



those nerdy girls



2024

BY THE NUMBERS



3,360

VOLUNTEER HOURS



\$70,000+

FUNDS RAISED



600,000

PEOPLE REACHED



14,000+

NEW FOLLOWERS



As the future of science and health becomes more uncertain, the work of Those Nerdy Girls is needed now more than ever, and we stand ready to rise to the challenge.

A Note from Executive Director

Sara Gorman, PhD, MPH

What a fantastic year for Those Nerdy Girls! In our fifth year going strong, we raised over \$70,000 and welcomed over a dozen new writers into the fold. We developed partnerships with some truly amazing organizations, including ScienceUpFirst, the Yale School of Public Health, Public Good News, and FactCheck.org. We grew our paid Substack subscribers by 45.9% (from 338 to 493). We gained 14,378 new followers across seven platforms. As the future of science and health becomes more uncertain, the work of Those Nerdy Girls is needed now more than ever, and we stand ready to rise to the challenge.

Looking ahead, we must focus on sustainability, which will be a major priority in 2025. We must also diversify our reader base to ensure we are reaching as wide a population as possible, including readers in medically underserved areas and from a range of demographic backgrounds. It is urgent, especially in this climate, to ensure that everyone has access to high-quality, trusted health information. Those Nerdy Girls will be a major part of the solution.

Reflecting on this past year, we are endlessly grateful for our amazing writers, who have collectively spent over 3,360 hours writing for Those Nerdy Girls. Each and every post takes 5-7 hours of work to complete, and our writers put a tremendous amount of care, dedication, and brainpower into ensuring the highest quality and most practical content possible to help you make essential health decisions. We are also very grateful for our wonderful Board of Directors, whose dedication to the health of the organization is admirable. We are incredibly thankful to our donors, whose support continues to sustain us and makes this important work possible. Finally, and certainly not least, we thank our readers for their dedication to our important mission. We owe everything to you, and we are so thankful to have all of you in our community.

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From Our Readers...

"Thank you to each of Those Nerdy Girls who bring us up-to-date and valid information that can be believed, followed, and help change our communities and world into a healthier place in which to live!"

Overview of Top Activities and Accomplishments in 2024

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From Our Readers...

"Thank you for always presenting science in such a beautiful and straightforward way, Nerdy Girls!"

"Thank you for your great work in translating current, accurate health information to your many readers. I rely upon you to cut through the noise."

In July 2024 we were able to create a paid position of content manager, whose role has been to ensure timely, evidenced-based content coverage of our key areas of focus: infectious disease, aging, mental health, reproductive health, and data/information literacy. Our content manager has redesigned the TNG workflow making the process from reader question submission to content expert response to collaborative editing to publication smoother and more timely. The new workflow aims to facilitate consistent content throughout the month, even out the distribution of topics covered, respond to real-world needs/interests, and ease the stress of production processes for writers, editors, and support staff. Within the framework, it ultimately prioritizes flexibility for writers and editors. The new process also includes a new quality control component.

This fall, the content manager brought on a new cohort of writers and editors whose specialties include: data visualization, immunology, genetics, oncology, environmental sciences, general public health communications, and health equity and inclusion. The six one-hour trainings cover effective science communication principles, such as plain language writing, adhering to universal health literacy standards, using empathy, incorporating narrative, information hygiene principles of interpreting correctly and conveying effectively data to broad audiences, and more.

Partnerships

Those Nerdy Girls thrives on high-impact partnerships with key players in the science and health communication field. This year, we partnered with a wide range of organizations by co-creating content living on both of our social media feeds and participating in Live events together. Some of our key partners this year included: the **Yale School of Public Health**, **Factcheck.org**, **Unbiased Science**, **Utah Department of Health and Human Services**, **ScienceUpFirst**, **Public Good News (PGN)**, and **Champions for Vaccine Education, Equity, and Progress**, among others. Going into 2025, we intend to continue these high-impact partnerships, with plans to collaborate further with the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, ScienceUpFirst, and Shot@Life already underway. We are ever grateful to our amazing partners for sharing their wealth of knowledge and wonderful content with us.

Leadership Transition

Effective February 1, 2025, Sara Gorman will step down as Executive Director, and MK Haber will take the helm. Dr. Gorman has been more than honored to serve this amazing organization and will stay on as a contributing writer and eternal Nerdy Girls cheerleader.

Photo: Nerdy Girls' Former Executive Director Sara Gorman (left) and new Executive Director MK Haber.



Fundraising

In 2024, we secured two contracts with Champions for Vaccine Education, Equity, and Progress to create some videos on various vaccine- and infectious disease-related topics. The contracts totaled \$15,500. During our Giving Tuesday and year-end campaign, we raised \$20,363, surpassing our goal. During a matching gift campaign over the summer, we raised \$11,042, surpassing our goal by 10%. In addition, we increased our Substack revenue from \$17,000 at the end of 2023 to \$25,498 by the end of 2024, an increase of 50%. This brings our overall 2024 revenue to \$72,403. These increases are game-changing for Those Nerdy Girls and allow us to continue bringing you the content you love and value and allow us to continue expanding our team and perfecting our processes and programs.

In addition to receiving financial support from donations and Substack, we also received in-kind support in the form of our volunteers' hours. Our volunteer writers contributed a total of 3,360 hours to the project in 2024. Our COO, Gretchen Peterson, contributed 1,300 hours, and our Chief Scientific Officer, Jenn Dowd and our Science Communication Director, Irini Hadjisavva, contributed over 3,000 hours collectively. We also received in-kind accounting and legal support from our fiscal sponsor, NewCourtland, and in-kind legal, financial, and strategic support from our wonderful Board of Directors.

We are endlessly grateful to our volunteers, Board of Directors, and fiscal sponsor. Without them, our operation could not run. Their value is incalculable.

In 2024 we reached 493 paid subscribers on Substack, bringing us over \$25,000 of yearly revenue from that source (up from \$17,000 in 2023).

Our Followers in 2024



Substack
46% growth



Threads
12.8k followers



Facebook
111k followers



TikTok
186 followers



BlueSky
4.4k followers



LinkedIn
29% growth



Instagram
21.3k followers

Social Media

Our social media channels continued to grow in 2024, reflecting our ongoing commitment to expanding community engagement and addressing the questions and needs of our readers.

Those Nerdy Girls are proud to now be active on the following social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Threads, BlueSky, X, LinkedIn, and TikTok. This multi-platform presence allows us to connect with diverse audiences and extend the reach of our science communication.

In the last few months of 2024, we focused on building our communities on Threads and BlueSky, as there is a lot of interest from other science and health communicators and the public to engage on these platforms. Our efforts have paid off with our number of supporters reaching 13.3k on Threads and 3.4k on BlueSky. Similarly, we have seen an 8% growth on Instagram and 25% growth on LinkedIn.

Furthermore, we have made sure to promote our Substack by linking it to our posts on our other social media channels and encouraging readers to subscribe. We have introduced more reels and videos as ways to communicate with our audience and making sure to engage our community in various appealing ways. We are happy that several of our team members have been eager to produce videos and communicate their message in a verbal way, leveraging the power of visual and verbal storytelling to deliver impactful messages.

In March 2024, we celebrated our “4th Nerdyversary” with a series of reflective social media posts. These highlighted our story since the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic and revisited key posts that had significant impact during that time. This year, the social media team also assisted with the three TNG fundraising campaigns this year: a matching gift campaign over the summer, Giving Tuesday, and our End-of-Year campaign. Looking ahead, we remain committed to finding new ways to connect with our audience, build strong and sustainable relationships, and share reliable health information on all of our social media channels.



Nerdy Girls IRL!

Clockwise from top left: Ashley Ritter and Jenn Dowd meet up in PA; Alison Buttenheim, Malia Jones, and Jenn Dowd re-created the Abbey Road cover while in London for Lego Serious Play training in June; Nerds Kenzie, Andrea, Sandy and MK explore play and decolonizing science communication in fall 2024 during the Pittsburgh, PA Writers Retreat; Kenzie Isaac and Sandy Laping walking at Happy

Valley between Oxford and London in October 24; On Nov 6, 2024, Jenn Dowd and Kenzie Isaac got lunch at Nuffield College (Oxford) to debrief the presidential election results and wrap each other up in some much-needed doses of laughter, lightness, and hope! Malia Jones and Amanda Simanek rode Go Karts in Wisconsin Dells after giving a keynote address at the Wisconsin Public Health Association meeting in May.

Plans for 2025

In 2025, our focus will be on achieving financial sustainability and organizational excellence. Here are some of our key priorities as we look ahead to the new year:

Our future depends on our ability to achieve financial sustainability. To this end, we are exploring a variety of ways to accomplish this with a full-fledged business plan in hand.

Diversifying our audience. We are committed to reaching across the aisle and engaging a broader group of readers. We also want to make sure we are reaching a wide demographic range of readers. To this end, we will be increasing our efforts to reach a broader audience in 2025. We will first focus on partnering with clinics in rural and underserved areas to bring our content to populations in these settings. From there, we will deploy several other strategies, such as partnering with local community groups and CBOs that specifically focus on reaching across the political and partisan aisle, to reach more people from different backgrounds.

Achieving peak efficiency of internal processes: We have made great strides this year in updating our processes to ensure greater efficiency. We have made substantial changes to our workflow to ensure maximal organizational excellence as we pursue the development and publication of our many posts. In 2025, we plan on continuing this process and conducting a thorough audit of our internal processes to ensure we are operating in the best way possible that allows us to continue to bring you the content you rely on in a timely and organized manner.

Making strides toward financial sustainability: Our future depends on our ability to achieve financial sustainability. To this end, we are exploring a variety of ways to accomplish this with a full-fledged business plan in hand. Some avenues include: foundation grant funding, earned revenue, continued expansion of our paid Substack subscriber base, and increasing the number of recurring donors. We are also exploring the possibility of monetizing our writer trainings and offering a certification for those that complete it.

Ensuring the highest quality product possible: High-quality, evidence-based content is the bread and butter of Those Nerdy Girls. In an effort to ensure the continued high-quality content you rely on, we established an “information hygiene” team this year. Comprised of several highly accomplished experts in data science and interpretation, this team reviews especially data-heavy posts to ensure accurate portrayal of the science involved. In 2025, we will continue to refine and expand the work of this team and institute other important quality control practices.

Financial Information

Those Nerdy Girls finished 2024 in a strong financial position, with roughly \$105,000 in the bank account.

Fundraising and Sustainability Plan

- **Individual giving:** Those Nerdy Girls has a dedicated donor base, for which we are extremely grateful. In 2025, we have a goal of raising \$45,000 from this source through a variety of campaigns, including Giving Tuesday, year-end, and potentially a matching gift campaign. We will also pursue a major gifts strategy. For Those Nerdy Girls, a major gift is anything over \$5,000.
- **Foundation funding:** We have a number of good projects in the pipeline that would be eligible for grant funding from foundations, including proposals to bring our content to more underserved areas and funds to formalize and create a certificate program for our science writing trainings. We have a goal of raising \$35,000 through this source in 2025.
- **Substack income:** Our Substack income has been growing steadily. We have a good base of \$24,605/year. We hope to grow this to \$40,000 in 2025. We have several strategies to do this, including a revamp of the perks we provide to paid subscribers and the development of a referral program.
- **Earned revenue:** Those Nerdy Girls has already successfully completed a number of contracts, including with the World Health Organization and Champions for Vaccine Education, Equity, and Progress (CVEEP). We believe this is an area of great potential growth for us. In 2025, we hope to bring in \$25,000 from this revenue stream.



Our achievements in 2024 are something to be proud of, and we owe it all to our incredible community of volunteers, employees, readers, and donors. We cannot wait to see what 2025 will bring. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being part of this incredible community, and we look forward to our journey together over the course of the coming year!

Those Nerdy Girls helps our readers make better health decisions by providing practical and factual health information. As trusted messengers, we build readers' confidence in navigating health information and sharing their knowledge with others.

