

2025 Social Impact Report Descriptive Text

[Description of Section 1: Screen is split into two sections.

Left side has solid teal background with all-caps text in navy blue, “2025 Social Impact Report.” The button leading to this document is in white text on a dark pink background.

On the larger right side is a halftone close-up photograph of a person with long wavy hair signing the word “impact.”]

[Description of Section 2: This section has a dark purple background. At the top, there is a video thumbnail leading to YouTube; when accessed within YouTube, a full description and transcript is provided directly underneath the video, along with captions.

In this video, Deaf Organizations Fund’s Executive Director, Sasha Ponappa, provides an ASL interpretation of the English text in Section 2. Toward the end, DOF’s Director of Development, Avi Haimowitz, provides an ASL interpretation of the closing section of the report as well.]

Text in Section 2:

Section Title: State of the Deaf Nonprofit Sector

We continue to feel the ripple effects of 2025, a year marked by upheaval and uncertainty. Our team saw deaf organizations and programs dealing with two serious issues:

- Deaf organizations receive less than 1% of the \$37.2 billion in grants awarded each year nationally by mainstream funders
- Significant and relentless attacks were being made on the nonprofit sector and disability rights

To better understand the impact of these two issues, we polled deaf organization leaders in spring of 2025. At that time, they were already reporting the following:

- 65% felt uncertain about future funding
- 55% experienced or anticipated a decrease in funding
- 45% experienced an increased demand for their services

Critical moments like these remind us of why Deaf Organizations Fund (DOF) was built. We are dedicated to caring for and protecting our communities. In response to the challenging climate, we collectively raised funds that would allow DOF to double the number of deaf organizations and programs we typically fund in 2026.

Your support also made it possible for us to host two webinars about notable policy shifts affecting the nonprofit sector and the different ways that deaf organizations and programs could move forward. We also launched the Consultant Directory, a pool of professionals with varying areas of expertise, to support the operations of deaf organizations and programs serving the front lines.

For grants offered in 2025, we remained committed to unrestricted, flexible funding. While we continue to make our funding process accessible, we took it a step further by providing our first-ever live grant webinar which was attended by over 115 organizations. We ultimately funded the direct services or operations of four very different, incredibly hard-working deaf organizations – a reflection of our alignment to the principles of trust-based philanthropy. Please read ahead to learn more about the impact they are making in their respective deaf communities.

[Description of Section 3: This section has a white background and is titled “Year in Review” in all-caps. There are four animated illustrations placed in a row: all follow the same styling of white hands with whimsical and curvy black outlines, placed on an irregular circle shape.

The first animated illustration depicts the ASL sign for “fund” placed on a dark purple circle background. Text directly underneath reads “Fund Distribution.”

The second animated illustration depicts the ASL sign for “resources” placed on a dark pink circle background. Text directly underneath reads “Nonprofit Resources.”

The third animated illustration depicts the ASL sign for “information” placed on a royal blue circle background. Text directly underneath reads “Accessible Information.”

The fourth animated illustration depicts the ASL sign for “training” placed on a salmon circle background. Text directly underneath reads “Training Institute.”

[Description of Section 4: This section has a white background with a static version of the ASL illustration of “Fund” placed alongside the section title. Within the section body, there are four organization logos next to text blurbs. From top to bottom: Atomic Hands logo, DEAFinitely, Inc.

logo, The Black Deaf Project logo, and Deaf Defy logo.]

Text in Section 4:

Section Title: Fund Distribution

DOF awarded \$25,000 in grant funding to each organization in our 2025 cohort. Each organization also received unrestricted stipends to support additional areas of need, including but not limited to accessing professional development opportunities. Below are brief anecdotes of how these organizations used Impact Grants to address their areas of greatest need:

Atomic Hands: Collaborated with SignStudy to develop Tachyo, a centralized tool that simplifies searching across multiple STEM sign language lexicons for specialized signs. This resource is unique in that signs are carefully organized and cross-referenced according to their meanings; it acts not just as a dictionary but as a resource for signers to explore the conceptual and linguistic nuances of using ASL in a variety of STEM settings. To streamline the creation of this resource, the team implemented an online portal for lexicographers to efficiently screen signs and their definitions. To date, the careful review of over 2,000 definitions has led to the release of 358 signs from three STEM lexicons. Deaf students, educators, interpreters, and more can now search for these signs on Tachyo – and new signs are being continuously added.

DEAFinitely, Inc.: Facilitated a DeafBlind Youth Council (DBYC) that provided virtual and in-person leadership and peer mentorship opportunities for DeafBlind youth. This unprecedented council, led and operated by DeafBlind mentors, offered DeafBlind youth spaces to engage in socioemotional learning opportunities, skill building, and development of interpersonal relationships.

The Black Deaf Project: "Melanin in Every Page: The Black Deaf Book Collective" is in the process of publishing four early reader children's books written and illustrated by members of the Black Deaf community that celebrate Black Deaf culture and serve as essential teaching tools. These books aim to fill a significant gap in educational, culturally relevant resources while providing children with expanded representation and fostering cultural competence.

Deaf Defy, Inc.: Implemented patient resource carts in seven refugee camps located across the Middle East along with North and East Africa regions and trained local deaf community members to utilize the carts long-term. These carts provided 228 deaf children and their families with access to audiology supplies and sign language resources specific to each country.

[Description of Section 5: This section has a white background with a static version of the ASL illustration of “Resources” placed alongside the section title.]

Text in Section 5:

Section Title: Nonprofit Resources

We sustained and expanded deaf organizations’ access to nonprofit resources:

Deaf Organizations and Programs Directory:

A continually growing list of nonprofits and programs working to meet the needs of deaf communities within the U.S., this directory is searchable by geographic region or cause area. By the end of 2025, this resource had nearly 90 organizations listed.

Consultant Directory:

This directory is another continually expanding list that centralizes nonprofit subject matter experts who identify as members of deaf communities and/or are equipped to provide communication access to leaders of deaf organizations. This directory was set up in summer 2025, and has nearly 20 consultants listed.

DOF Blog:

Our blog is a new communication hub for DOF to share important updates as well as share perspectives from guest writers on topics relevant to nonprofits. We kicked off 2025 with the publication of five blogs, including one written by DOF’s Board President, Christopher Soukup.

Technical Assistance:

DOF provided information and referral by email and Zoom to 100 deaf organizations and programs nationwide.

[Description of Section 6: This section has a white background with a static version of the ASL illustration of “Information” placed alongside the section title.

Underneath the section title and illustration, there is a brief animated clip of four people on a Zoom panel, with each person framed in a teal border. Clockwise from top left: Sasha Ponappa, Deaf Organizations Fund; Aracelia Aguilar, DeafHope; Darian B. Gambrell, DEAF, Inc.; and Zachary Ennis, Rochester Deaf Kitchen. Aracelia is shown signing: “That’s where we reevaluate and hold firm to our values.”

Text in italics appears directly underneath this animated clip: “On April 24, 2025, a [panel of deaf leaders](#) along with DOF Executive Director Sasha Ponappa engaged in discussions about the impact of the nonprofit crisis on their organizations.”]

Text in Section 6:

Section Title: Accessible Information

With the new presidential administration came many changes that impacted tax-exempt organizations’ operations and ability to maintain funding. To help address the influx of information, we created an ad hoc resource page centralizing accurate and accessible information.

This included up-to-date webinars from trusted sources like National Council on Nonprofits related to federal funding and executive orders impacting nonprofits, along with a community-driven Google document with curated nonprofit resources and strategies from deaf organization leaders.

We also provided accessible webinars; one of which was led by legal and compliance experts on understanding and navigating executive orders, and the other being a panel of deaf organization leaders discussing how they have navigated the nonprofit crisis and its impact.

[Description of Section 7: This section has a white background with a static version of the ASL illustration of “Training” placed alongside the section title.]

Text in Section 7:

Section Title: Training Institute

For as long as DOF has existed, deaf organization leaders have requested that we provide them with opportunities to access training sessions on topics relevant to nonprofits.

We were over the moon to finally be able to meet these gaps in accessible resources through the generous establishment of The Glenn and Martha Wilson Fund. This seed funding allowed DOF to begin the creation of a [Training Institute](#) that will consist of series of training sessions and accompanying materials on various nonprofit topics.

Looking ahead, the first set of topics covered in 2026 will include fundraising and grantwriting, and leadership and management. All trainings will be stored in a resource library on DOF's website, and offered free of charge.

[Description of Section 8: This section has a white background with 6 statistics shown under the section title. Each statistic appears in large, bold salmon text, with the explainer text directly underneath in smaller, regular navy blue text.]

Text in Section 8:

Section Title: 2025 at a Glance

- 84 grant applications received
- \$100K awarded in 2025 among 4 grantees
- 100 instances of technical assistance provided to deaf organizations
- 150 deaf organization leaders attended our educational webinars
- 40 supporters funded our work on a monthly basis
- \$200K raised in support of future 2026 grantees

[Description of Section 9: This section has a white background with two small photographs appearing underneath the section title. The photo on the left shows the back of Sasha, DOF Executive Director, slightly blurred in the foreground. She is signing something to a crowd of people standing and facing her, waving their hands in deaf applause. The photo on the right shows many people seated at round tables, with a mixture of people chatting and waving their hands also in applause.]

Text in Section 9:

Section Title: Community Response

A mere 1% of the \$37.2 billion in grants awarded annually goes toward disability justice organizations. This means even less money gets funneled to deaf organizations and programs. In response to this inequity, along with increased challenges within the nonprofit sector, we established the *1% IS NOT ENOUGH* campaign.

Through this effort we raised \$200K to help address immediate and long-term gaps in grants and resources for deaf organizations, including funding for 10 grant projects in early 2026 ([check them out here!](#)). We're so grateful to our parent organization, CSD, for providing the initial funding for this campaign, and to our incredible community of individual and corporate donors for their commitment to deaf organizations – the backbones of our deaf communities.

We also held our first ever in-person fundraising events in Austin and Seattle. It was a joy to connect with our supporters and donors face to face, and we look forward to meeting old and new faces again at future events.

[Description of Section 10: This section has a dark purple background. At the top, there is a video thumbnail leading to YouTube; when accessed within YouTube, a full description and transcript is provided directly underneath the video, along with captions.

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Text in Section 10:

In closing, we continue to see that deaf organizations and programs are forced to do more with less. The stark reality is that this will likely continue for months, if not years, to come. If you are inspired by the work we are doing, we encourage you to consider joining the [Champions of Deaf Organizations Collective](#), a community of monthly donors working together to sustain DOF's work.

The future of our deaf communities and the organizations that serve them depends on how we show up in this moment. **Together, we can and must build a resilient deaf nonprofit sector.**

Onward,
Sasha, Avi, and Finn