$738K (76 grants), up from \$407K in 2024. Female-focused grants totaled \$778K (84 grants), maintaining the emphasis on domestic violence services, women's health, and gender-specific programming identified in prior years.

Hispanic/Latinx communities received \$1.13 million across 80 grants reaching 23 organizations in 2025, up from \$663K (53 grants, 12 organizations) in 2024 and \$589K (49 grants, 17 organizations) in 2023. Over three years, both the dollar amount and the number of funded organizations have grown steadily. These grants support language access, cultural programming, and direct services for the county's growing Latinx population.

**Of note:** The data taxonomy for this report does not ask funders to identify funding specifically focused on supporting immigrant and/or refugee populations, and the collaborative does not draw correlations between grants made for demographic areas of focus and immigration status.

<sup>6</sup> For this and more Frederick County-level ALICE data, visit <https://www.unitedwayfrederick.org/challenge-ALICE>.

LGBTQ+ populations are served through 46 grants totaling \$375K across 22 organizations in 2025, compared to \$244K (36 grants, 14 organizations) in 2024 and \$393K (26 grants, 13 organizations) in 2023. The grant count and number of organizations have grown each year, though dollar amounts have fluctuated, likely reflecting the timing of larger one-time awards. The Sexual Orientation field remains one of the least-coded demographics in the dataset, meaning LGBTQ+-serving funding is almost certainly undercounted.

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## Chapter 9: The Federal Funding Freeze

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**In early 2025, a federal funding freeze disrupted grant flows nationwide.** While the freeze was ultimately reversed, its ripple effects were felt across Frederick County's nonprofit sector, influencing both funder behavior and organizational planning throughout the year. This chapter examines what the data reveals about local impacts and responses.

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The federal funding freeze of early 2025, though temporary, created significant uncertainty for nonprofits that depend on direct federal grants and/or federal pass-through dollars. Organizations providing health services, housing assistance, and social safety net programs were among the most directly affected, as their federal contracts and reimbursements were delayed or temporarily suspended. For Frederick County's nonprofit sector, where many organizations operate with thin reserves, even a brief disruption in expected funding can threaten service delivery.



### What the Data Shows

While the dataset does not directly tag grants as "federal freeze response" funding, several patterns in the 2025 numbers are consistent with local funders stepping in to bridge gaps:

**Total funding grew by \$3.5 million (23.3%),** far exceeding the +4.2% change between 2023 and 2024. The 12 returning funders alone increased giving by 22.9%, making this the largest single-year increase in the collaborative's history even before accounting for the new member.

**The Community Foundation posted a 22.9% increase,** from \$6.1M to \$7.5M, the largest single-year jump by any funder, the result of new project funds and other variabilities in funding.

**Ongoing program support surged to 83%**, up from 78% in 2024 (for grants that specified), suggesting funders prioritized keeping existing services operational rather than launching new initiatives during a period of uncertainty.

**The City of Frederick more than doubled its reported giving** from \$356K to \$751K, and announced an additional pool of funding intended to directly support organizations impacted by federal funding shifts in the SECURE Grants.

**Frederick County Government also announced two emergency relief grants** intended to offset harm caused by changes in the federal funding landscape: the FEED grant, administered in partnership with the Community Foundation of Frederick County, will support food security across the county, while the HEART grant aims to benefit nonprofit organizations facing challenges due to the current federal context.

*We anticipate that grant data from each of these specific grant programs will be included in the 2026 report, based on the date of fund distribution for each, and look forward to learning more about how these types of emergency relief efforts can benefit nonprofits and the clients they serve during hardships.*

### **Populations Most Affected**

Organizations serving ALICE populations and those in extreme poverty likely felt the freeze most acutely, as many of their services are partially funded through federal programs -- including Medicare, Medicaid, HUD funding, block grants, as well as direct federal grants. The data shows that grants targeting these populations grew substantially: ALICE-serving grants rose from 37.3% to 44.1% of all grants, and extreme poverty grants from 24.9% to 32.6%. While some of this increase may reflect organic growth, the scale and timing suggest a coordinated local response to ensure program continuity during federal uncertainty.

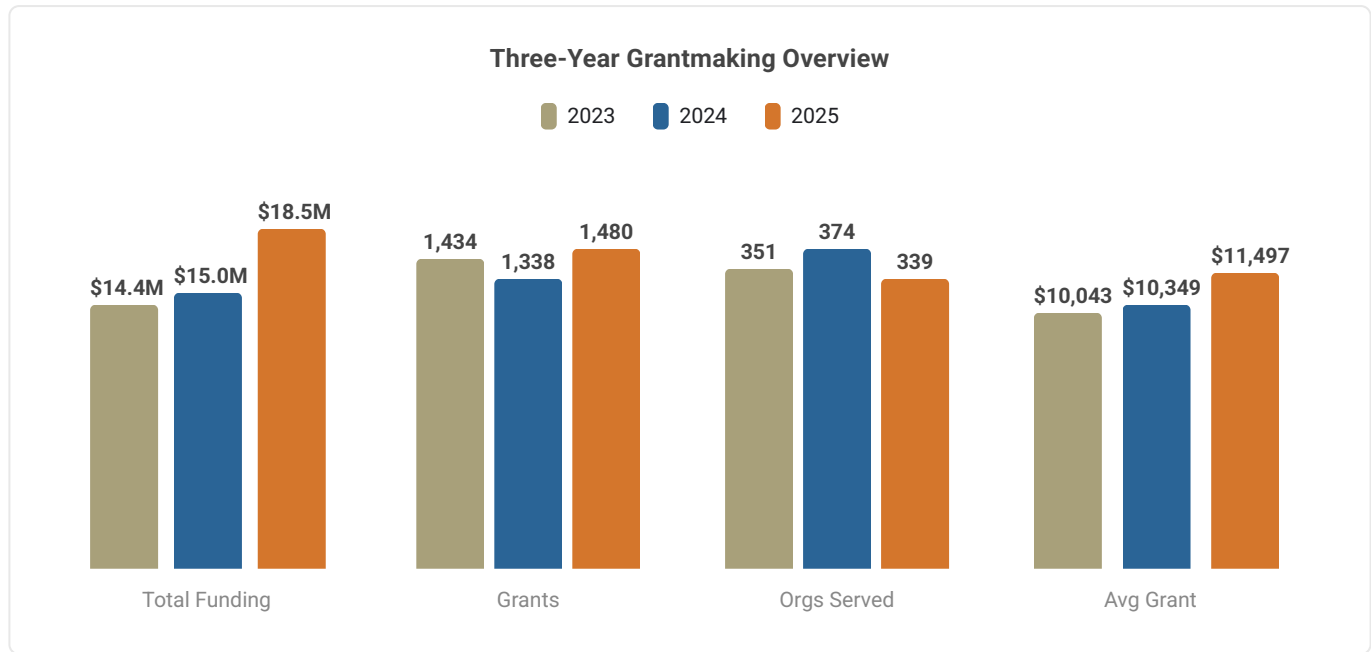
### **The Collaborative's Value**

The federal funding freeze underscored the importance of the data-sharing infrastructure the collaborative has built over six+ years. When federal funding was disrupted, funders who shared data could see in near real-time where gaps were forming and which organizations were most at risk. This intelligence-sharing capability, an unintended benefit of the collaborative's original mission, proved invaluable during the crisis and represents a model for future emergency coordination.



# Chapter 10: Year-Over-Year Trends

## The Three-Year Arc



Metric	2023	2024	2025	3-Year Trend
Total Funding	\$14.4M	\$15.0M	\$18.5M	+28.5%
Grants	1,434	1,338	1,480	+3.2%
NPOs Funded	351	374	339	-3.4%
Avg Grant	\$10,043	\$10,349	\$11,497	+14.5%
New Initiatives %	16%	22%	17%	+1 pt
Multi-Funder NPOs	29%	31%	39%	+8 pts
ALICE Grants %	33.0%	37.3%	44.1%	+11.1 pts
Arts & Culture %	5.4%	8.7%	11.2%	+5.8 pts

### KEY FINDING

**Six-year cumulative impact:** Over six years of data collection, the collaborative's members have deployed \$88.12 million through thousands of grants to hundreds of organizations across Frederick County.

# Chapter 11: The Funding Ecosystem

Frederick County's philanthropic ecosystem operates through informal coordination rather than centralized planning. The 13 participating funders each make independent decisions, yet most maintain strong connections with one another and

ongoing communications around this project and other collaborative efforts. Some powerful patterns emerge from their collective choices.

## Concentration at the Top

As noted above, three funders provide 75% of all funding. The largest funder alone provides 41%. This concentration, which has remained stable across all three years, means these funders have a significant role in shaping community priorities. However, the 2025 data shows growth across nearly every funder, suggesting a rising tide rather than a zero-sum competition for philanthropic dollars.

## Government as Foundation

Government sources (county and city combined) provide 10.5% of reported funding, but we know that this is just scratching the surface of local government investment in community nonprofits. The collaborative continues to look for opportunities to align giving for maximum impact, whether that be piloting programs with private philanthropy before seeking government funding or seeing government investment as a key validation of program success to unlock additional private investments.

## The Expanding Ecosystem

The addition of the Rotary Club of Carroll Creek signals a new shift in the collaborative's evolution. Service clubs represent a different model of community philanthropy, one driven by member engagement and local knowledge rather than endowment returns or government budgets. While this club's total giving (\$60K) is modest in the context of the full \$18.5 million awarded in 2025, the organizational infrastructure and community relationships that service clubs bring extend the collaborative's reach in ways that dollars alone do not measure. **The collaborative continues to invite participation from other funding entities supporting Frederick County nonprofits, and hopes to see additional funding sources included in future reports.**

## The Gaps Remain

Employment and job training funding dropped from \$189K to \$149K, remaining one of the thinnest categories relative to community need. This feels particularly noteworthy given the large percentage of federal workers in the Greater DMV area who lost employment in 2025 during government cuts.<sup>7</sup> Transportation, frequently cited as the most significant barrier to services in Frederick County,<sup>8</sup> held at \$401K. Substance use/addiction funding, despite growing to \$505K, remains modest relative to the scale of the crisis. These persistent gaps represent opportunities for strategic coordination among funders who have the data to identify them.

The decline in unique organizations served (from 374 to 339) alongside a \$3.5 million funding increase from 13 funders also points to a potential access gap: the existing grantee network absorbed significantly more funding, but the pipeline for new programs, projects, and organizations did not expand in kind. Whether this reflects the freeze's chilling effect on new program launches or a natural concentration of proven relationships will become clearer in 2026.

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7. A [March 2026 study from Brookings Institute](#) found that the Greater Washington DC Metro Area, including surrounding counties, lost more than 50,000 jobs between 2024 and 2025.

8. The Ausherman Family Foundation conducted a community research project looking into key transportation issues in 2022. The 2022 update to the Human Needs Assessment from the Community Foundation of Frederick County also indicated transportation as a community-wide challenge.

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## Chapter 12: Looking Forward

We've got data. Now what?



The collaborative plans to continue this work in partnership, and we have worked to highlight potential opportunities for growth and continued conversation throughout the narrative report above. These possibilities include:

- 1. Formalizing emergency coordination.** The freeze demonstrated that local funders can mobilize quickly. A shared rapid-response protocol or communication framework would prepare the collaborative for future disruptions.
- 2. Addressing persistent gaps.** Employment/job training, substance use, and transportation remain consistently underfunded, despite being identified by community studies as key issue areas. Consider pooled funding initiatives or designated priority areas.
- 3. Expanding access to unrestricted/general operating support.** Despite being raised by community nonprofits as a key factor in organizational health and wellbeing, especially during times of disruption, General Operations funding remains static year over year. New opportunities for unrestricted funding would easily sway this percentage to meet community requests.
- 4. Inviting additional participation.** The addition of a 13th cohort member in 2025 is exciting. Continue to engage with other funding entities in the county, with an eye toward an expanded and more complete picture of area funding.
- 5. Take note of larger contexts.** The average grant size has ticked up over time -- a positive sign, overall. But considering rising inflation, federal funding shifts, and other contextual changes, a larger grant may not immediately mean more purchasing power for nonprofits.

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## Chapter 13: Conclusion: The Story of 2025

The story of the Frederick County Philanthropic Funders Collaborative in 2025 is a story of resilience, growth, and collaboration. This builds on trends seen in past years -- from the COVID-19 crisis in 2019 and 2020 through to federal funding shifts in 2025. Those who live in Frederick County know this to be an area deeply rooted in partnership and lifting one another up -- and the data bears that out.



When federal funding wavered, local funders did not. Thirteen funders deployed \$18.5 million across 1,480 grants, the largest single-year increase in this collaborative's history. But the numbers only tell part of the story. Behind those numbers is a community that has spent years building the kind of shared infrastructure – common data, common language, common purpose – that makes rapid, coordinated response possible when it matters most.

That same infrastructure is also what lets us see clearly where more work remains. Community needs assessments point to housing, behavioral health, and economic vulnerability as pressing priorities, and the data shows funders moving in that direction, even as gaps persist in employment, transportation, and access to flexible operating support. The organizations doing the work have shared what they need; this report highlights where that input is being heard, and where there is opportunity to expand how funders listen to community.

The collaborative itself is still growing. New funders bring new relationships, new networks, and new ways of understanding who is being reached and who is not. There is room for more voices at the table.

None of this happens in the abstract. It happens here, in Frederick County, in the daily work of nonprofits and the families they serve, in a community with deep roots and a genuine commitment to taking care of its own. The data reflects that. And the collaborative, growing stronger each year, intends to continue to support it in the years to come.

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## Chapter 14: Methodology

The 2025 analysis was conducted at Data Driven Frederick using data contributed by all 13 participating funders. The analysis employed an AI-infused data pipeline that standardized diverse datasets from 13 funders with varying reporting formats, reconciled organizational naming variations into unified master records using Tax ID-based matching, classified grants by purpose, scale, topic, demographics, and continuity, validated data accuracy through automated and manual review processes, and generated interactive dashboard visualizations for community exploration.

Element	Count
Grant Records	1,480
Unique Organizations	339
Participating Funders	13
Data Fields per Grant	48
Analysis Year	2025
Cumulative Records (3 years)	4,253

### Limitations

Self-reported data means funders provide their own grant information, which may vary in completeness. Classification subjectivity means topic and purpose categories involve judgment calls. Participation scope means only 13 funders participated, and other philanthropic giving in the county is not captured. The Frederick County Government submits data by fiscal year rather than calendar year. Grants with zero or null dollar amounts were excluded from financial calculations.





**FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT**  
**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

Jessica Fitzwater  
*County Executive*

March 9, 2026

Dear Philanthropic Round Table Hosts and Attendees:

Thank you for the work you do on behalf of the residents of Frederick County. “Gaps Analysis of Philanthropy in Frederick County, Maryland: 2025 Report” is an impressive, continued step in understanding the nonprofit funding landscape in our county.

Although only 2025 payment installments under the Frederick County Community Partnership Grants were analyzed as part of this important report, I want you to have a snapshot of the total funding provided to nonprofits by and through Frederick County Government. The sources of these dollars include local, state and federal funds.

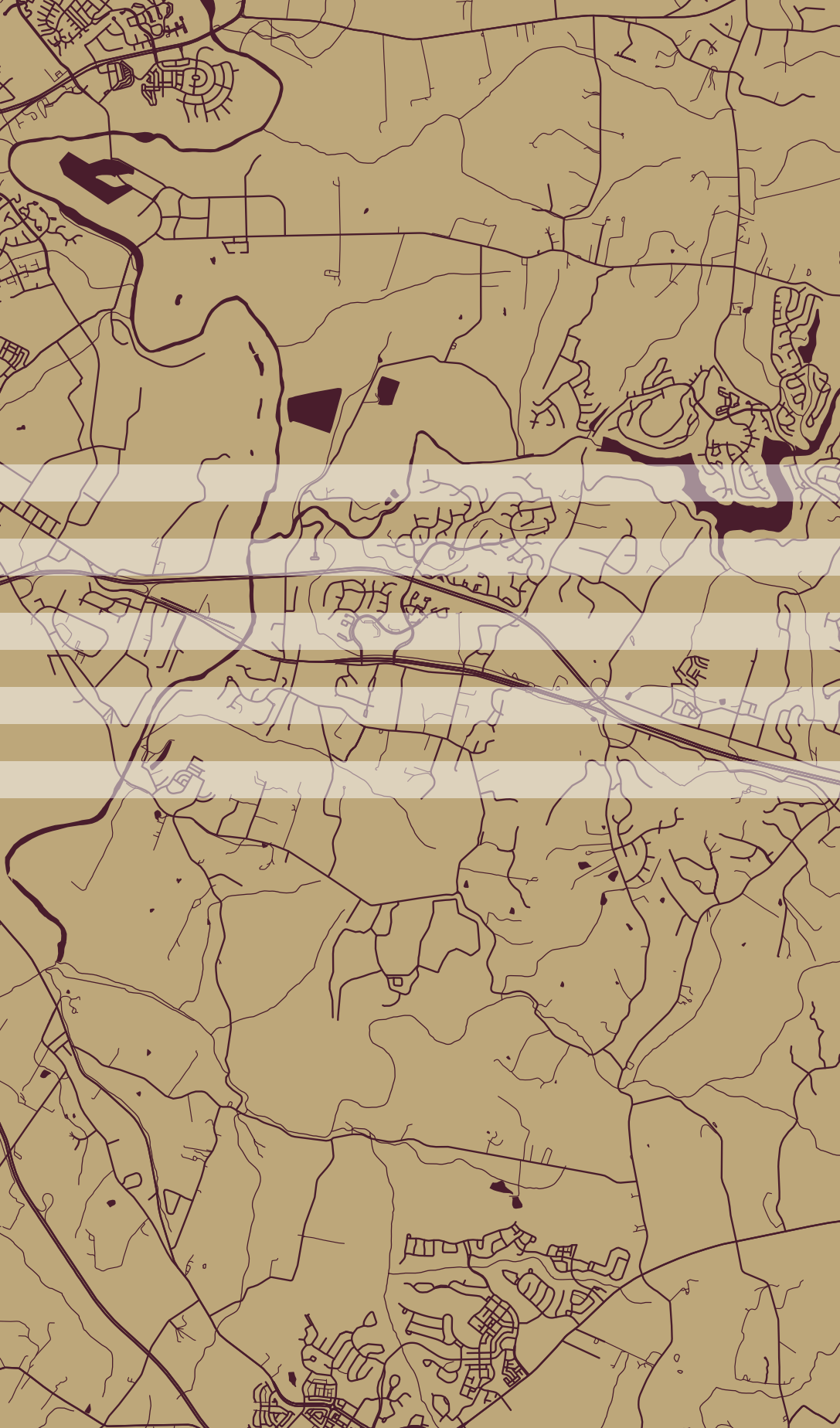
January-December 2025 Payments to Nonprofits:	
General Fund- Family Services Division	69,565
General Fund- Community Partnership Grants	1,197,500
General Fund- Non Departmental, Non County Agencies	109,335
General Fund- Miscellaneous	140,000
Opioid Abatement Fund	1,762,260
Housing Initiative Fund	162,500
Grants Fund	4,468,639
	7,909,799

Frederick County is fortunate to have so many funders willing to support and collaborate with local nonprofits. The information provided today most certainly will guide future funding decisions and help to address community-wide concerns revealed in recent needs assessments.

Sincerely,

Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive  
Frederick County, MD





For more information  
about the initiative  
behind this report,  
please contact  
Leigh Adams, Executive  
Director, Ausherman  
Family Foundation at  
[ladams@ausherman.org](mailto:ladams@ausherman.org)

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