10 Facts You Should Know About the Sex Worker Giving Circle (SWGC)

1. The SWGC is the first and the only sex worker-led fund housed at a U.S. foundation, and one of only a handful in the world!

2. Before launching the SWGC, we brought on three community advisors and met with nearly 20 different stakeholders to research funding needs and community-based grantmaking models like giving projects, the Trans Justice Funding Project, and the Miss Major/Jay Toole Giving Circle.

3. Many giving circles give some decision-making power to wealthy members who aren’t from impacted communities, but all of the SWGC’s grantmaking decisions were made entirely by the SWGC Fellows - all current or former sex workers.

4. The Fellows reflect the sex worker communities most impacted by oppression, including working class folks, street-based sex workers, trans women, and gender non-conforming people. And, each Fellow identifies as Black, Indigenous, and/or a person of color.

5. The SWGC Fellows got training and support to transfer their skills to grantmaking and fundraising. And it worked! The Fellows set an initial collective fundraising goal of $25,000, and blew it out of the water, raising over $100,000 between an online crowdfunding campaign, events, and major donor meetings!
6. Across the board, we received far more support than we expected, and individual donors and family foundations led the way! These activist donors showed up big-time for community-led grantmaking, giving over $350,000!

7. In 2013, a total of ~$330,000 went to funding sex worker-led organizing anywhere in the U.S. While we don’t know 2018's numbers, the funding landscape hasn't changed all that much, so the $200,000 in SWGC grants is a huge addition to the available funds for U.S. sex worker organizing!

8. The SWGC got some good media coverage this year, including The New Yorker, DapperQ, and Rolling Stone, as well as two pieces by SWGC Fellows themselves: Go Magazine & Rewire News.

9. Wondering who the SWGC wound up awarding grants to in 2018? Keep an eye out for our grantee announcement later this month - we’re so proud to be resourcing these powerful sex worker-led groups!

10. Thanks to the brilliant inaugural SWGC Fellows and the support of our communities, we’re already planning the second round in 2019! If you want to learn more, email swgivingcircle@thirdwavefund.org.