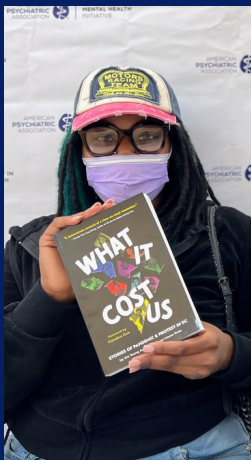
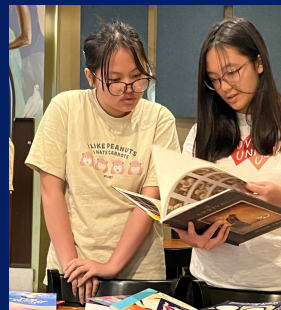
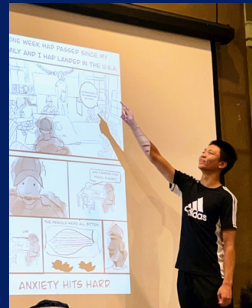


# Shout Mouse Press

# 2023 Annual Report



# A Note from Kathy Crutcher, SMP Founder

Dear Friends & Supporters,

Since 2014, Shout Mouse Press has cultivated and amplified the stories of underrepresented young people who deserve to have their stories told and celebrated. We are proud to have produced 59 diverse and inclusive books by 500+ youth authors. Their original children's and young adult books are inspired by their own lived experiences and engage readers of all backgrounds, providing authentic stories that build a more just and inclusive next generation.

In 2023, we published our first-ever Shout Mouse Press alumni anthology that tackled a momentous topic — the year 2020. *What it Costs Us: Stories of Pandemic & Protest in DC* recreated that historic year from the perspectives of young people who came of age during this pivotal time. We also produced the second installment of our award-winning Beyond Borders series, in collaboration with the Latin American Youth Center, which offers bilingual Spanish-English affirming stories of immigrant families. Moreover, 2023 welcomed a new author partner as we collaborated with Asian American LEAD to run a comics workshop for ten young people of Asian identities.

Beyond these important writing projects, 2023 brought major achievements for Shout Mouse, including recognition as a top independent press by the Independent Book Publisher Association, inclusion of one of our books in the New York City public school curriculum, and our third book selected and distributed to libraries nationwide by the Junior Library Guild. It was also a year of significant internal growth, as our staff and leadership developed our first-ever strategic plan, which aims to build a more sustainable organization and expand our programmatic reach — including increasing the number of underrepresented groups within our youth-authored stories.

As we embark on our 10th anniversary year, we are excited to celebrate all that we've achieved thus far. The impact of our youth authors is profound. Our authors' books add necessary complexity, empathy, and humanity to the stories of marginalized communities — stories that today are increasingly under threat of book bans and censorship. We continue to turn to young people to lead the way, to a society in which all voices are valued and heard.

All these accomplishments wouldn't be possible without you and your support. We are so grateful to you, our community of book lovers, supporters, and advocates.

Thank you!

# Our Mission

Shout Mouse Press is dedicated to centering and amplifying the voices of marginalized youth (ages 12+) via writing workshops, book publication, and public speaking opportunities. The young people we coach are underrepresented — as characters and as creators — within young people's literature, and their perspectives are underheard. By supporting them to write and publish their own books, we ensure they hold the pen—and the power.

## Our Four Program Areas



### Writing Mentorship

We coach youth (ages 12+) from marginalized DC communities to write books representing underheard perspectives in a variety of genres.



### Book Publishing

We actively promote and sell our youth-authored books, reaching schools and homes nationwide, proving that peer voices are powerful voices.



### Author Talks

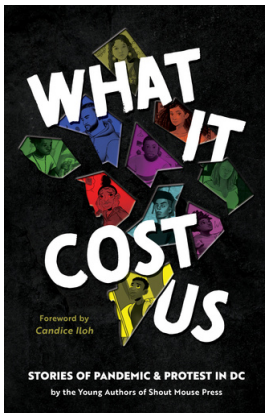
We provide public speaking training to all authors as part of our post-publication leadership program.



### Author Pathways

We offer a variety of career and college access supports, including internships, college and scholarship essay support, and scholarship funds.

# 2023 Programs and Publications



## What It Cost Us

In this collaborative novel, ten Shout Mouse alumni authors recreate the historic year 2020 from their perspectives. Told chronologically from the onset of the pandemic to the insurrection of January 6th, their stories of change and resilience illuminate an unprecedented coming of age.



## Asian American Youth Comics

During the summer of 2023, we coached ten young people of Asian identities to share their personal and authentic stories through comics. Their visual stories tackled themes including mental health, isolation, high school, the pandemic, and finding your way in a new country. Their comic zines will be published and distributed in Spring 2024.



## Beyond Borders Series

In the second installment of our Beyond Borders series, immigrant and first-generation young people wrote authentic stories centering immigrant families. This trio of bilingual children's books explore topics like leaving home, honoring lost loved ones, and sharing gratitude for one's family.

# 2023 Highlights and Achievements

## Voces Sin Fronteras in New York City Public School Curriculum

We continue to see the impact that our youth authors make on young readers across the country. In 2023, we were honored to learn that their bilingual memoir collection, *Voces Sin Fronteras*, will be taught in NYC public schools, reaching over 70,000 students! Published in 2018, sixteen young immigrant authors bravely shared their lives on the page, and now thousands of young people can draw affirmation and understanding from their stories.

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## Nationwide Winner at Make More of a Difference Awards

In 2023, Shout Mouse Press was thrilled to learn that we had been nominated and won recognition at Fidelity Charitable's annual Make More of a Difference Awards. Each year, the Fidelity Charitable Board of Trustees sponsors a program that invites their associates to nominate a nonprofit, share why the nonprofit is important to them, and vote to select finalists to receive grants. Shout Mouse Press won in the Arts & Culture category from among 150 nonprofits who were nominated.

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## Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection

Our talented youth authors were recognized by the literary industry for their powerful and authentic storytelling. In 2023, bilingual children's book *Belinda Lifts Her Voice* earned recognition from the Junior Library Guild – a top honor that ensures the book will reach thousands of libraries across the country. This recognition follows in the footsteps of *Joy-Grace and the Dress Dilemma*, from the first installment of our Beyond Borders series, which was awarded the same honor the prior year.

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## Independent Publisher Recognition

Shout Mouse Press was selected for the Independent Book Publisher Association's (IBPA's) Innovative Voices Program. This program provides guidance and support to five indie publishers to elevate publishing programs that center marginalized communities.

# Impact by the Numbers



**59**  
books published

**130,000**  
books in circulation  
including in schools, libraries, bookstores,  
and homes across the country and 27  
countries around the world



**500+**  
youth authors  
from  
underrepresented  
backgrounds

**20+**  
book industry honors  
including starred reviews  
in major trade publications  
and national awards  
for independent presses

**53,000**  
people reached through  
**250**  
public speaking engagements  
at universities, schools,  
festivals, conferences, and  
media appearances



**\$300,000+**  
distributed to young authors  
in scholarships, speaker  
honoraria, stipends, and  
direct aid



**23,000**  
books donated  
to readers in need through  
partnerships with Inspired  
Child, Homeless Children's  
Playtime Project, DC Books  
to Prisons, and others

# Testimonials



“It’s really important that we are the ones telling our stories. We have agency. We don’t need someone else to tell our stories—we can do it ourselves.”

— Sol,  
author of *Fernando's Big Idea*



“I wanted to take a moment to express my gratitude for your visit to our class. It was truly inspiring to have two young women like yourselves sharing your passion for creating wonderful books for kids. Your presence in the classroom left a lasting impression, and I am genuinely impressed by the incredible work you are doing. Your visit has left a lasting impression on our class, and I look forward to continuing to be inspired by your work.”

— Jenniffer, Author Talk attendee



“I feel like if I saw this story when I was growing up, I would feel less alone... I want to show kids how it gets better.”  
— Mariel-Ayen,  
author of comic “Anak”



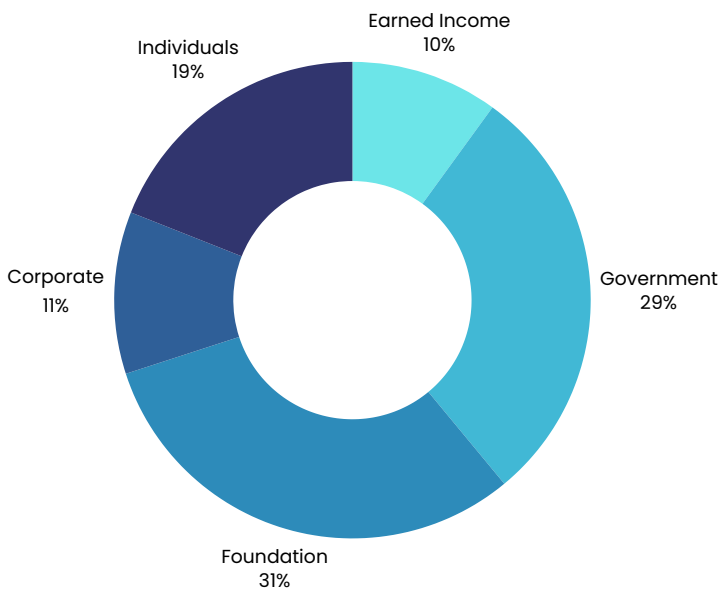
“Each of these ten authors is writing at an incredibly high level. For instance, within the context of Darne’Sha Walker’s “Dear AI,” excerpts like “I put on some music and sink back into my bed, waiting for inspiration. Or courage. Or anything” will strike a chord with everyone who experienced the pandemic... Even if you think you’ve already lived through the pandemic, WHAT IT COST US is likely to provide a different point of view.

Like all great short story collections, WHAT IT COST US: Stories of Pandemic & Protest in D.C. is more than the sum of its parts. Come for the authentic, thought-provoking perspectives; stay for the fresh, genre-bending writing.”

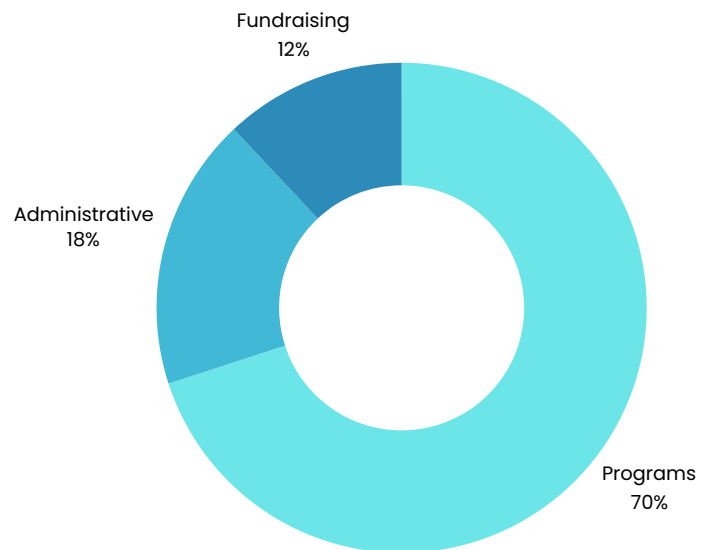
— Indie Reader, Starred Review



# 2023 Financial Snapshot



Revenue



Expenses

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## Thank you to our generous contributors

353 Individual Donations – Apple – Artemis Ward Foundation – Capital for Children – Community of Literary Magazines & Presses – Corina Higginson Trust – Crowell & Moring Foundation – DC Commission on Arts & Humanities – Fidelity Charitable Trustee's Philanthropy Fund – Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation – Nancy Peery Marriott Foundation – National Endowment for the Arts – Next Tier Concepts – Philip L. Graham Fund – Robert Schattner Foundation – Severus Foundation – Share Fund – Virginia Cretella Mars Foundation – Windward Fund

Learn more and stay connected at: [shoutmousepress.org](https://shoutmousepress.org)