

DEEPENING OUR ROOTS, SPREADING OUR BRANCHES: A YEAR OF GROWTH AND VISION

For CitySprouts, 2024 has been a year of remarkable growth and deepened connections. Last fall we embarked on a new strategic plan – a three-year roadmap for growth. A first step in this process was to hear from you, our community of stakeholders. A common theme emerged from these conversations: **continue to inspire joy, creativity, curiosity and wonder, and keep science education at the center of our mission.** Your feedback directly impacted our revised mission statement, our new vision statement and the definition of our values.

Grounded in our mission and vision for the future, CitySprouts embraced 2024 as a year to build strength from within, beginning with the retention of our entire team of Garden Educators and staff—a foundation that has empowered us to pursue new initiatives with confidence and creativity. Having an experienced, dedicated workforce has **deepened our roots**, providing the capacity and space to take on, and create, new initiatives and opportunities.

Our partnerships with 24 Boston and Cambridge Public Schools flourished in the 2023-24 school year. We increased our impact with adding a second garden educator day at two of our Boston schools. Our summer Green Team saw a 75% enrollment increase. A visit from Mayor Wu as part of her **Connect, Learn, Explore** initiative highlighted our summer program, and both the *Boston Globe* and *Boston Herald* featured our work. Our 80-plus volunteers played a crucial role in maintaining all our school gardens throughout the summer, ensuring the spaces thrived and were ready for students' return in September.

2024 was also a year to focus on improving our garden infrastructure. With support from the **BPS Facilities Department**, we made our Boston gardens more accessible and rodent-hardened. In Cambridge, two gardens were revitalized through a **Forward Fund Grant** from the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, with another scheduled for renovation this winter.

As we look to the future, CitySprouts remains firmly rooted in our mission of inspiring curiosity and wonder through hands-on learning. Our new strategic plan, gleaned from the voices of our community, will guide us as we expand our reach, deepen our impact, and continue to nurture the next generation of environmental stewards. The strong roots we've cultivated through our partnerships, staff, and volunteers will support the growth of new branches—creating a lasting legacy for the communities we serve and empowering a generation to grow a greener future.

Susan Diller, Executive Director



Susan Diller (R) with Katherine Walsh of BPS

ELEMENTARY GARDEN SCIENCE PROGRAMMING

CitySprouts Garden Educators lead hands-on science learning for Pre-K to Grade 5 students in their schoolyard gardens. As the students' primary teacher in the school garden classrooms, Garden Educators put CitySprouts' newly expanded curriculum into action. Our lessons and activities are expertly designed to align with state science standards, are culturally responsive, and support the development of social-emotional skills. Garden Educators partner closely with classroom teachers to make learning more accessible to the needs of their students. The creativity each CitySprouts educator brings to their work leads to experiences that spark a lifelong interest in science and a connection to the natural world.

One teacher raves:

“ Gardening with CitySprouts brings hands-on science learning to all my students in a fun and developmentally appropriate way! I have seen my students' academic language, scientific method-style thinking and general knowledge increase dramatically from their experience with [the Garden Educator]. A true gift has been [their] ability to embed social emotional learning and coaching into teaching. ”

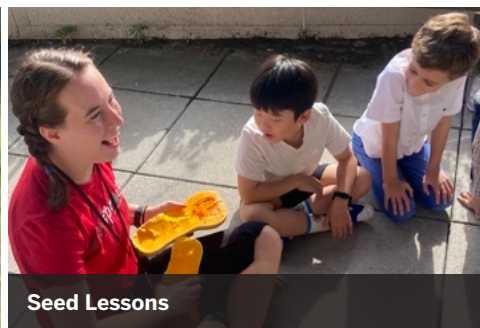
24 School Garden Classrooms

183 Partner Teachers

2,905 Lessons in the Garden



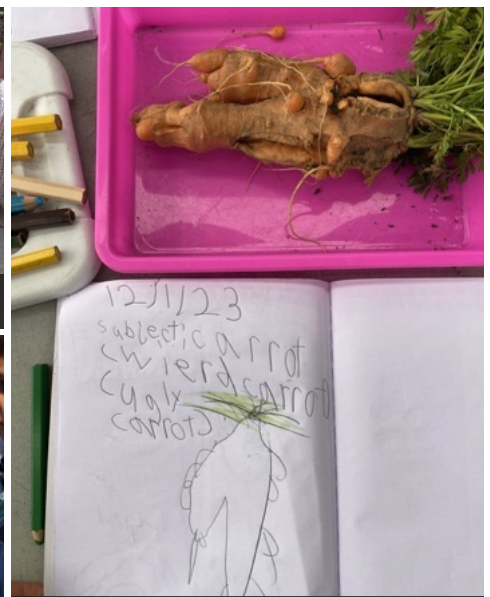
Spring Planting



Seed Lessons



Scavenger Hunt



Science Journaling



BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOL PARTNERS

Baldwin Early Learning
Pilot Academy
David Ellis Elementary
School
Haynes Early Education
Center
Henderson K-12 Inclusion
School (Upper & Lower)
Higginson-Lewis K-8 School

Nathan Hale Elementary
School
Orchard Gardens K-8 School
P. A. Shaw Elementary
School
Rafael Hernández K-8 School
Russell Elementary School
Samuel Mason Elementary
School

CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOL PARTNERS

Amigos K-8 School
Cambridgeport Elementary
School
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
School
Fletcher Maynard Academy
Graham & Parks Elementary
School
Haggerty Elementary School

Kennedy Longfellow
Elementary School
King Open Elementary
School
Maria Baldwin Elementary
School
Morse Elementary School
Peabody Elementary School
Tobin Montessori School

THE GREEN TEAM AFTERSCHOOL AND SUMMER PROGRAM

The CitySprouts Green Team, formerly the Young Leaders Program, is a tuition-free, Out of School Time program for young and emerging teens (10-14 year olds). The 5-week summer program and weekly afterschool clubs foster critical and compassionate thinkers by connecting youth to the natural world and the environmental systems in their local communities. The Green Team teaches relevant life skills – such as how to grow, sustain, and use plants – and sparks the joy of discovery and the power of scientific thinking. We prioritize Green Team applications from households with financial barriers to enrollment in summer programs – 69% of 2024 Summer applicant families reported household earnings of less than \$70,000 annually. In 2024 the Green Team was recognized with the Cambridge Agenda for Children's Network Love and Impact Award, and our Boston site enjoyed a special visit from Mayor Michelle Wu.

102 Green Team members in 2023-24

5 Garden recipes for Summer Cooking Fridays

17 Summer Field Trips hosted by 9 community partners

1 Whale spotted on a Harbor Tour!

“ *Your impact goes beyond beautiful plants and berries. You help create another space where our youth can learn, grow, and connect with nature.* ”

- Rachel Kinch, Program Director at the Cambridge Community Center



New rodent-proof beds



Green Team members give Boston Mayor Wu a tour of their garden



Touring the Dudley Greenhouse

VOLUNTEERS

CitySprouts gardens are a vibrant part of our Boston and Cambridge communities, and many of them are cared for by dedicated volunteers who ensure that the gardens thrive throughout the summer. CitySprouts invites individuals and groups to join us in cultivating school garden classrooms where children discover, explore and learn. In addition, volunteers assist with events and in our office. In 2024, CitySprouts summer volunteers contributed over 1320 hours in support of our mission, making more of our resources available to programs for children, families and teachers.

80 Volunteers and 1320 Hours

Caring for Summer Gardens

33 Corporate Volunteers gave 105 hours

building and repairing CitySprouts gardens

GARDEN OPERATIONS

The Garden Operations team works daily to systematically manage all 24 CitySprouts school gardens, ensuring they get the care they need to be thriving outdoor classrooms. This year, working closely with our BPS and CPS partners, the team launched a thorough assessment of our existing garden infrastructure. Work to renovate aging beds and mitigate rodent damage has begun, with special support from the BPS Facilities team and a Forward Fund grant from the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority.

3128 Seedlings planted across 24 schools

80 Varieties of plants growing in schools

OUR MISSION

The CitySprouts mission is to cultivate curiosity and wonder in students through hands-on science learning in their own schoolyard gardens.

OUR VISION

Inspiring a Generation to Grow a Greener Future.

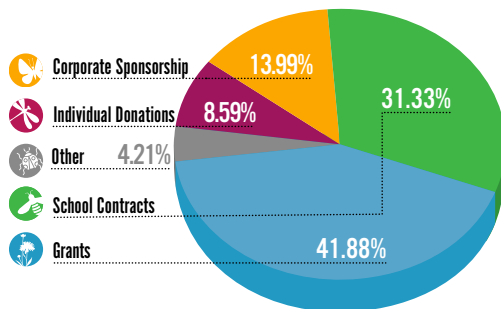
WE ACHIEVE THIS BY

- Building and maintaining school-based learning gardens
- Nurturing a passion for science and an attachment to the natural world
- Teaching to grow and prepare healthy fresh foods
- Inspiring middle school students to pursue STEM and green careers
- Creating experiences that promote social emotional learning
- Connecting students to environmental resources in their communities

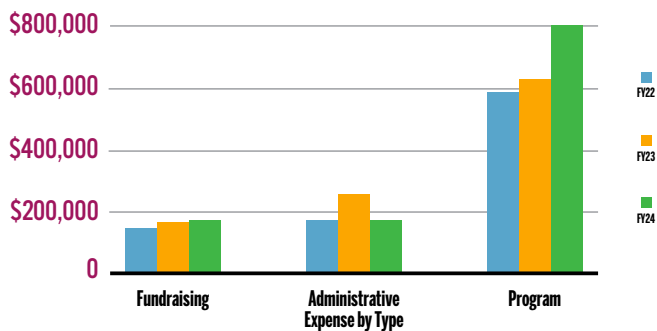


CITYSPROUTS' FINANCIALS

Revenue FY2024: \$1,100,618



Expenses FY2022-24



*For a full audited report, please contact Jessica at jparsons@citysprouts.org.

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Our community of supporters keeps CitySprouts growing and thriving, and we are grateful for your commitment to our mission. We welcome you to visit a school garden in 2025!

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TIAA
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