



Exhale to Inhale

2019

Annual Report



Dear supporters,

From the very beginning, Exhale to Inhale has been a story of community. We share a collective desire to honor survivors and carry forward more healing. Because of you, we have brought the healing power of yoga to thousands of survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

For this, I thank you. Thank you for deciding to join this incredible community. Thank you for being our partner in healing. This work cannot be done without each of you.

Each of you has been a champion for our cause. Whether you have supported our mission with your time, expertise, or monetary donations—you have made it possible for us to expand our reach. We are immensely grateful for the unique and generous ways you have chosen to support us.

The last year has shown me the true power of community. As the world and our community changes—we move, breathe, and adapt with it. Over the last six years it's been an honor to see the shifts and evolutions for us and for you as well. I've seen donors become teachers and teachers become Board members. I've witnessed you beginning to share your own stories as you champion ours.

2019 was truly an incredible year that has laid the foundation for a successful future. We remain committed to leading the charge as experts in the trauma-informed yoga field. First and foremost, our goal is to create a space for survivors and the staff that work with them to move, breathe, and reconnect to their resilience.

As we shift into 2020, we are committed to training and elevating leaders in the trauma-informed space through a new fellowship program, so that we can expand our services to reach more survivors and train more yoga professionals. Maintaining and expanding our programs would not be possible without your continued support.

Thank you for sharing this sacred space with us and standing with survivors. I am grateful for your vital contributions to our community and am excited for the next stage of our healing journey.

In gratitude,

Zoë LePage

Zoë Le Page
Founder & Executive Director

Our story through community

At our core, Exhale to Inhale is a story of community through partnerships. Partners, like you, who want to empower those affected by domestic violence and sexual assault to transform their lives. Working together, we provide the healing practice of trauma-informed yoga and help communities develop the skills and knowledge to support them.

We're more than just an organization that provides weekly trauma-informed yoga classes in domestic violence shelters and community centers. We're more than leaders in the trauma-informed field. We're a community. And this is our story through the words of our community:



Photo Credit: The Commission Project

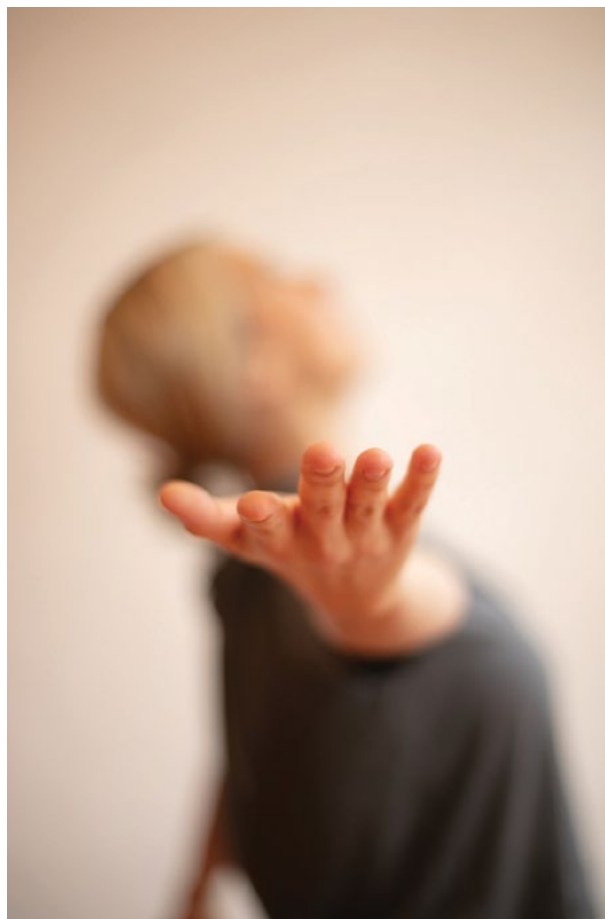
Celebrating Our Story

At the end of 2019 we had the opportunity to partner with The Commission Project and lululemon. A photographic installation was exhibited at lululemon Soho, featuring our teachers, staff, and partner organizations—the individuals who further our work daily.

A story of healing

A note from one of our students:

I attended yoga classes at a shelter a few years back while recovering from an abusive marriage. The yoga classes I'd been to with friends before Exhale to Inhale didn't feel safe in a way I couldn't quite pinpoint. Your yoga teachers helped me feel ok in my body again and helped me understand that traditional yoga classes sometimes put my body into positions that triggered reminders of sexual violence and extreme vulnerability. I just finished my daily yoga practice at home and suddenly wanted to express my gratitude for being able to participate in a trauma-informed yoga program and reconnect with my own body in a safe and gentle way. I can't speak for the other women in my group, but I know that specific yoga class, in that frankly bleak context, was massively healing for me.



A story of transformation

A note from one of our teachers, Natasha Johnson:

I've been teaching for Exhale to Inhale since the beginning of 2019. As a long-time yogini, from the onset of Exhale to Inhale's training I could tell this trauma-informed approach wouldn't just be transformative for the way I teach, but for me as well.

These teachings and this community are an extension of the work that I do in social justice, how I live, and my life philosophies. I firmly believe that those impacted by gender-based violence deserve freedom, agency, opportunity, and choices. I love that Exhale to Inhale allows those impacted to add yoga as a tool to their toolkit.

Teaching for Exhale to Inhale has been incredibly rewarding. Many of our students have never practiced yoga before—and I know it can feel scary just to show up. It's such an honor to hold this space for them and watch them step into their power. To see the trust growing between myself and them and between themselves is a reminder of the humanity of people and how easy it is to be present with those around us.



One of the amazing things about being a teacher is to see first-hand the impact of this work. Part of my signature look is wearing blue lipstick—and the last class in the series three of my students showed up in blue lipstick. It was a signal to me that they were willing to step into something new. I also loved that they had all coordinated to wear it on the same day.

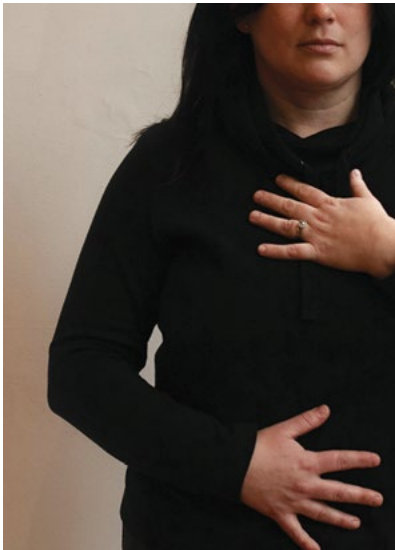
As a service provider, I know how immensely difficult our partner organizations work can be. I am so grateful that Exhale to Inhale provides this therapeutic tool to the staff as well as their clients. Healing has a ripple effect and I think it's lovely that we all can move towards a place of wellness and have more spaces to breathe.

Exhale to Inhale's trauma-informed training and the opportunity to teach for them has been truly transformational. What I've learned hasn't just impacted the way I teach, but the way I interact with people out in the world.

Our work with survivors

The work of Exhale to Inhale centers on survivors' unique healing journeys. Trauma can have a distressing impact on the mind and body and it can overwhelm an individual's ability to cope with their surroundings and responsibilities. With six years of expertise in the trauma-informed space—we aim to empower survivors through the healing power of yoga.

Our goal is to support survivors in building a foundation for personal healing by providing resources that can be used both on and off the yoga mat. Our classes are about choice-making and reconnecting to our bodies. This translates off the mat to learning new coping strategies, developing resilience, and regaining the ability to make empowered life choices.



Note From Our Student

"I can't emphasize strongly enough how this program helped me begin to feel safe in my body..."



Our teachers

We want to thank our dedicated and talented group of Exhale to Inhale-trained teachers, who volunteer their time so we can provide free classes to those who need it most.

Abby Ziaja	Christina Jones (3 years)	Lisa Weinert
Adrianna Keener	Cynthia Magana (1 year)	Lucy Schanzer
Adrienne Perkins	Desiree Ayoung	Magdalene Martinez
Alycia Moreno	DK Dyson	Mary Roth (1 year)
Amy Apgar (2 years)	Elise Benkard	Matthew Espino (2 years)
Ana Guedes-Mesquita	Ellyn Gerry (1 year)	Megan Prasad (2 years)
Angela Boswell (2 years)	Erica Milde	Melissa Jhunja (5 years)
Ariel Islam Davis (4 years)	Erika Zappia	Monae Weathington (1 year)
Astrid Locker	Francesca Muffaletto (2 years)	Monica Esquivel (2 years)
Caitie Corradino	Gillian Kaye (1 year)	Natasha Johnson (1 year)
Catherine Cromelin (1 year)	Helene Kerherve (4 years)	Paola Valquez
Cecilie Løvestam (2 years)	Jaclyn Spector (2 years)	Raquel Weinberg
Cheryl Chen	Jeesoo Park (5 years)	Rebecca Macies
	Jenna Conner (1 year)	Renk Kocturk (2 years)
	Jess Blake (6 years)	Sara Corris (1 year)
	Jessica Apfel (2 years)	Sara Madsen (2 years)
	Jessica Genussa	Sarah Berenbaum (5 years)
	Joanna Grasso (1 year)	Sarah McQuilkin (1 year)
	Josephine Cooper (1 year)	Sharika Valerio (1 year)
	Julie Rowland (2 years)	Shawna Wakefield (4 years)
	Kathryn Cornelius (3 years)	Shayna Skarf
	Katrina Law	Shikha Pursnani
	Lina Sarmiento (1 year)	Stephany Sanchez (3 years)
	Lisa Brody (2 years)	Suzannah Gratz
	Lisa Marie Rainford	Tara Johnson
	Lisa Mehos (3 years)	Tiffany Schiller (1 year)



Years in parentheses denote number of years teaching with Exhale to Inhale.

Our impact



In partnership with the New School for Social Research, we created a survey to measure stress, bodily pain, and sense of agency before and after an Exhale to Inhale class.

The data shows that students feel a **statistically significant improvement** across each of the measurements below.

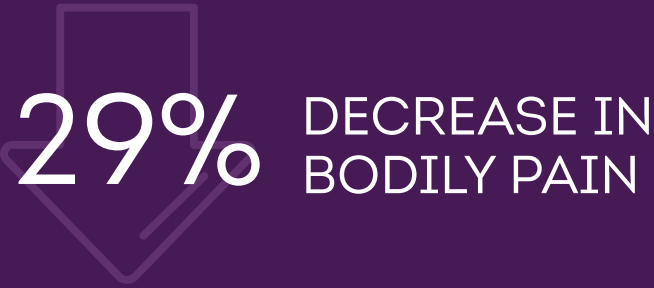
Stress

Survivors can experience elevated levels of stress. Our classes teach body and breath-based relaxation skills to reduce stress. This improves executive functioning (e.g. emotion regulation and decision-making).



Bodily Pain

Survivors can experience medically unexplained somatic complaints. Our classes aim to ameliorate these sensations through movement and breath. This in turn reduces symptoms of anxiety, depression, and PTSD.



Sense of Agency

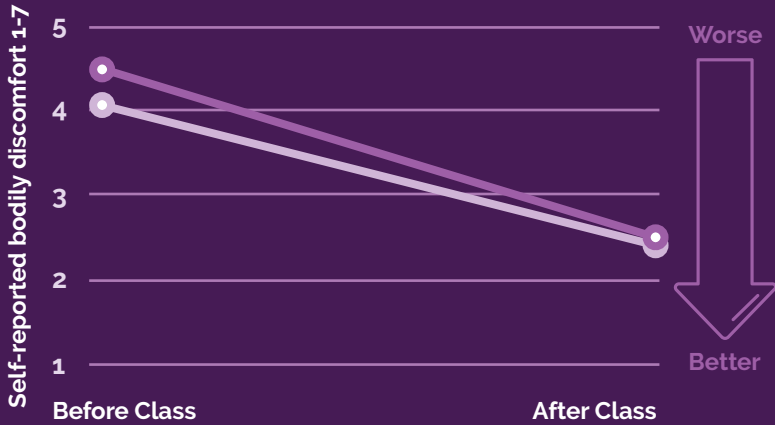
Survivors can feel a reduced perception of self-efficacy (ability to cope). Our classes encourage choice-making throughout the practice. This helps improve self-efficacy, which has ripple effects off the mat.



Yoga works, yoga heals

Our data also showed that those who experienced a greater improvement in bodily sensations were more likely to continue to attend additional yoga classes. We see our students return to the yoga mat because they are experiencing the healing power of yoga.

- Participants who attended only one class
- Participants who attended two or more classes



2019 Impact



441 Classes Taught



689 Unique Students Served



1,592 Yoga Visits



Classes held in all 5 boroughs of NYC



Note From Our Student

"...I know from experience that your work changes lives for the better."

A story of reconnection

A note from Sara Eldridge, an Assistant Program Director at one of our partner organizations:

I work as the Assistant Program Director at Secret Garden, part of Barrier Free Living (BFL). BFL provides services to survivors of domestic violence who also have a disability.

I love that we can offer our clients this tool to help them reconnect to their bodies and breathe in a safe and supported way. We have been partnering with Exhale to Inhale for three years and will continue doing so, because we feel that they truly understand what it means to work with survivors.

For so many of our clients, they've never had the opportunity to take time out for themselves—to just rest, recharge, and reconnect with their bodies. So being able to offer this space just for them is wonderful. Our clients constantly tell us how much they look forward to these weekly classes. And it's more than just the class—they tell us they feel more relaxed and are applying what they learn (breathing exercises, getting in touch with their bodies, and mindfulness) into their daily lives. For me, it's so huge that they can see these are tools that they can carry with them anywhere.

We know trauma lives in our physical bodies—and if we're not in tune with what our bodies are telling us we're missing part of the healing process. Which is why it's so exciting that Exhale to Inhale exists. I'm grateful they are doing this amazing and transformative work connecting trauma, mind and body, mindfulness and breath, all together.

In this day and age, many claim that they are “trauma-informed”, but after working with Exhale to Inhale, I genuinely feel they truly understand what trauma-informed means and what it looks like in terms of interacting with clients, designing classes, working with partners, and creating programs that truly work for survivors. I am truly grateful we can bring their services to our clients.



“These classes help me so much with my stress levels. It’s not just physically healing, but also mentally and emotionally healing. I love that it’s just for me, not for anyone else, and that I have total control over it. It’s been a very rewarding experience for me.”

- Exhale to Inhale Student at Barrier Free Living

Our partner organizations

Our work is possible in large part because of the partnerships we have with local domestic violence shelters and community centers. These facilities provide the access and physical space we need to deliver free classes for survivors and the staff who support them. We're grateful for these partners who over time have become our champions. Our 2019 partner organizations include:

Adolescent Health Center (Mt. Sinai)	Family Justice Center (FJC)	Harmonia - SUS	SUS Aegis (also known as Starhill)
BFL (Barrier Free Living)	FJC Bronx	Her Justice	Third Root (donation based)
Bottomless Closet	FJC Manhattan	Juliard	Victim Service Unit
Connect	FJC Queens	Liberty House (Volunteers of America)	VIP Queens
CUNY	FJC Staten Island	NMIC	Womankind
CVTC	Franklin Women's shelter	NMIC - Bronx	Woman's Prison Association
El Nido	Good Shepherd	STEPs	Wycoff Medical Center



Our expertise

We believe that by making our trauma-informed methodology and training accessible to all, it will allow teachers to develop the skills and knowledge they need to create more inclusive spaces in their communities. Our trainings incorporate lecture and experiential learning, always keeping survivors top of mind.

At Exhale to Inhale we believe the resources gained through yoga are at the very foundation of our lives—the ability to breathe, gain physical and emotional strength, and to make healthy life choices. Our hope is to support the creation of more inclusive spaces everywhere as our trainees take their learnings from the classroom out into the world.

We are grateful that a number of people who take our teacher training go on to volunteer teach for Exhale to Inhale, while others go on to use these resources to be of service in their own communities. Take a look at some training impact stories on the next page.



“Exhale to Inhale’s training taught me about showing up and being able to be a steward for others in this practice. It was such a lovely training and so different than others that I’ve attended. Learning to be mindful of others when it comes to my presence and language has helped me not just as a teacher but when I communicate out in the world. I feel more conscious of my impact on people.”

“Exhale to Inhale’s trauma-informed teacher training is hands down one of the best teacher trainings I have attended (I’ve done quite a few!) The course covered a lot of ground in one weekend, and the instructor followed up with additional resources that I refer back to often. I immediately felt equipped with the skills needed. My teaching style is heavily influenced by Exhale to Inhale with more inclusive language, grounding movements, and a thoughtful, compassionate approach.”



“This training provided me with a deeper understanding of the impacts of trauma and how to better support survivors on their healing journeys. I’m so grateful for having received these hours of knowledge because it gave me an opportunity to learn about what goes through people’s minds and bodies in response to trauma. Thanks to this training provided by Exhale to Inhale, I feel empowered, confident, and determined to support whoever I might encounter in finding, at least for a moment, a feeling of peace and tranquility.”



Our 2019 Trainings

9	full-length trainings attended by	139	individuals
5	four-hour workshops attended by	75	individuals
31	teacher training scholarships awarded in exchange for	372	hours of volunteer teaching

A story of partnership

flamingo

A note from one of our corporate partners, Flamingo:

Flamingo designs body care products for daily routines and self-care rituals. So much of feeling good in your skin is grounded in the products that you feel good using and other daily rituals that make up your routine. Exhale to Inhale's practice is similarly grounded in the ritual and routine of reconnecting with your own breath and movement through practiced techniques. When you're able to feel good in your own skin—through both quality products and movement—you gain power and confidence to show up for yourself. We truly believe that a positive relationship to body care starts with quality products, and that when we show up for ourselves in private, we're able to show up as ourselves in public.

From day one, we've set aside 1% of sales to donate to nonprofit organizations. When we met Exhale to Inhale, we felt the impact the organization was making was deeply aligned with how we want to support our customers and our community. After learning more about Exhale to Inhale's programming, and the ambitious goals that the team had for growth in 2019, we decided that the greatest impact we could have together would be investing in Exhale to Inhale's teacher training program. Training more teachers (and teacher trainers) has had a ripple effect on the number of people that Exhale to Inhale is able to reach and share their resources and classes with every day.



"From the moment we started considering nonprofit partners, Exhale to Inhale has sat at the top of our list. Zoë has built an incredible team dedicated to an incredible mission—and making a meaningful impact. Flamingo is proud to support Exhale to Inhale, and excited about the work we can do together as partners."
—Allie Melnick, GM, Flamingo

Our Inaugural Gala



Selling out our Inaugural Gala and seeing a room filled with 450 guests was something beyond our wildest dreams. Together we celebrated healing, stood with survivors, and heard words of inspiration. We came together as a community and lives were changed, and more will be changed, because of your support. Thanks to you, we raised 10 times what we had set as our initial goal for our first-ever Gala.



A Note From Our Keynote Speaker

"Through our partnership with Exhale to Inhale we are able to offer trauma-informed yoga, meditation, and movement workshops that aim to heal trauma and restore the mind-body balance often disrupted after traumatic experiences. Healing from trauma and rebuilding lives are complex processes that often 'take a village', a village comprised of dedicated partners like Exhale to Inhale which understands the ongoing impact of trauma and the importance of healing and building resilience through holistic practices."

Commissioner Cecile Noel of the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence

Our year in review

2019 was filled with many firsts, as well as numerous events to raise awareness and funds for survivors. Please take a look at some of our key milestones:

1

YEAR-ROUND

Movement for Meaning

Hosted 15+ donation-based events with local fitness studios, raising \$6,300.

2

APRIL

#healmetoo

A month-long campaign in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness month, raising \$30,849.

3

JUNE

Summer Solstice

Charity partner for Times Square Summer Solstice, raising \$7,600.

4

JUNE

New Board President

Welcomed Bomsinae Kim as our Board President.

5

JULY

New Partnership

Selected as one of Flamingo's charity partners.

6

AUGUST

Program Director

Aditi Davray stepped into the newly created role of Program Director.

7

SEPTEMBER

New Board Member

Welcomed Wael Younan as our Board member and Treasurer.

8

OCTOBER

Inaugural Gala

Held our first-ever gala at The Rubin Museum of Art, raising \$307,000.

9

NOVEMBER

New Board Member

Welcomed Tina Miletich as our newest Board member.

10

DECEMBER

Here to Be

Celebrated our Here to Be Partnership with lululemon.

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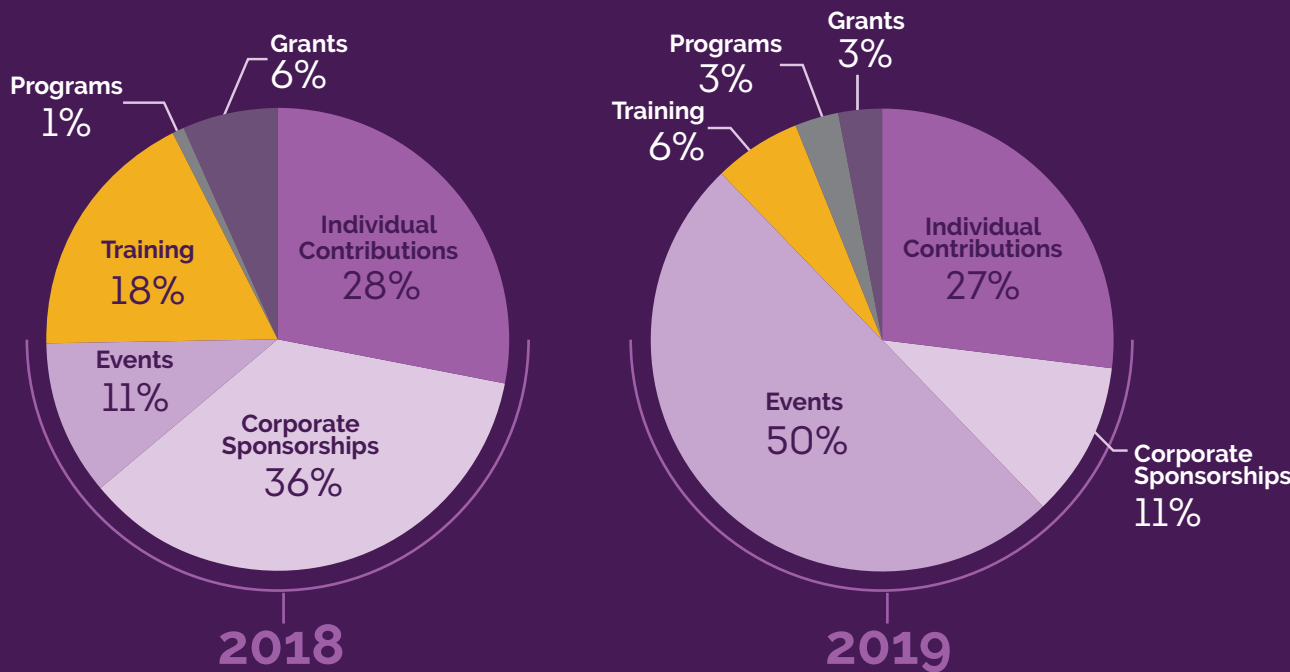
Financials

Gross Revenue

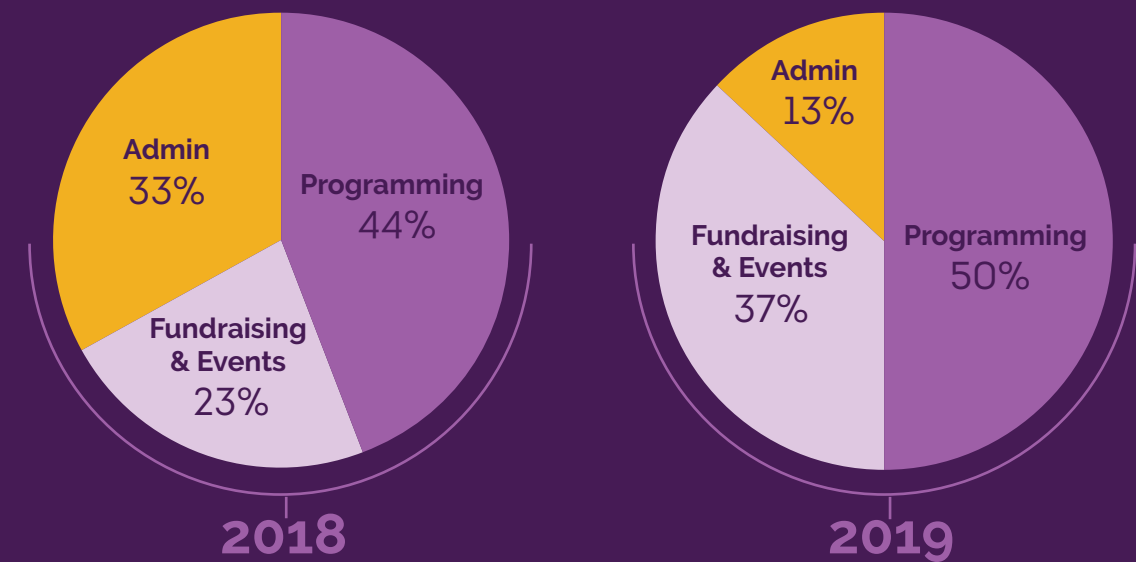
Due to our inaugural gala we were able to more than **double our gross revenue**. Note that 2019 financials include \$166K in in-kind donations.

2017	2018	2019
\$114,013	\$232,210	\$749,876

Breakdown of Revenue



Breakdown of Expenses



Our donors

We would like to thank each and every donor for helping to make 2019 an extraordinary year for Exhale to Inhale in terms of the number of contributors and the funds raised.

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