

Empowering Futures

2023 Annual Report





Dear Friends,

When we started Potencia in 2019 as international students who faced language barriers, we envisioned a future where every immigrant in this country will have the power to communicate, connect, and contribute.

We never stopped working towards our vision, one step at a time. 2023 was another year of testing new initiatives, strengthening community partnerships, and growing our service capacity. By leveraging our university network and community partnerships, Potencia continued to break language barriers for adult immigrants living in Massachusetts, while inspiring a generation of future civic leaders.

With high-quality, personalized English language tutoring, adult immigrants - many of whom are BIPOC - will be able to have a voice, gain confidence and economic mobility, and integrate better with their local communities. In the longer term, our work contributes to closing the racial wealth gap. Thank you to our tutors, learners, capacity-building volunteers, donors, and mentors, who constantly believe in Potencia's mission and contribute in whatever ways you can to uplift lives and build bridges in our community. Thank you to our funders and partners, who invested at this early stage, so we were able to make this happen and grow.

In the road ahead, we invite you to join us and democratize access to English language education. What changes would you make?

Warmly,



Amanda Wang
Co-Founder/CEO, Potencia

2023 Overview

40+

Weekly active learners
from

16

towns in MA, including
Boston, Chelsea, Everett,
Malden, and Revere

"My classes were very good because my tutor Edward designed the classes based on my needs. It is exactly what I needed. Although my tutor can speak Spanish, I asked my tutor to only use English in his class so I can practice English much more than before."

-- Josefina, learner from the Dominican Republic

"Starting out as a tutor and becoming a chapter president has been one of the highlights of my college experience. It was fulfilling and satisfying to watch the Tufts chapter grow to double its size in a year and turn into an official club with a dedicated executive board. "

-- Sarah Jun, tutor and Tufts University Chapter President (2022-2023)

400+

Learning hours

62%

of Potencia tutors in 2023
are from immigrant family
backgrounds

"My tutor Shi Yan's class was so good because she was professional and she had the experience to teach. And her lecture was systematic. Also, she shared YouTube links for me to watch after classes, which were so educational and helpful to enhance my English skills."

-- Mina, learner from South Korea

88%

tutors find the Potencia experience beneficial to improve their leadership skills, enhance intercultural understanding and/or more connected to the local community

90%

learners increased their confidence and improved English language skills after a semester of study (10 weeks)

"I love teaching at Potencia because I am constantly inspired by my students' growth. I gained an immense appreciation for non-English speakers currently living in America. Their determination to overcome language barriers and embrace a new way of life is so inspiring. Being able to see my learner begin to comfortably utilize new English sentence structures and words we learned in class has been one of the most rewarding teaching experiences I have ever had."

-- Connor Choptij, Northeastern University tutor and training curriculum volunteer, 2023-present

61%

tutors continue to teach after completing a semester of teaching

Program Highlights



Elaine, learner from Brazil

“The Potencia class tries to adapt to each learner’s needs. I have learning difficulties and my tutor does everything she can to help me overcome the difficulties and my shyness. After a semester’s study, I’m able to understand and express myself better at work. I always recommend Potencia to my friends!”

Ray, tutor and chapter president @ Brandeis University

“Potencia has not just been an avenue for me to give back but also a platform for growth. It’s challenged me to step out of my comfort zone, enhanced my communication skills, and deepened my understanding of the multicultural fabric that makes up America. More importantly, it has instilled in me a greater sense of empathy and an appreciation for the strength of the human spirit.”



Maya, tutor and education research intern @Boston College

“My personal experiences growing up with immigrant grandparents illuminated the power of building English proficiency. Potencia helps me make a positive impact in the community, and I'm so grateful to be working with (and learning from) such eager learners and an insightful team!”



Glauber, learner from Brazil

“In the past, I was hesitant to speak up, always relying on my coworker for assistance. But now, I can confidently share my knowledge and am thrilled to lend a helping hand to others. When a couple’s car battery died, I stepped up and used what I had learned in class to help them. My everyday life has been transformed!”



Harnessing the university network



Team *Outer Space*: Matt P. Ung, Emma Paterson, and Sejal Agarwal

Technology

Potencia has been developing a mobile app to empower learners to choose classes that fit their learning needs. Tutors will be able to track the learning progress as well. We have been partnering with Tufts **JumboCode** led by Ellis Brown and Silvia Wang, and a **Tufts capstone team “Outer Space”** supervised by Professor David Lillethun to develop the first version of the app. We hope to launch the app by the end of 2024 to scale our service capacity and efficiency.

Civic Engagement Beyond Tutoring

In addition to tech development, university resources have been crucial in the growth of Potencia.

During the summer break, Laidlaw Scholar and Tufts University student Tony Li, and Boston College graduate Maya Floreani, collaborated as **summer education research interns** over six weeks to improve Potencia’s tutor training curriculum.

In Fall 2023, the **Tufts 180 Degrees Consulting team** led by Tufts senior Matthew Chen was key in driving the business strategy development. The team has created strategic plans that will become a critical foundation for Potencia’s future growth plan.

Moreover, we were inspired by the dedication and professionalism of college student interns, who have contributed their valuable time and wisdom to support Potencia’s development. In the winter of 2023, five Tufts University students joined Potencia as **winter project interns**. From video creation to grant research, many works are done by these passionate college students, making an impact on their local community.





Impact Partners

Our partnerships with businesses enable us to recognize and reward tutors' incredible work. But beyond that, these minority-owned businesses have an aligned mission to advance racial equity and social justice.

Hen Chicken Rice (<https://www.henchickenrice.com/>) is an authentic Thai-style chicken rice restaurant in Somerville, MA owned by Thai immigrants. Since 2021, Hen has been supporting Potencia's mission to promote racial equity and inclusion in our communities.



L I K H Â

LIKHÂ (<https://shoplikha.com/>) creates joyful connectedness by bringing thoughtfully handcrafted Filipino artisan home goods and fashion accessories to markets across the globe. As a social enterprise, LIKHÂ's mission is to empower Filipino artisan families to overcome poverty by reimagining time-honored local craft for the global market.

Superfrau (<https://www.drinksuperfrau.com/>) is a woman-owned upcycled fizzy whey beverage company based in Springfield, MA, It fights food waste and climate change by offering flavorful and healthy drinks!



Lilco (<https://shoplil.co/>) is a woman-owned Boston-based fashion brand for small-breed pets established in 2016 and directed by a Turkish entrepreneur. The brand offers only high-quality, comfortable, and stylish products for pets, prioritizing simplicity in its design philosophy.



New Advisory Board

To better reflect our community voice and fuel Potencia's growth, we established our first advisory board. The advisory board will also serve as a leadership pathway for members to become future board of directors. We were excited to welcome the following people to our board in 2023:

Phillip D. Ellison

Phillip Ellison is an entrepreneurial strategist, cross-sector connector, and ecosystems builder with an equity-based framework. Earlier in his career, he worked with students and their families from immigrant backgrounds as an educator in New York City nonprofits in public schools. Those experiences grounded his understanding of **how important quality English language education is for the economic and social opportunities for immigrant families.**



Bo Jian

As a skilled educator and experienced counselor, Bo follows her passion for providing insights and overseeing projects from the concepts and the framework transfer to meaningful outcomes. After moving to the U.S. with limited English, **Bo benefited from Potencia's support and eventually achieved a master's degree** from the University of Pennsylvania and an ongoing Ph.D. from Syracuse University. Bo believes adults have their potential in different stages.

Su Hnin Pwint

Su works as the Design Lead at Medscout and previously worked as a product designer for Drift. **Su joined Potencia as a design advisor in 2021 to lead the mobile app design and helped build the new website in 2023.** Su has her undergraduate degree in User Experience and Interaction Design from Drexel University. She also pursued her dual master's degree in Innovation and Management and Human Factors Engineering at Tufts University.



Abdallah Al-Obaidi

Abdallah Al-Obaidi is a **former Iraqi refugee** who came to the US in 2013 **with limited English proficiency.** He learned English by reading the dictionary and later became a medical interpreter during his college years. Currently, he is the Director of the Young Physician Initiative, YPI, at Tufts University School of Medicine where he currently attends as a medical student.

Tutors & Organizational Volunteers

Tutors

Sarah Abukwaik
Maria Alejandra de Urioste
Camila Alvarez
Emma Anane
Evrosina Awad
Clea Bell
Lydia Chen
Sih-Ni Chen
Connor Choptij
Esha Dagli
Sanjana Doshi
Makayla George
Birdie Gile
Ray Gong
Fernanda Graniello
Dani Grinberg
Bijan Harandi
Jessica Herman
Holly Hessner
Alexia Huerta
Mihika Iyer
Caroline Johnson
Myra Khan
Kathryn Lakin
Alejandra Leos
Jenny Lin
Shi Yan Liu
Edward Lopez
Julia Lovas
Thang Ly
Aria Ma
Kylie McNulty
Christopher Mendez Mendez
Amelia Miller
Jia Yao Mize
Linda Nguyen

Samantha Ouellette
Jennifer Park
Armaan Patel
Amanda Piña
Ariana Rich
Demi Ring
Joanna Sandoval
Megan Stevens
Roshni Sudharsan
Benjamin Tadmor
Anna Tkebuchava
Yasmine Vakili
Destiny Villarreal
Chloe Walker
Tianmu Wei
Jonah Yun

Chapter Presidents

Sarah Jun @Tufts University
Leo Ma @Boston College
Diya Seadie @Boston University

Student Club Teams

180 Degrees Consulting @Tufts University
Jumbocode @Tufts University

Summer Interns

Maya Floreani
Tony Li

Winter Interns

Thomas DiLorenzo
Yan Gao
Sofia Lascano
Sierra Held
Jamie Park

Donors & Supporters

In fiscal year 2023 (ending 12/31/23), Potencia raised \$43,561.70 thanks to the funding, support, and coaching of local foundations, business pitch competitions, individual donors, and corporations. Potencia struggled to raise funding until the co-founders returned to the U.S. in Oct 2022. In 2023, we were able to raise nearly five times the total funding raised in 2022.

Foundations & Corporations



Accelerators & Pitch Competitions



Individual Donors

Anonymous
Joel Aranson
Jean and Robert McTighe
Catherine Popper and Noah Eckhouse

In-kind Support

Simon Klein
Katherine Manning
Parker Gallini LLP

Financials

	FY2023	FY2022
<i>Income</i>		
Corporate Giving & Foundation grants	\$29,400.00	\$2,800.00
Individual Donations	\$3,500.00	\$6,754.31
Program Service Fees	\$1,331.85	\$157.36
Other Income (Awards, Prizes, etc.)	\$9,329.85	\$0
Total Income	\$43,561.70	\$9,711.67
<i>Operating Expenses</i>		
Staff Salaries	\$15,734.16	\$1,500.00
Payroll Taxes	\$2,919.19	
Other Fees (filing fees, etc.)	\$185.00	\$35.00
Total Operating Expenses	\$18,838.35	\$1,535.00
Total Net Income	\$24,723.35	\$8,176.61

What's Next: 2024 and Beyond



We hope to invite you to be part of this journey, in any way you would like to contribute to this cause. Join us as an intern, advisor, or volunteer in 2024.

What changes would you make?

01 Program Development

- Expanding learner base
 - Collaborate with community organizations serving different ethnic groups
- Chapter leadership
 - With now 4 chapters running with leadership teams in place, we hope to expand more leadership opportunities within universities

02 Joint Pilot with the City of Malden

We are excited to secure a government contract with the City of Malden to collectively make quality English language learning more available to adult immigrants in the community. We plan to start with a 10-week pilot scholarship program for up to 35 Malden learners with 20 trained community members as English tutors.

03 Mobile App Launch

We plan to launch the beta version of our app by the end of this year. The app will focus on facilitating the learning journey of our learners and tutors, from matching and scheduling to tracking classes. Harvard University Tech for Social Good will partner with us in Spring 2024 to continue the UX/UI design on expanded features of the app.

This annual report is possible thanks to the contributions of our winter 2024 marketing intern, **Sofia Lascano** (Tufts undergraduate student).

Stay Connected

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