INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S FLOW FUND

2020 - 2021 Storytelling
WE INVITE YOU INTO THIS STORY TOLD THROUGH THE WORDS, ART, AND REFLECTIONS OF THOSE INVOLVED IN THIS JOURNEY.

"This image was taken in Abiquiu, and I really felt that the rocks were revealing themselves to me in ancestral form. This one made me feel the grandmothers. I feel this feeling when in group with everyone here, too."

~IWFF Cohort Member
The Indigenous Women’s Flow Fund (IWFF) is an Indigenous-led grantmaking program that nourishes community-sourced initiatives and offers solutions and alternatives to systems in crisis. Grounded in trust-based philanthropic approaches, IWFF brings together five Indigenous women from across the United States, for a three-year period, to be decision-makers over grantmaking dollars and shape the program according to their vision.
PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING

Empowers individuals and groups outside of typical philanthropic institutions with funds that they recommend to organizations of their choice. Participatory grantmaking seeks to break open predictable patterns of philanthropic decision-making and allows for the democratization of funding decisions. The IWFF Cohort not only identifies groups to support but also shapes the themes of the program.
Creativity, flexibility, connection, and nimbleness are core to our work at Kindle Project. This allows us to be responsive to emergent needs, opportunities, and learnings as they unfold.

We provide structures and facilitated spaces for real-time explorations. We architect our programming to collaborate with our partners.

We co-create and facilitate spaces for both the IWFF Cohort and Donor Circle members as communities of practice.
OUR APPROACH

PROVIDING CAPACITY

As an intermediary, Kindle Project provides the scaffolding of staffing, infrastructure, administration, due diligence, fundraising, and education to the communities and donors we work with. This allows both donors and community-based decision-makers to focus their time and energy on moving money in powerful ways and creating alternative pathways of grantmaking for systemic change, while Kindle Project handles the details.
OUR ECOSYSTEM

Donor Circle

Kindle

Grantees

Cohort
The IWFF Cohort is a multi-generational circle of women representing Ho-Chunk, Diné, Tsétséhéstáhese, Isanti Dakhota Oyate, Raramuri, and Northern Arapaho. They are artists, seed savers, community advocates, poets, organizers, mothers, daughters, and grandmothers. Each brings their wisdom and intuition to the circle. We believe that women leaders based in their communities know best where money should flow.

"The old ones say that women will lead the healing among the tribes. Inside them are the powers of love and strength given by the moon and the Earth." - Native American wisdom

*The IWFF Cohort has chosen to be anonymous to the public.*
Kindle Project is a women-founded, women of color-led, grassroots philanthropic organization working intersectionally to build bridges, flip power, and support community-driven philanthropy. We are invested in democratized, collaborative, and strategic grantmaking that aligns donors and projects for meaningful impact. We ignite creative ideas for moving money, elevating trust-based and people-powered giving models as well as participatory decision-making practices.
PROJECT TEAM

PEARL GOTTSCHALK (LUJAN)
Advisor
Mescalero Apache/Rarámuri

JAIME GLOSHAY
Facilitator
White Mountain Apache, Navajo, and Kiowa Nations

SADAF CAMERON
Kindle Project Director
Afghani/Scottish

ADAM RUBEL
Advisor
Hebrew: North Africa, Eastern Europe
IWFF DONORS & DONOR CIRCLE

The IWFF Donors are multi-generational and committed to leading with trust and creativity in their grantmaking. They bring their curiosity and openness to our collective work. Each donor has made a multi-year pledge to meet the long-term commitment to Indigenous communities.

Many of the IWFF Donors have joined together in a donor circle that runs parallel to the IWFF Cohort, and have cultivated a deeper community of practice. Kindle Project holds the space and facilitates the exploration of emerging themes and deeper lessons while the donors reflect upon and evolve their own perspectives. Within the context of a structured yet emergent learning process, peer engagement helps donors become increasingly capable of effectively undertaking trust-based, participatory grantmaking.

~ IWFF Donor painting
The 22 Indigenous-led IWFF grantees were chosen by the cohort as a result of their depth of connection to their communities and to organizations that are often unseen by traditional philanthropy. Organizations are located across the United States and are listed here on this map.
Flow Funds empower individuals to recommend grants to organizations of their choice. The method uplifts the wisdom of individuals and celebrates their agency to move resources. In 2020, each cohort member had a budget of $30k. The cohort members moved $150k to 12 Indigenous-led groups.

The Collective Fund empowers group decision-making to nominate organizations for a grant. The method prioritizes the wisdom of the group and celebrates consensus building. The IWFF Cohort collectively moved $165k to 10 Indigenous-led groups with grants ranging from $10k - $25k.
INDIVIDUAL FLOW FUND GRANTEES

BRAVEHEART SOCIETY
DREAM OF WILD HEALTH
HONOR OUR PUEBLO EXISTENCE
MAK’AMHAM OHLONE CAFE
MGIZI COMMUNICATIONS
OYATE TECA PROJECT

SACRED PLACES INSTITUTE FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
SEVENTH GENERATION FUND - THRIVING WOMEN INITIATIVE
SUKAWAKA NA TA WOUNSPE
WICONI WAWOKIYA, INC
WIND RIVER FOUNDATION- WHITE BUFFALO RECOVERY
ANONYMOUS
THE IWFF COLLECTIVE FUND

The IWFF Collective Fund supports work that contributes to healthy, vibrant Indigenous communities, which includes...

- Rematriation & Community Capacity
- Arts, Culture, Media
- Cultivating & Sharing Seeds
- Food Sovereignty & Access to Traditional Local Foods
- Land Sovereignty
- Language Immersion & Revitalization
- Nourishment and Protection for Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit Relatives

In a collaborative, creative facilitated process, the IWFF Cohort identified the themes and shaped the contours of the Collective Fund.
COLLECTIVE FUND GRANTEES

DZIL YIJIIN FOOD SOVEREIGNTY PROJECT
DAKHOTA IAPI OKODAKICIYE
DREAM OF WILD HEALTH
GROW OUR OWN
MENDING THE SACRED HOOP
SEEDING SOVEREIGNTY
WICONI WAWOKIYA, INC.
UKWAKHWA
YELLOWBIRD LIFEWAYS
ANONYMOUS
The following pages are a compilation of explorations, learnings, and creative expressions from both the IWFF Cohort and the Donor Circle. We hope that these offerings will inspire you as well.
YEAR ONE SHARING FROM IWFF COHORT & DONOR CIRCLE

THE IWFF COHORT...

...gathers and makes decisions on a lunar, cyclical giving process that honors the rhythms of the natural world, seasons, and the life of plants and seeds.

...makes decisions with trust in greater guidance, intuition, knowledge, and makes them together as a circle and in a mutually supportive community.

...explores what decolonizing philanthropic practices look like in action.

THE IWFF DONOR CIRCLE IS...

...redefining the role of a donor in relation to truly sharing power with a community.

...reimagining how the story of success is received and told, and reimagining community-driven impact.

...exploring peer wisdom and how to be in partnership with emerging communities.
We asked the IWFF Donors...

"BY SHIFTING OUR RELATIONSHIP TO RESOURCES AND POWER, WHAT BECOMES POSSIBLE?"

Walking with individuals and communities in their short-term needs, with long-term intentions for change.

Donors may become more human and connected - not just through their money.

Greater opportunities for collaboration and partnership that can lead to true solidarity.

A transformation of philanthropy that is more grounded in holistic reciprocity and mutual respect, while being aware and honest about structural power dynamics.

Connection.

More possibility for multiple creative solutions for the issues we are dealing with as a species.

A remembering that we don't have to have all the answers. We don't have to be in the same room to feel connected, that there can be bridgers and translators to help us feel that connection.

The insights that come from the margins become amplified and are taken more seriously.
We asked the IWFF Cohort...

"HAVING INDIGENOUS WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING POWER COULD TRANSFORM..."

A transformation of philanthropy that is more grounded in holistic reciprocity and mutual respect, while aware and honest about structural power dynamics.

Everything. Feminine energy has no ego. It is always loving and looking outward.

The narrative of the patriarchal, colonial oppression we still struggle with.

Greater opportunities for collaboration and partnership that can lead to true solidarity.

Connections with communities globally. The big picture is humanity - starting with our Indigenous roots.
Lifting Hearts Off the Ground

We tell you to help us rebuild our communities after you dropped bombs on our roof tops. We did not tell you that your help was not for us. We did not need you to rebuild the walls of our homes. You needed to rebuild your beauty and honour. Only when we build together will we heal together. These walls are not the destination. They are the road to sisterhood. The road to brotherhood.

~IWFF Cohort Member

In Community,

You tell us to help rebuild your communities after we dropped bombs on your roof tops. We did not know that we were the ones who needed help. We needed to rebuild ears to listen hearts to feel hands to share souls to re-member Building together is warm with sisterhood, strong with brotherhood. Healing.

~IWFF Donor
Sing two songs:  
a heart’s worth.  
More chorus, less chaos,  
harmony  
by parts.  
Stanzas, dances, moonlight  
on circumstances.  
Age into courage.  
Grow into truth. Our  
hands are clammy,  
but tender.

~ IWFF Donor Poem

"Musicians"
Contact Us
WWW.KINDLEPROJECT.ORG

To join as a donor, please contact Sadaf.

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Click here to listen to an audio offering from an IWFF Cohort Member.