



Soroptimist is a global volunteer organization that provides women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment.

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE AMERICAS, INC.®

## Dream Big Campaign Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the Dream Big Campaign?

A global campaign to raise the funds necessary to invest in our capacity to reach the 2021-2031 Big Goal of investing in the dreams of a half million women and girls through access to education – and sustain that growth well into the future.

### Why are we having this campaign?

We want to ensure Soroptimist on every level is prepared to thrive in our next century and meet our audacious goals to impact half a million women and girls. We need to invest in our greatest asset – our members and clubs – and provide the support they need to grow the *Live Your Dream Awards*, *Dream It, Be It* and Big Goal Accelerator Projects. In order to provide that support, SIA needs to modernize its operations, expand its impact and attract new partners.

We envision that by the year 2031, Soroptimist will continue to thrive and grow into a more sustainable and increasingly impactful organization enacting social change, both locally and globally. We cannot continue to work in the same way as we do today and expect greater results on our impact. The strong foundation that we build today will ensure we are thriving in the year 2031 and beyond.

### What is the goal of the campaign?

The board has set our goal as \$15 million dollars in two years. It's a bold goal. Our unified goal of reaching half a million women and girls in the next ten years depends on being able to expand, deliver and sustain our service as Soroptimists.

### How will the money be used?

Funds raised will be invested into projects in three key program areas: expansion, delivery and sustainability. These projects will enable our organization to reach four times the number of women and girls we are currently serving by 2031.

The projects we have identified for the first phase of funding are addressing our critical organizational needs to reach our next Big Goal. These projects will focus on program sustainability – improving current and acquiring new technology and program expansion – supporting clubs financially and attracting new donors.

## What are the Dream Big campaign projects and how were they selected?

The projects were identified through a combination of member feedback and strategic planning by Soroptimist leadership. These projects will expand our ability to deliver our brand-unifying global Dream Programs and support our forward-looking vision of growth and investment into our members, clubs and global mission. [Learn more about the projects here.](#)

## How will the campaign impact my community, club, and me as a member?

The practical impact of this campaign will appear as we progress through the ten-year time frame of the Big Goal, including:

- financial support for clubs to deliver impact locally.
- leadership development and volunteer training for members.
- Increased visibility of our programs which will help clubs to attract more members and supporters.
- decreased fundraising responsibilities for clubs so they can focus on mission-related work.
- new opportunities to engage community members in our Big Goal.
- increased resources to carry out the Dream Programs.
- increased brand awareness of Soroptimist.

## Our club needs more funds. Why should we I donate to the Dream Big Campaign when I could give to my own club?

The work we all do locally is critical to our success. Our clubs are the most important part of our strategy to reach 500,000 women and girls in the next ten years. We are a global organization, and we want all our clubs to have full access to the tools and processes that can make them most successful. We have seen the value that up-to-date technology has provided this past year. Being able to do our work virtually has allowed us to continue to support the women and girls who are looking to us to help them succeed. Funds raised in the Dream Big Campaign will support clubs and members throughout SIA.

For example, the on-line portal for the *Live Your Dream Awards* is very well received in the US. It has streamlined the application, judging and records storage processes. We want to expand this tool/process to all countries in the Federation. Not only does this mean translation, but the software needs to comply with privacy security requirements in all these countries as well.

Another example of support for our clubs and members is a proposed on-line learning portal. This would allow us to provide consistent, on-demand training. Training topics would include how-tos for our tools and processes, especially as we continue to roll-out improvements based on feedback from users. Additionally, broader topics on leadership development and professional development would be available to support growth within Soroptimist and in our professional lives as well. Corporations and businesses are seeing that on-line, on-demand learning opportunities are valued by all age-groups but see a large demand by younger employees. We see this as a positive engagement tool for our members.

Funds raised by the Dream Big Campaign will be used to expand our ability to fund Club Grants. We see this as contributing to an even greater expansion of our *Dream It, Be It* program. Since we anticipate that 2/3 of our growth in the numbers of women and girls we reach with our Dream programs will be through club *Dream It, Be It* programs, expansion of these programs is critical to successfully reaching 500,000 women and girls.

## **Will there be any support to my club for raising additional funds to support this campaign?**

Our goal as Soroptimists, whether a club, region or SIA headquarters, is to lift up the many millions of women and girls around the world who face obstacles to accessing education. SIA has developed resources that will help members explain this vision for our future to your community and potential donors to help you fundraise for your club, your region and the federation, including:

- SIA Case Study
- Community/Corporate Partner Resources
- 100th Anniversary Facebook Fundraiser

## **How is giving to the Dream Big campaign different from supporting SIA's other fundraising efforts?**

We are dreaming big for today and for our future. Gifts to SIA ensure we have the resources we need to provide *Live Your Dream Awards*, implement *Dream It, Be It*, support clubs in their local efforts, and carry out the mission of Soroptimist. Designating a gift to Dream Big campaign is an investment in the future transformation and growth of Soroptimist. Our donors can be part of supporting women and girls today while building a strong and sustainable future for the next generation of Soroptimists.

The Dream Big campaign creates a special opportunity to give a gift over and above your support of our current program impact. If a donor is able to give to both, that is fantastic, but if they are only able to give to one, we encourage continued support of the annual fund.

## **How are donors to the Dream Big campaign being recognized?**

All individual gifts and pledges made to the Dream Big campaign will be recognized through the Laurel Society. In addition, there will be special recognition for cumulative gifts to the Dream Big Campaign for individuals, clubs and regions.

## **How do I make a gift to the Dream Big campaign?**

One-time and monthly gifts, as well as pledges, can be made on the Dream Big campaign website at <https://www.dreambig.soroptimist.org/>. Gifts can also be mailed to Soroptimist International of the Americas at 1709 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Gifts of \$10,000 and greater can be made through a pledge over a period of 2-3 years by contacting Erica Cheslock [erica@soroptimist.org](mailto:erica@soroptimist.org), Director of Donor Relations.

## **I know someone who could be a potential major donor to the Dream Big campaign. Who can I talk to about this?**

We have a special group of Soroptimists, the Donor Relations Task Force, who are able to support conversations with potential major donors. Additionally, staff is available to support outreach to corporations, foundations and other potential donors. Please contact Erica Cheslock, Director of Donor Relations, at [erica@soroptimist.org](mailto:erica@soroptimist.org) to be connected with the right person.

## Additional questions for the sales team:

### **Why should I donate to the Dream Big campaign when my club and region needs funding too?**

Members are asked to support our impact at all levels of the organization, and they can make a choice about what gift is more meaningful to them because we are all in this together. We will reach our 2021-2031 Big Goal with support from all levels of the organization. Part of our goal in the campaign is to grow and diversify our donors to take pressure off clubs and members to raise funds so they can spend more time focused on impact. The support your club will receive from the funds raised through Dream Big include:

- financial support for clubs to deliver impact locally.
- leadership development and volunteer training for members.
- increased visibility of our programs which will help clubs to attract more members and supporters.
- decreased fundraising responsibilities for clubs so they can focus on mission-related work.
- new opportunities to engage community members in our Big Goal.
- increased resources to carry out the Dream Programs.
- increased brand awareness of Soroptimist.

### **Our club has had to adjust our work because of the pandemic. Why isn't SIA doing the same thing instead of asking us for more money?**

SIA has adjusted to the realities of the pandemic and reduced its staff by 25 percent. Our plans for our 2021-2031 Big Goal and our Dream Big campaign were in place prior to the pandemic. The board of directors discussed the options of reducing our goal or postponing the campaign and chose to move forward because women and girls are counting on us – now more than ever. They restated their commitment to investing in half a million women and girls through access to education leading to economic empowerment. To reach that goal, we will need to make a sizable investment in our organization. It may take longer than planned, but we are still committed to our goals.

### **The pandemic has put a significant strain on our clubs and members. We are struggling to maintain members and raise funds. Why are we doing this campaign now? Why not wait until the effects of the pandemic are over?**

We know that the pandemic has been hard for many people. We also know that the pandemic has affected some members and clubs more than others. We know that the pandemic has disproportionately affected women. More women have lost jobs or have had their hours cut back. Some of the jobs lost will not be coming back. Our *Live Your Dream Awards* are needed more than ever as these women will need retraining in order to find new work in the new economies that are being developed. If we wait, these women will be left further behind.

We are asking our members who can give now to give now and members who can give later to give later. Today's circumstances will not last forever but the disruption to the lives of the women and girls we serve will last a very long time if we postpone this work.

We need our members to understand that we honor what they can give now and in the future. There is a saying in fundraising, “Don’t make decisions for your donors.” In other words, ask and let them decide what they can give and when they can give it. Also let them know that what they can give is enough. If we honor what they can give now, when they can give more, they will.

### **Why don’t we get corporate and foundation support?**

Over the past ten years, SIA has invested in a corporate and foundation support strategy but did not receive an adequate return on the investment. Because of our geographic diversity, it can be challenging to find a good fit for a global partner.

We know that many corporations, foundations, grants, and significant individual funders want data that shows the outcomes derived from their investment. Funds raised by the Dream Big Campaign will improve our data collection and security and our ability to follow up with the women and girls we serve in order to perform more robust analysis. This will allow us to provide the information supporters and prospects look for when making decisions.

We are still pursuing all opportunities to diversify our revenue including corporate and foundation support. The most effective way to pursue corporate support is with a specific introduction. If you have a contact at a corporation or foundation that you believe would be a good fit, we welcome the introduction. We have a team of staff and volunteer members available to work with these prospective donors.

Finally, we have created tools for clubs to use to approach local businesses to support their club work. Working as a team, we can raise the funds we need to achieve our Big Goal at all levels of the organization.

### **Our community has a lot of need and not just for education. Why are we focused on education and economic empowerment?**

SIA is focused on education because it is the most effective tool to help women and girls reach their full potential and live their dreams. Education helps women and girls achieve economic empowerment which allows them to make decisions about their own lives and the lives of their families. While the need is great everywhere, we know that providing an education will help women and girls overcome all other obstacles. As a global organization with a mission to provide women and girls with access to the education and training they need to achieve economic empowerment, and a ten-year Big Goal to invest in the dreams of half a million women and girls through access to education, we must harness all our resources to be successful.

### **Why haven’t we delayed the launch of this campaign until things are better?**

While things are difficult for Soroptimists around the world, the pandemic has exacerbated the challenges facing women and girls who face obstacles to their success. They need our help now.

### **Why are the Dream Big Campaigns investing in infrastructure and not just giving more *Live Your Dream Awards*?**

The Dream Big Campaign is investing in the transformation that needs to happen for us to reach our next Big Goal of empowering 500,000 women and girls through access to education. We need to do more than we

are doing today, we need to reach four to five times as many women and girls as we reach today. We want to improve how we work and how we communicate with our members, supporters, advocates and partners. We want to provide new tools and materials, such as the on-line application portal currently only available in English, in all the languages spoken in our federation. We want to make the best use of new technologies available to train our members and leaders to prepare them for their next roles. We need to upgrade our technologies for more robust security and analytics so that we can reach the people that need our services where they are. We want to increase our ability to raise funds from sources other than our members to increase our club grants, *Live Your Dream Awards* and sustain the increases in impact beyond 2031.

Not all the funds raised will be invested in infrastructure, some will be used to fund more *Live Your Dream Awards* in areas not served by a Soroptimist club. Some will be used to fund club grants to support our Dream Programs or other local work to achieve our 2021-2031 Big Goal.

Another way to look at this is that if we used all \$15,000,000 goal towards \$1,000 *Live Your Dream Awards*, we would give 15,000 awards, significantly below our goal of reaching 500,000 women and girls with our Dream Programs. If we don't change and just stay on the same growth rate we achieved in the last 10 years, we are on a path to reaching only 150,000 – 200,000 women and girls in the next 10 years. If all the funds go towards awards, we would have nothing left to transform us to be able to reach our Big Goal.

If a member is passionate about their donation going directly to the women and girls that we serve, we ask that they give a gift of personal significance to our annual fund for our annual program needs. The need is always great and our annual program needs will only increase as we become more successful in reaching more women and girls with the funds raised in the Dream Big Campaign. Gifts designated towards annual giving will not be recognized for as a Dream Big donation, but they will still be recognized by the Laurel Society.

### **Is the campaign just going to pay for more staff at SIA headquarters?**

No. Donations will be used in many ways to support clubs in their work including new technology, club grants, new *Live Your Dream Awards*, leadership development and volunteer training to name a few. Investment in our professional staff at headquarters is also needed if we are going to reach our next Big Goal and create the growing, impactful and sustainable organization we need today and in the future. Additional staff will be needed to diversify our donors, grow our public awareness, support our members to become better leaders and volunteers, deploy additional *Live Your Dream Awards* around the world, and provide opportunities to engage more people in our mission. An investment in our professional staff is an investment in our organization. We are all on the same team working toward the same goals and growing and developing that team is essential to growing our impact.

### **We already give so much – where is that money going?**

The funds you donate today go to support our global programs. Dues do not support program. Donations are used to develop, manage, support, promote, and evaluate our global programs in our 20 countries and territories. In addition to the support provided to our clubs in six languages, contributed income also supports *Live Your Dream Awards* for newly chartered clubs, region and federation awards and awards for

women who do not live near a Soroptimist Club. Contributing to our global impact allows us to serve women and girls across our 20 countries and territories.

### **We want more information about SIA's financials. Where can we get that?**

Our financial statements are public knowledge and can be viewed at [guidestar.org](https://www.guidestar.org). You can also request our audited financials from [siahq@soroptimist.org](mailto:siahq@soroptimist.org).