

2024 Annual Report

*Connecting Heart to Heart with
Older Adults*



IN MEMORY OF
*NAOMI
FEIL*

1932 - 2023



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Message from the Executive Director

It's incredible what our lean staff of one full-timer and four part-timers have done in one year!

- VTI and Validation was represented at 11 conferences from San Francisco to Geneva, Switzerland - and most of them in-person.
- We have two new training centers in the United States and one that will come onboard in a month or so. This brings our numbers to 29 AVOs in 15 countries.
- We received Continuing Medical Education Credits from the American Academy of Family Physicians for our Validation for Medical Professionals training.
- VTI supported it's AVO in China by adapting its Presenter training to an online model and following that up with an in-person Level 1 training to give those Presenters the opportunity to become Certified Validation Teachers.
- The 2024 Validation World Congress was an amazing success with over 500 participants around the world throughout the four-hour online event. This year our theme was 'Connecting heart to heart with people living with cognitive change' and included people affected by cognitive change in each panel discussion.
- VTI offered certified Presenters, Teachers, and Masters 8 opportunities to come together and network with our online Teacher Meetings. We also hosted 4 meetings in French and 4 in German. AVOs were offered 2 different quarterly opportunities to network and find solutions to problems.
- We created a Naomi Feil Unveiling web page which brings together everything related to our founder in one beautiful place. For those of you who missed the excellent New York Time Magazine piece on Naomi Feil, you can find it here. (add link to the article)
- Thanks to excellent Board management, our Endowment Fund now tops 2 million dollars. We can't use these funds yet. They are earmarked for paying professional staff in the future.

At our strategic board meeting in July 2024, I announced that I will be stepping down from the Executive Director position no later than October 2026. I'm not stepping away from perpetuating my mother's legacy through my work as a Validation Master but it's time to pass the torch to someone who can bring VTI further on its path.

At that meeting, Board members adopted and refined our strategies and created realistic actions for this year. We are moving forward using our scarce resources in the most effective and efficient way.

Our 5-year objective is: "in 5 years, the Validation method is known and practiced throughout the world, as an effective communication method for disoriented older adults. We achieve this by communicating research results that show Validation courses are effective, ensuring the method is accepted or endorsed by national and international accrediting bodies."

It's aspirational but with all our new partners and increased outreach, we strive every day to realize our goals.

I am incredibly grateful to the VTI team: Nancy Brown (Deputy & Communications,) Jana Stoddard (Manager), Conor Wilmot (Marketing), and Joanna Ata (Web Master).

I am proud of, and grateful to our Officers and Board of Trustees. They play an active role in making VTI an effective and powerful organization.

I know that Naomi is nodding her approval from on high for our determined efforts to continue her legacy. Every day I think of her final words to us: her death will be a joy, not a sadness because people around the world understand her Validation method and continue in her footsteps, with her energy and spirit.

- Vicki de Klerk-Rubin





Mission and Vision

Our Mission

The Validation Training Institute is a non-profit organization that **advances knowledge, values, education and research rooted in the Validation method.** The objective is to nurture respect, dignity and well-being in the lives of older adults experiencing age-related cognitive decline and their caregivers.

Our Vision

Our vision for the future is that every older adult experiencing age-related cognitive decline, and their caregiver, can feel the joy and love of meaningful communication.

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History

Validation began as the personal practice of a brilliant individual: Naomi Feil.

As a 4-year-old refugee from Nazi Germany, she grew up in the Montefiore Home for the Aged in Cleveland, Ohio, where her father was the administrator, and her mother was the head of the Social Service Department. The older adults she lived with were her direct neighbors and became friends.

This experience gave Naomi unique empathy and insight into the world of disoriented elders which became the foundation for the Validation method.

In 1982, with the help of a few supporters, she created the Validation Training Institute (VTI) as a vehicle for spreading information about the method and to train practitioners and trainers.

Over the past 40 years, VTI has created and delivered constantly evolving training programs, published four books in 12 languages, created films and built an international network of partnerships. Feil's concepts have inspired a generation of 'person-centered' eldercare.



What We Do

Education

- VTI offers training to support the existing work of the AVOs. We also develop new curricula and training materials.
- There are 28 AVOs in 13 countries that offer a wide range of Validation training that is adapted to the local language and culture.
- Certified Validation Teachers work independently and with AVOs anywhere in the world by offering workshops, presentations and training that aligns with the guidelines presented in our Quality Manual.

Outreach

- VTI offers free materials and videos while also helping foster connections between Validation practitioners working around the globe.
- Online support groups for both certified and non-certified practitioners are led monthly by Validation Presenters or Teachers.
- A comprehensive Authorized Validation Speaker list is available [here](#).

Quality Maintenance

- There is an 8-member Education Committee that creates new training forms, curricula and testing methods.
- The Quality Manual provides guidelines for all aspects of training as information on how to run an AVO.
- Quality Certification for Institutions can be earned by organizations that meet VTI's holistic criteria.
- The VTI website contains [an archive](#) of all current and past research about the Validation method.

Facts and Figures for 2024

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AVOs

We added 4 new AVOs in 2024.

- 8,436 Validation Workers (↑67)
- 881 Validation Group Practitioners (↑34)
- 514 Validation Teachers (↑5)
- 28 AVOs (↑4)
- 20 Validation Masters

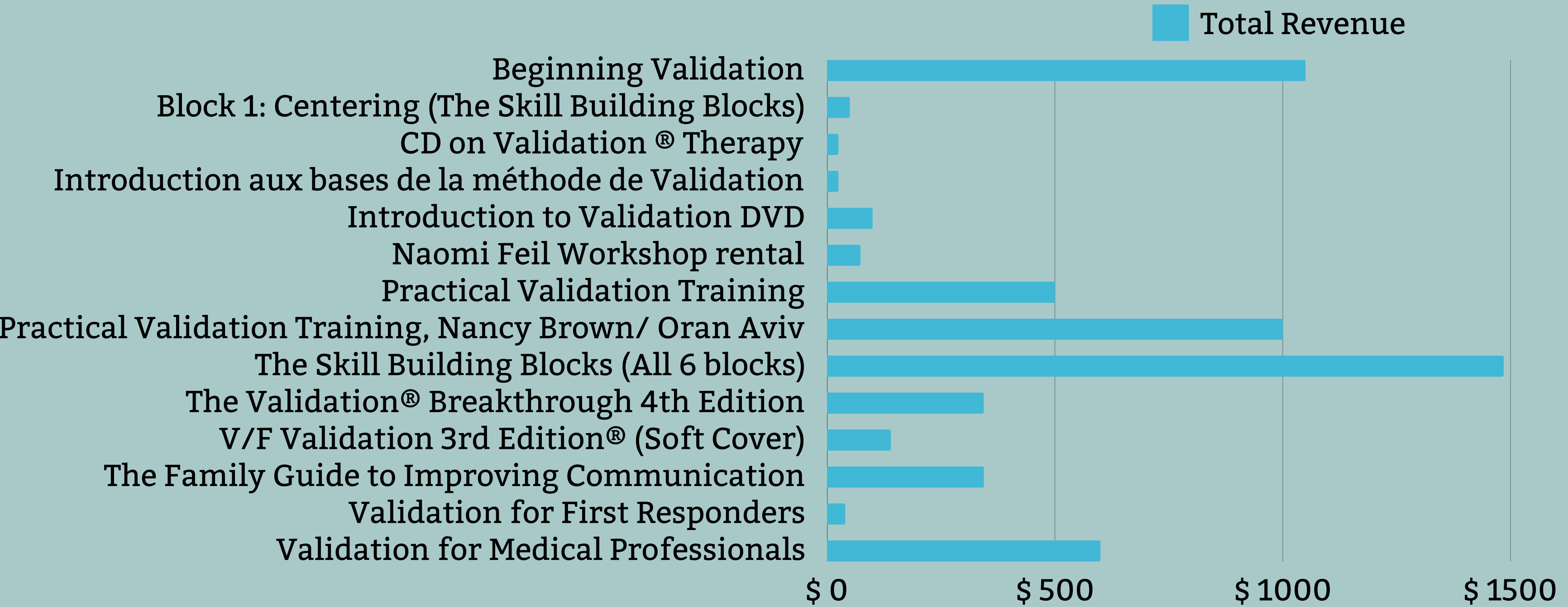
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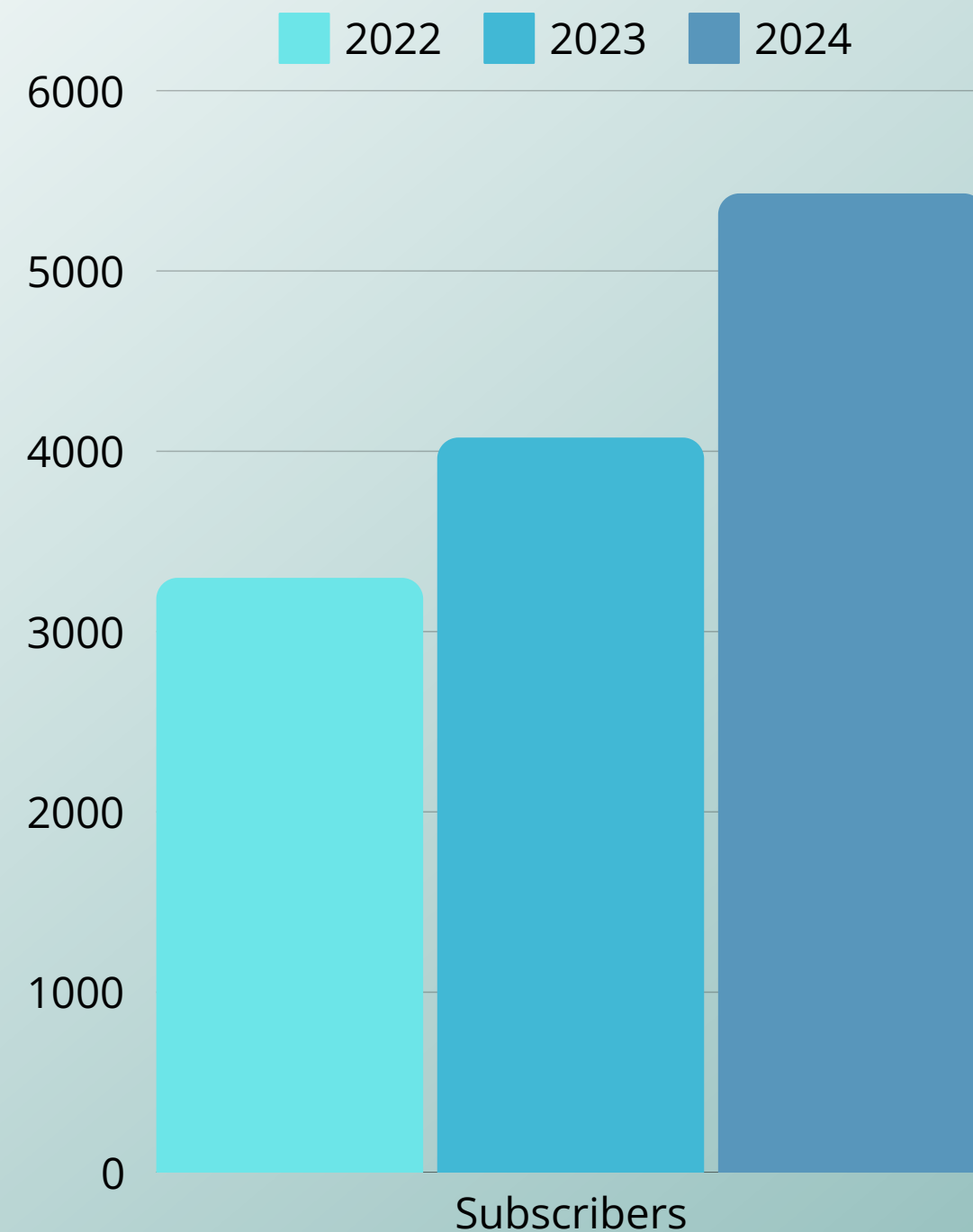
Validation Workers

Increase from the prior year,
where we added 54

- 13 Countries (↑2)
- 10 Board Members
- 9 Languages
- 8 “How-to...” Videos Uploaded in 10 Languages
- 24 Online Support Groups Held

Facts and Figures for 2024





Engaging Our Community via Email

1

1,354 New Subscribers

Increased engagement and growing audience interest

2

73,936 Emails Sent

39.74% open rate, 5% click rate, effective messaging

3

Low Unsubscribe Rates

225 unsubsribes, 5 spam complaints, audience satisfaction

COUNTRY	ACTIVE USERS	
United States	14K	↑275.6%
Australia	1.1K	↑439.8%
Germany	1K	↑32.6%
Canada	972	↑245.9%
United Kingdom	834	↑267.4%
Austria	517	↑27.0%
France	446	↑61.0%

Reaching Audiences Across the Globe



Active Users Increased

224.5% growth, expanding our reach



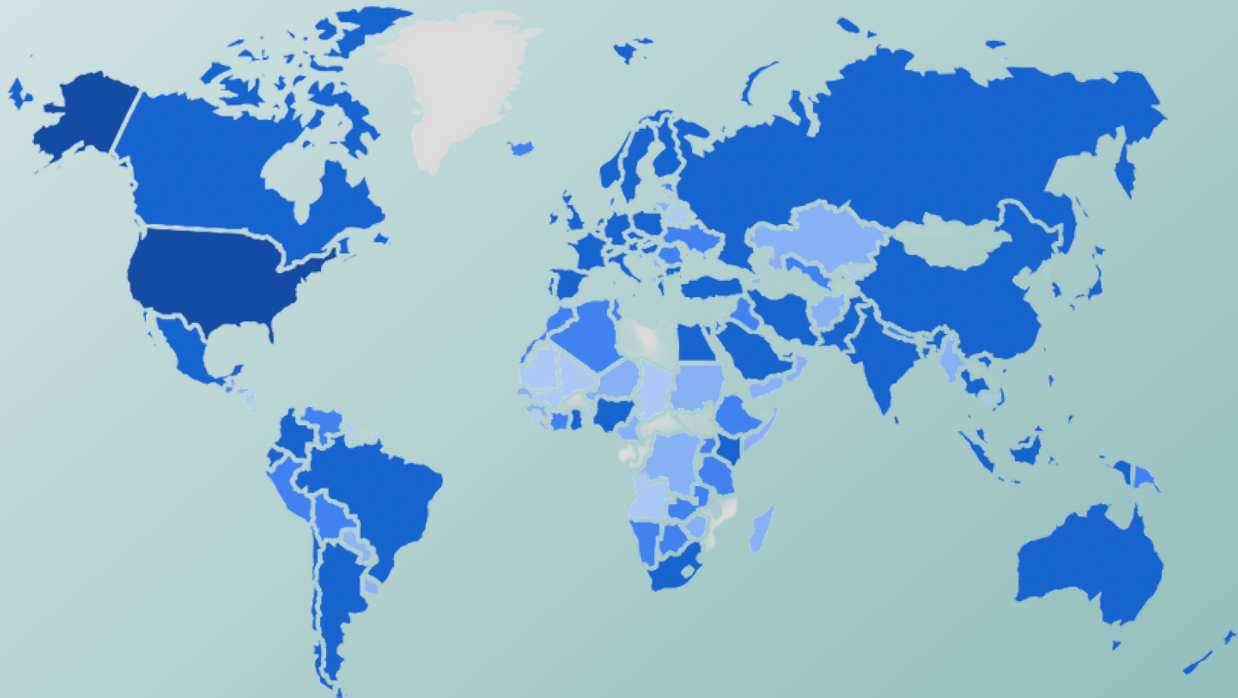
Organic Search Sessions Up

322.8% growth, visibility and discoverability



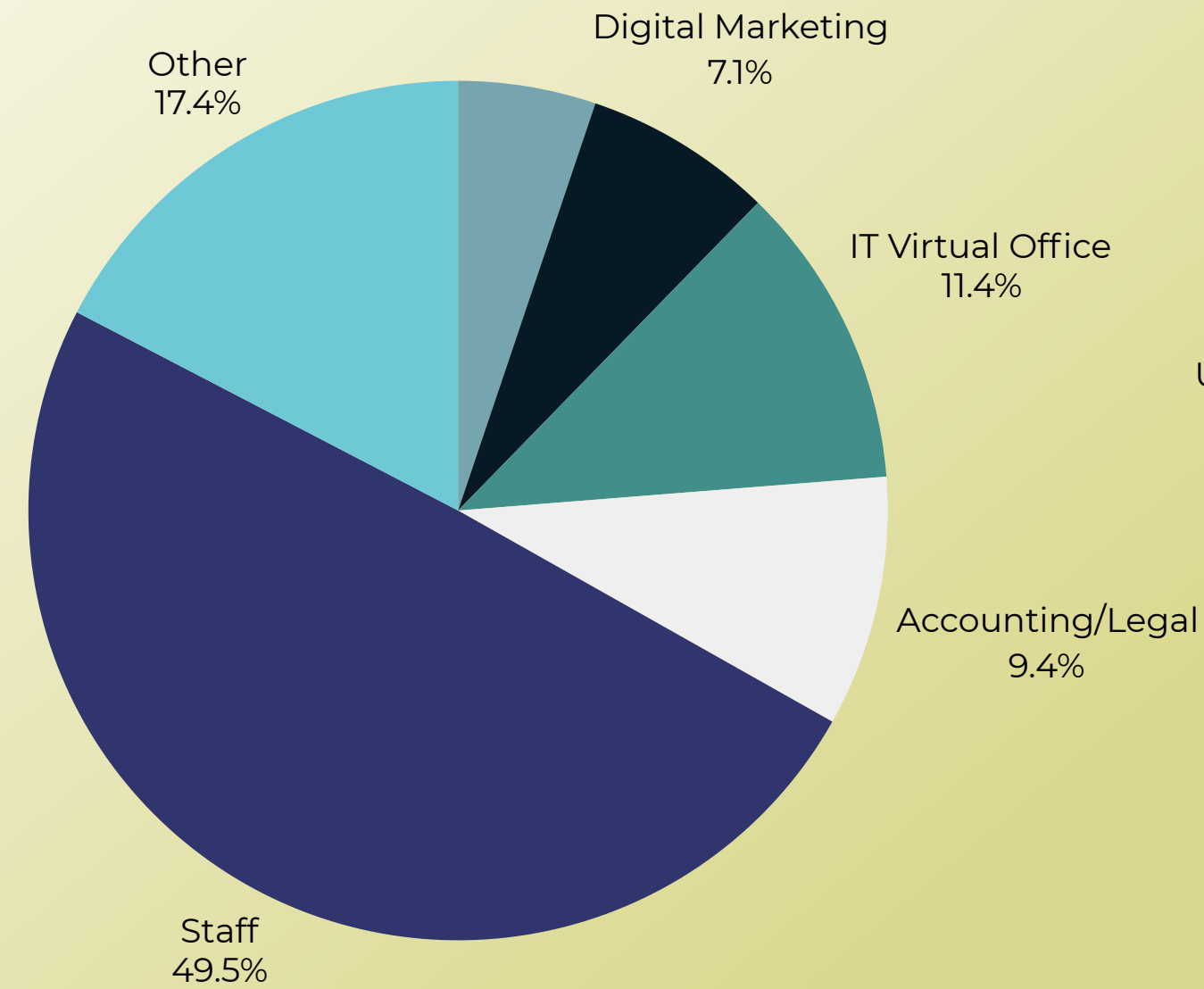
Global Engagement

Strong growth in the US, Australia, and the UK

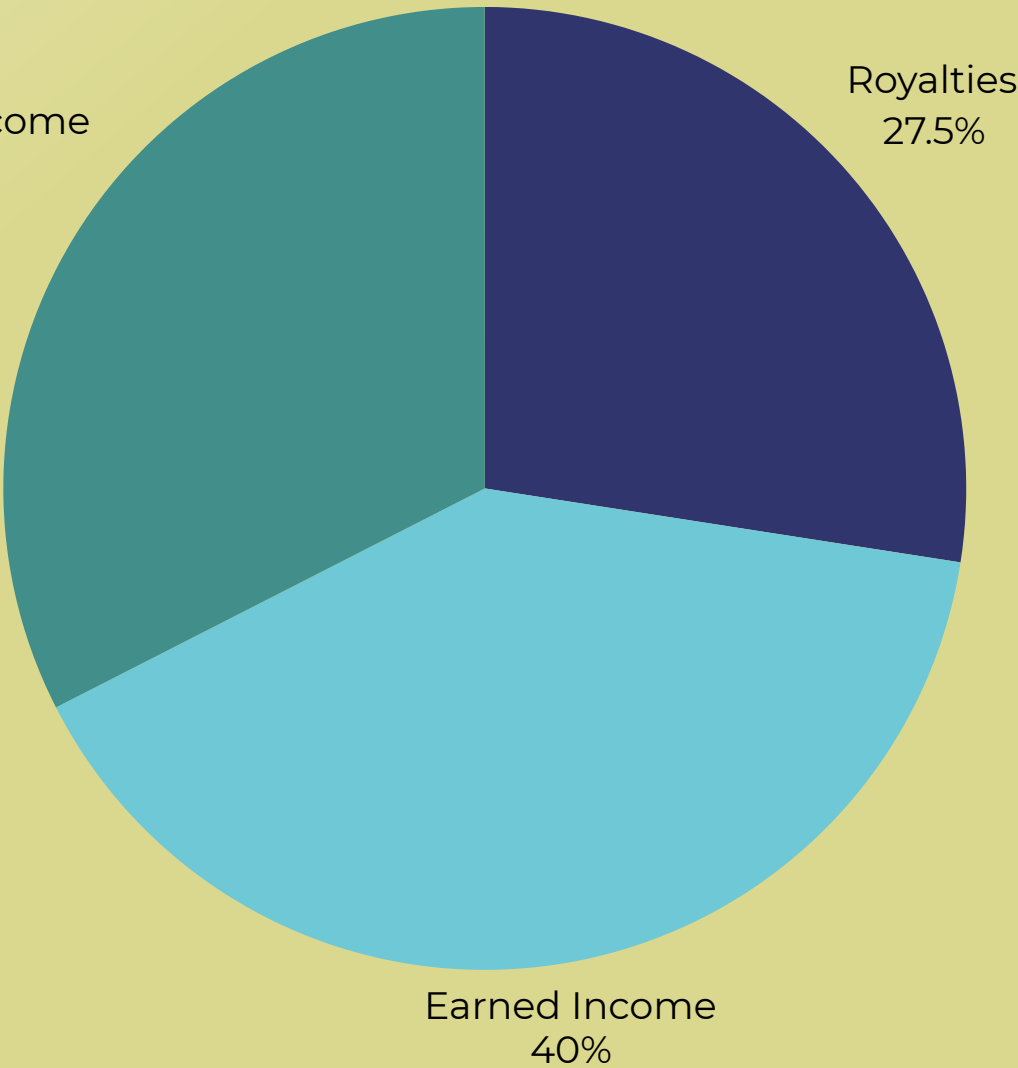


Financial Overview 2024

For a complete look at our financial reports, click [here](#) (Not uploaded)



preliminary data



Strategic Plan for 2026 and Beyond

VTI has developed a new 5 Year Strategic Plan for 2024 through 2028:

Financial Stability

- Increase earned revenue through online product sales
- Support new AVOs and help existing AVOS increase course offerings
- Design and launch Spring and Fall Fundraiser campaign.

Outreach

- Increase mailing list by 500 email addresses using targeted campaigns to different markets and utilizing partner list exchange

Courses

- Publish results of data collection from all VTI courses.
- New Course to launch this year??

Thank You Supporters

- **Corporate Donors**

- Meridian Senior Living

- **Individual Donors (\$250+)**

- Rita Altman
- Scott Averill
- Robert Baird
- Molly & Peter Balunek
- Nancy Bravman
- Fran Bulloff
- Piet & Vicki De Klerk
- Ed Feil
- Marie-Claire Giard
- Erica Marks
- Nancy Brown
- Beth Rubin
- Dirk van Leeuwen



Staff and Board of Trustees

VTI Staff Members

- Vicki de Klerk-Rubin, Executive Director
- Nancy Brown, Deputy Director for Communications
- Jana Stoddard, Manager
- Conor Wilmot, Marketing Manager
- Joanna Ata, Web Manager

Board of Trustees

- Rita Altman, SVP, Memory Care & Program Services, Sunrise Senior Living (Virginia, USA)
- Molly Balunek, Financial Planner and co-founder of Endeavor Wealth Advisors (Ohio, USA)
- Frances Bulloff, Retired Attorney (Ohio, USA)
- Kevin Carlin, Principal and Chief Sales Officer of Meridian Senior Living (Washington, USA)
- Edward G. Feil, PhD, Senior Research Scientist, Oregon Research Institute (Oregon, USA)
- Hedwig Neu, RN, CVM, Chair of VTI's Education Committee (Germany)
- Mariska Praktiek, MBA, Head of Strategy, Employee Engagement and Mindfulness, The Athena Group AG (Switzerland)
- Rudolf Rodenburg, MBA, Head of Strategy, Branding and Culture, The Athena Group AG (Spain)
- Harvey Sterns, PhD, Professor of Psychology at University of Akron (Ohio, USA)
- Charles de Vilmorin, CEO and Co-founder of Linked Senior (Washington, D.C., USA)