LETTER FROM DAN PORTERFIELD
President and CEO

LETTER FROM JAMES S. CROWN
Chairman, Aspen Institute Board of Trustees

BUILDING A MORE INCLUSIVE ECONOMY
We are committed to building a more inclusive economy that drives greater security, opportunity, and resilience for all.

EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE
We empower youth—particularly those furthest from opportunity—to transform lives, families, and our world.

ADVANCING CLIMATE SOLUTIONS
We advance climate solutions through practical, collective action that protects our planet and our future.

STRENGTHENING TRUST & DEMOCRACY
We strengthen trust and democracy by solving problems in partnership with individuals, institutions, and communities.

WHAT’S NEW
A new center on the Aspen Meadows Campus celebrates the legacy of Herbert Bayer.

LETTER FROM MIECHA RANEA FORBES
Vice President for People and Culture

IN MEMORIAM
Celebrating the lives of longtime champions for freedom, justice, and equity.

LETTER FROM MARIA LAURA ACEBAL
Vice President and Corporate Secretary

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OUR PROGRAMS AND FELLOWSHIPS

ENGAGE WITH US
With a letter from Cynthia McKee, Executive Vice President for Institutional Advancement

2021 ANNUAL REPORT
With a letter from Jennifer Jones, Vice President of Finance
Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Aspen Institute has worked hard to serve the public good and position ourselves for the future. As you will see in these pages, thanks to the collective commitment of many people and partners, we have become an even stronger and more impactful organization.

**Investment in our mission has grown by more than 30%** since the start of the pandemic. Why? Because our work is important and relevant, and because you—our supporters—are generous and public-minded.

In this report, you will read about how we’re building a more inclusive economy through our partnership with Mastercard and our powerful City Learning and Action Lab. You will see how we’re empowering young people through the pedagogies of our youth leadership programs. You will learn about our work to advance climate solutions from environment-focused impact investing to practical efforts to enhance global food security. And, you will find out how the Institute is striving to strengthen democracy through the findings of our Commission on Information Disorder and the courage of our partner Institute, Aspen Kyiv in Ukraine.

As we coped with the challenges of the past two years—and increased investment in our mission—we have also strengthened the Institute for the long term. For example, we have:

- Enhanced our ability to host impactful convenings, such as the new Aspen Ideas: Climate solutions summit to be held annually in the Miami area through 2024.
- Constructed the gorgeous new Resnick Center for Herbert Bayer Studies on our Aspen Meadows campus, while renovating the historic Boettcher Building—the last building that Herbert Bayer designed.
- Formed new partnerships with Salamander Hotels and Resorts to provide new energy, guests, and revenue to the Aspen Meadows, and with NBCUniversal News Group to bring back the annual Aspen Ideas Festival in person.
- And, strengthened our operations by keeping all employees working throughout the pandemic and implementing a comprehensive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan.

We do all of this—and more—with a spirit of humanistic optimism that has fueled the work of the Aspen Institute for more than 70 years. Thank you for your support and for your enduring belief in our purpose to drive change toward a free, just, and equitable society.

Dan Porterfield
President and CEO
As my term as chairman of the Aspen Institute Board of Trustees comes to a close, I would like to reflect on a few key accomplishments from the last several years.

In 2018, we welcomed Dan Porterfield as our new president and CEO. Over the last four years, it has been my privilege to partner with Dan and celebrate many successes for the Aspen Institute. Together with a dedicated and thoughtful committee of trustees and staff, we created a Statement of Principles; that statement will guide the pursuit of our mission to drive change toward a free, just, and equitable society. Seven decades ago, the Institute’s founders were inspired by the unique challenges of their day: the Holocaust, a World War, and enormous geopolitical uncertainty. While the challenges have changed, the essential elements of our founders’ vision remain compelling and affirm the importance of the Statement of Principles adopted by the Board of Trustees in April 2022.

We have launched several strategic relationships to strengthen the impact of our work, including the Aspen Partnership for an Inclusive Economy. We are uniting Institute experts with a diverse range of public, private, and nonprofit leaders to help drive a global economy that supports greater security, opportunity, and resilience for all.

Resilience has been a significant part of our vision throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, in no small part thanks to the leadership and generosity of our Board and supporters. We have emerged stronger both financially and programmatically and are excited about the future contributions the Aspen Institute will make to the world.

In the last year, we were proud to complete the construction of the beautiful Resnick Center for Herbert Bayer Studies on our Aspen Meadows campus in Aspen, Colorado. The Bayer Center is a one-of-a-kind, museum-quality tribute to one of the Institute’s founders and will offer exhibitions, community engagement, and education programs in the Roaring Fork Valley and beyond.

In May 2022, we began a promising partnership with Salamander Hotels and Resorts as the new manager of the Aspen Meadows Resort. We are confident that a visit to the Aspen Meadows will be a highlight of your Colorado experience and we are excited to see the renovations in store for the campus.

It has been my sincere honor to serve the Aspen Institute throughout the last several years and I am grateful and humbled by your continued partnership. Thank you for all that you have done.

James S. Crown
Chairman, Aspen Institute Board of Trustees
BUILDING A MORE INCLUSIVE ECONOMY

We are committed to building a more inclusive economy that drives greater security, opportunity, and resilience for all.
As we rebuild from the pandemic, what are the roles and responsibilities of business, government, and civil society in creating an equitable, just, and sustainable economy?

This was the focus of the 2021 Global Inclusive Growth Summit, which convened purpose-driven leaders and inclusive economy experts from around the world. They discussed innovative solutions, new partnerships, and collective action which can rebuild an economy that works for all. Presented by the Aspen Institute and the Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth, the summit featured discussions with global leaders, including US Vice President Kamala Harris, former US President Bill Clinton, World Trade Organization Director General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, and H.M. Queen Maxima of the Netherlands, who serves as the UN Secretary-General’s Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development.

Conversations at the summit illuminated ideas for reshaping financial systems to be more inclusive and sustainable. In remarks, H.M. Queen Maxima of the Netherlands said that financial access is necessary but not sufficient to achieving financial health. At another talk, Senator Chris Coons called on President Joe Biden and US leaders to join the more than 35 countries that have implemented national financial inclusion strategies. Additionally, summit participants unveiled a range of new programs and investments promoting economic opportunity and bottom-up growth in communities across the globe.

The Global Inclusive Growth Summit convened global leaders on creating a more equitable economy.
The Aspen City Action Lab is helping Latino communities generate inclusive economic growth.

Representing nearly one in every five people in the US, the Latino population is projected to account for 78 percent of net new workers between 2020 and 2030. Yet Latinos, who are underpaid by $288 billion per year, hold a disproportionate share of low-wage jobs, and more than half need digital skills training to remain competitive in a changing labor market.

Throughout the pandemic, the Institute’s Latinos and Society Program, led by Domenika Lynch, has been working with cross-sector leaders and policymakers to build the infrastructure of opportunity needed to design, coordinate, finance, and implement uniquely targeted economic and workforce solutions for the Latino community.

In 2021, Latinos and Society teamed up with renowned urbanist Bruce Katz and Drexel University’s Nowak Metro Finance Lab to launch the Aspen City Action Lab. Currently, the Action Lab is focused on helping six inaugural Latino-majority cities, including Chicago, El Paso, Miami, Phoenix, San Antonio, and San Bernardino, generate long-term inclusive economic growth.

The Action Lab’s work relies on community-informed, data-driven plans and quality research generated by the Latinos and Society Program and its partners, including three reports released in 2021 about the impact of digitalization on Latino workers and businesses.
Christopher Gergen wants all people, regardless of background, to have opportunities to create wealth and compete in the global marketplace, and he’s taking a “portfolio approach” to getting them there. He founded Forward Impact, a for-benefit advisory firm and investment fund that works with philanthropists, policymakers, corporations, and investors committed to dismantle systemic economic inequities. He was also the founding CEO of Forward Cities, a national non-profit that helps cities and regions strengthen their equitable entrepreneurial ecosystems.

“If we are going to truly foster and sustain inclusive opportunities within communities,” Gergen says, “we need to be working to strengthen coordination and capacity across the entire ecosystem—building the talent pipeline, providing comprehensive support, connecting to opportunity and capital, tracking progress, and attracting follow-on investment.”

Gergen has been connected to the Institute for nearly a decade. In 2013, he was named a Henry Crown Fellow, where his fellowship project focused on scaling Forward Cities to the state level. In 2020, Forward Cities received a Global Inclusive Growth Spark Grant, which also recognized current CEO Fay Horwitt for helping cities create equitable entrepreneurial ecosystems. In 2021, he teamed up with the Latinos and Society Program to create the Action Lab, which spurred economic growth in five Latino-majority communities in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Gergen has also been named a Braddock Scholar, where he leverages mentorship and a cohort of like-minded entrepreneurs. “We like to think about how we can work at scale, creating a model—a sort of playbook—that can be brought to many cities through many partners.”

Over the next few years, Gergen has a goal of working with policymakers, philanthropic partners, and private investors to dedicate more than $100 million into systems change models in dozens of regions, creating economic opportunity and wealth for thousands of local residents. “This is about investing in systems-change models with community at the center,” he says.
The Financial Security Program mobilizes the public and private sectors to call for a US financial inclusion strategy.

More than 50 countries have a national financial inclusion strategy, a formal plan to address gaps in economic access. One exception is the United States, which lacks a roadmap to ensure that all Americans have access to banking and other financial services. This oversight contributes to poor financial outcomes for 35 million residents, including the Black, Latino, and American Indian and Alaska Native households which are disproportionately excluded.

The Financial Security Program brought together public and private sector organizations to change this. More than 100 financial and tech sector companies, consumer advocacy nonprofits, civil rights leaders, and others released a letter calling for the establishment of a Presidential Commission within the US Treasury to create a national financial inclusion strategy. The call has been supported by US Senators Chris Coons, John Hickenlooper, and Raphael Warnock.

Exclusion from financial systems has made it difficult for many Americans to access aid during the economic downturn caused by COVID-19. The letter calls for closing those gaps: “Making sure that every person in America has easy access to safe and affordable bank accounts, payment tools, saving and retirement accounts, credit, insurance, and safety net programs when needed would be a critical—and monumental—step toward an inclusive economy.”

“The US requires a national strategy to help federal agencies and the financial services industry understand their roles in these persisting inequities, develop coordinated strategies, and create the tools necessary to build a more inclusive financial system,” says Ida Rademacher, executive director of the Financial Security Program.
We focus on empowering youth—particularly those furthest from opportunity—to transform lives, families, and our world.
Ascend sparks a transformative approach to improving the lives of children and families.

Over a decade, Ascend at the Aspen Institute has catalyzed a national two-generation approach to build family well-being by intentionally and simultaneously working with children and the adults in their lives together—a movement now reaching 10 million families.

In 2012, Ascend launched the first Ascend Fellowship cohort and released the Two Generations, One Future report. Since then, the program has created a leadership community of parents, practitioners, policymakers, and researchers guided by a shared north star. At the forefront are 120 Ascend Fellows, a group of visionary leaders innovating across the country. Their work drives systemic change, from rewriting state policy and building career pathways for parents to advancing brain science and tackling the far-reaching impact of mass incarceration.

Through the Ascend Network, the 2Gen approach is active in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Ireland, and Rwanda. Together these leaders are rewriting the narrative and transforming the systems that serve families.

Led by Anne Mosle, Ascend is ushering in a new era of family policy and a culture of collaboration across all levels of the public and nonprofit sectors. Voters across the political spectrum support this work, with bipartisan polls showing that a majority view a 2Gen approach as a commonsense way to address poverty.

Year after year, Ascend reimagines leadership to create a world where all of our children and families thrive.
During the COVID-19 crisis, the Education and Society Program released Recovery and Renewal: Principles for Advancing Public Education Post-Crisis, a values-based framework to help education leaders confront the unprecedented challenges created by the pandemic’s impact on public schools and the children and families they serve.

To put its framework into action, the Education and Society Program, led by Ross Wiener, has been gathering education leaders from across the country to reflect on the report, engage in dialogue across differences, and advance courageous, visionary leadership that has the power to renew the promise that public education represents to society.

The framework is helping leaders navigate current crises like public health contingency planning, staffing shortages, and lost learning, while encouraging them to consider larger questions like the purpose of public schools in a pluralistic democracy, the role of schools in addressing racism, and how schools can better support families struggling with basic needs.
The COVID-19 pandemic and increasing mental health challenges for youth present a historic mandate for schools to reimagine their approach to sports. To support this work, the Project Play initiative, part of the Sports & Society Program led by Tom Farrey, released Sport for All, Play for Life: A Playbook to Develop Every Student Through Sports in March 2022. The playbook offers eight strategies to update the traditional high school sports model.

Students need more options for physical activity, whether through community partnerships, intramurals, student-led clubs, or other innovations that supplement the standard menu of interscholastic teams. Each of the playbook’s strategies includes five ideas for how policymakers, industry leaders, and other stakeholders can help support the evolution of high school sports, while the “Call for Leadership” section explores the power of non-discrimination becoming the focus of the next high school sports model.

IMPACT AT-A-GLANCE

$160,000 awarded by Adidas, BOKS, The DICK’S Sporting Goods Foundation, and Hospital for Special Surgery to eight high schools with innovative practices to grow sports participation.

Sports & Society offers a new approach to the traditional sports model.
EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE

THE RISING GENERATIONS
Young people have the drive, imagination, and talent to tackle today’s most critical challenges—that’s the animating ethos of our three youth leadership programs: the Bezos Scholars, the Aspen Challenge, and the Aspen Young Leaders Fellowship, all coordinated by Executive Director David McKinney.

The **Bezos Scholars Program**, founded by visionaries Jackie and Mike Bezos, launched at the inaugural Aspen Ideas Festival in 2005. Since then, the program has grown and evolved to **engage outstanding high school students** from across the US and from Africa in a rich, year-long leadership development program that not only delivers specific and measurable learning outcomes, but also amplifies youth voice and action by supporting scholars to launch real-world community change projects. Today, the program is distinguished by its inclusion of educator-scholars nominated by the students themselves, its capacity for connecting participants with thought leaders, and its grounding in the latest science on how young people learn and thrive.

The **Aspen Challenge** launched in 2013 to bring the success of the Bezos Scholars Program to even more young people around the US. Hosted in two cities each year, the Aspen Challenge **provides a platform for young people to create solutions to some of the most urgent issues facing their communities.** Past partner cities include Los Angeles, Denver, Chicago, Washington DC, Dallas, Philadelphia, and Louisville. 2022 brought the Aspen Challenge to Miami and New Orleans, where students addressed issues such as mental health, climate change, violence prevention, and poverty alleviation. More than 320 young people and 80 educators brought change to communities. “We saw people rally behind us. Our school and local businesses,” says one student from New Orleans. “We were a part of something bigger. It felt like we were actually making change.”

The **Aspen Young Leaders Fellowship** actively **nurture cohorts of diverse, young, community-focused leaders** as they work toward degree completion and job placement. AYLF creates opportunity ecosystems that wrap leadership development, civic engagement, and workforce readiness together to help young people. “While in AYLF, my peers and I were heard at every point in our fellowship,” says an alumnus of the program. “It was an unprecedented feeling to play a decisive role in self-actualizing our education.”

Working across four regions—St. Louis, Chicago, Newark and the Mississippi/Arkansas Delta—while developing community partnerships in additional areas, this unique model provides one year of intensive training coupled with four years of targeted, community-anchored support. It recognizes the assets and talents of the young fellows and of their neighborhoods and local stakeholders. “By developing ecosystems of support tailored to fellows’ needs, AYLF is truly creating leaders who will help Chicago become a city where your zip code does not determine your trajectory,” says a local leader.
We advance climate solutions through practical, collective action that protects our planet and our future.
The Aspen Global Innovators Group supports community leaders at the forefront of the food security crisis.

The changing climate is visibly impacting the world: heat waves in Europe, floods in Asia, and severe droughts in East Africa, to name a few. These natural disasters upend cities and villages and, with them, food systems. Despite the severity of the problem, there are glimmers of hope—the people who fight against all odds to ensure that every person has access to the food they need.

Solving food security issues requires local, regional, and international action, and the Aspen Global Innovators Group, led by Lola Adedokun, supports two fellowships to address threats to food systems in this country and around the world: the New Voices Fellowship and the Healthy Communities Fellowship. The fellowships bring expert viewpoints from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and underserved communities in the US into the global food conversation.

The Healthy Communities Fellowship elevates leaders like Aaron “AJ” Johnson, who is working across sectors to provide access to food for those who need it most. Johnson launched a nonprofit, The Oasis Project, in a historically Black neighborhood of north Tulsa, offering wrap-around services for residents, including rental and utility assistance, support for single parents, banking resources, workforce training, and health classes. He also opened Oasis Fresh Markets, the first full-service supermarket in the neighborhood. Meeting these challenges has strengthened Johnson’s belief in food justice. “The eradication of food deserts is key because everyone deserves fresh and healthy access,” he says. “It shouldn’t be a privilege but a right for everyone.”

The New Voices Fellowship supports locally-rooted, globally-networked development experts like Ghanaian celebrity chef and social entrepreneur Elijah Amoo Addo. He founded Food for All Africa, and operates the first and largest food bank in West Africa. Food for All has implemented large-scale solutions to food recovery and redistribution across Ghana by partnering with restaurants, hotels, and stores. The beneficiaries are children, the elderly, and people with disabilities who receive the repacked food in school lunches and monthly food bags.

For Amoo Addo, addressing the linkage between food security and climate change requires collective action. “Climate change is a threat multiplier for hungry and undernourished people,” he says. “Countries with high levels of hunger are often highly vulnerable to climate change and have a low capacity to adapt. Addressing food security challenges must therefore be a shared responsibility.”
Shondiin Mayo, a member of the Ambassadors for Land Conservation program, delivers climate education—and empathy.

“Climate change also includes the human perspective,” says Shondiin Mayo, a participant in the Ambassadors for Land Conservation program, part of the Center for Native American Youth led by Nikki Pitre. She studied creative media and film as an undergraduate and then made a leap to a policy focus as a graduate student, all to learn how to effectively communicate the emotional truth that comes with strong storytelling.

In her home community in Alaska, climate change is evident. “Warmer weather arrives earlier in the year and more forest fires leave the land charred,” she says. “The spring ice melts at a faster rate and has flooded my childhood village and destroyed a lot of homes.” She captures the data about salmon depopulation with a memory from her early days, that of her father working late into the night to process salmon he’d fished from the river. Now, she says, he sits lonely on its banks because the salmon have died from the stress of the heat, his sloping shoulders a poignant, personal reflection of a global disaster.

Mayo’s stories aren’t without hope. As she learns more about climate change, she’s also learning more about the Indigenous knowledge systems that have kept communities like hers alive for centuries. “I hope that the actions we take today will make the next 20 years more welcoming to alternative solutions that tribes may have,” she says. “We are the precious gems of knowledge, and caretakers of this planet we call home.”
An Aspen Challenge winner showcases the power of young people to activate climate solutions.

Eighteen-year-old Gianna Hutton was introduced to the concept of climate literacy through an Advanced Placement environmental science class at Miami Palmetto Senior High School.

The class inspired Hutton to action. Over the last decade, she had noticed how the climate crisis was affecting her community. She engaged a group of classmates to champion an education- and advocacy-based approach to engaging youth around climate change. The team, known as Agents of Change, was a 2021 Aspen Challenge grand prize winner.

Hutton says the students’ approach to increasing climate literacy was two-fold. Over a few months, Agents of Change developed an educational component with peer-to-peer presentations on science communications, as well as a youth-led podcast featuring community leaders in the climate movement. To activate students, the team launched “Meatless Monday” and composting programs at Miami Palmetto Senior High School.

Since launching, Agents of Change has given lectures to hundreds of students, and composting resources have been distributed to many students and families. In addition, more than 15,000 people viewed the team’s “Meatless Monday” digital content, and 200 recipes were distributed for use at home. Following this success, the Miami-Dade County School District adopted the “Meatless Monday” program and scaled it to all of its schools.

“Young people are powerful,” Hutton said during a keynote address at Aspen Ideas: Climate. “We put all of these solutions into action in just eight weeks. I want to encourage everyone to harness the power of youth. Through collaboration and passion, we can find community-based solutions to crises with just the start of a conversation.”
We know that customers have never cared more about how their purchases impact the environment,” says Stacy Kauk, head of sustainability for the e-commerce giant Shopify. Kauk, a 2021 First Movers Fellow, had a goal to create tools that would let Shopify’s retail business customers integrate environmental sustainability into their operations with just a few clicks. The result, Planet by Shopify, launched in summer 2022.

First Movers, the leading global network and professional development program for corporate social intrapreneurs, is part of the Business and Society Program, led by Judy Samuelson. It gathers an annual cohort of accomplished innovators like Kauk, who come to make the world a better place while increasing the value of their businesses. The Planet initiative was Kauk’s Innovation Project—a pillar of the First Movers Fellowship Program, in which fellows lead their companies to craft new models, operations, and ways of doing business that strengthen positive social and environmental impact. It is a mission that has drawn more attention with the rise of environmental, social, and government investing—or ESG—as well as rapidly evolving expectations that companies play a role beyond driving economic value.

“Planet empowers Shopify merchants to join the fight against climate change in such a meaningful way,” says Kauk, noting that commercial shipping accounts for nearly three percent of global carbon emissions and that many businesses will choose more sustainable options when they’re provided. The Planet app allows business owners to easily opt into a more environmentally sustainable model and more carbon-neutral shipping through the calculation of emissions and funding of removal projects. It also gives peace of mind to end customers, who can choose to order from merchants who value environmental sustainability.

“With Planet,” says Kauk, “Shopify businesses can use carbon-neutral shipping to connect with customers while supporting the most innovative climate solutions on Earth.”
Speakers and attendees at Aspen Ideas: Climate explored solutions to the climate crisis together.

It all started with two unique partnerships: one between the Aspen Institute and the city of Miami Beach; the other between the Institute’s Public Programs team, led by Kitty Boone, and its Energy & Environment Program, led by Greg Gershuny. These partnerships and the increasing understanding of the climate crisis gave birth to Aspen Ideas: Climate. The inaugural event held in Miami convened leaders to discuss how to mitigate the effects of climate change and how to adapt as a society to ensure our ability to thrive on this planet.

The first Aspen Ideas: Climate offered 1,100 attendees an opportunity to hear from influential voices like John Doerr, Xiye Bastida, Adam Silver, Al Roker, and Eric Silagy, as well as experts like Catherine Coleman Flowers, Daniela Fernandez, Esethu Cenga, and Donnel Baird, who are creating climate solutions every day. There is much to be done but with collective agreement to drive progress on topics ranging from zero-emissions shipping to sustainable investing, Aspen Ideas: Climate inspired action.

Working with the city of Miami Beach was important in many ways, particularly because of its location. As a city built on sediment, Miami Beach is susceptible to rising sea levels, increasingly severe weather events, and extreme heat. The city will continue to serve as the backdrop for Aspen Ideas: Climate, showing the world what is possible when a community works together to combat climate change.
STRENGTHENING TRUST & DEMOCRACY

We strengthen trust and democracy by solving problems in partnership with individuals, institutions, and communities.
The 2021 Resnick Aspen Action Forum demonstrates the power of collective leadership.

Since its inception a decade ago, the Resnick Aspen Action Forum has been one of the Institute’s most influential platforms for sparking real and measurable change in the world. Each summer, the Action Forum offers an opportunity for people committed to values-based leadership to reflect, refresh, and recommit to confronting some of society’s greatest challenges.

Under the theme “Collective Leadership: What does it take in a polarized world?”, the 2021 Action Forum gathered members of the Aspen Global Leadership Network, led by Dar Vanderbeck, for a week-long virtual program. They explored why our communities and countries are divided, how to build greater trust and understanding across differences, and the unique roles leaders play in creating social change.

The 2021 Action Forum laid the groundwork for addressing today's most critical social, economic, and moral leadership challenges. Examples of recent initiatives that have been launched and fueled by collaborations between AGLN Fellows include closing the racial wealth gap by supporting Black-owned banks, building a cross-sector civic movement to fight the pandemic in Panama, and collaborating to fight identity-based hate.

**IMPACT AT-A-GLANCE**

- **330 leaders** and **50 youth** from **30 countries**
- **100K+** social media impressions
- **88%** of participants say they gained a greater sense of purpose & direction
- **84%** plan to apply learnings on “collective leadership” to their work in the future
CURING INFORMATION
Aspen Digital addresses America’s crisis of truth and trust. Co-chaired by award-winning journalist Katie Couric, cybersecurity expert Chris Krebs, and civil rights leader Rashad Robinson, Aspen Digital’s Commission on Information Disorder included representatives from across disciplines and the political spectrum. This diverse group undertook a six-month-long investigation to understand the multidimensional impacts of mis- and disinformation.

The commission held internal discussions and gathered perspectives from dozens of experts, community leaders, academics, researchers, tech industry representatives, and lawmakers. It also studied over 500 pages of materials, including news articles, research reports, and academic papers. The final report offers a viable framework for action, making 15 recommendations for how government, private industry, and civil society can help increase transparency and understanding, build trust, and reduce harm. In April 2022, former President Barack Obama highlighted the piece at the top of his ‘reading list’ on disinformation and democracy.

Following the release of the commission’s recommendations, Aspen Digital has continued to engage government leaders, peers, and colleagues working on disinformation challenges, as well as corporations, funders, and civil society groups interested in aspects of the final report.

Looking ahead, Aspen Digital, led by Vivian Schiller, is expanding its engagement in the global conversation, beginning with a series of exploratory meetings across cities in Europe.

In response to calls from the commission and others, the Rockefeller Foundation launched a three-year, $10 million project to combat false public health information.

Twitter responded to the report by announcing the creation of the global Moderation Research Consortium of experts, in alignment with two of the Commission’s recommendations.

Nearly 180 news stories were generated, with multiple outlets calling the report “sweeping,” including Bloomberg, CNN, and The Washington Post. The Post’s editorial board also endorsed the work.
Aspen Kyiv and the Institute’s International Partners mobilize in defense of Ukraine.

“One day, everything changed,” said Yuliya Tychkivska, executive director of Aspen Kyiv. During a session at the Aspen Ideas Festival, she shared her personal experiences as a wife and mother during the Russian invasion of her country. “No one could imagine they would start bombing the capital and other cities—and that they would bomb places like residential buildings.”

A week before the full-scale war began, Tychkivska fled Ukraine with her young children, saying goodbye to her husband who stayed behind to fight. While driving for six weeks through Europe to find safety, Tychkivska and the Aspen Kyiv team activated their network of alumni, trustees, and partners. Together, they found creative ways to source and deliver food to cities in need, engaged social media influencers in campaigns aimed at Russian nationals to combat disinformation, and helped evacuate Aspen Kyiv staff and their families. “I was trying to connect the dots, and we were working 24/7 to respond to unexpected tasks and challenges,” she said.

More recently, Aspen Kyiv began partnering with the Institute’s International Partners to host Ukrainian Dialogues, a platform for facilitating conversations between Ukrainian representatives and countries that support them. The series of virtual convenings has engaged leaders from Central Europe, Colombia, Japan, Spain, Italy, France, New Zealand, Mexico, Romania, Germany, the United States, and the United Kingdom on strategies for defending Ukraine’s freedom and protecting democracy.

In addition to their new programming, they have collaborated with the Institute to feature a unique Ukrainian exhibit on the Aspen Meadows campus, Bird of Hope, Beast of War, to share the ideas and stories of Ukrainians through artwork. This exhibit opened in summer 2022 and will run through the fall in the Koch Building.

To provide additional support to Aspen Kyiv, the Institute launched the Aspen Kyiv Fund, a tax-deductible vehicle for collecting personal contributions that has helped provide salaries for Aspen Kyiv staff, support Aspen Kyiv’s operations in and outside Ukraine, and aid innovative programming related to the crisis. Funding has also been made available for emerging humanitarian needs experienced by the Aspen Kyiv staff.

“This is a war of existence,” Tychkivska said. “We know what we are fighting for. We are fighting for values, and we prove it with actions. That’s why we will win—with your help, of course.”
Institute programs commit to building trust that is central to public health crises.

As the world continues to grapple with COVID-related unknowns, the Institute is committed to addressing facts and providing solutions. The Science & Society Program, led by Aaron Mertz, hosted a series of virtual events for public health leaders and the general public on how to build trust during a time of scientific uncertainty. Experts at these sessions stressed that public health messaging should come from those who reflect the community being served and understand its context, history, and challenges.

This was reiterated by Dr. Mitchell Katz, president and CEO of NYC Health + Hospitals, when he was honored for his leadership throughout the pandemic of the nation’s largest municipal hospital system. Katz received the Institute’s Preston Robert Tisch Award in Civic Leadership. During the award ceremony, Katz shared that every city needs a strong public hospital system composed of hospitals, community-based centers, and home-based service providers who are known and trusted by communities.

Last year at Aspen Ideas: Health, led by Ruth Katz, preeminent voices such as Dr. Anthony Fauci, Dr. Francis Collins, and Dr. Rochelle Walensky gathered virtually to discuss the pandemic’s devastating impact on communities across the globe as well as how to prevent and respond to future pandemics. In conversations that continued at the 2022 event, they agreed that trust is central to fighting any public health crisis. Leaders must be transparent about what is known based on data and evidence, what is still not understood, and how the scientific process is being leveraged to find answers.
The Weaver Awards invest in trust-builders and their neighborhoods.

**Weave: The Social Fabric Project**, led by Frederick Riley, addresses the crisis of broken social trust that has left Americans divided, isolated, and struggling to address their common needs. Every community has “weavers” who show up for others, see the dignity in all people, and work to solve shared problems. Weave exists to support these grassroots leaders and spread their mission to create an inclusive social fabric in America. The **Weaver Awards** is a new model for distributing funds and attention to these hyperlocal trust builders.

The awards were piloted in Baltimore in partnership with M&T Bank. A local board of community advocates chose from nearly 200 applications to distribute $170,000 to 30 people over two years. The awardees are using the funds for projects that build hope and connection—from installing porch lights that allow neighbors to socialize in the evening to rehabbing a local park to creating safe after-school spaces for students.

2021 Weaver Award recipient Danielle Battle started the nonprofit Restoring Inner City Hope, which provides after-school programs for youth in Baltimore’s Cherry Hill neighborhood. She leads clean-ups and prayer walks, and holds celebrations in the community. “We push love,” she says. “Our mission is to love, inspire, and empower youth and families in Baltimore city. So, we are doing that now in the corner of Cherry Hill and hope to grow it out into the entire community.” Beyond the microgrants, the Awards invite Danielle and other weavers to a group called Weave Baltimore for mutual support, learning, collaboration, and resource sharing.

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**IMPACT AT-A-GLANCE**

- **197** Weaver Award applicants in 2021-22
- **30** Awardees in Baltimore
- **$170K** in neighborhood grants

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**WEAVING COMMUNITY**
A new center on the Aspen Meadows Campus celebrates the legacy of Herbert Bayer.

In June 2022, the Resnick Center for Herbert Bayer Studies, located on the Institute's Aspen Meadows campus, officially opened its doors to the public. This 7,000-square-foot museum-standard exhibition space preserves the legacy of artist and designer Herbert Bayer, who studied and taught at the Bauhaus before emigrating from Germany to the United States in 1938. Between 1946 and 1975, Bayer supported Aspen's postwar revitalization, shaped the Aspen Institute’s early artistic and programmatic vision, and designed the organization’s historic campus.

The Center, led by Lissa Ballinger, promotes understanding of Bayer—one of the leading figures to translate the Bauhaus movement into an American context—and his contributions to art, design, and architecture. It anchors the Institute’s campus-wide visual arts program, which includes more than 10,000 square feet of gallery space and over 30 acres of outdoor space. The Bayer Center produces exhibitions, public programs, and educational initiatives.

The inaugural exhibition, Herbert Bayer: An Introduction, curated by Bernard Jazzar, is the first major US exhibition since 1973 to present the artist’s work from the late 1910s to the mid-1980s. With more than 150 pieces arranged across 13 galleries, Bayer’s artworks are presented chronologically, from his teenage sketches to paintings from his final decade in Montecito, California. The exhibition includes dozens of rarely-exhibited drawings, gouaches, and watercolors as well as tapestry, sculpture, publications, works on paper, ephemera, and historical photographs.
The Aspen Institute’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan presents a unifying goal across the organization to strengthen and continuously improve our DEI work. The plan is organized into five focus areas across our internal and external work: sustainability; strengthening our organizational culture; finding, retaining, and growing talent; facilitating inclusive leadership and management; and focusing on our external work.

Our current priority has been our internal work, which will be supported through a recent award we received from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. We hired a director of DEI to guide the action plan and a director of learning and development, to focus on staff development. Policies and practices improved, from creating equity across staff-led affinity groups to deepening staff’s sense of belonging and inclusion through community agreements and a reporting system to help track concerns and grievances. We also launched our work around vendor and supplier diversity policies and conducted a pay equity audit which found no evidence of pay inequity for similar work across race and gender.

One programmatic highlight was the Land Acknowledgement Ceremony in our DC offices, held in partnership with the Institute’s DEI Committee, the Center for Native American Youth, and representatives from the Piscataway Conoy tribe. This event was the beginning of a long-term, reciprocal relationship between the Institute and local Indigenous communities, increasing awareness of the land and its history for visitors to our offices and attendees at our events.

This work continues today and into the future. I look forward to working proactively to advance the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion across our myriad endeavors in the months and years ahead.

Miecha Ranea Forbes
Vice President for People and Culture
MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT

Celebrating the life and legacy of a longtime champion for freedom and democracy.

The Aspen Institute celebrates the life of Secretary Madeleine K. Albright. A diplomat, professor, author, and business leader, she was the first female US Secretary of State—an iconic fixture in American foreign policy circles with an essential voice.

Secretary Albright served on the Aspen Institute Board of Trustees starting in 2002. She founded the Aspen Ministers Forum to strengthen diplomatic ties between the US and Europe that same year, and expanded the forum to become a truly global group of ministers. She also helped establish Aspen Central Europe based in Prague in 2012 and received the Institute’s Henry Crown Leadership Award the previous year.

Secretary Albright leaves an enormous legacy as a longtime champion of freedom and democracy around the world. All those who had the good fortune and grace to know her, or to be in her presence, understood her to be a warm, caring, and people-centered human being as well as a deeply principled and towering public servant.

The Institute celebrates the lives of our other trustees who passed in 2021 and 2022.

William A. Nitze
1942-2021

Jay Sandrich
1932-2021

Albert Small
1925-2021

Frederick B. Whittemore
1931-2022
LETTER FROM MARIA LAURA ACEBAL

The Aspen Institute could not deliver on the promise of its mission without the guidance, expertise, and dedicated support and leadership of our Board of Trustees. Our trustees help ground us in the strength of our history and lift us to meet the challenges of our tomorrows. They hold us true to our principles in a way that illuminates our path forward in these times of exponential change and growing divisions. Together, our strong and diverse community is committed to deepening our impacts on economic inclusion, rising generations, global climate solutions, social trust, and so much more.

Since its founding in 1949, the Aspen Institute has benefited greatly from the service, intellectual contributions, and philanthropy of our Board of Trustees. We are so grateful for these generous individuals from the public and private sectors who provide counsel on the governance and critical issues facing our organization and who serve as our most passionate and trusted ambassadors.

As our organization continues to seek bold and innovative ways to be of service, we thank our Board of Trustees for their dedicated commitment and their active partnership in helping the Aspen Institute fulfill its mission of realizing a more free, just, and equitable society.

With gratitude,

Maria Laura Acebal
Vice President for Strategic Development and Corporate Secretary
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Founder and Chair of Queen Noor and
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Nicole Corea
Managing Editor

Kissane Viola Design
Layout & Design

David K. Gibson
Senior Editor
The Aspen Institute’s programs have achieved an international reputation for excellence in driving change through dialogue, leadership, and action, to help solve society’s greatest challenges.
As we celebrate a year of great promise and progress at the Aspen Institute, I would like to thank you especially for helping us ensure our mission—to realize a free, just and equitable society—remains relevant and resolute. Since joining the Aspen Institute in October 2021, I have seen firsthand the transformative effects of our work. From building a more inclusive economy to empowering young people and advancing climate solutions to strengthening democracy and our social fabric, our commitment to improving the lives of people and communities is evident around the world. Whether in attendance at our inaugural Aspen Ideas: Climate in Miami Beach this May or in Aspen for our 18th Annual Aspen Ideas Festival or across the country as we convened leaders both young and old on a myriad of topics, we were reminded that the space we create for inclusive dialogue and thoughtful debate plays a critical role in moving ideas to action.

It is the dedication and tireless engagement of our many partners, however, that ensures the impact of our work takes root and is felt far and wide. For this, and for so much more, we are grateful to our trustees, Society of Fellows, Paepcke and Heritage Society members, corporate and foundation partners, and many other close friends who join us in fulfilling our mission. Together, we give hope and the possibility of a bright future for generations to come.

We hope you will join us on this important journey!

Cynthia A. McKee  
Executive Vice President for Institutional Advancement

DONATE
Our work—and the impact we make on people and communities around the world—would not be possible without your financial support.

PARTNER
We partner with leading companies in our mission to create a free, just, and equitable society. Our corporate partners span industries and geographies but are united in their shared commitment to creating a society where everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

SOCIETY OF FELLOWS
Society of Fellows members actively participate in Aspen Institute programming, serve as advocates and ambassadors, and uphold the Institute’s mission. Join the Fellows program to enjoy exclusive access and unique experiences that only the Institute can offer.

Learn more and join us today at aspeninstitute.org/engage.
The Aspen Institute experienced two financially challenging years in 2020 and 2021 due to impacts on programming as a result of the global pandemic. Despite the many setbacks and necessary cancellations to in-person convenings, along with the need to shift our workforce to a fully remote status, we were able to maintain our fiscal strength by making significant adjustments to our budget without impacting staffing or the quality of our programming, leaving us poised for a strong future.

The following data is based on our 2021 audited financial statements and shows continued strength as the Institute’s net assets expanded significantly during this period by $60M, while our liabilities grew by only $11M. Contributed revenues of $141M in 2021 are a result of our donors’ continued commitment to the impactful work of the Institute.

Jennifer Jones
Vice President of Finance
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION December 31, 2021
With Summarized Financial Information as of December 31, 2020  (Dollars in Thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>$17,712</td>
<td>$8,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>$301,558</td>
<td>$239,897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments held for deferred compensation</td>
<td>$7,711</td>
<td>$6,757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable, net</td>
<td>$6,960</td>
<td>$5,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants and contributions receivable, net</td>
<td>$49,885</td>
<td>$40,677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>$3,988</td>
<td>$3,503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventory</td>
<td>$283</td>
<td>$139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property and equipment, net</td>
<td>$68,526</td>
<td>$60,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets held for sale</td>
<td>$8,053</td>
<td>$8,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security deposits</td>
<td>$835</td>
<td>$444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment related receivables</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$465,514</strong></td>
<td><strong>$394,226</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable and accrued expenses</td>
<td>$13,611</td>
<td>$11,902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants payable</td>
<td>$1,916</td>
<td>$2,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer deposits and deferred fees</td>
<td>$5,033</td>
<td>$2,737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refundable advance</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital lease obligations</td>
<td>$56</td>
<td>$97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred rent and lease incentives</td>
<td>$13,972</td>
<td>$14,143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred compensation</td>
<td>$7,711</td>
<td>$6,757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>$53,081</strong></td>
<td><strong>$41,995</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$412,433</strong></td>
<td><strong>$352,231</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$465,514</strong></td>
<td><strong>$394,226</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NET ASSETS BY RESTRICTION**
(Dollars in Thousands)

- **2021**
  - **$412,433**
    - **$215,473** Total with donor restrictions
    - **$255,259** Total without donor restrictions

- **2020**
  - **$352,231**
    - **$136,758** Total without donor restrictions
### STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES December 31, 2021
With Summarized Financial Information as of December 31, 2020 (Dollars in Thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPERATING REVENUE &amp; SUPPORT</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project and federal grants</td>
<td>$100,649</td>
<td>$84,405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>$40,211</td>
<td>$46,874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income appropriated for operations</td>
<td>$9,959</td>
<td>$10,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference center fees</td>
<td>$8,990</td>
<td>$5,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service fees</td>
<td>$10,502</td>
<td>$6,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship revenue</td>
<td>$6,576</td>
<td>$3,853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar and event fees</td>
<td>$2,515</td>
<td>$1,699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$395</td>
<td>$168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental income</td>
<td>$435</td>
<td>$424</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Operating Revenue and Support $149,223 $160,507

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NON-OPERATING ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investment income in excess of earnings</td>
<td>$23,200</td>
<td>$14,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss on uncollectible pledge</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>($2,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in assets</td>
<td>$60,202</td>
<td>$43,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets, beginning of year</td>
<td>$352,230</td>
<td>$308,313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR** $412,433 $352,231

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENSES</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy programs</td>
<td>$72,930</td>
<td>$64,867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus activities</td>
<td>$12,074</td>
<td>$10,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public programs</td>
<td>$6,937</td>
<td>$6,308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Leadership Network</td>
<td>$6,856</td>
<td>$6,503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth &amp; engagement</td>
<td>$3,038</td>
<td>$2,268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminars</td>
<td>$1,122</td>
<td>$822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other restricted programs</td>
<td>$8,908</td>
<td>$7,464</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Program Services $111,868 $98,328

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting Services</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General and administrative</td>
<td>$27,116</td>
<td>$26,431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising and development</td>
<td>$4,250</td>
<td>$3,854</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Supporting Services $31,366 $30,285

**TOTAL EXPENSES** $143,234 $128,613

Change in net assets from operations $37,002 $31,894
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
(Dollars in Thousands)

OPERATING REVENUE 2021
$180,237,048

- Seminar and event fees: $2,515
- Conference center fees: $8,990
- Service fees: $10,502
- Sponsorship revenue: $6,576
- Rental income: $435
- Other: $395
- Project and federal grants: $100,649
- Contributions: $40,211
- Seminar and event fees: $2,515
- Conference center fees: $8,990
- Service fees: $10,502
- Sponsorship revenue: $6,576
- Rental income: $435
- Other: $395
- Project and federal grants: $100,649
- Contributions: $40,211

OPERATING EXPENSES 2021
$143,234,455

- Fundraising and development: $4,250
- General and administrative: $27,116
- Other restricted programs: $8,908
- Youth and engagement: $3,038
- Seminars: $1,122
- Aspen Global Leadership Network & innovation funds: $6,856
- Public programs: $6,937
- Campus activities: $12,074

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
(Dollars in Thousands)

LIABILITIES 2021
$53,081,498

- Deferred compensation: $7,711
- Accounts payable and accrued expenses: $13,611
- Grants payable: $1,916
- Note payable: $3,780
- Customer deposits and deferred fees: $5,033
- Refundable advance: $7,000
- Deferred rent and lease incentive: $13,972
- Capital lease obligations: $56

ASSETS 2021
$465,514,933

- Security deposits: $835
- Cash and cash equivalents: $17,712
- Accounts and other receivables: $6,960
- Prepaid expenses and other assets: $49,885
- Investments held for deferred compensation: $7,711
- Investments: $301,558
- Property and equipment, net: $68,526
- Investments held for deferred compensation: $7,711
- Prepaid expenses and other assets: $3,988
- Investments: $301,558
- Property and equipment, net: $68,526

2021 ANNUAL REPORT
2022 Aspen Institute Impact Report
2021 CONTRIBUTIONS

The Aspen Institute creates impact thanks to the generous contributions of our donors. The following list of donors reflects contributions from January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021, including all gifts, grants, in-kind donations, and charitable and non-charitable sponsorships of $1,000 or more from individuals, corporations, foundations, and government entities.

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$100,000 OR MORE
AARP
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Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies
Carnegie Corporation of New York
Marguerite Casey Foundation
Child Relief International Foundation
Citi Foundation
College Futures Foundation
Comcast Corporation
Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan
Kim and Rob Coretz
Penny and James G. Coulter
Cowen Services
Howard Cox
Susan Crown and William Kunkler
Bonnie and Kenneth L. Davis, M.D.
Democracy Fund
Deutsche Gesellschaft
Dick’s Sporting Goods Foundation
Deutsche Gesellschaft
The Richard W. Goldman Family Foundation
The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation
Antonio Gracias
Stacy E. Grant
Foundation to Promote Open Society
Genentech
Julie Farkas and Seth Goldman
The Richard W. Goldman Family Foundation
The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation
Antonio Gracias
Stacy E. Grant
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