THE POWER OF WE
Looking Back, Looking Ahead

Catalyst was created to improve Sonoma’s collective response to the global pandemic. We enlisted a diverse volunteer team to raise funds, reach out to Valley nonprofits, and fund projects quickly—providing the “extra” that allowed nonprofits to meet Sonoma’s overwhelming needs during the crisis.

Together, we had it in our power to influence a better outcome—to reduce suffering and raise spirits. And we did.

**What We Achieved**
- Innovated a new, collective funding model
- Enlarged the Valley’s philanthropic pie: **125 donors gave more than $1.6 million**
- Conducted 80 listening sessions with community leaders to identify the greatest needs
- Funded 44 grants, filling gaps nonprofits could not bridge without extra support:
  - Provided meals, groceries and essential items to **over 7,200 people**
  - Supported vaccination drives and outreach for 7,250 at-risk Valley residents
  - Enabled 107 families to safely isolate
  - Supported 1,700 youth with tech, school supplies, and aid (literacy, mentoring, study, mental health)
  - Assisted 460 renters and 77 landlords with rental documentation to prevent eviction
  - Partnered with Rotary to provide pandemic stipends to **175 small businesses**

**What We Learned**
- Working through a pooled fund can create cumulative impact beyond what individual donors can do alone
- Diverse representation is a must to understand needs and generate better solutions
- Philanthropy works best when funders combine responding to requests with initiating creative problem-solving
- Engaged funders can play a connecting role—creating new partnerships, building trust, spotting gaps and eliminating duplication
- The pandemic revealed the full extent of the deepening social and economic challenges that have long existed—and the promise of new kinds of solutions
- We cannot go back to the old ways: we must harness the teamwork and innovation that emerged during the pandemic

**What’s Next**
After nearly two years of learning and problem-solving, **Catalyst is ending this temporary, pandemic-related phase of work and creating a permanent fund**.

The new Catalyst—through a merger with Sonoma Valley Fund and in partnership with Community Foundation Sonoma County—will be a lasting vehicle to invest strategically to meet evolving needs and address underlying issues.

We will work to catalyze philanthropic leadership, find solutions, and create a more resilient and equitable future for all.

Catalyst is a fund of Community Foundation Sonoma County, which invested significantly to make this work possible. For more information, including a full grants list and a link to our short film, “The Power of We,” visit [www.sonomavalleycatalystfund.org](http://www.sonomavalleycatalystfund.org).

We invite your involvement in this valuable work. You can reach us at [info@sonomavalleycatalystfund.org](mailto:info@sonomavalleycatalystfund.org).
THANK YOU TO ALL

Our generous community demonstrated “the power of we” in the pandemic years with an outpouring of care and leadership, hard work and imagination. These are the volunteers who worked, the donors who gave and the nonprofits who led the way during Catalyst Fund’s first phase.

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Sonoma Valley Catalyst Fund

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