



2022-2023 IMPACT REPORT



THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN
DIASPORA PROJECT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SEAD's Theory Of Change

PAGE 02

Financial Snapshot

PAGE 20

Letter From Co-Director

Kaysone Syonesa Schneider

PAGE 03

Letter From Co-Director

Jessica Eckerstorfer

PAGE 22

Key Highlights

January-June 2022 Fiscal Year*

PAGE 04

Our Gratitude

PAGE 24

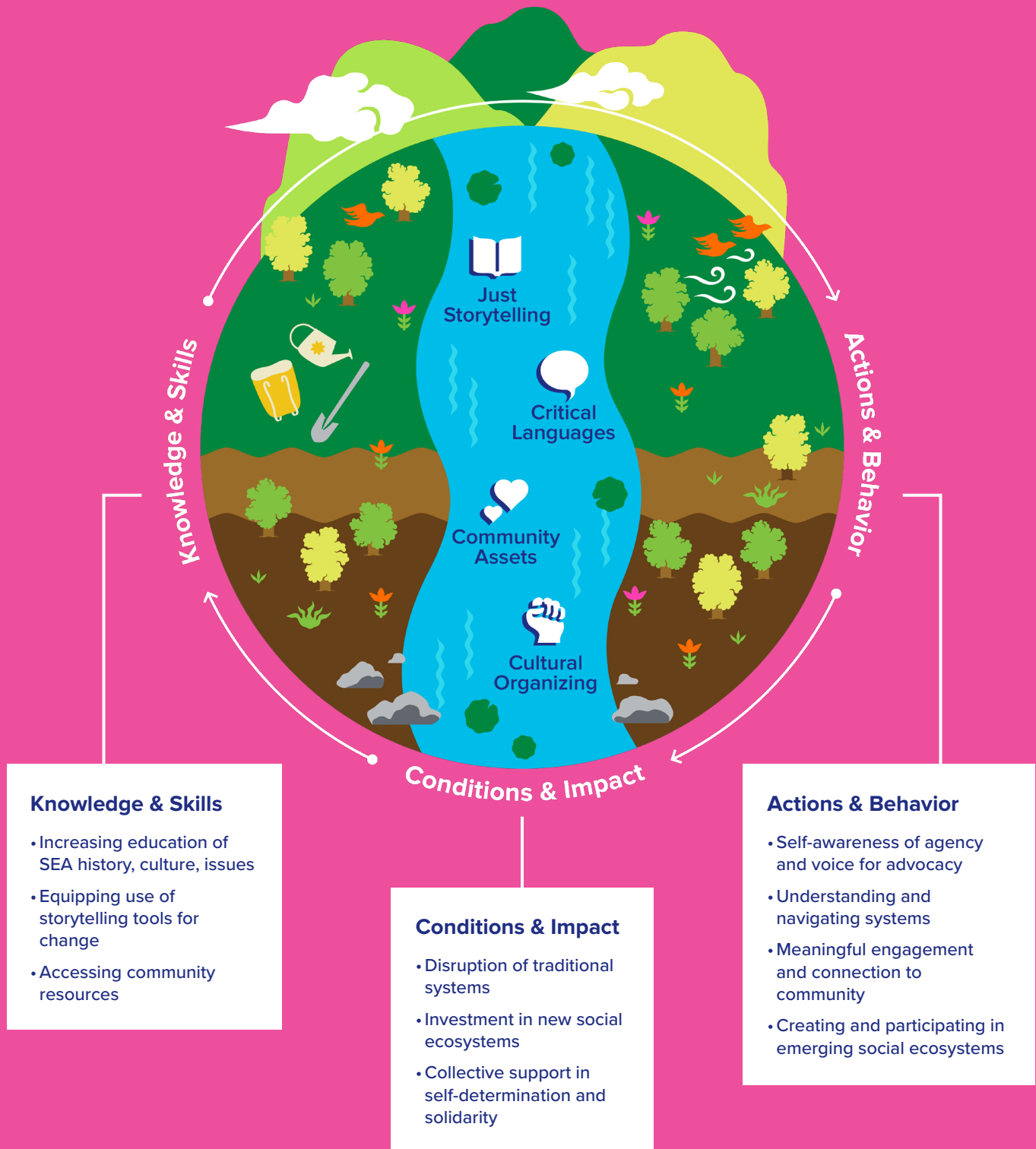
Key Highlights

July-June 2023 Fiscal Year*

PAGE 10

*SEAD is shifting our Impact Report from the calendar year back to our fiscal year. Due to this shift, we are including highlights for the remainder of the 2022 fiscal year (January 2022 to June 2022) to account for the work we've done. This impact report is officially for the 2023 fiscal year.

SEAD'S THEORY OF CHANGE



The SEAD Project
@theseadproject

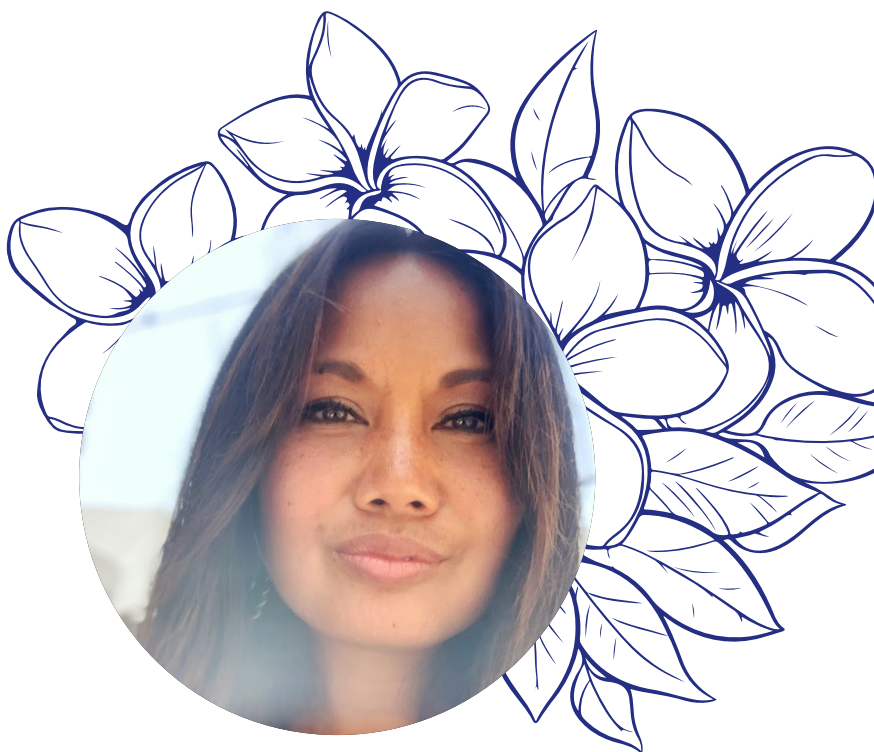
📍 Minneapolis, MN theseadproject.org



Growing social empowerment ecosystems through cultural organizing, critical language, and just storytelling.

LETTER FROM CO-DIRECTOR

Kaysone Syonesa Schneider



Sa bai dee to our dear community of supporters,

When was the last time you paused because you heard something that made you want to listen to the rest of the story? Did it bring you joy? Did you get misty eyes, or did you laugh? Were you inspired, captivated? When your day is full of wonderful surprises, do you want to tell someone right away?

Stories are an intricate part of our lives. Stories are memorable, stories are heart work...it imprints deeply in our brain and emotions. They connect us to others, open our hearts and minds, increase our compassion and hope, activate our empathy, help us better understand convoluted issues, and give us insights to our circumstances. Stories give shape to our complex world. Stories are also important data. Storytelling is the heartbeat of SEAD. It is the heart in which we engage with community.

In the past year, we have been more open to hearing from the community. We launched our community input survey and held a community forum to guide and act as a blueprint for SEAD's new strategic plan for the next three years. The responses launched us into further data diving to unpack the concerns and thoughts of the community. The more stories we heard, the more we wanted to be a listening canvas and create more spaces to foster dialogue. We can start transforming perspectives through the stories that we share and find creative approaches to strengthen the space, voice, and choice for the Southeast Asian community to address the important issues impacting us.

We adapted our programs to remain a virtual format to meet the needs in various corners of the world for a more expansive, accessible effort in advancing our work. SEA Change Lab continues to invest in our young people to become impactful advocates for change that is fundamental to how we work. We further developed our cultural organizing

work to deepen our community engagement and launched a survey that will continue through the remainder of 2023 to further understand community identified issues. We also took a pause to reflect and re-evaluate, revised our strategic plan, and planned a future focused on amplifying those goals. These are just a few of the many examples of reimagination and engagement that defined our work in the past year.

As we move forward, we will build more strategic and valuable partnerships to increase the impact and maintain this important work. We will strive to engage and partner with community in equipping them with the tools, language, and resources to advocate for a better future. Together, let's have more courageous conversations to empower ourselves and those listening to choose what comes next. Our stories not only help us to remember and acknowledge our lived experiences, but they also require us to act and rewrite our future with possibilities. We must continue to prioritize action that will lead us towards a society that celebrates and represents our Southeast Asian heritage and identity.

Reflecting upon our growth, I am filled with hope and gratitude for what's to come. I am immensely proud of our team's grit, hope, imagination, and resilience to move our mission forward after the last two years of transitions, challenges, and opportunities. So I would like to thank all those who have, through your compassion, creativity, and belief, helped us to continue our work throughout the years. Your support and love will carry us forward in the future feeling more focused, passionate, and determined than ever. Our hearts are open to the next years of celebrating as we plant stories, build possibilities, sing and dance in joy together.

Kaysone Syonesa Schneider
Co-Director, Partnerships & Development

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY—JUNE 2022

FISCAL YEAR



SEA Roots
Spring 2022
PAGE 04

Permaculture
Healing Cohort
Spring 2022
PAGE 05

Cultural
Organizing
PAGE 07

SEA ROOTS HERITAGE & CULTURE SPRING 2022

Sharing languages and cultural literacy with community

SEA Roots amplifies our Southeast Asian languages and cultures. The program continues the importance of carrying the stories and grounding ourselves in our histories and identity. SEAD is one of the few organizations around that offer affordable and accessible Hmong, Khmer, Lao, and Vietnamese language classes to anyone, anywhere, creating the necessary space for learning and bridging our communities rooted in our storytelling.

Teaching Team:

- Bee Vang-Moua (Hmong)
- Sotheary Duong (Khmer)
- Bunchung 'Liam' Ly (Khmer)
- Akarath Soukhaphon (Lao)
- Hung Nguyen (Vietnamese)
- Joan Dao (Vietnamese)
- Tri Vo (Vietnamese)



By Sunisa Nuonsy

Eupatorium Fortunei

Ntīv

- ❖ Chinese herb, "Pei-Lan"
- ❖ Pab kom qhab los noj mov thiab ua kom txhob xeev siab
- ❖ Pab kom txhob nthuav, txhob ua npaws, thiab kub taub haus



*

By Kayla Mua

ເລື່ອງສິສ໌
ນແສງວັນ
ຄໍ້າ ໂດຍ ສຸນິສາ
ນວນສີ




28

students enrolled

13

SEADS of Love
scholarships

By Gaonoucci Belle Vang

THE SEAD PROJECT - LAO COURSE

Community

Allyship

Involvement

Volunteering

**LAO
ACTIVISM
IN THE CENTRAL VALLEY**

Gaonoucci Belle Vang



PERMACULTURE HEALING COHORT SPRING 2022

SEAD had the opportunity to co-host and collaborate with The Minnesota Humanities Center to provide 4 cohort interactive learning workshops based on permaculture, a philosophy that integrates land, resources, people, culture, and the environment through mutually beneficial synergies—imitating systems in nature. This unique series was co-created by SEAD, Hindolo Pokawa of Midwest Farmers of Color, and Southeast Asian community healers. There were four in-person workshop series called, “The Art of Healing and Resilience through Permaculture,” dedicated to community and the environment. The workshops were co-facilitated with Joy Nguyen integrating effective modalities of healing that are culturally-competent and community centered with emphasis on cross cultural frameworks rooted in permaculture practice and principles of transformative justice. Thank you to Eden Bart and MayKao Fredericks.



12

cohort members

2ND

cohort series



CULTURAL ORGANIZING

Our cultural organizing work continued to creatively implement campaigns and resources centered on social justice issues.

Mindfulness Deck

As part of our mental health terms initiative, we released our Mindfulness Deck and Videos to generate awareness and conversations around connections between our mental health and mindfulness. This resource included 5 sets of mindfulness exercises by Vietnamese Zen Buddhist monk, Thích Nhất Hạnh, presented by Linsun Simthong for The SEAD Project:

- “Breath In, Breath Out”
- “Concentrate on Your breaths”
- “Be Aware of Your Body”
- “Release the Tension in Your Body”
- “Walking Meditation”



Rad Café

SEAD continued to release an additional seven audio interview series through our Rad Café Episodes. These series explored and engaged with our interviewees on what role critical thinking plays in how Southeast Asian Americans relate to and engage with the big political problems that impact all the communities we care about in the present, past, and future.

Wellness Week

In the spring 2022, SEAD hosted a successful Wellness Week that provided workshops and resources on mental health, self defense, and at home COVID testing with the focus on mental wellness and self-care.

COVID-19 Wellness Panel

SEAD led a panel discussion on Mental Health in the time of COVID-19 with community members Cindy Vang, Maggie Eckerstorfer, and Tsua Xiong. The conversations highlighted how to take care of yourselves and your loved ones during this time and explored culturally specific resources for our Southeast Asian community members.

18 attendees



COVID-19 Resource Handout Event

To wrap up our wellness week, SEAD handed out free at-home COVID tests at our Pop-Up COVID Resource Handout at Hmongtown Marketplace. We had the opportunity to connect with community members and provide resources to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

300 COVID tests distributed in less than an hour

85 community members we connected with



Femme-focused Self-defense

SEAD community member, Joan Dao, led a femme-focused self-defense workshop as part of our Wellness Week where participants learned self defense from the safety and comfort of their own home. All participants also received our “Self Defense Guide.”



34 attendees



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

JULY 2022—JUNE 2023
FISCAL YEAR



SEA Roots

PAGE 10

SEA Change Lab

PAGE 13

Cultural
Organizing

PAGE 15

Community
Events,
Workshops, &
Partnerships

PAGE 17

SEA ROOTS HERITAGE & CULTURE

Sharing languages and cultural literacy with community



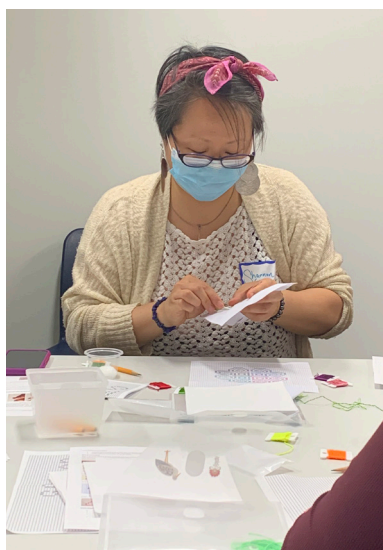
SEA Roots Pop Up Workshops

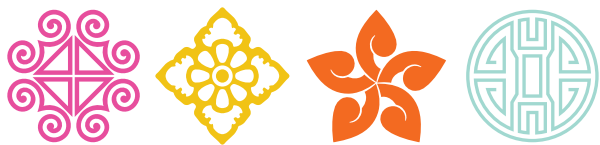
SEAD kicked off our summer series with a Paj Ntuab (Hmong Weaving) Workshop led by community member Mandora Young at Rondo Library. Mandora taught the history and technique of cross-stitch and Hmong story cloths. The workshop was a great hit and in-demand that we partnered with Mandora again in the fall to do another workshop in combination with a vaccine clinic hosted by Fairview.

34 participants



28 persons vaccinated





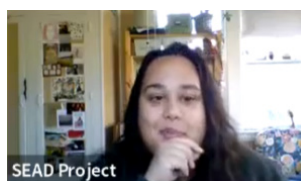
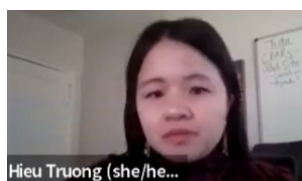
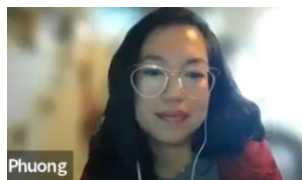
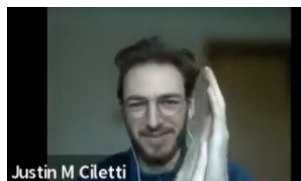
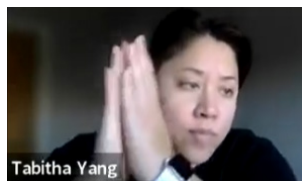
SEA Roots Language Classes

Our Language Workshops continue to be a pillar program that helps our community members learn and develop core skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking in Hmong, Khmer, Lao and Vietnamese. Through the class conversations and interactions, they make impactful cultural connections with their teacher and other students around the country. The students' final projects highlight stories and perspectives that remind us of the importance of language as a means to strengthen our understanding of our experiences and our connection to people and heritage.

A huge thank you to all of our teachers that make this program possible.

Thank you to:

- Yer Her & Koobmeej Lee (Hmong team)
- Sotheary Duong & Bunchung 'Liam' Ly (Khmer team)
- Stacey Phengvath \$ Anan Believe (Lao team)
- Hung Nguyen, Huong Nguyen, Tri Vo, & Joan Dao (Vietnamese team)



29

students enrolled
in Fall 2022

33

students enrolled
in Spring 2023

13

SEADS of Love
scholarships in
Fall 2022

15

SEADS of Love
scholarships in
Spring 2023

By Daria Keo

Other Khmer Classical and Folk Dances



Robam Choun Por (Blessing Dance)

Created by Her Majesty the Queen

Sisowath Kosamak Nearyrath,

Choun Por is performed at the

of ceremonies, weddings and f

occasions to greet and offer ble

and good wishes to the gue



Sneang Tosoang Dance

Sneang Tosoang Dance consists of



Robam Neset (Khmer Fishing Dance)

This folk dance describes the

By Lina Rinh Zepeda

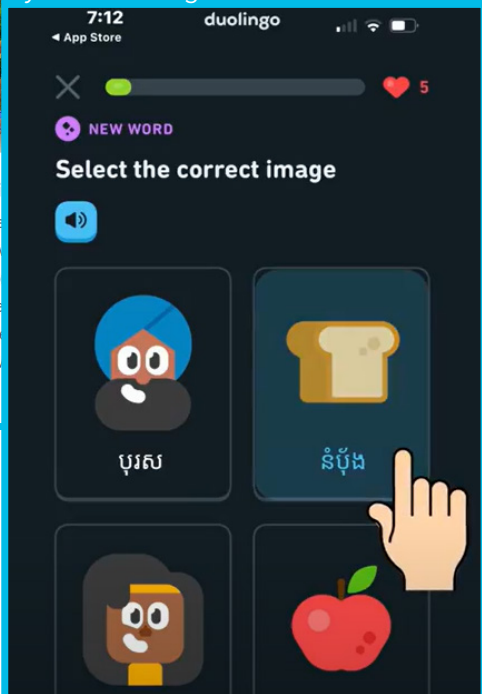


By Tang Lor

Nws yeej tsis
tau lig hloov
koj tus kheej.

It's never too late
to transform yourself.

By Chenda Hing



By Regina Hieap





SEA CHANGE LAB

Growing creative leaders at the intersection of arts and advocacy

By implementing SEA Change Lab through virtual programming, we opened up accessibility and continue to expand our youth leadership opportunity for Southeast Asian creatives ages 18 -25 around the globe. We had about 31 young creatives applied for the 8-week program. Our Winter 2023 SEA Change Lab Cohort included 10 Changemakers from Illinois, California, Minnesota, Kansas, New Hampshire, Oregon, and Laos, who came together twice a week to grow in heritage, leadership, and artistry. Our SEA Change Lab Changemakers envision what it means to change their community while growing social empowerment and leadership development through artistic storytelling and identity. The cohort members were also connected to a network of community leaders, professionals, and artists to further build upon their professional, artistic, and leadership skill sets.



Top artworks from left to right by Kim Sweeney, Olivia Sourivong, Kim-Sarah / Bottom artwork by Xais Vang



Our Changemakers:

- Cali Poeu Huynh
- Kim-Sarah I
- Mia Jennings
- Kasandra Kue-Rojas
- Kingkanda Souliya
- Oliva Sourivong
- Kim Sweeney
- Alexandria Tran
- Eugene Vang
- Xais Vang

Teaching Artists and Professionals:

The teaching artists and professionals are integral in making SEA Change Lab successful by sharing their resources, knowledge, and experiences with the cohort. Thank you to:

- May Lee-Yang
- ThaoMee Xiong
- Kyaw Moe Khine
- MK Nguyen
- Wone Vang
- Freedom Nguyen
- Rebecca McCammon
- Mandora Young
- Brandon Soun
- Savannah Rattanaovong
- Genie Tran
- Narate Keys
- Saysomphorn 'Sai' Sisavatdy
- Leyen Trang
- Chuayi Vang
- Tswj Ntug Yang
- Kou Thao
- Billy Lor
- Melissa Prenevost
- & many more!

What Changemakers have shared about the impact of SEA Change Lab:

“

The SEA Change Lab program was my first experience participating in any sort of creative arts/advocacy cohort. I absolutely loved connecting with my members, checking in with one another, laughing, sharing, crying, etc. This is the first time I've been connected to a full SEA community since I moved to a PWC. I feel rejuvenated. I feel affirmed with a new sense of confidence to continue to take up space.

“

I loved doing the memory mapping, planning your passion, and the healing circle. The memory/ancestry mapping has inspired me to write a letter to Tais, because I do not know much about my grandma's history and found out that I'm not the only one, because of a language barrier. Planning our passions helped me conceptualize how I can continue to realistically incorporate art into my life. Mental health is not something that is often talked about in the SEA community, and I'm glad that I had the space to discuss it with others.

CULTURAL ORGANIZING

Equipping and building SEA-origin diaspora communities towards informed, meaningful self-advocacy



2nd Annual MAFN

SEAD successfully hosted its 2nd Annual Mid-Autumn Film Night (MAFN) in partnership with Open Eye Theatre and Trilingua Films. The evening featured short films from our SEA community and provided plenty of fun & resources for all. About 112 community members came out to connect and support our Southeast Asian Film creatives. These films are love letters inked in the sinking struggles, sojourns, and unsettled worlds that make up the complex and beautiful weight of our Southeast Asian communities. This year SEAD was able to extend viewing of both online exclusives and films screened on-site at MAFN through SEAD's Vimeo Showcase. We also partnered with the City of Minneapolis and Black Nurses Rock to provide a free vaccine clinic.

Thank you to our 16 filmmakers from all over the country!

- Dan Yang
- Brandon Soun
- Blongsha Hang
- Lan Nguyen
- Rocky Her
- Loan Hoang
- Sarah Nguyen
- Thet Oo Maung
- Ramin Rahni
- Kelly Huang
- Vibol Sungkriem
- Mai Moua Thao
- Quyen Nguyen-Le

We were happy to feature an international short film from our Lao student filmmakers:

- Pitivanh Phamuang,
- Xaypaseuth Xayyalath
- Chanthasone Xoumphonphakdy

112 attendees

62 persons vaccinated



MAFN Talk



To complement our 2nd Annual Mid-Autumn Film Night, SEAD launched MAFN Talk to highlight our MAFN Featured Film Artists. The 6 interviews provided a portal to connect through the artistic eyes of SEA film creatives.



Brave Harbors

We launched the Brave Harbors project aimed to equip Southeast Asians with knowledge and understanding of their histories and current situations to address present and future social issues that affect their communities. Brave Harbors is an opportunity to engage with our SEA Communities who want to apply their cultural knowledge to do positive solidarity work, and use their own map of experiences and working knowledge of the systems that impact them and their peoples. As part of the initial project steps, we created a community survey to gather insights and create comprehensive “maps” of stories, histories, and challenges that our people can use to navigate tumultuous seas of systems and -isms—together.

SEA Folktale Coloring Pages

We developed our first series of SEA folktale coloring pages that act as a creative interface between Southeast Asian young and older generations to learn and share their traditions and cultures. The content was designed to be accessible to children under 10 years old, while having appeal to much older than 10. The coloring pages goal is to connect younger generations with older generations through an accessible and introductory array of culturally foundational stories that include relevant folktales.

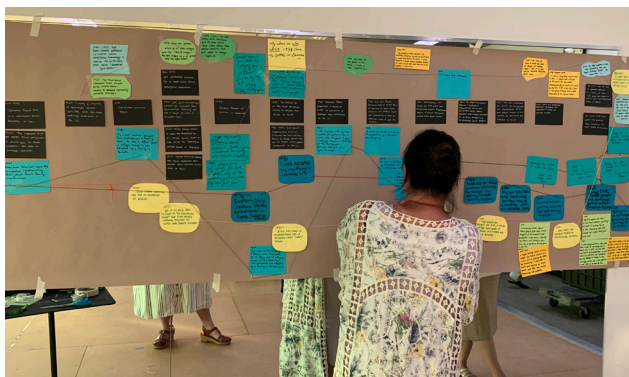


COMMUNITY EVENTS, WORKSHOPS, & PARTNERSHIPS

This year, SEAD strengthened our community engagement through partnerships and solidarity work to continue to increase our organizational capacity and community impact. We are grateful to have partnered with some great individuals and organizations:

Memory Mapping for Vietgone

SEAD conducted a Memory Mapping Workshop in partnership with the Guthrie Theater's production of "Vietgone." Together, we discussed and reflected on the Asian diaspora and immigration here in the United States and our journeys of "how we got here."



14 participants



Community Hybrid Forum

SEAD hosted a community hybrid forum that was co-facilitated by Becky McCammon and Devika Ghai. Becky and Devika led us through thoughtful circle practice as we reflected and thought on the future vision for SEAD. The forum provided participants with a space to engage in community dialogue as a critical step towards building strong processes for ensuring accountability.

32 participants



SEAD Resource Fair

SEAD partnered with the Minneapolis Health Dept., the Hennepin County Health Dept., and the City of Brooklyn Center to offer vaccines, other resources, and lots of entertainment to our SEA community. Held at Centennial Park, several community organizations joined us, including the Lao Center of MN, CAPI USA, and the University of Minnesota vaccination team.



34 individuals vaccinated

40 additional vaccinated persons given incentives



Memory Mapping for AANHPI Month

Thanks to the generosity of Macalester College and the Racial Justice Project Fund, SEAD was able to conduct a Memory Mapping workshop with a small community of the student body, helping to reflect on the ways in which our history has influenced our current moment.

~10 participants



Communications for Small Shops

As part of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofit's virtual conference, "Communications for Small Shops", SEAD facilitated a workshop on narrative change and storytelling and its role in activism and community work.

83 participants

2022 Muslim Women's Leadership Conference

As part of the AMAJ Cohort, SEAD tabled at the 2022 Muslim Women's Leadership Conference. We connected with community members to support and share community resources.

48 community members we connected with



Solidarity Street Gallery

We partnered with the East Side Arts Council to help organize, support, and celebrate The Solidarity Street Gallery, a 2-day event highlighting the history and arts of our east side community on East Payne in St. Paul.

Lunch and Learn for AAPI Heritage Month

SEAD facilitated a narrative change and storytelling workshop with MN Dept of Education as part of their heritage and awareness month and day recognitions. The Lunch and Learn series were created to make space to further their diversity, equity, and inclusion work by offering opportunities for learning and deepening their understanding to move closer towards true equity and belonging. Participants reflected on how narrative change and storytelling work can be applied to the education sector and the engagement of students.

~25 participants



YWCA Rhetoric of Hate: Art as Activism Community Panel

In collaboration with YWCA Minneapolis and our AMAJ cohort, we participated in the "It's Time to Act" series as part of the YWCA's "Rhetoric of Hate: Art as Activism" event. The panel discussion was led by moderator Hedy Tripp, Anh Thu T. Pham, and our Cultural Organizer, Tri Vo.



~20 participants



MN Asian Heritage Group and the Department of Human Services

SEAD facilitated a narrative change and storytelling workshop with the MN Asian Heritage Group and the Department of Human Services. Through the power of narrative change and storytelling, we discussed how each organization can better discuss and share their mission with clientele and the greater community.

15 participants



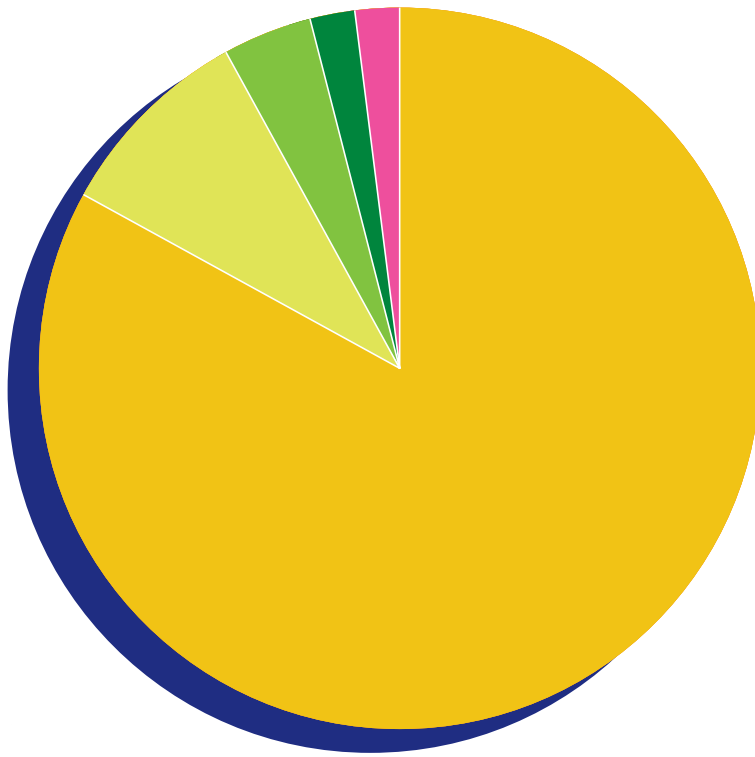
FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

JULY 2022—JUNE 2023

FISCAL YEAR¹

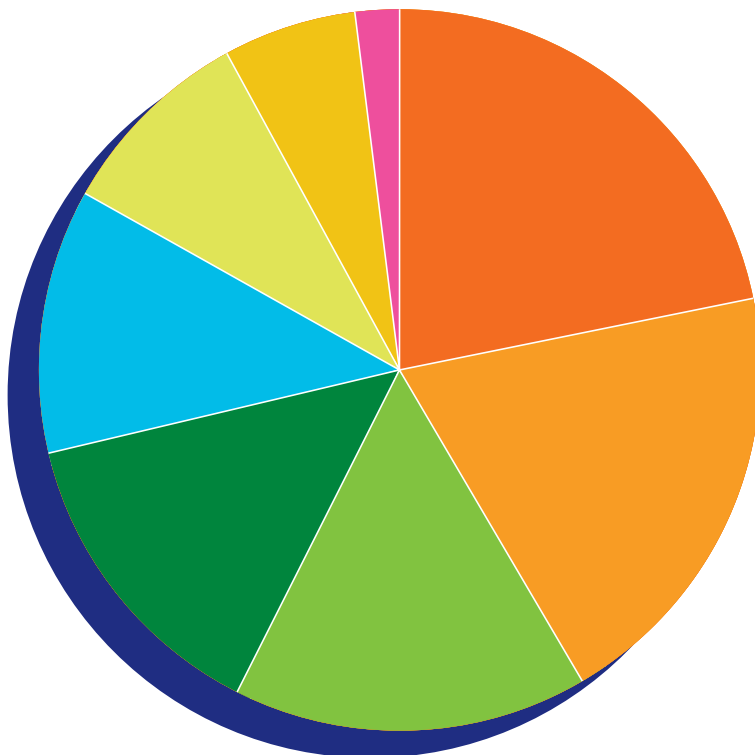


1. See “SEAD FY22-23 Form 990...” Report (www.theseadproject.org/our-impact)



Revenue: \$568,179

- **83%** Foundation Grants
- **9%** Contract Fees
- **4%** Individual Contributions
- **2%** Registration Fees
- **2%** Other Income



Expenses: \$472,567

- **22%** Management & General
- **20%** SOON Enterprise
- **16%** Cultural Organizing
- **14%** Fundraising
- **12%** SEA Roots
- **9%** SEA Change
- **6%** Storytelling
- **2%** Community Response

LETTER FROM CO-DIRECTOR

Jessica Eckerstorfer



From a SEA Change Lab participant, 2023 –

“I found myself being able to talk about things I hadn’t normally talked about with others, and I was met with so much support and resonance.”

At the heart of it, community work is about building connections, a process that takes real time, dedication, understanding, and empathy. Over the last two years, I’ve seen how our little team here at SEAD has strived to build lasting connections with our roots, with our diverse community, and with one another.

I think about how each month our team members take turns hosting a learning and engagement conversation, allowing us to take a break from our work and discuss varying topics while learning from and about each other. I think about the whole host of programs we’ve organized this last year, everything from our language classes, to our youth emerging artist cohort, from our film night, to our vaccine events. Even more importantly, I think of all the individuals we’ve gotten to know through each event. Each person has their own perspective, their own history and experiences. Their stories, their wants and needs, their traumas, their joys, and their hopes for the future—this is what motivates us to do the work.

SEAD has always had a unique advantage when it comes to the work we do. Our team not only cares about the folks we serve, but we’re also members of the community. This closeness and shared history means that we operate from a place of personal care, a passion to see our kinfolk thrive. It can also mean that when things hit our community or when tragedies arise that relate to our shared histories, it makes our work that much harder, because we’re working alongside those struggling while also struggling. This duality fuels us,

makes the work we’re doing feel more urgent, more necessary. Ensuring our traditions, languages, and cultural practices remain intact. Preserving the stories and experiences of our elders. Combining the knowledge and histories into everyday activism work. Highlighting and uplifting the artistry and representation amongst our people. None of this happens without community.

This is why SEAD does not and will never operate in a vacuum. Building connections and hearing from our people helps create the pathway on which we move forward. Whether you’ve taken one of our surveys, left a comment on a social media post, sent a request to our ‘hi’ email, attended an event or workshop, connected with a team member, or stopped by while we’ve been tabling, we will continue to take what you tell us into account, building upon what exists to grow our reach and our abilities. We appreciate those of you that have shared with us. Your love and commitment shines through.

In the next year, we hope to grow our language courses, expanding our curriculum to include advanced classes for our intermediate learners. We will develop elder stories into performance pieces and tour the productions, bringing these stories to audiences all over the state of Minnesota. We will conduct both an online and in person cohort for our SEA Change Lab, welcoming both local and international emerging Southeast Asian diaspora artists into the fold. We will grow our cultural organizing, providing space and regular programming for community to engage in political and social justice



education and conversation. We will conduct history panels and story collections on the topic of the upcoming 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon, commemorating and learning from the historical events that have brought us here. But what else? Where else can we provide space?

In order for real diversity to take place, legitimate acts of inclusion need to be considered in every aspect of the work you're doing. Therefore, SEAD will never presuppose what you need. Instead, we will be here to listen and help provide space for those looking for it and support for those seeking it. So let's get lunch, go on a walk and chat, hop on a phone call and hear from one another. Our small team will never have all the answers, nor all the solutions. We want to meet you all where you're at, knowing that everyone is at a different stage in the learning journey and that we'll all make mistakes along the way. But as your community, we help one another grow from these mistakes, we turn them into opportunities and learning moments, and show one another grace.

I am grateful for all those I've connected with over the last two years as Co-Director, and know there is so much more to come. Thank you to those who have and continue to show up with us at SEAD. Your authenticity, heart, and vulnerability is more beautiful than you know. Peace and solidarity.

Jessica Eckerstorfer
Co-Director, Programs & Communications



OUR GRATITUDE

Thank you to all our staff, board members, community, donors, supporters, language teachers, contractors, and volunteers who made our work possible.



STAFF

Kaysone Syonesa Schneider
Jessica Eckerstorfer
Charmaine Balisalisa
Tri Vo
Dexieng Yang

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Rachel Singratsomboune
Bo Thao-Urabe

FUNDERS & SUPPORTERS



This work is funded in part by the Minnesota Humanities Center with money from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund that was created with the vote of the people in Minnesota on November 4, 2008.



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.



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