

### Quick snapshot:

**Who:** Central Texas nonprofit professionals and consultants working in philanthropy

**What:** [Co-Signing](#) An Open Letter of Thanks to Impact Austin Members

**Why:** To confirm the appreciation we have for unrestricted funding and encourage it to continue

**When:** Gathering signatures by Friday, May 30th, 2025 to deliver on Monday, June 9th

**Where/How:** From your computer, in 4 mins, keep reading, co-sign, and SHARE!

**Copy/paste simple text to spread the word:** Hey there! Did you hear that Impact Austin has made a shift so that all of their grants are unrestricted? Please join me and other nonprofit professionals and leaders in sending a huge thanks to their membership and encourage them to continue this generous practice. For more information and to sign the letter, you can click [here](#)! Spread the word to anyone you think should join us in signing. Thank you!

### Longer details:

Dear nonprofit colleagues,

Most of you who are getting this initially will know me, but my hope is that you'll help me spread the word to our friends in the sector all throughout Central Texas, so this little introduction is for those who I don't know! My name is [Ami Kane](#), and I currently serve as the CEO of Girls Empowerment Network, where I've been on staff since 2010. I also sit on the board of Impact Austin, where I've been a member since 2014 and volunteer since 2010, the AFP Greater Austin Chapter board, where I am serving as a Co-Chair for Philanthropy Day 2025, and I'm also a Leadership Austin Emerge 2014 alum and currently in Leadership Austin's Nonprofit CEO LeaderLab. I hold my CFRE and I also consider myself a student of Community-Centric Fundraising. If all of that doesn't tell the story for me, suffice it to say, I am deeply passionate about the health & happiness of the Austin community, ethical fundraising, and philanthropy both personally and professionally.

In early 2024, I got the honor of facilitating a panel of nonprofit community partners to Impact Austin's membership at our annual Discovery Day gathering. I was asked to cultivate a discussion that would educate the members about what nonprofits are facing and raise awareness about the unique challenges of our sector as we seek to meet the needs of our community. The folks on the panel were brilliant. At the very end, I asked the panelists one final wrap up question and said, "Is there anything else you want Impact Austin members to know?"

I can't recall who answered first or I would properly credit them, but their answer was a clear, unequivocal "unrestricted funding." Once that simple truth was stated the rest of us couldn't help but echo it--every panelist agreed. As we all intimately know, being trusted by our donors to administer our funding toward the costs/expenses we most need them for, even if we can't predict a year in advance when we're writing an application what they may be, is a game changer for us.

Y'all, it is with much pride I share: ***Impact Austin listened.*** I never brought that moment backup (because I didn't need to) and it was hardly the first or last time our members heard about unrestricted grants, trust-based philanthropy, and unrestricted funding. So I was thrilled beyond words when our grants leadership team recommended and our board unanimously approved offering unrestricted grants this grant cycle for the first time ever in 2025!

I know many of you saw this and were as thrilled as me and THANK YOU for telling me so! Internally at Impact Austin, for some of our members, this change has been a no-brainer. But for others, they are trying out a totally new way of grant review. Instead of comparing project-to-project, they are stretching their minds and processes to ensure that we give every applicant a very thorough and fair review when we are now using agency-to-agency evaluation methods.

***I feel strongly that shifting to unrestricted grants from requiring program applications and budgets, etc., is one of the most important and powerful changes that Impact Austin has made in recent years and I want this change to be how we are, forever more.*** I think that if we tell members that, as nonprofit professionals, we saw this incredible act and applaud it, it will go a LONG way as they truly care about our agencies and our needs.

On Monday, June 9th our membership will gather and officially vote on the final recipients of our first ever set of fully unrestricted grants. When we do this, I dream that we can simultaneously deliver a letter of gratitude from us, the professionals in the sector, to help them know this change is seen and celebrated! Will you please consider signing the

following open letter with me? I am asking for 1 signature per agency, but to try to get AS MANY AGENCIES AS POSSIBLE, so share, share share!

My hope is that the signatory will be folks who are authorized to sign, so usually that would be those in the CEO/Executive Director, Board Chair, or heads of Fundraising departments seats (CDOs, Development Directors). But if you're authorized to sign for a 501(c)(3) in Central Texas, any title is fine. We also welcome consultants who work in philanthropy to sign on behalf of their businesses, too.

***DID YOU KNOW, since our inception in 2003, Impact Austin has granted \$9M to orgs in Central Texas. Can you imagine what another \$9M of UNRESTRICTED grants could mean for us all over the next 20 years?***

If that feels as powerful to you as it does me, please keep reading and add your agency here! THANK YOU!

*Ami Kane*

Questions?? Email: [ami@girlsempowermentnetwork.org](mailto:ami@girlsempowermentnetwork.org) Personal cell (text is best): 317-695-8552

### **Open Letter Text:**

*Dear Impact Austin membership,*

*Today, at your Annual Meeting, you have done something important and powerful beyond words--you have supported your latest grant-funded community partners with the gift of UNRESTRICTED FUNDING! We wanted to both thank and applaud you for this momentous occasion!*

*We celebrate not only the achievement of reaching \$9M in grant funding but also the trust-based act of changing your grant review process to accommodate the ability to grant unrestricted funding.*

*The co-signers of this letter represent professionals from many of Central Texas' nonprofit organizations--those who sit in leadership seats and as heads of fundraising departments; those who are past community partners and those who we hope will become future partners. We felt it was very important to commend Impact Austin for this moment!*

*We spend our days asking community members like you to join us in financially supporting our work. We represent hundreds of Central Texans receiving life saving and changing services such as shelter, food, educational support, arts of all kinds, mental health services, environmental protection, animal welfare work, youth development, elder care, and so much more than we can ever properly list. By transforming your grant process, you will help continue to transform Central Texas into the best place for us all to live and love life.*

*We offer you a sincere and enthusiastic thanks for leaning further into trust-based practices and applaud your generosity!*

*With gratitude,*

*Name and Organizations will be added here*

**[To co-sign, click here!](#)**

**What else:**

**PLEASE SHARE**

**Simply draft your own email as to why you supported this letter and feel free to send it to ANY 501(c)(3) nonprofit professional you know in Austin/Central Texas who you think may also appreciate unrestricted funding and want to encourage Impact Austin to continue this!**