



About

Pollen is a community of cross-sector collaborators that promote career and civic engagement opportunities and who use peer-to-peer recognition to create both positive impact as well as personal and professional growth for our members. We have invested in a team of the most talented writers, artists, and designers to create content that is exceptionally engaging, that breaks boundaries and confidently tells stories in ways that capture attention and get to the core.

Founded in 2009 by Lars Leafblad to take professional community building to a new level, Pollen uses moments of connection and visceral storytelling to inspire and grow ideas. We engage our readers, members and followers in new and exciting ways that propel interest and content sharability.



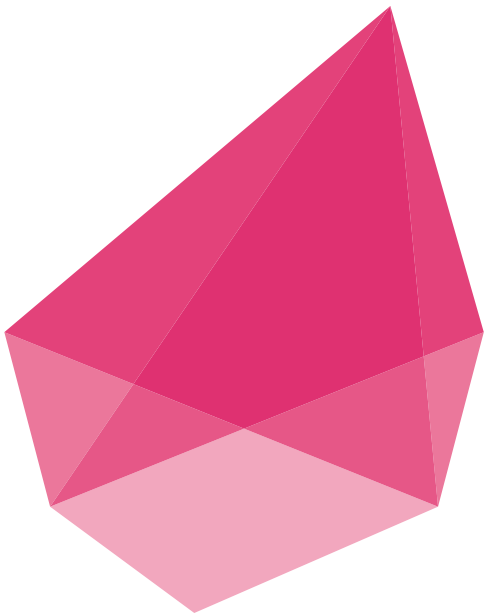
On an on-going basis, Pollen now reaches more than 10,000 actively engaged civic-connectors, entrepreneurs, community-builders, and make-it-happeners. Importantly for our partners, Pollenites represent a community of well-established thought leaders and emerging influencers who are changing our world in meaningful ways.

P O L L E N

Leadership

As testament to Pollen's core value of collaboration, the organization launched with leadership model that includes a co-executive directorship. Meghan Murphy and Jamie Millard share leadership responsibilities and together run the day-to-day operation while also having established a vision for the long term.

While both women participate equally in establishing Pollen's direction, they come to the organization with specialized and complementary skills. Jamie guides the development, implementation, and sustainability of the organization's core strategic activities: profiling individuals' stories, sharing community-curated opportunities, and hosting experience-driven events, with emphasis on future business development for the organization. As co-executive director, Meghan similarly guides the development and implementation of Pollen's strategic activities with an additional emphasis on setting the editorial vision and establishing the highest standards for composing artful, entertaining stories.



Meghan can be reached at: meghan@pollenmidwest.org
Jamie can be reached at: jame@pollenmidwest.org

Timeline

2009.

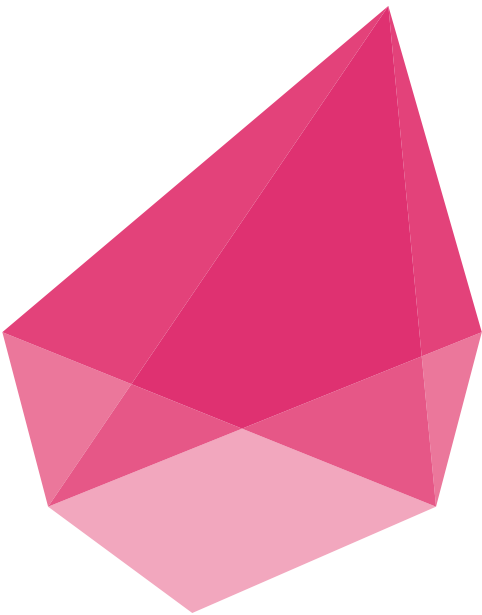
Lars Leafblad founded Pollen in 2009 with a vision of providing civic-minded leaders with a way to connect and share ideas. Soon after, Lars established the Pollen newsletter for which he curated, wrote and produced all the content.

2010.

By 2010, the newsletter was published on MinnPost twice monthly. Over Lars' initial three years with Pollen, the community expanded to include over 4,0000 members. He also established Pollen highly-active social communities for Pollen on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.

2011.

In early 2011 Lars met Jamie Millard of Paper Darts at a Young Nonprofit Professionals Network event. Both big-picture thinkers with minds for creative/social entrepreneurialism, Lars and Jamie began talking about a possible Pollen-Paper Darts partnership. After several meetings with the entire Paper Darts team and within the year, BePollen.com was born. Everything on this site is a result of the collaborative ethos of the partnership.



2013.

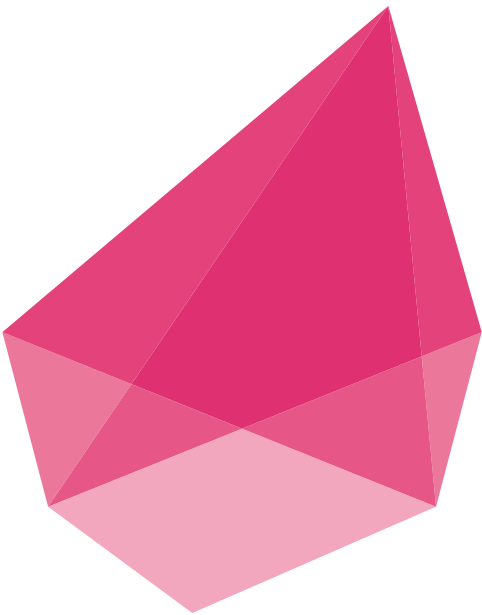
After two mind-melding years of Lars and the Paper Darts team working side by side to produce and curate an issue of Pollen twice a month, Lars announced a shift in Pollen leadership. For the first time in four and a half years and beginning on August 15, 2013, Lars would be taking a step back and Jamie Millard and Meghan Murphy of Paper Darts took a step forward. While Jamie, Meghan, and other volunteers lead day-to-day operations as well as long-term visioning for Pollen.

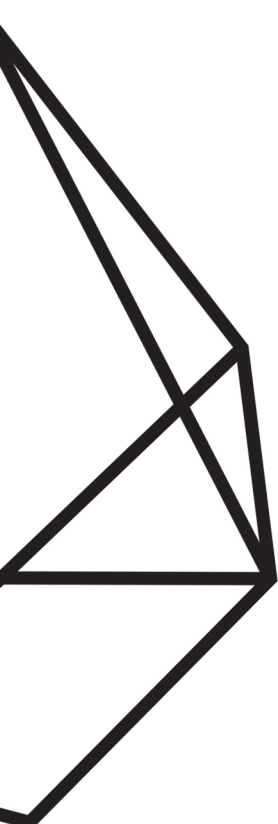
2013 also brought with it a generous investment from the Bush Foundation, who provided Pollen with the pledge of a 3-year grant aimed at solving community problems by transforming the way leaders connect and build networks in our region.

2014.

In the one year since the Bush Foundation's investment, Pollen continues its steady growth. In addition, a successful event series, Work Redux, focused on the future of work launched to sellout crowds. Attendees overwhelmingly requested that Work Redux continue into 2015 and plans are currently in the works to satisfy this demand.

In the 4th quarter of 2014, Pollen — along with its talented partners at Westwerk — launched a new website likened to a content rocket ship that pushes the boundaries of how connections are made, opportunities are shared, and how stories are consumed.





The Pollen Audience

SEPTEMBER 2014

Size of Pollen audience:

Email subscribers: 3,722

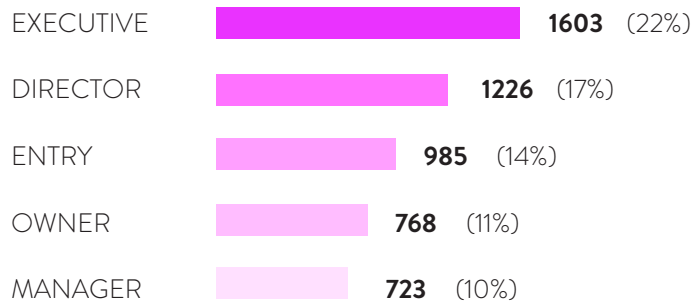
LinkedIn private group: 7,205

Facebook: 3,593

Twitter: 3,016

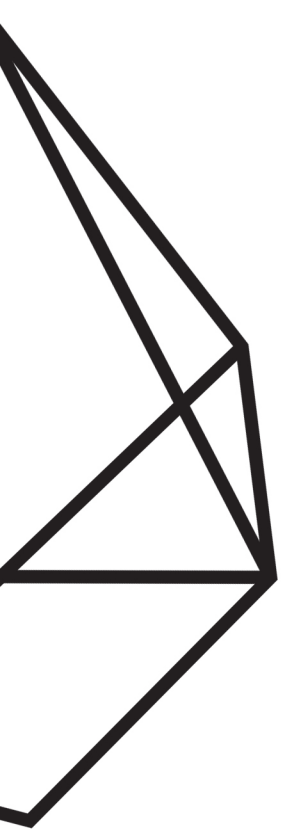
Demographics:

Seniority:



Location:

90% live in MSP Greater Metro



Function:

Media and Communications: 7%

Marketing: 7%

Program and Project Management: 7%

Consulting: 7%

Education: 6%

Arts and Design: 6%

Industry:

Corporate: 16%

Nonprofit Organizations: 14%

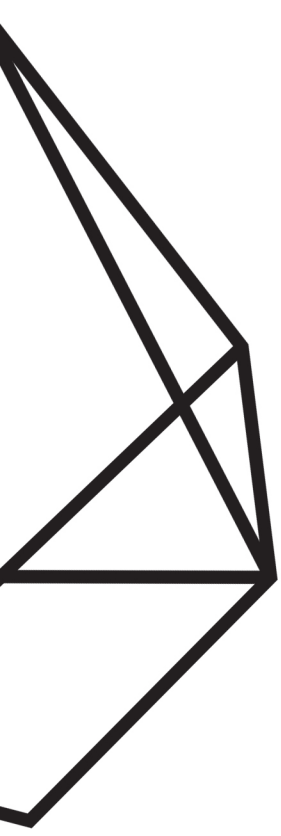
Marketing and Advertising: 10%

Public Relations: 6%

Higher Education: 4%

Management and Consulting 3%

Information Technology: 3%



Engagement Statistics:

Email engagement (twice industry average):

Average email open rate: 43%

Average click-through-rate: 21%

Facebook engagement:

Average click-throughs per post: 130

Average likes/comments/shares per post: 18

Twitter engagement in a typical, one month period:

83,300 impressions

617 link clicks

184 retweets

163 favorites