

SIEGEL FAMILY ENDOWMENT

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Year *in* Review

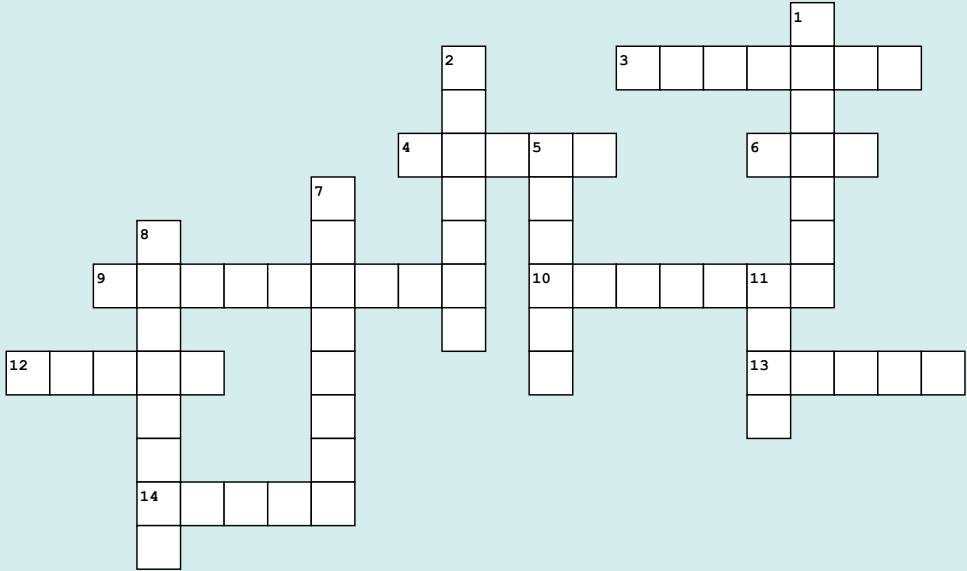




The Siegel Crossword

Across

- 3. "_____ as Community Infrastructure," our latest white paper
- 4. One of our values in action
- 6. The acronym we use for public interest technology
- 9. Our research strategy is shaped by what we call the 3 "N's": _____, Networks, and Insights (Hint: it doesn't start with an "N!")
- 10. Our approach is _____-driven
- 12. _____ Siegel, our Chairman
- 13. Who writes grant recommendations
- 14. The number of interest areas Siegel currently has



Down

- 1. We work at the nexus of technology and _____
- 2. One of two authors we cite as inspiration for our work
- 5. Multidimensional infrastructure is physical, digital, and _____
- 7. We recently started thinking about the intersection of art and research, what we are calling _____ research
- 8. What we call our posts on our website sharing news, updates, and research findings
- 11. We believe that philanthropy is society's _____ capital

Staff; 14. Three; 1. Society; 2. Zurcher; 3. Schools; 4. Trust; 5. Social; 6. PIT; 7. Creative; 8. Inquiry; 9. Knowledge; 10. David; 11. Risk

HINT: Explore our website for the answers you're missing!



→ Pursuing Progress Through Inquiry, Innovation, and Intentionality

A look back on 2023 and a glimpse forward from David Siegel, Chairman of Siegel Family Endowment, and Katy Knight, Executive Director and President

Pausing for reflection at the

end of each year offers us the opportunity to look back with pride at the work of our team and our grantees, and also to provide some forward-looking guidance as we think about our work for the year to come. These are uncertain, often volatile times, and optimism can sometimes read as a synonym for naivete. And yet, we are optimistic about our ability to make sense of the challenges ahead of us and push forward the ideas that will create a brighter shared future. Our sense of hope is situated comfortably next to our sense of urgency.

Building on David’s belief that there’s no problem in life that can’t be addressed by applying the scientific method, Siegel Family Endowment is **grounded in inquiry** and driven by relentless curiosity. We look at the emerging issues of our time with an engineering mindset, studying problems and breaking things down into their component parts in order to rebuild something better. We also know that not everything we try is going to work. There will always be tensions we did not anticipate, realities on the ground we did not account for, and hurdles that slow down the work or halt it altogether. We don’t have all the answers. And perhaps now more than ever before, we don’t even know all the questions. But through our iterative, systematic process, we are making progress. And we are reimagining how to use philanthropy differently to support a more just and prosperous society.

This year we’ve invested in **growing our team** and

understanding the lessons learned from the last few years of grantmaking in our post-pandemic reality. We have also made investments in programs that are dedicated to exploring how, as technology continues to rapidly evolve, communities that have too often been excluded from technological revolutions can actively participate in and co-create a vision of the future that is equitable for all. As you’ll read in notes from our colleagues leading Research and Grantmaking, the work ahead of us will be focused on doubling down on crucial questions about the impact of technology-driven change on people’s lives right now.

Through our **inquiry-based approach**, where we begin with questions rather than solutions, we’ve been meeting grantees and community leaders from across the country to learn more about the challenges they face. We recognize that to advance broader access to opportunities, our research and grantmaking must be coupled with **convening and engaging with communities** — urban, rural, west coast, east coast, southern, midwestern, and beyond — to listen and learn. Having spent the last year building out our first formal local collaborative effort in Atlanta, we are also already thinking deeply about where we might next bring a place-based investment strategy. While our work in Atlanta is certainly far from over, we are incredibly motivated to continue growing our partnerships across the country and to **acknowledge, amplify, and involve vulnerable populations** as we pursue more equitable futures for all.

That’s particularly important at this moment, as our society experiences whiplash-inducing technological change. We believe that the **growing field of public interest technology** (PIT) can play an important role in centering our relationship with technology around equity. PIT offers us a multidisciplinary lens for advocating for the development, deployment, and ongoing use of technologies for the public good. It’s also a space where philanthropy is uniquely positioned to drive impact. Philanthropic organizations can bring together disparate institutions — including higher education, government, nonprofits, communities, businesses, and others — and can bring trust and equity to the forefront of development in a way that industry often cannot. We are incredibly proud of the scale and impact that the **PIT University Network** has **achieved** in the past several years, and are excited to continue advancing our shared mission of building the infrastructure for public interest technology to thrive as a field through our collaborative efforts on the **PIT Infrastructure Fund**.

And that cuts to the heart of why we feel optimistic. We are privileged to be in a position that allows us to play such an important role in providing the funding, support, and cover to those driving real change. It’s risky work, but we believe that philanthropy’s role is to act as **society’s risk capital**, de-risking the innovations that can create a better future.

There’s no denying that the year ahead will be an

especially challenging one, here in the United States and abroad. Climate change will continue to take a devastating toll. Major conflicts are igniting tensions around the world. And a contentious election once again threatens our democracy. But by focusing on the ways that we can work collectively to empower people to make a difference in their own communities, we can slowly but surely build the better world we all deserve.

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to our continued partnership in the year ahead.

With best wishes,



→ About Siegel Family Endowment



We are a foundation focused *on understanding* and *shaping the impact* of technology on society.

SIEGEL FAMILY ENDOWMENT employs an inquiry-driven approach to grantmaking that is informed by the scientific method and predicated on the belief that philanthropy is uniquely positioned to address some of the most pressing and complex issues facing society today. Our grantmaking strategy positions us to be society's risk capital. We support high quality work that will help us derive insights to timely questions and has high potential for future scale. Our focus is on organizations doing work at the intersection of learning, workforce, and infrastructure. We aim to help build a world in which all people have the tools, skills, and context necessary to engage meaningfully in a rapidly changing society. Siegel Family Endowment was founded in 2011 by David Siegel, co-founder and co-chairman of financial sciences company Two Sigma.

Our Interest Areas

We believe the impact potential of a philanthropic organization goes beyond the individual impact of specific grants or even broader strategies. A well-functioning philanthropy is also a learning organization. It should learn from successes as well as failures, connect the dots between issue silos and sectors, be humble about what it knows, and identify gaps in knowledge that need to be filled. It is our goal that advancing knowledge in our grantmaking interest areas will lead to better decision making for ourselves and other funders, as well as for policy makers, and leaders in the private and nonprofit sectors.



Learning

We strive to understand how we can better equip individuals with the knowledge they need to contribute to and engage with a rapidly changing society. Yet, we also recognize that every factor in a learner's education — from broadband access to safe and affordable housing to the development of social-emotional skills — can widen inequality and impact success. Our work supports and shapes programs and solutions that build lifelong learning opportunities and envision an education system that works for everyone, by addressing long standing social and economic inequities.



Workforce

We believe that innovation — whether it is technologically or organizationally driven — can happen anywhere, in any industry, region, or community. However, the foundations that support innovation are not accessible to everyone. We're asking how to bring innovative capacity closer to those who are now left out and make the rewards of innovative ideas accessible to everyone. As such, our vision is to promote an equitable innovation economy — one that enables all people and their communities to achieve prosperity.



Infrastructure

Strong social, physical, and digital infrastructure is a prerequisite for cultivating an equitable society. Our work aims to make the infrastructure of today and tomorrow work for all people. We do this by supporting organizations that foster the growth of resilient social networks and communities, strengthen public spaces and buildings, and expand access to digital life.

→ From *the* Siegel Grantmaking Team

Reflections on 2023



▶ Public Interest Technology University Network (PIT-UN)

Siegel's grantmaking focuses

on the impact of technology on society through the lenses of our three interest areas: Learning, Workforce, and Infrastructure. Our inquiry-driven approach is at the core of the way we work, and is shaped by our desire to learn alongside our grantee partners and others in the field rather than promote predefined solutions. We believe philanthropy can play a critical role in convening, supporting, and collaborating with key stakeholders to ask and address complex questions in order to tackle the biggest challenges facing society today.

We are grateful for the leadership of our chairman, David Siegel, a computer scientist who has studied AI for decades, as we advance our mission in a rapidly-changing world. Recent developments in generative AI have the potential to impact society on every level, altering the way we live, work, and learn. We have been a tech-focused foundation since our establishment in 2011, and are well positioned to continue building on our work with grantees and partners to understand the opportunities and risks of emerging technologies, while ensuring that advances in the field are anchored in serving the public interest.

2023 was a year of organizational growth, exploration, and reflection for the Siegel grantmaking team. Our staff nearly doubled in size, allowing us to meet this unique moment of technological transformation head-on. Because technological change cuts across learning, workforce, and infrastructure systems, we've expanded our grantmaking portfolio beyond traditional silos, and see this intersectional approach as essential to addressing society's most pressing issues. Over the past year, we've leaned into our commitment to focus areas that are interdisciplinary and community-centered by nature, including:

Public Interest Technology (PIT)

Our work around the [growing field of PIT](#) supports organizations focused on designing, developing, and deploying technology in ways that serve all people. In 2023, we entered our fifth year of partnership with the Public Interest Technology University Network, and supported their work on campuses across the country to nurture a new generation of civic-minded technologists. As we've heard from our grantee partners and students,



▶ Project Invent

today's learners — tomorrow's workforce — don't just want good jobs: they want jobs that do good.

Schools as Community Infrastructure

In 2023, our multi-dimensional vision for schools was exemplified by our place-based work in Atlanta, where we supported the development of a roadmap to [education-centered community reinvestment](#). We prioritized cross-sector partnerships and deep engagement with local residents, and collaborated with families, students, local government, school leaders, and other stakeholders to create a model for community-centric initiatives that will help both learners and their neighbors thrive. We've also explored other innovative ways to build connections between schools and communities in the hopes of applying our learnings across our portfolio.

As we look back on 2023 at Siegel, we're thrilled with what our grantee partners have accomplished and what we've learned alongside them. For a fuller look at our published findings from throughout the year, we encourage you to visit our [Insights](#) page on our website. In the meantime, we cannot wait to see what 2024 has in store!



▲ The Tech Interactive



Evan Trout
Grantmaking
Manager

What's one passion project or special interest area that you explored in 2023?

In my work, I continue to be interested in the principles that form the thesis behind participatory grantmaking. This is a framework built on the idea that the people impacted by philanthropy should have a say in the work that philanthropy is doing. From the perspective of the communities we serve, it's saying "don't do your work to us, but *with* us." And while Siegel hasn't adopted a full participatory grantmaking practice, we can work on further elevating some participatory values through strategies like asset-framing, supporting proximate leaders, and building community.

Humility is another big value that has continued to shape my work. Operating with the understanding that we do not and cannot have all the right answers and context to solve the problems that we are working on reinforces the need to listen, and to develop participatory and co-designed processes with our grantee partners and communities.

What was one of your favorite moments in 2023?

One of my favorite moments this year came out of the staff retreat that we held in the office over the Summer. I led a session on creating vision boards, and I'd expected it to be a light, creative exercise that would help surface new ideas for the rest of our discussions. But the conversations ended up being so much more impactful than I anticipated. What surprised me the most was that, when asked to describe the themes that shaped their board, the overwhelming majority of the group mentioned joyfulness. I found myself pulled in two different directions by this - on one hand, being able to consider joy as an aspect of your work is a very privileged position and could sound really out of touch. But on the other hand, the idea that joy could be considered a privilege feels so flawed. The question that I've been mulling ever since has been: how do we, as a philanthropic entity, help foster conditions that allow for joy to be a part of everyone's experience at school, at work, and in their communities?



▲ Partners convene for a day-long workshop to launch Siegel's second phase of work in Atlanta.



Ali Chin
Grantmaking
Manager

What's one passion project or special interest area that you explored in 2023?

This year, I've been interested in exploring STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics), and how integrating the arts with STEM can build students' interests across content areas by tapping into their creativity and connecting what they're learning to the real world. We work with a few different organizations that provide young people with access to hands-on STEAM learning experiences in communities, including a grantee that develops and implements educational programs that introduce computer science through digital arts and game design. We're thrilled to partner with them on further understanding how their approach to CS education can get more students to engage in computing, as well as to feel a sense of belonging and excitement to pursue careers in related fields in the future.

What is some feedback you've heard from grantees, and how do you plan to address it in 2024?

One thing we've heard from our grantees is a desire for more opportunities to connect, share ideas and insights, and collectively learn with other partners across our portfolio and interest areas. Our work this year with our partners in Atlanta also underscored the power of bringing together diverse groups of stakeholders from different sectors who may not always find themselves in the same rooms. Looking towards 2024, we have intentionally centered our programming around building community and connections. We're excited to really amplify our role as a convener by launching spaces for grantees to meet and learn with other people doing aligned work in different fields.

SFE *by the Numbers*

2023

2023 TOTAL DISBURSEMENT:

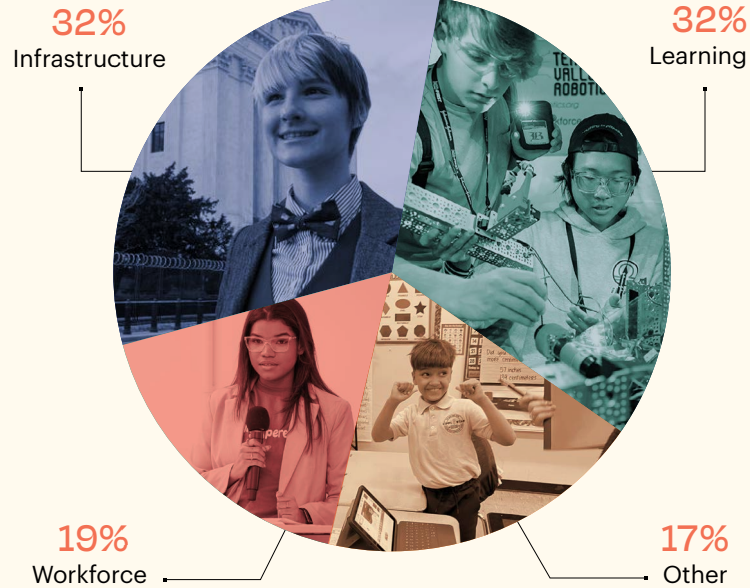
\$27.1
MILLION

111

active grants

49% new grants + 51% renewed grants

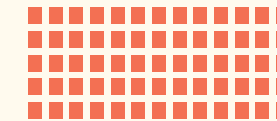
Grants by Interest Area



WE WELCOMED
SEVEN
NEW COLLEAGUES
TO THE SIEGEL TEAM

WE SHARED

65
insight posts across
our interest areas



We brought together

12

thought leaders to form
the Siegel Research
Advisory Council.

We launched the third cohort of the Siegel Research Fellows, growing to include **14 researchers** from academic and non-academic institutions.



GRANTEE FEEDBACK SCORING*

Overall experience partnering with Siegel: **4.85/5**
Experience with our grant writing process: **4.76/5**
Experience with our post-grant engagement process: **4.75/5**

*Based on end of year survey

56%

OF GRANTEES ARE ORGANIZATIONS LESS THAN TEN YEARS OLD

MEDIAN GRANTEE OPERATIONAL BUDGET

\$4

MILLION

WE PUBLISHED

17

in-depth profiles on the work of our grantees



→ From *the* Siegel Research Team

Reflections on 2023



▶ Aspen Digital

Since Siegel's founding,

we've supported research at both academic institutions and independent research organizations. In 2021, we laid out a [vision](#) for advancing our research efforts and capacities in alignment with our mission to understand and shape the impact of technology on society. Since then, we've expanded our research grantmaking, built internal research capacity, and fostered strong relationships with a variety of mission-aligned research organizations.

Our approach is grounded in what we call the 3 "N"s - Knowledge, Networks, and Insights.

Knowledge

We were pleased to continue supporting the work of research institutions across the country who are working at the intersection of technology and social science. Our approach recognizes that the challenges we face are inherently multi-disciplinary and interconnected, which has informed our strategy for convening academics, students, and independent researchers from different fields and backgrounds to collaborate with one another.

Our grantees have contributed to a better understanding of how [social media influences politics](#); developing [frameworks for auditing generative AI systems](#) for bias; and how new information technologies are [impacting collective adaptation](#).

We also recognize that knowledge comes from many places — not just from dedicated researchers, but also from practitioners who are creating and implementing programs that are operating in the field. We've developed systems for gathering and sharing knowledge from our grantees who are testing these ideas in practice, and will continue to amplify their efforts through funding, research advice, and networking support.

Networks

2023 was a year of tremendous growth for the [Siegel Research Fellows program](#). The 2022-23 class of fellows was almost 50% larger than our previous cohorts, and included participants from independent research organizations outside of academia for the first time. In the third iteration of our program, the 2023-2024 cohort includes researchers who approach the work with a

creative or artistic lens — what we have termed "[creative research](#)" — as well as representation from an HBCU through [#BlackTechFutures](#).

In 2023, we also established an inaugural group of leaders and experts working at the intersection of technology, social sciences, and its impact on society to participate in a [Research Advisory Council](#). We look forward to their insights, guidance, and leadership in the months to come to better understand what we, as a community, should be thinking about, researching, and funding in both the near term and future.

Insights

A crucial part of our research strategy involves amplifying insights from our grantees and our internal research. These insights touched on a huge range of topics, including [AI reporting](#), [Hollywood and AI](#), [scaling impact for communities](#), [tech layoffs](#), [shadow prompting](#), and [more](#). With the addition of [two in-house Research Fellows](#) to the team, we look forward to placing even greater emphasis on sharing out our learnings and questions, including those that we may lack the answers to.

In 2024, we aim to further broaden the perspectives and expertise of our Siegel Research Fellows and the Research Advisory Council. We recognize that the pace of technological development is only accelerating, and it is imperative for all of us to continue grappling with its implications and how best to shape its impact on society.



▲ Sorting Feminist Data collected at SOHO20 by Caronline Sinderson, 2023-2024 Siegel Research Fellow



▶ 2022-2023 Siegel Research Fellows Convening



Madison Snider
Research Associate

What's one passion project or special interest area that you explored in 2023?

This year, I worked on developing Siegel's inquiry into tech policy. While we are not a policy-making organization, we work with many policy-oriented organizations, many of which are in our research portfolio. Our team was intrigued by the idea of philanthropy making a positive impact on the general understanding of what values surround tech policy. Throughout the year, I conducted a handful of interviews with grantees and other partners in our broader network to understand the values guiding their work. While we're still sorting through the data we collected, it's already clear that these lessons will play a crucial role in shaping our positions on policy around public interest technology and tech regulation. I'm looking forward to going further with this work in 2024.

What have you learned from Siegel Research Fellows, and what are you excited about collaborating with them on in the year ahead?

We're now entering our third year of the Siegel Research Fellowship, and we've learned a lot from the last two cohorts. The first cohort was very much an exploration of enhancing the work of researchers in our interest areas. In the second cohort, we expanded beyond just academic partners to include independent research and policy-focused organizations. In this third iteration, we're hoping to explore the diverse strengths of the fellows, and do our best to ensure that they make good use of Siegel's network of resources and support. We're especially excited to have a creative researcher and an HBCU-hosted fellow in the mix, and have launched a Slack community group to streamline discussions on ongoing research and news. We're also planning on organizing another in-person convening, publishing monthly spotlights of the fellows, and hosting capacity building workshops on effective communication and sharing work across sectors.



Amanda Ahern
Research Associate

What was one of the most surprising things you learned in 2023?

I was surprised by how quickly and easily companies can take away data access from researchers. We were at our first in-person retreat for our Siegel Research Fellows earlier this year when Twitter pulled access to their API. A group of fellows and some Siegel grantees happened to be in the same room around the time the news broke, and a few of them immediately started collaborating on an open letter with the Coalition for Independent Tech Research. The open letter included guidance for legislators and a network of mutual aid for students that would be impacted by the new restrictions. Seeing collective action in the face of change and upheaval was pretty heartening, and prompted me to think about the concrete ways that Siegel can support cross-sector collaborations to produce real, tangible products that affect policy.

What was one of your favorite moments in 2023?

One of my favorite moments of work in 2023 came out of the Siegel Research Fellows in-person retreat that we hosted in February. Our research team worked with Zeve Sanderson, Executive Director of the Center for Social Media and Politics at NYU, to host the fellows in New York City for a few days of workshops, field trips, and networking events. Fellows were able to share their research and get feedback from their peers in the cohort. We also hosted an event exploring research for policy and public impact with a group of panelists that included policy experts, journalists, academics, and technologists. The whole experience was a chance for the fellows to create meaningful connections, and was a good reminder of the added value of convening people across disciplines and areas of focus to forge ties that may not happen as readily in a virtual setting.



◀ All Tech is Human



Looking Ahead

Strategic perspectives from Heads of Grantmaking and Research

As we conclude 2023 and

contemplate the remarkable achievements of our grantees, I am eagerly anticipating the opportunities that 2024 holds for Siegel Family Endowment and our partners. We will enter the upcoming year with fully staffed grantmaking, research, and external engagement teams. With a core emphasis on collaboration between teams, 2024 will present us with the opportunity to be intentional with every facet of our work, and place a strong focus on sharing out what we and our partners are learning.

For the first time as an organization, we have created a guiding star to help steer our decisions and emphasize **intentionality, learning, relevancy, and collaboration**:

“We commit to intentional and equitable grantmaking that elevates grantees, fosters connection, and generates tangible learning outcomes. We commit to codifying, reflecting on, and sharing what we learn to inform our own strategy, that of our grantees, and that of our peers. We commit to prioritizing collaboration throughout to strengthen our work and our community.”

In some ways, this new guiding star is the formalization of Siegel Family Endowment’s long held values and commitments. We will continue to work across three interest areas: learning, infrastructure, and workforce. We will continue to use an inquiry-based approach. We will continue to take calculated risks on emergent ideas and programs. We will continue to **learn** from our grantees, from our colleagues in philanthropy, and from the communities that we serve. We will continue to share what we are learning with different audiences.

But in other ways, our new guiding star is also a departure from our previous work. We are doubling-down on our interest areas, and seek to be much more **intentional** and focused in ensuring that all our commitments align to those areas. This will force us to make some tough choices, recognizing the impossibility of addressing every avenue, so that we can go deeper into areas where we are well-positioned to affect change.

Moving forward, we plan to prioritize **relevancy** as a key component of our funding strategy. We’re developing

a nimble funding strategy that can respond directly to what is happening in our world. While we have always strived to share what we are learning, we plan to be more responsive, deliberate, and timely in sharing, so that others can leverage those learnings in their own contexts and communities.

Our new guiding star also prioritizes **collaboration**, both internally and externally. For the first time, we are at full capacity across all three of our teams: Grants, Research, and External Engagement. We have established processes and opportunities for these three groups to share expertise and perspectives that will allow us to coordinate among ourselves more seamlessly.

We also expect to be more deliberate in looking for opportunities to collaborate with and between grantees and partners. We aim to serve as a connector between grantees, partners, and other relevant stakeholders. We want to create spaces for relationship-building, knowledge sharing, and partnership that wouldn’t be possible without our convening role. In all of this work, we plan to continue and deepen our commitment to listening to partner voices, and we expect to clearly articulate how we plan to change in response to received feedback.

Finally, we remain committed to improving our processes to support this guiding star. We will continue to revise and revamp our grantmaking process to make sure it is equitable and user friendly. This process will continue to be centered around feedback cycles that will allow us to listen, hear and implement changes. We will also look for ways that we can support organizations beyond traditional grantmaking.

With excitement, gratitude, and appreciation,



Joshua Elder

*Vice President and
Head of Grantmaking*

The year 2023 will likely be

remembered as the year that generative artificial intelligence landed on our collective radar. Like many others, Siegel Family Endowment and our partners have been grappling with many of the implications of AI for society. In 2024, we will continue to ask questions and explore problems and solutions, with three areas likely to continue to emerge as topics of public discussion and debate.

First, and unsurprisingly, I expect that the **explosion of interest in artificial intelligence will continue** into 2024, driven in large part by the promise and perils of generative AI. While the focus this year was largely on understanding the underlying generative models (GPT, Midjourney, etc.), I think we’ll see more emphasis on the use and misuse of these models in different contexts as various AI models and tools become increasingly embedded in the digital tools and services we use everyday, such as email, photo-editing, social media, and work systems.

As AI becomes a more central part of everyday life, this will continue to raise the need to focus on the potential harms (bias, safety, hackability, etc.) and how best to provide guardrails through regulation and policy (both via government and private sector practices). This will also raise the need to focus on what new opportunities AI tools will create across sectors, across problem spaces, and across diverse communities, recognizing the different ways people will eventually interface with AI. How do we as a society best design the digital infrastructures that will create opportunities for all?

Second, **2024 will also be a significant election year here in the US and around the globe, with technology playing an important role.** The explosion of mis- and dis-information around elections shows little signs of abating. And many are expecting generative AI to help fuel this trend next year. At the same time, the social media landscape continues to evolve with the rise of new platforms, the fall of others, and a more fragmented and siloed media landscape. Understanding the evolution of complex adaptive systems and information flows is perhaps more important now than

ever before.

Finally, **technology played an important role in labor market shifts in 2023.** Strikes in the auto industry and in Hollywood highlighted the connection between the impact of new technologies on work and worker voice and power. Negotiations over the use and deployment of technology became central to the bargaining process, not an afterthought. But what about the rest of the workforce that is not represented by a union and has much less say over how their employers might deploy new technology? And how will new technologies impact existing jobs and work tasks? Could these new technologies create new opportunities in the labor market? 2024 may be a critical year to further our understanding about how best to leverage new technologies for good in the workplace — enhancing our productivity, our creativity, and our distinctly human skills — while protecting the rights and livelihoods of workers.

I’m very much looking forward to diving into all three of these topics with colleagues and partners in the coming year. Over the last three years, the Research team has built internal capacity and expanded our efforts to better track and understand these issues. We launched the third cohort of Research Fellows, established a Research Advisory Council, and continued to expand our support of research centers around the country. In 2024, we plan to leverage the growth in our Research team and Fellows program and the addition of our Research Advisory Council to explore approaches for responding to and impacting these three areas of change.

Sincerely,



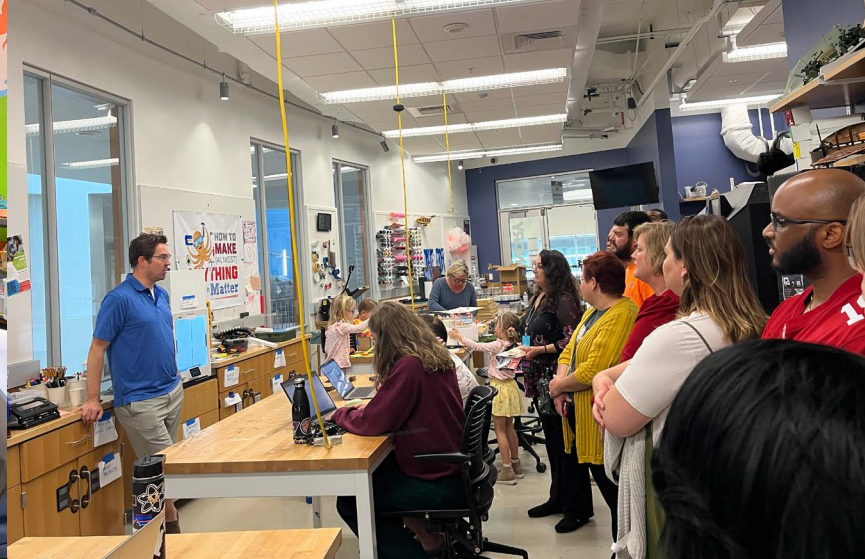
John Irons

*Senior Vice President
and Head of Research*

Our Grantee Partners

2023







<https://www.siegelendowment.org>