

# Using Evidence to Scale What Works



Corporation for  
**NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE**

## 2015 State of the Social Innovation Fund Report Highlights

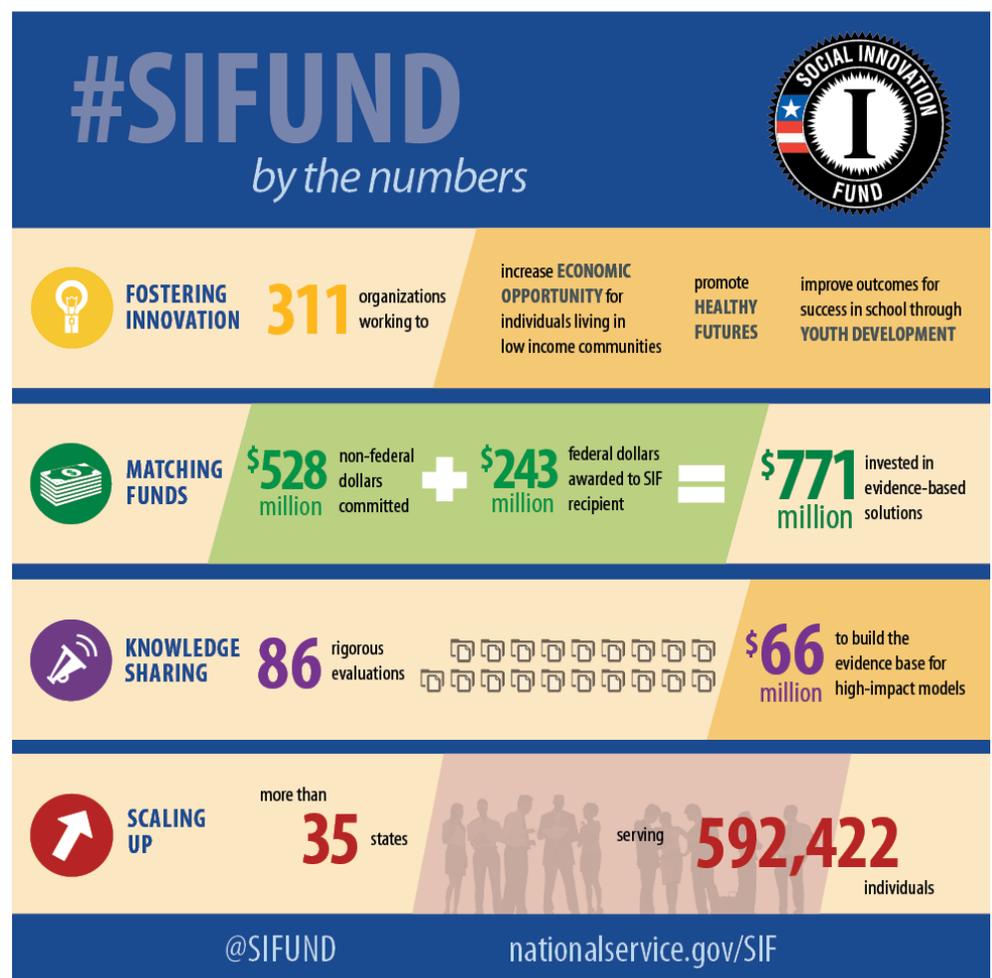
### Finding What Works and Making It Work for More People

Authorized by the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act in April of 2009, the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service that empowers organizations to identify and support community solutions, while building the capacity of the nonprofit sector.

With the simple but vital goal of *finding what works and making it work for more people*, the Social Innovation Fund and its grantees unite public and private resources to identify and scale innovative and effective evidence-based solutions to local and national challenges in three priority areas: economic opportunity, healthy futures, and youth development.

The Social Innovation Fund has two grant programs: SIF Classic and SIF Pay for Success. Through the two programs, experienced intermediaries direct resources to nonprofit organizations and state and local government entities, or “subgrantees/subrecipients,” to help build the capacity of the social sector and lift-up solutions that can transform lives. In addition, the Social Innovation Fund shares lessons learned and results through its [Knowledge Initiative](#).

As of September 2015, the SIF has made a total of 43 grant awards and has worked with 311 organizations in more than 35 states.



data as of September 2015

## Grantee Success Stories

Through the SIF's unique grant programs and in collaboration with intermediaries, the SIF is helping communities thrive. The full "Using Evidence to Scale What Works: 2015 State of the SIF" report featuring profiles of all intermediaries and their impactful work can be found at [nationalservice.gov/SIF](http://nationalservice.gov/SIF). The following are a few highlights from the report of SIF-funded work in our priority areas of economic opportunity, healthy futures, and youth development.

### REDF

REDF's history with the Social Innovation Fund began in 2010 when it was awarded a \$7 million grant to invest in and provide technical assistance to social enterprise (mission-driven organizations) that employ low-income people with multiple barriers to employment. In November 2014, REDF released its impact report, which highlighted an increase in employment and housing stability and a decrease in dependence on government support among its social enterprise workers.



### US Soccer Foundation

In 2011, the U.S. Soccer Foundation was awarded a \$4.6 million grant to combat the rising rates of childhood obesity and promote healthy lifestyles for children in underserved communities. As a result, the Soccer for Success program has reached 18,000 children in underserved urban communities with a program that uses soccer to combat obesity, promote healthy habits, and foster positive development. An independent evaluation of the program focused on three core health indicators for evaluation: BMI percentile categories, waist circumference, and aerobic capacity. The study found that participants showed greater improvements in all three indicators than participants in similar programs. In addition, the study found that the program has statistically significant and consistent results across different locations and demographic categories, supporting the case for replicating it in other urban communities.



### Reading Partners

An Edna McConnell Clark Foundation subgrantee, Reading Partners, began working with the SIF in 2011, to assist students who struggle with reading. Reading Partners collaborates with under-resourced schools and engages volunteer reading partners to help students improve literacy skills. Recently, Reading Partners released its evaluation impact report, which found 68 percent of students with reading partners read on grade level compared with only 37 percent at the start of the school year. The program more effectively raised students' reading proficiency compared to similar reading programs and was more cost-effective than other reading programs offered in the same school.

