“Change can begin from below. True change must come from below. Just as it is the root system that makes a tree stand, so it is with changes that must last.”

— NNIMMO BASSEY at FishNet Dialogue held in Port Harcourt, Nigeria last year as “opportunities to forge strong ecological collectives and to show the world that we have the adaptive solutions to the ravages of climate change.”
The Year, by the Numbers

Here’s what your support made possible at Thousand Currents during our fiscal year 2018, from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.

39 Grassroots Partners
forging local solutions to our shared global challenges, of which 11 Partners are new because solidarity must be grown

3 Focus Areas
• food sovereignty
• alternative economies
• climate justice

39 Investments
in the first round of the Buen Vivir Fund — in healthcare, housing, small business development, banking, and environmental and climate protection

Over 50 Years
of partnership with our three longest-standing partners, because solidarity does not stop

2+ Million
small farmers, Indigenous peoples, sexual and ethnic minorities, and youth have been reached by our partners

100% of Gifts
from individuals went to direct grantmaking for our grassroots partners, since our operating costs were covered by foundation grants

120 “Impact Influencers”
or people who have graduated from the Thousand Currents Academy

4 Out of 4 Stars
from Charity Navigator and holder of GuideStar’s “Gold” Seal of Transparency

16 Staff
walking the talk with partners

600+ People
are part of the Thousand Currents Young Professionals Group

33 Years
since we were founded in 1985 (as IDEX)

$4.3 Million
proud, our FY17 revenue reflects steady and sustainable growth
Characters gather in a room, and on each wall, there is a door. The doors are marked FOOD, ECONOMY, CLIMATE, and LEADERSHIP. A tattered book (representing the past), a ticking clock (representing the present), and a pair of goggles (representing the future) discuss which door to go through. Characters know that each door leads to a different future.

**PAST:** We have to go with what we know.

**PRESENT:** Uhh, that really doesn’t seem to be working for us. Have you seen the destruction and despair all around us?

**FUTURE:** What is most important for us to know?

**PRESENT:** That we have a choice.

**PAST:** And what, pray tell, is that? I don’t see one.

**FUTURE:** Whatever door we choose, we evolve or devolve. Either way, I’m fine.

**PRESENT:** How are you fine?

**FUTURE:** What if the future has already happened? That would mean we know how to live in harmony already — now.

**PRESENT:** Change is the only thing we can count on right now. Transitions and cycles are part of living, natural systems.

**PAST:** That’s true. History shows us that transitions are internal and external, long and quick. Transitions happen between the lines.

**PRESENT:** So does it matter which door we choose?
Message from Solomé Lemma, Thousand Currents Executive Director

Dear friends,

Change and transitions are inevitable parts of living on the planet. That doesn’t mean they are easy. They do make life infinitely more interesting though. Thousand Currents’ partners show us how to navigate change while building power in their communities.

In our past year, Thousand Currents and our partners have been flowing through many transitions, which you will read about in this annual report. You will also see that regardless of the circumstances, important threads remain: courage, creativity, experimentation, humility, and interdependence.

We learn from our partners every day that embracing change provides hope — hope that communities and nations, and everyone in them, can flourish.

Hope is something we create through these times, through every transition.

It matters which door we choose...

Photo credit: Red Ñuqanchik
Fade In: 2. EXTERIOR. Farm. Day.

Past, Present, and Future walk through the “FOOD” door and find themselves standing in a luscious field of diverse crops.

PAST: Where are we?

PRESENT: This is a place where everyone has access to healthy, locally-grown food. The question is how did we get here?

FUTURE: I know. So do the smallholder farmers that are sharing sustainable and organic farming methods and local seeds with each other. And so do the movements and activists who are urging their governments to put smallholder farmers’ interests before those of global food companies. Transitions are always part of farmers’ growing seasons.

THOUSAND CURRENTS PARTNERS ARE UPHOLDING THE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE HOW FOOD IS GROWN. For example, Thousand Currents catalyst partner La Via Campesina (Global) represents over 200 million small holder farmers, as they transition our world away from corporate-driven agriculture that destroys social relations and nature, and toward peasant agriculture that upholds food sovereignty. Ntinga Ntaba kaNdoda is a community-owned rural movement toward self-determination and food sovereignty for Keiskammahoek, South Africa. They work with 13 villages, and have plans to expand to all 42 villages to reach the estimated 50,000 people who live in Keiskammahoek.
“Thousand Currents is important to me in this time of transition because I trust that their commitment to resourcing the grassroots is unwavering.

“Thousand Currents’ partners are building the solutions we need to create a more just world, and I want them to get the funding they deserve.

“In this time of great political unrest, I believe that shifting power to communities most impacted by systems of oppression and exploitation is necessary. By funding community-based solutions in the Global South, Thousand Currents is doing that work.”

RACHEL GELMAN, Thousand Currents supporter

Photo credit: Wwww
**Fade In: 3. INTERIOR. Bank. Day.**

Past, Present, and Future walk through the “ECONOMY” door and find themselves standing in line in a bank. There are plants growing everywhere, bright and fun colors everywhere, and many small groups of people stand around talking with each other.

**PAST:** Where are we now?

**PRESENT:** This is a place where everyone enjoys economic prosperity that generates well-being for all people. The question is how did we get here?

**FUTURE:** I know. So do the people prioritizing producers and consumers over shareholders—shareholders who likely already have enough. The people who are building local economies to generate income based on sustainably-produced goods and shared collective interests also know. They are transitioning out of an extractive economic system built on inequality.

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**THOUSAND CURRENTS PARTNERS ARE TRANSITIONING LOCAL ECONOMIES FROM PRIORITIZING SHAREHOLDERS TO PRIORITIZING PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS.** For example, Thousand Currents partner EduPaz in Chiapas, Mexico has transitioned its programs from simple microcredit to a holistic agroecology-focused loan program for 27 communities. Ñepi Behña has transitioned from supporting 250 Nahñú women to creating a women’s artisan network and participatory certification process for “fair trade with equity” across Mexico that promotes the techniques and knowledge of Indigenous nations.
“There is little doubt that we are in a unique moment of history and a crucible of change.

“The foundation world needs to understand more widely that the grassroots communities know best how to deploy resources. We live in a moment of intense suffering and intense possibility.

“I first met members of the Thousand Currents team and heard them speak at conferences focused on Just Transition. [The term “Just Transition” refers to the shift from an extractive economy to a regenerative, local, and living economy.]

“[As] a first time funder, I was deeply impressed by the strength and integrity of the staff. I knew this was an organization I could trust and learn from.”

PETER BOKOR, Thousand Currents supporter
Past, Present, and Future walk through the “CLIMATE” door and find themselves walking side by side on a pristine, sun-kissed path surrounded by trees and wildlife.

**PAST:** Where are we now?

**PRESENT:** This is a place where everyone lives in a safe and healthy environment that supports abundant life. The question is how did we get here?

**FUTURE:** I know. So do the leaders who are creating opportunities for communities to manage and protect the land, water, and seeds on which their lives and livelihoods depend. And so do people reducing vulnerability to natural disasters and combating pollution, deforestation, oil and gas exploration, soil erosion, overfishing...

THOUSAND CURRENTS PARTNERS ARE ADVANCING GRASSROOTS CLIMATE SOLUTIONS. For example, Digo Bikas Institute in Nepal is transitioning communities away from fossil fuels by fighting for car-free zones in Kathmandu and supporting the residents of Dhupsung — a village in a mountainous, remote, poor region — to ensure their village runs entirely without fossil fuels. The Pacific Network on Globalization in Fiji is organizing communities and youth to ensure open access to the oceans that sustain their lives and livelihoods, and to oppose seabed mining in the Pacific that disrupts the marine ecosystem and biodiversity.
"When you are trying to create an engaged community and build a movement, you need leaders that are dedicated to mutual learning.

"That’s where Thousand Currents steps in. Grassroots movements provide the space for communities to be at the forefront of their own solutions, while providing the opportunity for justice, dignity and self-determination for all.

"I support Thousand Currents because it does not want to control or micromanage its partners. Thousand Currents builds trust and creates the space for grassroots organizations to creatively thrive without confines or contingencies."

GEORGE OTIONO, Chair of Thousand Currents Young Professionals Group
Characters are back in the square room, and on each wall there is a door. They are now marked FOOD SOVEREIGNTY, ALTERNATIVE ECONOMIES, CLIMATE JUSTICE, and GRASSROOTS LEADERSHIP.

PAST: It’s like accepting change as an inevitable part of living on the earth is a lifelong endeavor.

PRESENT: That doesn’t make it easy.

FUTURE: But it does make life infinitely more hopeful — hopeful that communities and nations can flourish for everyone in them.

PRESENT: Maybe hope is something we have to build together, even if the changes we see seem to be destroying it.

PAST: Maybe hope is what enables us to support each other through all of life’s transitions.

FUTURE: You know what always flows with change? Currents.

Thousand Currents partners show us how to navigate change while building power in communities. They offer us an antidote to regressive leadership and failing institutions. The thousands, and millions of people around the world living and working closest to problems — they are the source of innovative solutions. By supporting them, we can unleash solutions to our shared global challenges — Past, Present, and Future.

TO OUR DONORS, ALLIES, AND PARTNERS, THANK YOU FOR STANDING WITH US THIS YEAR.
Our Partners

As of 30 June 2018

BRAZIL
• Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST) / Landless Workers Movement
• Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens (MAB) / Movement of People Affected by Dams

COLOMBIA
• Federación Nacional Sindical Unitaria Agropecuaria (FENSUAGRO) / National Federation of Agricultural Trade Unions

FIJI
• Pacific Network on Globalization (PANG)
• Social Empowerment Education Programme (SEEPP)

GUATEMALA
• Asociación de Mujeres Xipiyakol (ADEMI) / Xipiyakol Women’s Association
• Asociación Femenina para el Desarrollo de Sacatepéquez (AFDEDES) / Women’s Association for the Development of Sacatepéquez
• Asociación para la Promoción de la Salud y el Desarrollo Socio-Económico (APROSADSE) / Association for the Promotion of Health and Social Economic Development

INDIA
• Sahyog Sansthan

MEXICO
• Centro de Derechos Humanos “Fray Francisco de Vitoria” O.P. / Centro de Derechos Humanos “Fray Francisco de Vitoria Human Rights Center”
• Educación para la Paz (EduPaz) / Education for Peace
• Fundación Semillas de Vida, A.C. / Seeds of Life Foundation
• Nepi Behla / Women of Dignity
• These two organizations were supported via the Mexico Maize Fund.

SOUTH AFRICA
• African Centre for Biodiversity (ACBio)
• Biotruth
• Ntinga Ntaba kaNdoda
• Positive Women’s Network (PWN)
• South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA)

ZIMBABWE
• Institute for Young Women Development (IYWD)
• Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers’ Forum (ZIMSOFF)

Regional and Global Partners
• Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA)
• Comisión de Mujeres de América Central de La Via Campesina (CUMC) / Women’s Commission of Central America of La Via Campesina
• Focus on the Global South (Focus)

Catalyst Partners

NEPAL
• All Nepal Peasants Federation (ANPFA)

GLOBAL
• La Via Campesina (Global)

Senior Partners

GUATEMALA
• Comité Campesino del Altiplano (CCDA) / Peasant Farmers Committees of the Highlands
• Instituto para la Superación de la Miseria Urbana de Guatemala (ISMUGUA) / Institute for Overcoming Urban Poverty in Guatemala

MEXICO
• Desarrollo Económico y Social de los Mexicanos Indígenas (DESMI) / Social Economic Development of Indigenous Mexicans

PERU
• Asociación para la Naturaleza y el Desarrollo Sostenible (ANDES) / Association for Nature and Sustainable Development

Buen Vivir Fund Members

Whether grassroots organizations, foundations, family investment offices or young investor collectives, all members of the Buen Vivir Fund are selected because they are leaders in practicing forms of investment that support people, communities, and the earth.

• Asociación Femenina para el Desarrollo de Sacatepéquez (AFDEDES) / Women’s Association for the Development of Sacatepéquez
• Dietel & Partners, representing the Buen Vivir Fund

• Asociación Femenina para el Desarrollo de Sacatepéquez (AFDEDES) / Women’s Association for the Development of Sacatepéquez
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• Dietel & Partners, representing the Buen Vivir Fund
Message from Fahad Ahmad

Thousand Currents Board Chair since 2017

Thousand Currents’ biggest transition this year was the search for and hiring of Solomé Lemma as our new Executive Director, and inviting Rajasvini Bhansali onto the Thousand Currents board.

We know that Solomé will lead us boldly into our strategic plan and uphold our values and commitment to social justice around the world.

Change is healthy for organizations. It brings new ideas and new opportunities. We have learned much from our partners about what is needed to sustain and strengthen this work. From our investment fund, the Buen Vivir Fund, to our collaborative fund designed to move more resources to grassroots climate change leaders via the CLIMA (Climate Leaders in Movement Action) Fund, and through the growing network of over 100 “impact influencers” in the philanthropic sector who have attended the Thousand Currents Academy, we are exchanging grassroots brilliance every step of the way.

Even as we embrace transitions, we remain true to our vision and values. Everyday, we continue to invest in organizations and movements led by women, youth and Indigenous Peoples in the Global South. They are the visionaries who create innovative and impactful solutions — solutions that are redefining the future of communities, whole countries, and our ever-changing world.

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Our Team
1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018

STAFF
Rajasvini Bhansali
Jenesha “Jinky” de Rivera
Stephanie de Wolfe
Trishala Deb
Dino Foxx
Rajiv Khanna
Luam Kidane
Solomé Lemma
Jennifer Lentfer
Joanna Levitt Cea
Heather Masaki
Lindley Mease
Verónica Moreno
Hafsa Mustafa
Rachel Smith
Jessie Spector
Hilda Vega
Katherine Zavala
ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE
Sharon Bridgforth
Omi Osun Joni L. Jones, PhD
Pregs Govender
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Nwamaka Agbo
Fahad Ahmad
Rajasvini Bhansali
M. Jahi Chappell
Gregory Hodge
Sasha Rabsey
Julian Rhoads
Gerald Richards
Susan Rosenberg
Topher Wilkins
Ada Williams Prince

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THOUSAND CURRENTS HAS EXPERIENCED AN EXCELLENT FEW YEARS OF STEADY AND SUSTAINABLE FINANCIAL GROWTH. From 2013 to 2018, our organizational revenue, institutional fundraising, and grantmaking grew substantially, thereby increasing Thousand Currents’ impact by channeling more resources to our grassroots partners.

Thousand Currents ended its fiscal year (FY) 2017 at $4.3 million in revenue. (This figure also includes revenue earned through our fiscal sponsorship of the Black Lives Matter Global Network). The graphs below reflect data from our last audited fiscal year 2017.

Thanks to multi-year, flexible funding commitments from key institutional funders, as well as from our earned-income strategies, we began FY17 and FY18, and will begin FY19 with 100 percent of our core organizational costs covered.

This means that giving from Thousand Currents’ loyal individual donors is able to go directly to programmatic work. That is, it goes to our responsive grantmaking to visionary leaders and grassroots organizations and movements in the Global South — those who are creating lasting solutions to their communities’ most pressing issues and our shared global challenges.

INSTITUTIONAL FUNDERS

Anonymous (2)  
11th Hour Project  
Abundance Foundation  
Akonadi Foundation  
Alcibiad Alliance  
Andrus Family Fund  
Apple Computer Inc.  
Amitz Family Foundation  
Ashurst Foundation  
Basecamp  
The Blossom Fund  
Blue Dot Advocates  
Bridge Fund  
Bright Funds Foundation  
Robert Field Bullock Foundation Inc.  
The Charitable Giving Card Program of the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee  
JP Morgan Chase Foundation  
Chevron Matching Gift  
Program  
Cliff Bar Family Foundation  
Collective Heritage  
Instituta/Bioneers  
CPRR Heritage Mission Fund  
Dietel and Partners  
Foundation for a Just Society  
G. Frederick Charitable Fund  
Friedman Family Foundation  
Global Fund for Women  
Hand Family Fund  
Horizons Foundation  
The HOW Fund  
International Planned Parenthood Federation  
Kendra Scott Jewelry  
The Libra Foundation  
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation  
Mills Family Foundation  
Mize Family Foundation  
Morgan Stanley Global Impact Funding Trust  
Mortenson Family Foundation  
NoVo Foundation  
Oracle Corporation  
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation  
Pantha Rhea Fund  
Peace Development Fund  
Peterffy Foundation  
Qinti Fund  
Rotunda Software  
RSF Women’s Capital Collaborative Shared Gifting Circle  
Salesforce.com  
Serad Holdings Limited  
Small Planet Fund  
Soeds Real Estate Account  
SWF Immersion Foundation  
Swift Foundation  
Tamalpais Trust  
Tikva Grassroots Empowerment Fund  
UBS Community Affairs and Corporate Responsibility  
USA for Africa  
Vanguard Charitable BOLIAYD Fund  
Walker Family Foundation  
Wallace Global Fund  
Cunningham Wallace Family Fund  
Gertrude and William C. Wardlaw Fund  
Edna Wardlaw Charitable Trust  
WE Trust  
Weissman Family Foundation  
West Foundation  
The Whitman Institute  
Zephyr Real Estate  

* In FY17, to ensure our long-term financial sustainability, we received revenue to grow our reserve fund, called the Baobab Fund.

** FY16 and FY17 include revenue earned through our fiscal sponsorship of the Black Lives Matter Global Network.
Thousand
Currents
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