

Our Story



1917 The Beginning // Chicago business leader Melvin Jones asked a simple and world-changing question – what if people made a commitment to improving their communities? More than a century later, Lions Clubs International is the largest service club organization in the world, with more than 1.4 million members in 48,000 clubs acting on the same simple idea – when Lions come together for the good of humanity, there’s nothing we can’t achieve.

1920 Going International // Just three years after our founding, Lions became international when we established the first club in Canada. Mexico followed in 1927. In the 1950s and 1960s, international growth accelerated, with new clubs in Europe, Asia and Africa.

1925 Saving Sight // Helen Keller addressed the Lions Clubs International Convention in Cedar Point, Ohio, USA, and challenged Lions to become “knights of the blind.” Since then, we have worked tirelessly to aid those who are blind or visually impaired.

1945 Uniting Nations // We were one of the first nongovernmental organizations invited to assist in the drafting of the United Nations Charter. We host an annual Lions Day with the United Nations to continue our partnership and identify global solutions to the challenges facing humanity.

1957 Organizing Youth Programs // We started the Leo program to provide the youth of the world with an opportunity to serve and lead with Lions. There are approximately 180,000 Leos and 7,200 Leo clubs in more than 140 countries worldwide.

1968 Establishing Our Foundation // Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) assists Lions with global and large-scale humanitarian projects. Through our global Foundation, Lions have received more than US\$1 billion in grants to help meet the needs of their local and global communities.

1990 Launching SightFirst // Through the support of LCIF, Lions are restoring sight and preventing blindness on a global scale with the SightFirst program. Launched in 1990, Lions have raised more than US\$351 million for this initiative that targets the major causes of blindness.

2017 Celebrating Our Centennial // Lions celebrate a century of service by serving more than 250 million people around the world through a special Centennial Service Challenge.

2018 Rallying Around Global Causes // Lions unite to support the global causes of vision, hunger, the environment, childhood cancer and our new global focus, diabetes. LCIF launches *Campaign 100: LCIF Empowering Service* to raise US\$300 million to increase the service impact of Lions around the world.



Lions Clubs International