



2024 Annual Report

July 2023 - June 2024

Photo Credit: El Sistema Texas



El Sistema USA[®]

www.elsistemausa.org



Dear El Sistema USA Members, Supporters, and Friends,

I am incredibly proud of the strides El Sistema USA (ESUSA) has made this past year, both programmatically and organizationally. Our growth in programming and revenue has been truly remarkable! In Fiscal Year 2024 (July 2023-June 2024), we launched a groundbreaking [music and science curriculum](#) in partnership with the Polaris Dawn space mission, engaged nearly 30 music programs in [data collection](#) to measure the profound impact of music on children, and increased our revenue by an impressive 85% compared to 2023.

As music educators and nonprofit leaders, our work is important! The collective efforts in our field—using music as a powerful tool for social impact—are more vital than ever. ESUSA is uniquely positioned to amplify and advance these efforts by connecting, strengthening, and building our network. Together, we are ensuring that all children, regardless of background, have access to high-quality music education that celebrates their voice and potential.

In FY2024, we made meaningful progress toward this mission, and we are excited for an even more transformative year ahead in FY2025.

Thank you for your unwavering support in keeping music education alive and thriving.

With gratitude,

Liz Moulthrop
Executive Director
El Sistema USA



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ESUSA Membership at a Glance



25,000
Students



6,000+
Teaching
Artists



35
States &
Provinces



140
Member
Organizations

ESUSA Welcomes New Members

ESUSA Welcomes New Organizational and Individual Members



NVM Writer's Workshop
Member in Training

ESUSA Welcomes New Board Members



Karen Cueva
Head of Operations,
The Lewis Prize
for Music



Liber Cuervos
Director of Education
and Programs at
Miami Music Project



Carol Minter
Executive Director
at Soundscapes

ESUSA Team



Elizabeth Moulthrop
Executive Director



Brian Gallion
Business and
Memberships Manager



Gabrielle Molina
Lead Program Consultant



Angie Scala
Graphic and
Web Designer



Carmen Delgado
Social Media Manager



Daniel Trahey
Manager of Creative Youth
Voice & Leadership

ESUSA Board of Directors

Lauren Shelton
Chair and Executive
Committee Chair

Isaac Sinnett
Co-Vice Chair

Monique Van Willingham
Co-Vice Chair and
Governance Committee
Chair

Robert Gofourth
Treasurer and Finance
Committee Chair

Mateen Milan
Clerk

Mark Churchill
Founding Director,
ESUSA

Roger Bernstein

Linda Bunce

Trina Christensen

Liber Cuervos

Karen Cueva
Membership &
Engagement
Committee Chair

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McNeil**

Rodrigo Guerrero

Armand Hall

**Kaitlyn Korogy-
Guarneros**
Co-Governance
Committee Chair

Carol Minter
Advancement
Committee Chair

Tomisha Price-Brock

Brian Wiebe

Roberto Zambrano

Ciyadh Wells

NEW Mission Statement & Website



This year, El Sistema USA unveiled our new Mission Statement, along with a brand new look for our website. Crucially, the work of ESUSA has not changed. We remain committed to the values inspired by El Sistema from Venezuela and our ESUSA membership model, which emphasizes free or low-cost tuition, frequent instruction, community, and ensemble-based learning.

Our new language better conveys the impact of that work, the values that drive it, and what we strive to achieve together. The clarity with which we tell our stories and make the case for music education will serve our collective efforts to inform, inspire, fundraise, and advocate.

MISSION

El Sistema USA® works to ensure every child has access to high-quality music education that celebrates their voice and potential, by supporting a national network of organizations & educators.

VISION

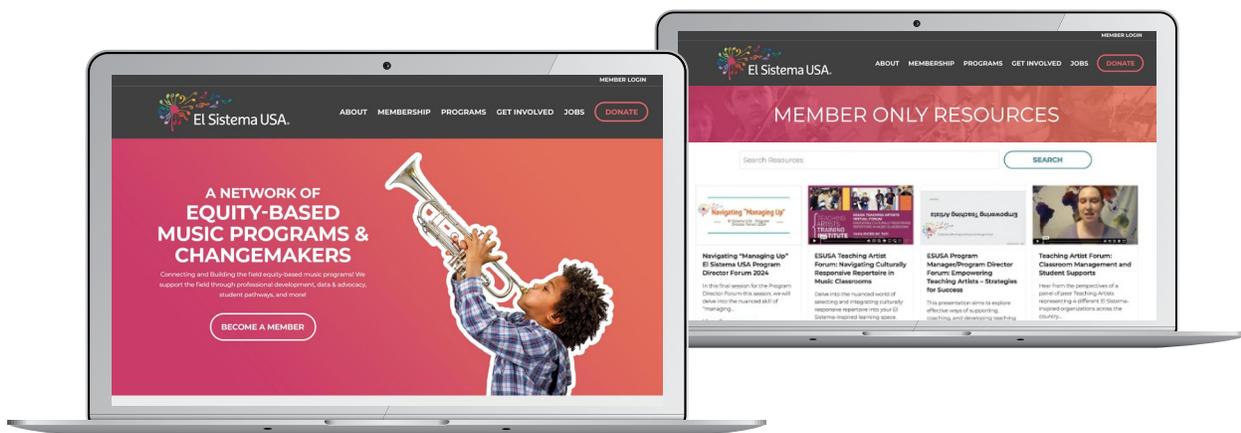
El Sistema USA® is committed to equity and excellence in music education. We envision a world in which every child—regardless of income, geography, or identity—has access to a high-quality music education program that builds community, opportunity, and personal growth.

WHAT WE DO

We support a network of music education programs throughout the country with staff development and training, research and data, student leadership programs, and advocacy for the field.

Introducing El Sistema USA's New Website!

Visit our website today and find out more about ESUSA's member benefits, including a **fresh El Sistema USA Resource Hub page, for members only!**





Sarah Gillis

Polaris Partnership

El Sistema USA® (ESUSA) unveiled a new curriculum, [A Musician's Guide to Reaching for the Stars](#), developed in collaboration with Polaris Dawn Mission Specialist Sarah Gillis, an accomplished musician and SpaceX engineer.

Inspired by Sarah Gillis's journey from classical violinist to space adventurer, *A Musician's Guide to Reaching for the Stars* encourages students to reach for their dreams and discover the connections between music, creativity, and exploration.

This was developed for a wide range of ages (3rd grade +) and classroom types. This is the perfect resource to use for summer learning. We would love it if you could share this resource with your network. The curriculum features Sarah and her crewmembers Jared, Scott, and Anna, along with music and space experts Rickey Minor, Jeri Lynne Johnson, Kevin Day, Joe Tanner, and Sue Levine.

Its five modules, each featuring videos and engaging activities called "Challenges," weave together elements of Sarah Gillis's personal story, an inside look at the Polaris Dawn crew's mission prep, musical activities, and self-reflection exercises. The five modules are titled: 1) Daring to Dream; 2) Joining a Stellar Crew; 3) Training for Life in Space; 4) Plotting the Mission Timeline; and 5) Looking Toward the Next Adventure.

The curriculum is not limited to classroom teachers—families at home, camp and after-school program counselors, teaching artists, and others working with young people can easily access the curriculum and engage with its activities in a variety of settings.

This curriculum collaboration was a precursor to the Harmony of Resilience video that the Polaris Dawn Mission to Space released this September, in our new fiscal year, in partnership with El Sistema USA featuring El Sistema students globally! In the video, Sarah Gillis performed "Rey's Theme" by composer John Williams on her custom-made violin while in orbit aboard the Dragon spacecraft, launching her campaign to raise support for music education back on Earth. Her music selection, fittingly, was a piece from the film, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*.

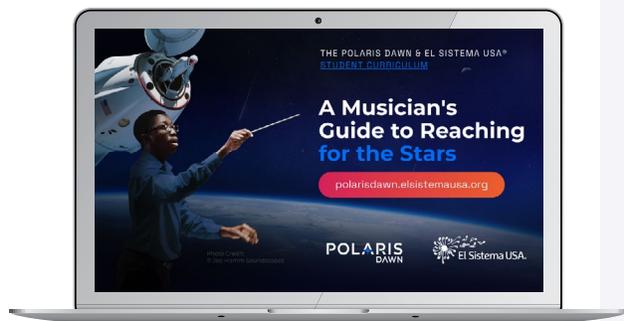
Gillis was joined in performance by youth musicians from around the world, all of them students in the international El Sistema network of organizations, specifically: the inaugural El Sistema program in Venezuela, The Boston String Academy in the United States, NEOJIBA in Brazil, Dream Orchestra in Sweden, Brass for Africa in Uganda, and BLUME Haiti. The [video](#) of their historic performance is the first-of-its-kind downloaded from space via Starlink high-speed internet, and has been viewed a BILLION times worldwide!

49,000

Curriculum
Site Visits

152

Countries
Reached



"This is hands down such a great resource for any music class! I will be using this with my students and will have 170 students performing Rey's Theme later this year. BRAVOO!!!"

- NJ Middle School Orchestra Teacher

El Sistema USA-Peabody Fellowship

El Sistema USA is proud to collaborate with The Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University to offer up to two full cost of attendance scholarships to the Peabody Conservatory for Fall 2024. El Sistema USA accepts nominations from any El Sistema USA member organization. Since the inception of the El Sistema USA Fellowship at Peabody Conservatory in 2018, 8 students have been awarded full scholarships to attend Peabody. This year the scholarship was awarded to tuba player Valeria Perez Desiderio from Guaynabo, Puerto Rico of the Orquesta Sinfónica Juvenil de Puerto Rico.



Youth Ambassador Program at the National Symposium

The Inaugural ESUSA Youth Ambassador Cohort presented throughout the weekend at multiple sessions. The cohort of 10 young leaders represented six ESUSA programs and states. YA sessions included:

- Opening Plenary
- Student Relationships: How to Teach, Collaborate, and Equalize Power
- Redefining Success: The Impact of Prioritizing Student Health through Program Activity



Youth Leadership Cohort at Ravinia Seminario

ESUSA facilitated a cohort of 10 young leaders from across the country at the National Seminario Ravinia in July 2023.

"My participation as a Youth Ambassador influenced me to want to advocate for more student voices in my program and to also advocate for students to lead activities more often. It has also caused me to want to look for programs that don't have a lot of student leaders and help those programs fit or try to have more student leaders in their programs."

- 2024 Youth Ambassador



185

Attendees



11

Webinars
& Forums



Webinars and Virtual Forums

In FY2024, ESUSA hosted a variety of virtual sessions for Teaching Artists, and Program Directors and Managers, including:

Teaching Artists Forums with Anna Barson, the Managing Director of Teaching Artists Training Institute

- *Latin & Hispanic Heritage Month with Felipe Morales-Torres, Assistant Director of the Bornoff Foundation for Advancement of String Education (FASE)*
- *Backwards Design Lesson Planning*
- *Classroom Management and Student Supports*
- *Navigating Culturally Responsive Repertoire in Music Classrooms*
- *Redefining Measures of Success in Music*

Program Director & Manager Forums with Gabrielle Molina, the Executive Director of Project Music

- *Internal Professional Development*
- *Program Design: The Critical Piece that Impacts Everything We Do*
- *Navigating National and International Summer Camps, Festivals and Fellowships*
- *Empowering Teaching Artists: Strategies for Success*
- *Navigating “Managing Up”*

Webinar

- *Pathways to College – Unlocking Your Musical Journey with ESUSA at the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University*



Nearly 200 arts administrators, teachers, and leaders attended our June 2024 National Symposium at Butler University! Thank you to all the attendees and our sponsors, without whom this event could not have happened. This fiscal support included a \$20,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. The symposium's overarching theme, "Inspire, Connect, Transform," underscored its aim to gather inspiration, foster national connections, and catalyze positive transformation in equity-based music education. Highlights included keynote speaker, Eric Williamson, Artistic Director of the Black and People of All Colors LGBTQ+ Gospel Choir; the Mark Churchill Teacher of the Year Award to Camilo Ortiz, Founding Pre-Orchestra Music Director for El Sistema Santa Cruz; the Youth Ambassador Cohort; curated sessions for Administrators and Teaching Artists; and musical guest - The String Queens.



"Watching the youth ambassadors engaged with the String Queens performance and seeing TSQ respond live and engage- this is SO RARE in classical music spaces and I'm so thankful the YAs could experience this from such a great representation of their potential future selves."

- Symposium Attendee

"Eric Williamson delivered the presentation in a way that intentionally includes queer people in the conversation and acknowledges us as leaders of the change. He acknowledged that there were queer (and queer BIPOC) teaching artists in the auditorium and that was so affirming."

- Symposium Attendee



DR. CHRYSAL SELLERS-BATTLE
Associate Dean of Equity & Inclusion



RACHEL ROBERTS
Director of the Institute for Music Leadership

Regional Gathering at Eastman School of Music

ESUSA board and members gathered at the Eastman School of Music for professional development with Eastman staff, music, and networking.



Teaching Artist Training at National Seminario Ravinia

ESUSA conducted professional development sessions on youth leadership and social-emotional learning with Ebonie Pierce, Scott Edgar, and Vivian Gonzalez at the National Seminario Ravinia: Orchestras for All.

NATIONAL SEMINARIO



ESUSA-Eastman Leadership Bootcamp Partnership

7 leaders from ESUSA member programs attended the Eastman Leadership Bootcamp free of charge in June 2024.

Lina M Alvarez Vasquez, Production Assistant, San Diego Youth Symphony

Sarah Danielle Williams, Director of Education, Baltimore Symphony ORCHKids

Marian Johana Gutierrez-Curiel, Orchestra Manager and Strings Program Coordinator, BRAVO Youth Orchestras

Emily Buehler, Manager of Programs and Community Engagement, Paterson Music Project

Freddy Jesus Contreras, Associate Artistic Director, Capital Harmony Works, Trenton Music Makers

Laurianne J Lopez, Program Manager/Program Director, New Mexico Philharmonic

Amy Meyer Brunner, Program Director, Yamhill Enrichment Society



EASTMAN INSTITUTE FOR MUSIC LEADERSHIP

EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC • UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

“Having participated in the Eastman Bootcamp has been an invaluable experience. The quality and warmth of the presenters made it much easier to navigate topics that are often difficult to understand thanks to very engaging sessions. It was also wonderful to meet new colleagues, learn from their experiences, and make new connections.”

-Marian Gutierrez-Curiel



Group Picture from Eastman Leadership Bootcamp

14
Organizations Who Received Grant Writing Support
Fundraising Office Hours with ESUSA Advancement Consultant
ESUSA offered grant writing support to 14 ESUSA member organizations in 2024



31

Participating Programs

- Angelica Center for Arts and Music
- ASO Sympatico
- Bakerview Music Academy
- Bay Area Music Project
- Bravo! Vail
- Capital Harmony Works - Trenton Music Makers
- Choir School of Delaware
- Crescendo Phoenixville
- ECoSistema
- El Sistema Santa Cruz/Pajaro Valley
- Enriching Lives through Music
- ESYO CHIME
- Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies (Harmony Program)
- Harmony School of Music Inc
- INTEMPO
- Junior Orchestra of Yamhill County
- Kids 4 Harmony
- Kidznotes
- New Jersey Symphony
- OrKidstra
- Paterson Music Project
- Project Music
- Riverside Arts Academy
- ROCmusic
- Sistema Huronia Music Academy
- Sistema Kingston
- Sistema Ravinia
- Sistema Toronto
- Sistema Tulsa
- The People's Music School
- The Raleigh Music Collective

National Standardized Student Survey Tool & Dashboard

ESUSA has launched a standardized student survey tool on social emotional indicators for all ESUSA member programs. ESUSA will collect pre and post surveys which will be matched to measure change over time. Programs can upload their survey data to an online dashboard which will allow programs to view the results and custom analysis of their individual program. ESUSA will also provide aggregated national data analysis. This standardized national survey tool and database will allow for organizations to tell their individual and collective stories of impact. ESUSA is working with Research Consultant, Deborah Ward, Ph.D and DART Analytics on this project.

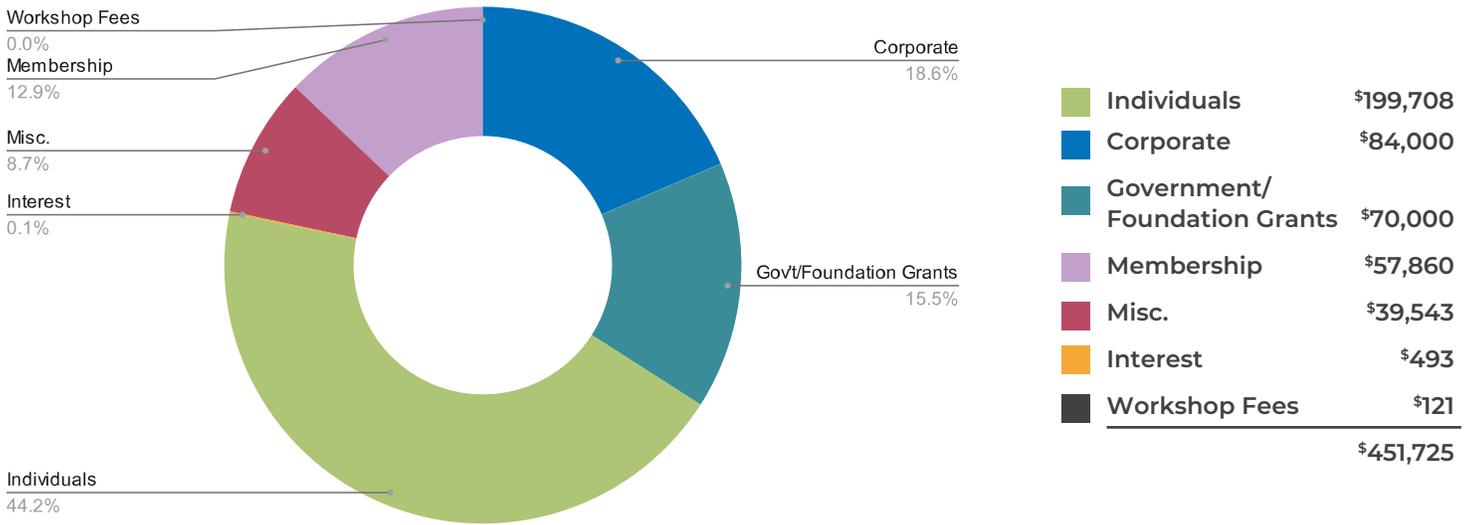
*“As a small organization, **our membership in ESUSA has been an invaluable resource.** The data collection help that ESUSA has spearheaded has been a useful tool that was easy to administer with a small group of volunteers. **It has provided deep insight** into how our students feel about their developing musical skills, why they continue their studies with us, and **how we can improve our program to meet their needs and interests.**”*

- Liz Grimshaw, Founder and Executive Director, Crescendo Phoenixville

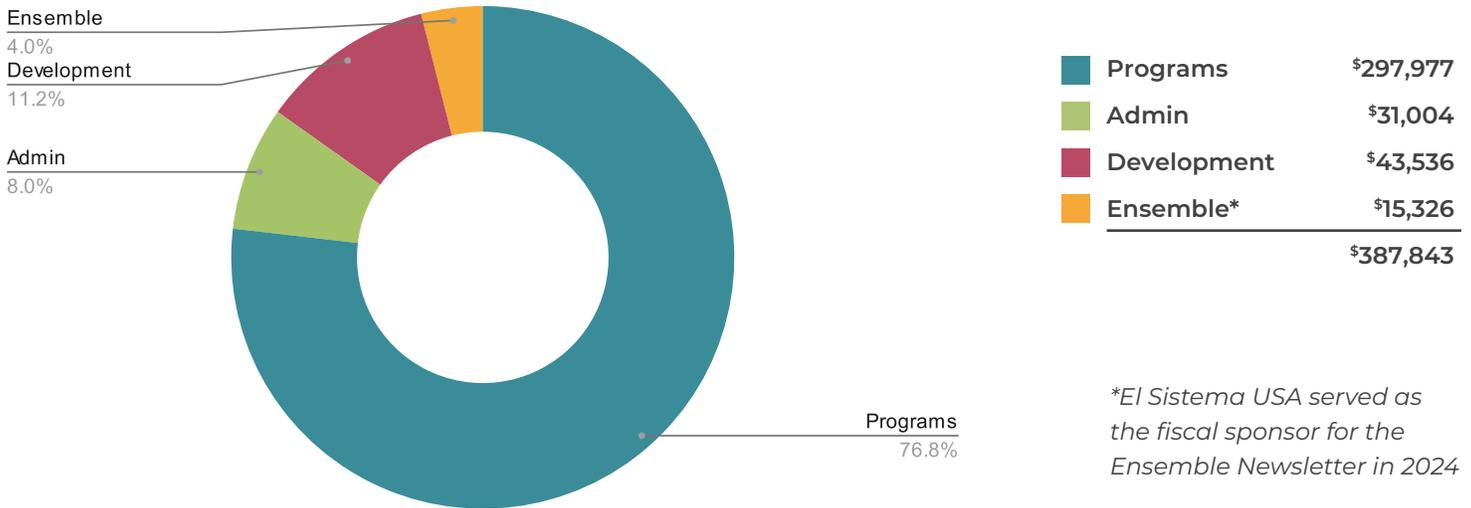
FY 2024 Budget and Giving

FY24 Total Income	\$451,725
FY24 Total Expenses	\$387,843
FY24 Net	\$63,882

ESUSA FY24 Income



ESUSA FY24 Expenses



**El Sistema USA served as the fiscal sponsor for the Ensemble Newsletter in 2024*



To Support El Sistema USA,
visit www.ElSistemaUSA.org/donate

4721 Emperor Boulevard, Suite 130, Durham NC, 27703 | 908-308-4632

www.elsistemausa.org

El Sistema USA is a charitable 501c3 (Tax EIN: 46-2483315)