



# IMPACT REPORT 2025





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
Leadership Summits.....	8
Young Leaders.....	12
Kosmos Farm, Costa Rica.....	16
Education.....	18
Policy Partners.....	21
Storytelling.....	26
Financials.....	28
Looking Forward.....	30



# A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

At Walking Softer, 2025 was a year of continued investment in people and ideas driving long-term environmental progress. Throughout the year, we focused our efforts to support emerging leaders, strengthen community, and create space for meaningful collaboration across climate, conservation, policy partners, and innovation.

Through awards, convenings, partnerships, and direct support, we continued backing individuals and organizations advancing practical solutions and building momentum in their respective fields. One of the most encouraging aspects of this work has been seeing the strength of the Walking Softer community continue to deepen through new collaborations, lasting relationships, and leaders stepping forward to support one another.

As we move through 2026 and mark six years since Walking Softer was founded, this moment also serves as an important opportunity for reflection. We are thoughtfully considering where we can have the greatest long-term impact and how to best deploy our time, resources, and community in support of meaningful environmental progress.

We remain energized by the leaders and partners surrounding this work and grateful to everyone helping make it possible.

With gratitude,

Tighe Brown  
President, Walking Softer





Walking Softer is on a mission to inform, inspire, and support Changemakers to take bold and immediate action in the conservation and regeneration of our planet.

#### **WHERE BIG IDEAS AND IMPACT MEET**

With eight billion people on the planet all desiring and deserving to live happily, we must reinvent how we live, our endless cycle of hyper-consumption with a use, trash, repeat mentality must be challenged.

How we produce food, clothes, and consumer goods must evolve to be more sustainable. The same is true for transportation, construction, and energy production.

We believe conservation and regeneration are values that cut across political lines, uniting people around shared commitments like clean air, healthy land, and thriving communities.

The time to reimagine how we produce and consume is now, and the result will be the greatest economic opportunity the world has ever seen.



# WHAT WE DO

We support individuals at every stage of their climate journey, whether they are high school students, early-stage entrepreneurs, business leaders, or policymakers.

## **Youth Programs**

We support the next generation of environmental stewards through Walking Softer's Education and Young Leaders programs as they learn about and advance climate solutions.

## **Leadership Summits**

We foster global change and passion for the planet's health by hosting immersive experiences that bring together diverse leaders for meaningful collaboration and impact.

## **Policy Partners**

We support pragmatic climate solutions by equipping bipartisan policymakers with reliable data, information, and narratives to drive sustainable solutions.

## **Storytelling & Partnerships**

We invest in partnerships and the power of storytelling, we amplify our community and programs to inspire collective action for a healthier planet.

## **Kosmos Farm, Costa Rica**

We are exploring regenerative farming, seeking to educate, innovate, and collaborate with individuals and communities who are actively conserving and regenerating the planet.



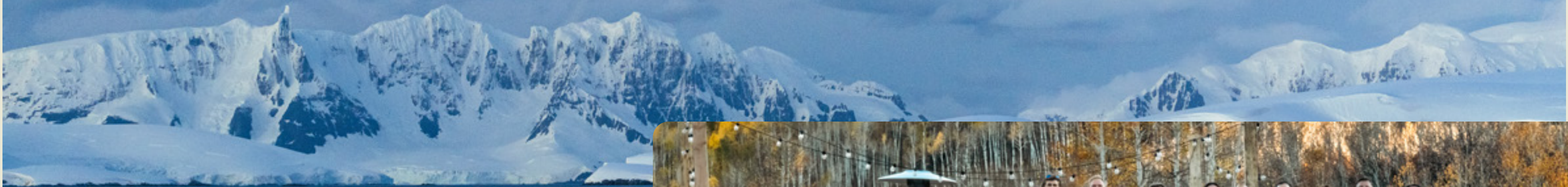
# ECOSYSTEM

All of our programs are designed to work together, forming Walking Softer's ecosystem. This system creates circularity and reaches a wide range of Changemakers, from high school students to business leaders, environmental advocates, and policymakers. Our multilayered approach prioritizes efficiency and, most importantly, drives impact.

Behind this ecosystem is a deeply collaborative team that brings the work to life across every program. Working in close relationship with one another and the communities we serve, the Walking Softer team ensures each initiative strengthens the others, resources are shared intentionally, and every experience contributes to greater leadership and a healthier planet.







# LEADERSHIP SUMMITS



# LEADERSHIP SUMMITS

## OVERVIEW

The Summit team focused on strengthening the relationships that make our Summit community real, creating more chances for people to find one another, build trust, and stay in close conversation as their work evolves. It's a rare kind of community, rooted in shared principles and real mutual support, and it only stays strong when we keep investing in the relationships that hold it together. After hosting leadership summits in each of the past two years, first in Antarctica then in the Arctic, this year was intentionally designed to support what those gatherings sparked: a steady rhythm of connection, collaboration, and shared problem-solving so our people feel supported and better equipped to turn ideas into impact.

## Partner Spotlight: Amphibian Connect

In collaboration with Arctic Changemaker Evan Rapoport, we hosted 40 Changemakers at Riverbend Ranch for the first ever Amphibian Connect convening - an intentionally curated gathering of nature-loving leaders brought together to imagine what's possible, spark momentum, and advance bold, scalable solutions that strengthen how people relate to and care for the natural world.





## New York Climate Week

During New York Climate Week, we collaborated with Summit Changemakers to convene friends old and new for a set of relationship-forward gatherings designed to strengthen community and deepen connection.



The Spirit of Community: A Summit Reunion at the Museum of Ice Cream Hosted by Arctic Changemaker Manish Vora



The Art of Connection: A Dinner at Arctic Changemaker Andrew Zuckerman's Studio



Climate Town: A Group Outing to Young Leader Alum Rollie Williams' Comedy Show



## Carri Twigg

Co-Founder of Culture House

*"You only need a few things to save the world: friends who are smart, fun, and brave; clear, uncompromising information about the problems we face; the passion of young, visionary Changemakers; and the courage to say yes. Walking Softer's delivers all of that."*

*Our journey together hasn't just been transformative; it has created a rare community rooted in trust, rigor, generosity, and action. Walking Softer doesn't just convene people, it equips them to turn connection into impact."*



## Evan Rapoport

Founder of Amphibian

*"It's been a privilege to partner with Walking Softer this year on events that highlight the vital importance of reconnecting humanity with nature. I was also deeply honored to meet with the Young Leaders to share stories and lessons from my career at the intersection of technology, oceans, and biodiversity."*

*The Walking Softer community has introduced me to so many inspiring individuals who share a passion for living a life filled with purpose, curiosity, and adventure. Thank you!"*



YOUNG  
LEADERS



# YOUNG LEADERS

## OVERVIEW

For our third cohort we reimagined the programming to include a balanced representation of nonprofit and for-profit leaders, reflecting our belief that addressing complex environmental challenges demands diverse, cross-sector approaches. In evaluating nominees, equal weight was given to both the individual and the project, recognizing that lasting, systemic change is driven by both the quality of character and strength of execution.

Recipients received a unique blend of individual executive coaching and cohort-based learning, an all-expenses paid Leadership Retreat in Lake Tahoe, and \$50,000 in non-dilutive funding. Cohort 3 culminated in a Pitch Showcase in San Francisco in February 2026 with an external network of supporters.

## COHORT 2 HIGHLIGHT



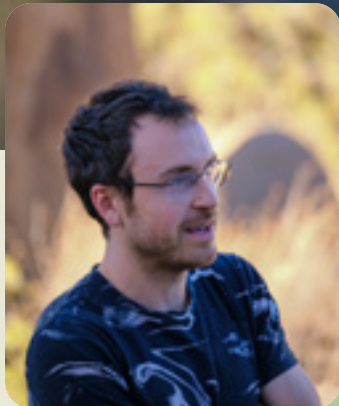
### Miswar Syed

Co-Founder and CEO  
Swish Solar

"Before I started the program, I was working on Swish part-time while still completing my master's degree. At the time, we had raised around US\$30K in funding, built an MVP, had some initial customer interest, and had not yet filed any patents. During my time at Walking Softer, we started seeing stronger commercial traction and increased customer interest."

Since the program Miswar has:

- Raised US\$1.5M in pre-seed funding
- Grew the team to 7 full-time employees
- Built and launched SwishOS, a purely data-driven platform to maximize solar asset revenue and efficiency
- Signed customers across multiple countries
- Expanded the patent portfolio to four patents/patent applications



## Jack Hanson

Founder of Run on Climate

Emphasizes the importance of YLA's funding:

*"The funding from the Young Leaders program has been instrumental in scaling up and hiring new staff, enabling this work. Further, the guidance from the Walking Softer team and coaches has been critical in strategy, decision-making, and networking. In addition, the program's credibility and visibility helped us build new partnerships. The support was a key accelerator that helped us grow more intentionally during this period."*



## Suzanne Pierre

Founder of Critical Ecology Lab

Notes that, as a result of the funding and program, she is significantly more business-minded in her approach to building her organization. She is more confident in the organization's long-term viability and therefore engages more confidently with potential funders. *"Through the activities undertaken from 2024-2025, we have set the foundation for the following anticipated outcomes":*

- ① *Three scientific publications quantifying the social justice drivers of forest carbon dynamics under a changing climate.*
- ② *100+ citizen scientists trained in socio-climate research methodology between 2024-2026.*
- ③ *56 acres of tropical secondary forest conserved and 4,610 tons/CO2 sequestered in 2026 (calculated based on Ramirez et al. 2021)."*



# IMPACT ON PARTICIPANTS

- *"I'm very grateful to be in a cohort with young minds who will undoubtedly push me forward. I believe there is so much power and potential for positive impact among all of us."*
- *"I learned so much from the other young leaders, and it really energized me on my project, while giving me room to breathe and think differently about some of it."*
- *"I am not alone on this journey, and it's such a relief to know we share this experience. This makes me so much more excited to get back to work."*
- *"I feel very supported and welcome by the entire team, and you all have added a lot of positive energy."*



# KOSMOS FARM, COSTA RICA



# KOSMOS FARM, COSTA RICA

## OVERVIEW

Costa Rica is an experiential program exploring the possibility of regeneration and hopes to educate and innovate with others that are conserving and regenerating the planet.

## 2025 RECAP

Walking Softer took a major step forward in aligning its farm with long-term strategic vision. The organization convened a newly formed Farm Steering Committee composed of eight executives from diverse sectors and global backgrounds, each bringing expertise in sustainability, regenerative agriculture, business strategy, and community development.

During the committee's first on-site gathering at the Kosmos Center, the group engaged in deep listening sessions with staff, walked the fields, and mapped out opportunities to evolve the farm into a flagship model of regenerative practice and education. What emerged was a connected and organized committee ready to support the organization to consider how best to transform the farm.



EDUCATION



# EDUCATION

## OVERVIEW

Walking Softer Education completed the 2024-2025 program year, in which students from 32 groups implemented environmental projects in their communities. Through reporting, we gathered evidence of the program's impact on students and their communities, from increased feelings of empowerment and teamwork among students, to the distribution of native plants to community members. 14 students were awarded scholarships, and we look forward to engaging with them for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year as we aim to support their educational journey through resources, connections, and community. In addition, the 2025-2026 program cohort already includes 41 groups. Thanks to program modifications based on last year's feedback, we have been meeting regularly with those teachers to help support them in successfully implementing impactful projects in their communities. 2025 was an exciting year for Walking Softer Education, and we look forward to continuing to expand and improve in 2026.

## 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

**32** participating groups consisting of **623 students** for the 2024-2025 school year, with all participating educators reporting they are likely to participate again.

**\$90,460** distributed in project funds and teacher stipends.

Impactful projects were implemented across **10 states**, including a sustainable food systems event in St. Louis, MO, native crop gardening in Orange County, CA, and mangrove restoration in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

**14** exceptional students selected as scholarship recipients.

Showcased the program at **two national** conference presentations, the National Science Teaching Association and the North American Association for Environmental Education.



**Zia  
Grossman-Vendrilla**  
Teacher at Berkeley High School in  
Berkeley, CA (returning participant)

*"This is a phenomenal program and opportunity, and I really can't overstate my gratitude for access to funds to make these creative projects come to fruition. It's incredibly satisfying and gratifying to be able to work with my students in this way."*



**Ken Hamilton**  
Executive Director of GreenAllies in  
Pottstown, PA (returning participant)

*"The knowledge that the students obtained about rewilding and the benefits of native plants was a lifelong learning experience. It was an opportunity to learn these concepts outside of a traditional classroom."*

*They learned from community members and through non-traditional methods, applying their skills and knowledge to real-world service learning. This kind of hands-on learning is priceless."*



**Adel Kosanke**  
Teacher at Vista Grande High School  
in Taos, NM

*"I just love this program, and it has really expanded the opportunities for culturally relevant teachings to come to life for my agriculture students. Thank you."*



POLICY  
PARTNERS



# POLICY PARTNERS

## OVERVIEW

Walking Softer marked five years of continuous support to leading non-profits advocating for sustainable bipartisan policy to America's energy and environmental challenges. Each partner organization working on policy at a federal or state level brought a unique blend of expertise and perspective to promoting durable policies. Together, they leverage decades of experience and proven insight on national security, renewable energy, data modeling, policy development and conservative grassroots constituency-building. Partners include the largest network of conservative "eco-right" policy organizations in the country as well as the most sophisticated policy research and advocacy operations in Washington D.C.

## 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

**Saving gigawatt-scale clean-energy financing from elimination**, including \$1 Billion for the Department of Energy's Loan Program Office credit subsidies, which enable higher-risk clean energy, storage, and transmission projects to access project financing they likely would struggle to secure in private markets.

**Extending federal tax credits for nuclear, geothermal, hydropower, and battery storage** into the mid-2030s, enabling many major clean-energy projects that would otherwise have stalled or disappeared to move forward.

**Advancing three national energy permitting initiatives** out of the U.S. House of Representatives on a bipartisan basis, a step toward making federal permit reviews more transparent to meet America's AI-driven rising energy and infrastructure needs.

**Achieving new disaster resilience policy in the annual bipartisan Pentagon authorization, and protecting critical federal climate and disaster-response programs at NOAA and FEMA** through continued bipartisan engagement on Capitol Hill focused on national security and climate risks.

**Securing decarbonization policy wins in Florida, Texas, and Utah**, including bipartisan permitting reform in Utah that cuts some critical permitting timelines from six months to two weeks; and defending Texas' competitive electricity market, the nation's renewables superpower.

**Reaching over 2,500 policy makers through 1,400+ events in 92 countries**, helping leaders understand data-driven climate impacts, for example, a new *Temperature Change by Location* map, which uses MIT-developed AI to show regional warming projections in seconds instead of weeks -- and then test strategies that drive real-world emissions reductions.



## Bob Inglis

U.S. Rep. (R-SC4) 1993-1999; 2005-2011  
Executive Director, republicEn



## Andrew Jones

Climate Interactive



## Carlos Curbelo

U.S. Rep. (R-FL26) 2015-2019  
Chair, Climate Solutions Foundation

*"Walking Softer is unique in understanding the importance of sustained support for right of center outreach on climate. Too many come and go, not realizing that durable support is the only viable path to durable policy and durable solutions."*

*"Thanks to Walking Softer's long-term support, we are able to equip conservative and bipartisan leaders with practical, non-partisan climate analysis grounded in economic and systems realities. Walking Softer's backing of our climate solutions simulator, En-ROADS, helps decision-makers focus on what works by exploring trade-offs, managing risk, and identifying solutions that deliver measurable results."*

*"Walking Softer understands that only through bipartisan collaboration can we achieve durable energy and climate policy that advances American prosperity and protects the environment. The organization's support for groups working on conservative solutions that encourage bipartisan dialogue has been particularly impactful."*



## CENTER FOR CLIMATE AND SECURITY

The Center for Climate and Security is a solutions-oriented, bridge-building policy institute focused on common-sense solutions for systemic climate and ecological security risks. It helps develop government policy and conducts groundbreaking research and analysis on risks/threats from climate change to national and global security.

[climateandsecurity.org](https://climateandsecurity.org)

## DEPLOY/US

DEPLOY/US delivers bipartisan climate outcomes by accelerating conservative climate leadership. It is the only nonprofit in the country built to scale the impact of the entire Ecoright field, including conservative climate-forward nonprofits and their allies engaging key constituencies (military, business, faith, anglers, hunters, farmers, and youth).

[deployus.org](https://deployus.org)

## CITIZENS FOR RESPONSIBLE ENERGY SOLUTIONS (CRES)

CRES Forum educates the public and influences the national conversation around responsible clean energy solutions through coalition-building research, and strategic communications. It moves policymakers to greater action on the need for the federal government to play a role in reducing the emissions that are harming our climate, air, and water.

[cresforum.org](https://cresforum.org)

## CLEARPATH

ClearPath accelerates American innovation to reduce global energy emissions. It believes that solutions to produce more clean energy and lower emissions must focus on policies that put markets over mandates and innovation over regulation.

[clearpath.org](https://clearpath.org)

## CLIMATE SOLUTIONS FOUNDATION

Climate Solutions Foundation brings together ideologically diverse Members of Congress and their staff, global leaders, and corporate and trade executives to discuss climate science, economics, and policy. The Foundation supports the continued work of the House Climate Solutions Caucus and the creation of the Senate Climate Solutions Caucus.

[climatesolutionsfoundation.com](https://climatesolutionsfoundation.com)

## CLIMATE INTERACTIVE

Climate Interactive works to accelerate the path to climate stability by persuading and empowering decision-makers with highly accurate, politically neutral, easy-to-use tools and insights that cut through the complexity and provide the clarity required to implement high-leverage climate solutions.

[climateinteractive.org](https://climateinteractive.org)

## republicEN

republicEn speaks to conservatives in the language of conservatism. “En” is for energy, entrepreneurship, and the environment. It provides educational support for conservatives committed to building public understanding of free enterprise and its promise to solve energy and climate challenges.

[republicen.org](https://republicen.org)



STORYTELLING





# STORYTELLING

## OVERVIEW

Marketing supported Walking Softer’s mission by increasing the reach and effectiveness of its programs. Our approach, amplify with purpose, prioritized usefulness over volume, focusing on clear, credible storytelling that reflects the work being done within our community.

The team executed integrated digital and print initiatives, including website updates, video production, social media campaigns, and brand-aligned asset development. These efforts emphasized substance over visibility in an increasingly crowded communications landscape.

Marketing increased awareness of Walking Softer and reinforced its role in advancing a healthier planet. By highlighting Changemakers, marketing supported individuals, projects, and companies beyond financial contributions - providing visibility, strengthening connections, and extending impact through practical, purpose-driven communication.

## 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

### Climate Town Collaboration

Produced 21 videos with Young Leaders Alumni and Climate Town host Rollie Williams, reaching 677K YouTube and 27.8K Instagram followers with engaging climate content.

### Ambassador of Change

Collaborated with Young Leaders alumnus Pooja Tilvawala to produce behind-the-scenes social content for COP30 and Climate Weeks in New York, San Francisco, and D.C.

### Young Leaders

Released 37 pieces of content showcasing Young Leaders, including a new “Who Is” video series highlighting each participant and their climate project.

### Education

Created social-first content highlighting Education program scholarship recipients and events that empower high school students as agents of change.

### Community

Covered events on social media, including New York Climate Week, Progression 2025, and the Net Zero Conference among others, highlighting the broader climate community’s work.



### 2025 PERFORMANCE LOOK BACK

ENGAGEMENT RATE (AVERAGE ACROSS ALL SOCIAL MEDIA)

13.85%\*

IMPRESSIONS/VIEWS (ACCUMULATION OF OWNED SOCIAL MEDIA)

562,925

ACCOUNTS REACHED (ACCUMULATION OF OWNED SOCIAL MEDIA)

134,169

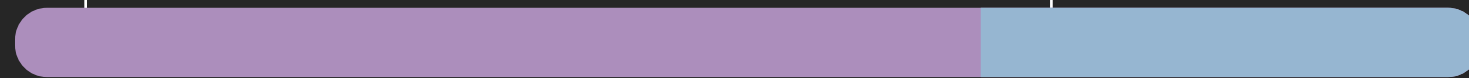
TOTAL FOLLOWERS (ACCUMULATION OF OWNED SOCIAL MEDIA)

5,733

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

Women (65.7%)

Men (34.3%)



#### Age

25-34 (36.8%)

45-54 (15.2%)

65+ (4.2%)

18-24 (7.8%)

35-44 (29.2%)

55-64 (6.9%)



\* Average engagement rates are 5.5% (Good United, The Nonprofit Social Media Strategy Playbook, 2025 Edition, Part One).





# FINANCIALS



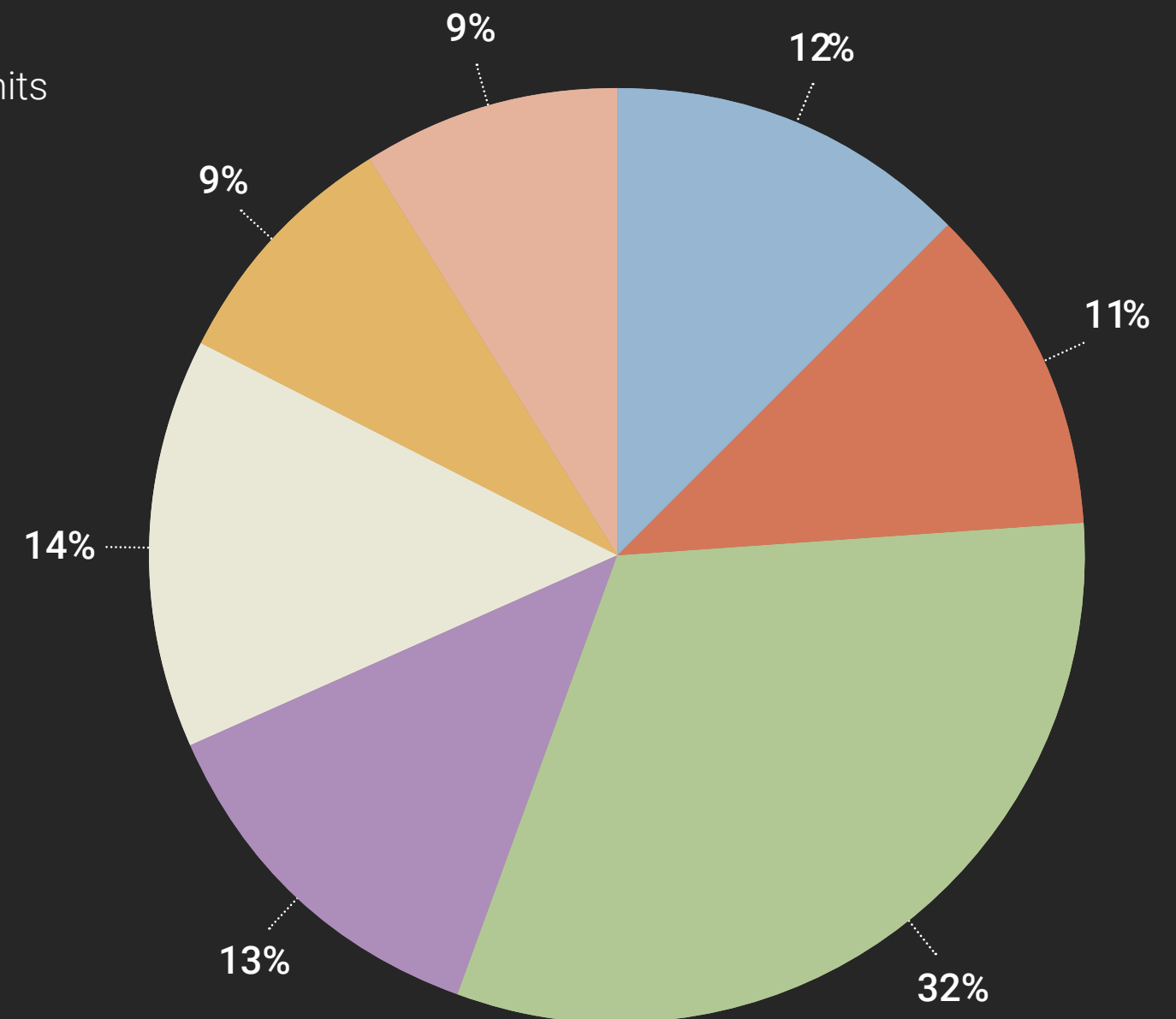
# FINANCIALS

## OPERATING EXPENSES AT A GLANCE: \$5.2M

Walking Softer strategically allocates resources to support its mission of empowering Changemakers in environmental conservation and regeneration. Program expenses include youth programs, partnerships, immersive experiences, storytelling, and a regenerative farm in Costa Rica. To expand opportunities for Young Leaders, Walking Softer simultaneously concluded Cohort 2 and launched Cohort 3 within the same year. Administrative costs cover essential accounting, legal, technology, and communications operations.

### KEY

- Leadership Summits
- Young Leaders
- Kosmos Farm
- Education
- Policy Partners
- Storytelling
- Admin





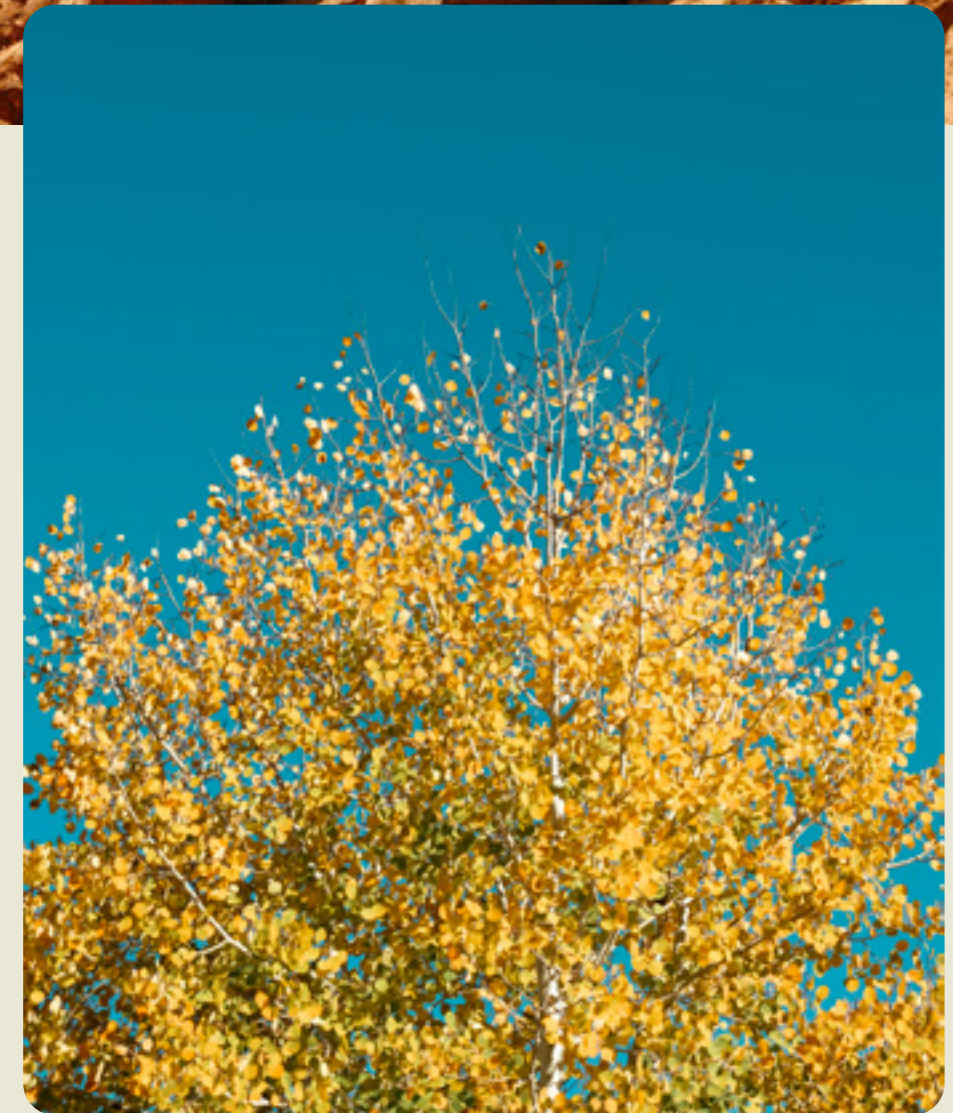
# LOOKING FORWARD

Walking Softer is focused on building a connected and resilient community of leaders, organizations, and partners working toward long-term environmental progress. We believe meaningful change happens through relationships, shared learning, and sustained support for thoughtful leadership.

We intentionally waited until June to release this report to allow space not only to reflect on the work completed in 2025, but also to better understand the momentum and direction emerging in 2026. The first half of this year has already reinforced the strength of the Walking Softer community through new partnerships, deeper alumni engagement, and continued growth across our programs.

In the year ahead, we will continue growing our Summit and Young Leaders communities through the launch of our fourth Young Leaders cohort, expanded collaboration opportunities, and continued investment in education and scholarship programs supporting emerging leaders.

Across all areas of work, we remain committed to thoughtful storytelling that amplifies diverse voices, strengthens connection, and inspires meaningful action.





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to recognize and celebrate these incredible Changemakers for their dedication, passion, and tireless efforts in supporting our programs and making a positive impact on our planet. Your commitment helps us drive meaningful change and inspires a brighter, more sustainable future for all.

Chúk Odenigbo  
Seisei Tatebe-Goddu  
Venu Gupta  
Dave Solomon  
Evan Rapoport  
Anita Sanchez  
Erick M. Brenes Mata  
Julie Markham  
Paula Major  
Scott Atkinson  
Elizabeth Whitlow  
Katherine Moore  
Maya Rogers

Olivia Dell  
Oliver English  
Manish Vora  
Andrew Zuckerman  
Rollie Williams  
Pooja Tilvawala  
Carri Twigg  
Samir Goel  
Katie Eder  
Josh Izenberg  
Palmer Morse  
Taylor Abbey  
Abhay Singh Sachal

Turner Wyatt  
Jeff, Patty and Emily Horing  
Andy and Joyce Lee  
Evi Lazou-Laskaridis  
Vicky Lieu  
Adel Kosanke  
Zia Grossman-Vendrilla  
Tina Brouwer  
Sydney Cheung  
Emilia Belciak  
Nayelli Gonzalez  
Zayra La Puerta





Be The Changemaker.

[walkingsofter.org](http://walkingsofter.org)