

NEWS LETTER

 King Baudouin
Foundation
Working together for a better society

Under the Honorary Chairmanship of HM Queen Mathilde

WINTER 2022

Energy poverty
Fair green solutions



EDITORIAL

Brieuc Van Damme
Chief Executive Officer

SHARING, CARING

As we lurch from the global health battle with a deadly virus to bloody combat on European soil, from climate-driven natural disasters to a cost-of-living crisis that is driving many families to despair, it's no surprise that one dictionary has declared the word of the year to be permacrisis. Yet it is in just such times that solidarity and community come to the fore, strengthening the feelings of generosity and hope that lie at the heart of our work.

Two years before rocketing energy bills fired a new urgency about renewables, KBF began an unprecedented listening exercise to hear how our most vulnerable fellow Europeans see the green transition. Fair Energy Transition for All has delivered a blueprint which shows how fairness is key to making a success of getting out of fossil fuels (pages 3-5). Putting the FETA initiatives's theory into practice, we've made 3 million euros available, immediately and with little formality, to groups whose ability to help those in need has been jeopardised by a spike in their costs for heating, cooking, and other supplies. Here, too, I've been struck by the spirit of solidarity among organisations, which have moderated their own requests to spread grants more widely.

The sheer diversity of ways that we can care for those facing health and survival challenges is also well illustrated in this issue: combined grants from the Mouton and Liénart Funds offer hope for genetic answers to eye diseases; the inaugural Rousseeuw Prize for Statistics rewards powerful new data tools that aid medical decision-making; our Myriad partner Give2Asia has launched a platform to speed donations for disaster relief; and a remarkable new U.S. film, made with Belgian Paralympian Marieke Vervoort and produced with KBF help, will enrich debates around the world on end-of-life choices.

In thanking our donors and the Belgian National Lottery and its players, and in wishing all of our readers a peaceful holiday season, let me also encourage you to turn to pages 18-19 to sample some of the marvels of our art and heritage collections on show over the winter!

The King Baudouin Foundation is an independent, pluralistic foundation working in Belgium and at European and international level. We are seeking to change society for the better, so we invest in inspiring projects and individuals. The Foundation was set up in 1976, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of King Baudouin's reign.

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FAIRNESS: THE KEY TO EUROPE'S GREEN FUTURE

A fuel crisis may hasten Europe's switch to renewable energy; [KBF-led research](#) shows public support will depend on it being seen to be fair by those least able to afford additional costs. Bold measures are called for.

Well-meaning government efforts to combat climate change can backfire badly. When they do, not only is the planet at risk, but also the social cohesion of our democracies.

That idea, crystallised by the 2018-19 yellow vest protests which forced a French U-turn on fuel tax hikes, prompted the King Baudouin Foundation to launch a Europe-wide listening

exercise to understand the views and engage with the needs of those for whom investing in new forms of energy is beyond their means.

Two years on and that project, Fair Energy Transition for All, or FETA, has delivered deep insights into public opinion – few among Europe's poorest communities, for example, dispute the need to change behaviours to slow global warming.

“The levels of distrust with which politicians and institutions are viewed by the most vulnerable should sound a clear warning. Ultimately, the transition will fail if there is not horizontal support across the population.”

**FETA recommendations
to EU policymakers**



THE FETA PROJECT

The FETA project was initiated and coordinated by the King Baudouin Foundation and involved five other European philanthropic institutions: Fondazione Cariplo, Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt, the IKEA Foundation, Stiftung Mercator, and the Open Society Foundations.

Some 900 people from socially and economically disadvantaged groups took part in the focus groups across nine countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland. Their views and ideas were worked into recommendations by 150 policy experts and reviewed by focus group participants and others before being delivered to national governments and EU institutions.

For further information on the findings of the FETA focus groups, see the [KBF International Newsletter, Spring 2022 edition](#), pages 12-13

Now, nine months into the war in Ukraine, with EU import bans on Russian oil and gas sending millions of household budgets into the red, KBF and its partners have also delivered detailed recommendations for policies that can both speed the move to renewables and maintain – indeed strengthen – Europe’s social fabric.

“That someone’s asking their opinion – and that this opinion is being noted down and passed up to the authorities – that matters to people. They hope that what they say is taken into account.”

FETA focus group facilitator,
Belgium



The guiding principle, the FETA authors say, must be fairness.

The risk of popular backlash against energy transition measures is not, they conclude, that policies push people to change habits, such as car ownership, or to cut their consumption, but rather that their effects are seen as unequal.

Recommendations for action at EU level take in broad strategies such as putting well-being and resilience at the heart of public policy and better communicating not only the necessity of the green transition but also its benefits for personal health and for social cohesion.

Governments should invest heavily in public transport, housing, and green energy infrastructure, aided by the kind of pooled EU funding that was pioneered during the pandemic, as well as a loosening of EU rules on national budget deficits.

Tax and benefit systems should target help to those who can least afford upfront costs for cutting carbon emissions, like insulation, heat pumps, or electric vehicles.

FETA advises improving data on energy poverty on a European basis and providing better, more

“Everyone should benefit,
but those with broad shoulders
should carry more.”

consistent practical information on new energies at local level, with particular attention on the most vulnerable in society.

It is important that energy transition policies are not only fair, but seen to be fair. That could mean, on the one hand, low-income families receiving completely free public transport passes, and, on the other, clear signals that elites, whether political leaders or wealthier citizens, are also reducing their carbon footprints – cutting back on limousines or private jets.

While governments face major challenges in focusing on long-term goals in times of crisis, the good news found by FETA's listening exercise is that “vulnerable citizens are open and willing to adapt their behaviour” – if they perceive those changes as fair.

“An unfair transition will not succeed in the long-term,” the report concludes. “Fairness must be the compass that guides the route.”

The recommendations in full:
fair-energy-transition.eu

SPREADING GOOD IDEAS

FETA's EU experts spotted good practices around the continent that they believe should be adopted more widely:

- The integration of different forms of transport network, timetabling, and ticketing in Catalonia, as way of improving car-free access to cities and jobs for low-income rural residents
- Tenant electricity schemes in Germany, which let flat-dwellers benefit from solar power

generated on the roof of their building

- Scotland's Just Transition Commission, a small panel including business, unions, young people and scientists, that advises ministers on the complex array of social and economic issues raised by the overhaul of energy systems

National panels using FETA's focus group data proposed an array of new approaches to governments:

- French experts proposed offering low-income households a Personal Energy Transition Account, similar to an already popular scheme that funds training and which could be used

to help pay for making homes more energy-efficient or switching to electric vehicles

- Italy should introduce personal trainers, ready to go door to door if necessary, to help people, especially the more vulnerable, reduce costs through better use of energy
- In the Netherlands, FETA experts suggest that free training be targeted at the unemployed and those waiting for residence permits to help them fill the large numbers of vacancies opening up for specialists in giving energy advice or in installing new equipment.

FROM 'CRAZIES' TO LIFESAVERS

NEW ROUSSEEUW PRIZE REWARDS DISCOVERY OF VITAL ANSWERS FROM DATA

James Robins and his colleagues were once treated as pariahs for seeking to identify cause and effect from raw data; the inaugural KBF-administered “Nobel Prize” for statistics recognises how their insights on “causal inference” have brought huge benefits in public health and in a growing range of other fields.



L-to-R: Thomas Richardson, Eric Tchetgen Tchetgen, James Robins, Peter Rousseeuw, Andrea Rotnitzky, Miguel Hernán

It was the middle of the night in California when Professor James Robins got the call from a long-time collaborator. The news? Robins and his team had won a million-dollar award for a body of statistical work on 'causal inference' that had been four decades in the making and was long scorned by a sceptical scientific establishment.

More than 10,000 km away in Buenos Aires, Robins' collaborator Andrea Rotnitzky had been the first of the team to wake to the email declaring that she, Robins and three colleagues – Miguel Hernán, Thomas Richardson and Eric Tchetgen Tchetgen – were joint recipients of the [first Rousseeuw Prize for Statistics](#).

"I couldn't believe it," said Robins, a biostatistician and professor of epidemiology at Harvard after accepting the award from prize founder Peter Rousseeuw at Leuven University in the presence of King Philippe. "Partly because I am a physician, an epidemiologist and a statistician, I wasn't really part of the 'in group' in statistics. I wasn't winning prizes. So this recognition was amazing."



Rotnitzky, who joined Robins in his research in the 1980s, shared in the sense of coming in from the cold: "When I saw the email, it was 3 am for Jamie but I said, 'what the heck, I'm going to call'. So I woke him up. We were very shocked. I've never won anything in my life, so I went from zero to infinity!"

Impact widespread, and growing

For many years, the accepted view was that while data could show correlations – say, between drinking coffee and being active – only empirical testing could determine whether one caused the other.

WINNING TEAMWORK

- Half awarded to James Robins (Harvard University)
- Half shared by: Miguel Hernán (Harvard University); Thomas Richardson (University of Washington); Andrea Rotnitzky (Universidad Torcuato di Tella, Argentina); Eric Tchetgen Tchetgen (University of Pennsylvania).

QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY THE LAUREATES' WORK

- When best to start antiretroviral therapy for HIV
- How post-menopausal hormone therapy affects heart disease
- What effect statin therapy to lower cholesterol has on cancer
- Can Covid-19 patients benefit from anti-inflammatory therapy

Robins' conviction that data alone could reveal much more has transformed how we can infer the effects of interventions, treatments, and exposures to substances. For example, it reduces the margin of error when prescribing the type of treatment for an HIV patient, and its timing.

In the last decade or so, the causal revolution sparked by Robins and his students and collaborators has exploded within public health, constantly evolving to solve new conundrums, and influencing other fields such as economics and psychology.

Statistics gets its 'Nobel'

Their recognition represents the launch of the biennial prize, developed by Peter Rousseeuw, Professor of Statistics at Leuven University, who chose the King Baudouin Foundation as a partner to manage the Fund and select an expert committee which reviews nominations.

Even as a student, he found it disappointing that statistical research did not have a Nobel Prize dedicated to what is a vital discipline for the advancement of science. Approaching retirement age, he decided it was up to him to do something about it. "Statistics is a cornerstone of science, health, industry,

economics, government, and more, and benefits society as a whole," says Rousseeuw.

"An interesting puzzle"

Having graduated in medicine, Robins' interest in causal inference was sparked after he founded an occupational health clinic at Yale University.

When testifying in workers' compensation cases, he was often asked whether it was more probable than not that a worker's illness was caused by exposure to chemicals in the workplace. When he looked for ways to provide an answer, he found them lacking.

"Nobody knew an adequate way to analyse it," he says.

"I thought it was an interesting puzzle."

With so many variable factors littering the 'causal pathway', few believed there was a way to use existing data to infer causality.

WHO IS PETER ROUSSEEUW?

Raised in Antwerp, Rousseeuw studied mathematics and took his doctorate in statistics at Brussels' Free University (VUB), where he filled his "boring" summer vacations by also studying physics and engineering.

After two decades teaching at universities in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, he headed to the United States in 2002. There, he spent 11 years at Renaissance Technologies, an investment firm which trades using statistical models.

Returning to Leuven University, his eclectic interests have included finding genetic markers for a particularly intractable type of breast cancer, helping to uncover fraud in the reported trade flows of EU countries, and a mechanical food-sorting project.

Now at retirement age, he aims to remain active in research.





Robins says he and his collaborators were convinced they saw a way to solve this but were swimming against a tide of academic opinion that was, he says, “totally wrong”. Only years later, he adds, did the editor of one prestigious journal concede that ignoring Robins was the worst error he had made in science.

“We were stubborn”

Rotnitzky recalls the difficult early years after she started working with Robins in 1988: “We were treated as pariahs,” she says.

“People said, ‘look at these crazy people ... what are they doing?’ We were stubborn. I had the benefit of working with a genius.”

‘Genius’ is not a label Robins wears comfortably. He says

he simply “knew what was important and how to get there, when other people weren't thinking about it at all”. He also had a knack for finding people with the right skills to help.

Seeing how their work is evolving and is increasingly mainstream means he feels “most proud of the impact the work will have on people's lives in the future”.

Also looking to the future, Rotnitzky feels their story should resonate with a new generation looking for answers: “My message to young people is: if you really believe in something, don't pay attention to the trends of the moment, keep going! We persisted and, in the end, it paid off.”

HOW THE ROUSSEEUW PRIZE WAS BORN

“For 40 years I was hoping a Nobel-sized prize would be created for statistics, but it never materialised. So, I decided to take the initiative myself,” says Belgian statistician Peter Rousseeuw.

After specialising in the discipline in the 1970s, it became clear to Rousseeuw how essential statistics are for humanity. He cites the discovery of the link between smoking and cancer, and data analysis that revealed the hole in the ozone layer.

The field of ‘statistics’ is broad, now incorporating terms like big data and machine-learning, but under whatever name it has not had the recognition it deserves, he says.

Prestigious awards have an impact, attracting students, researchers, and funding. So he used savings from his time at a U.S. hedge fund to form a private foundation.

Setting up the prize was a “long road” that took six years, he says, with help from his colleagues Mia Hubert and Stefan Van Aelst.

“We had long dialogues with some scientific societies, who appreciated the initiative but did not dare to engage. In contrast, things proceeded very smoothly with KBF, which has a lot of experience with awards. We are very grateful to them.”

The prize will be awarded every other year and will continue indefinitely.

rousseeuwprize.org

HOMELESS YOUNG PEOPLE: TURBULENT LIVES

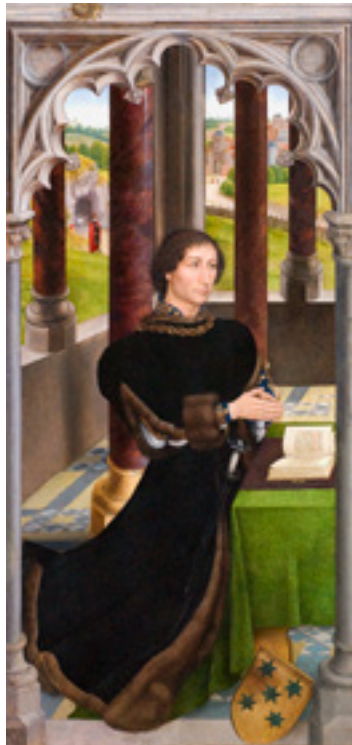
Combatting an epidemic of homelessness across the EU requires reliable and consistently comparable data. That is the goal of a KBF initiative that saw researchers from Leuven University's LUCAS centre and from Louvain University's CIRTES organise a third annual census of homeless people in nine areas of Belgium on the night of 27-28 October 2022. Additional research, also involving Ghent University, has focused on homeless youngsters, almost one in five of the homeless counted in 2020 and 2021.

Who are they, why are they homeless, what are their needs and expectations? The study found that homelessness among the young can be more hidden, as they more frequently than older people couch-surf with friends and family. The study has identified three distinct groups: young adults who've lived in the care system; those who've left home, often after conflict or domestic violence; and recent immigrants.



PERMANENT HOME FOR MAN OF SORROWS

[Albrecht Bouts' 'Man of Sorrows'](#), painted between 1500 and 1525 and bequeathed to KBF in 2021, fills a gap in the collection of Flemish Primitives at the Groeningemuseum in Bruges. Bouts (ca. 1452-1549) was probably a pupil of Hugo van der Goes, whose *Death of the Virgin* is one of the finest works in a collection that had hitherto lacked a painting by any important artist who worked in a city other than Bruges during the 15th and 16th centuries. 'Man of Sorrows', by the Leuven-based Bouts, was left to KBF by Father Ghislain De Jaeger. He had inherited it from his father, a past chairman of the Friends of Bruges museum group *Musea Brugge*, and bequeathed it in honour of his father. The acquisition has been restored and is on view until 5 February 2023 as part of the 'Face to Face with Death' exhibition at St. John's Hospital in Bruges. 'Man of Sorrows' will then feature as part of the permanent display at the Groeningemuseum.



MASTERPIECES ON DISPLAY AT BRAFA

Art lovers are in for a treat as KBF acquisitions go on display at the BRAFA art and antiques fair, from 29 January to 5 February 2023 at Brussels Expo. Showcasing Belgian heritage acquired for the nation, the KBF stand will feature 'Théâtre', the collected plays of Maurice Maeterlinck in three volumes illustrated by fellow symbolist Léon Spilliaert in 1902-03 (p. 19). Another standout will be a masterpiece by Hans Memling, recently donated via KBFUS. The portrait of Francisco de Rojas has returned home to St. John's Hospital in Bruges, the city where Memling, among the most influential of the Flemish Primitives, painted it in the 15th century. KBF is also exhibiting drawings by Pierre Alechinsky. In a nod to 2023 being Art Nouveau year in Brussels, Art Nouveau craft pieces by Philippe Wolfers, Paul Hankar, and George Morren are also shown. heritage-kbf.be/

FINANCE CAN BE A FORCE FOR GOOD

Reaching the UN's Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, especially in these trying times, will require huge amounts of investment. No more than 5% of assets invested by Belgian funds currently have sustainable investing as their objective. That leaves plenty of space for investors to fund societal change through impact investment, and to support business solutions for social needs – increasingly without even having to sacrifice financial returns. The KBF-supported Belgian Impact Day, on 30 November, brought together investors, finance and investment experts, and entrepreneurs showcasing their sustainable business models, to inspire and issue a call to action.





MARIEKE'S ADDICTION TO LIFE

A remarkable U.S. film about an extraordinary life and its early ending has premiered with support from the King Baudouin Foundation; the story of Paralympian Marieke Vervoort offers a powerful insight into Belgium's euthanasia laws – and reflects on our common search for meaning.

Can a greater sense of control over our death, give us a greater sense of power over our lives? If you knew when you would die, how would you choose to live?

'Addicted to Life', a documentary by award-winning American film-maker Pola Rapaport about the sporting icon known to most Belgians simply as Marieke, poses many questions for the end-of-life conversation. Vervoort's answer is clear: by guaranteeing to spare her a lingering and painful end, her country's right-to-die legislation gave her the will to live life to the full.



An active teenager, Vervoort was struck down in the 1990s by a rare, incurable, and extremely painful condition, which left her confined to a wheelchair by the time she was 20.

"I had my own life under control. And look, I'm still here. You're always doing more and more, because you've got your own life in your hands. You can say when it's enough."

Marieke Vervoort in 'Addicted to Life'

Yet she was not going to sit at home in despair. Vervoort discovered the world of wheelchair sport, eventually taking up triathlon, where she enjoyed international success.

In 2008 however, the pain forced her to give up that discipline. She also took the decision to gain the official euthanasia approval required for her to end her life. As Vervoort tells Rapaport during the film, this gave her renewed strength to face her future and make the most of her remaining years, notably to become a world champion, world record holder, and Paralympic gold medallist, in wheelchair sprinting.

Passed in 2002, Belgium's euthanasia law requires lengthy medical and psychological tests before permitting those enduring intolerable suffering to end their lives with the help of doctors.





Comforted by having “my euthanasia papers in my hand”, Vervoort responded with a burning desire to experience as much as she could of what life has to offer. As the film’s publicity tagline puts it: “The right to die gave her the will to live.”

The 100 metres gold at the 2012 London Paralympics turned her into a national treasure. More medals followed at Rio in 2016. That’s where Rapaport picks up the story, with Vervoort announcing her retirement – and declaring her drive to squeeze the most out of every day left to her.

The film follows her racing sail buggies on the beach, bungee jumping and

experiencing zero gravity, as well as her personal journey with parents and friends over three years; laughter – and a few tears – accompany Marieke’s reflections on life, death, and meaning, until the moment, a few months after her 40th birthday, when she peacefully went to her rest. ‘Addicted to Life’ had its world premiere closing the Portland Film Festival on 22 October 2022. The film will go on general release in Belgium in the new year.



KBF and Funds that it manages have long supported reflection and good practices on issues around advance care planning and end-of-life care, as well as help for people living with disabilities and research into rare diseases. The Foundation’s health programme provided funding for ‘Addicted to Life’, as did the Hibiscus Fund, managed by KBF.

Further details at mariekethefilm.com



JOIE DE VIVRE

Pola Rapaport recalls Marieke Vervoort and how ‘Addicted to Life’ came to be made.

How did you hear of this Belgian athlete?

“In the New York Times, in September 2016. At the Rio Paralympic Games, she gave a remarkable press conference. She said that knowing she could access the aid of her doctors to die had extended and vastly improved her life.”

What made you want to make the film?

“Marieke combined a charismatic personality with a fascinating, paradoxical, and existential story: finding that the legal permission to determine the time and condition of her death gave her an incredible lease on life and desire to keep on living life to the maximum.”

What would you like viewers to take away?

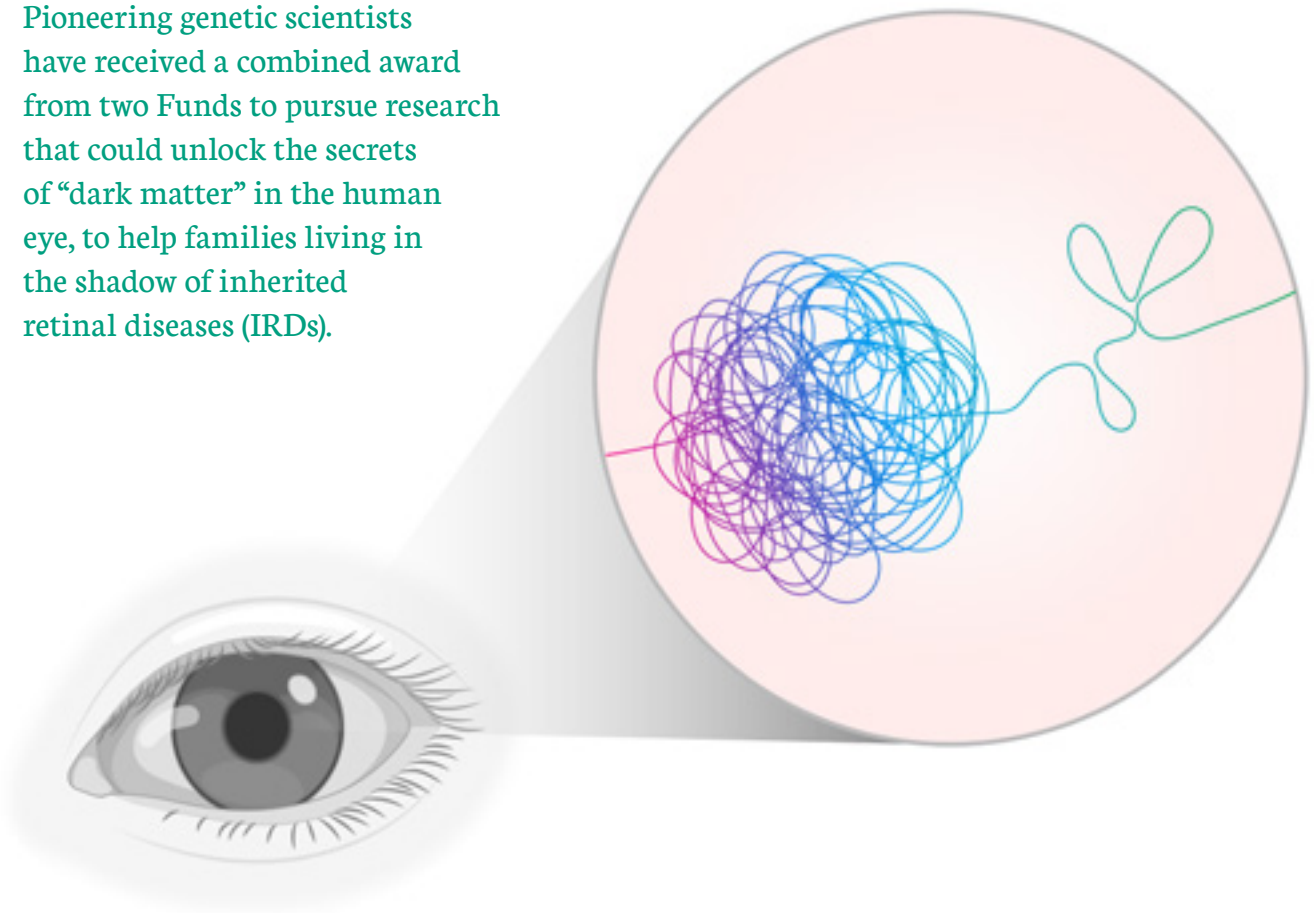
“To connect to Marieke Vervoort’s joie de vivre and her attempts to wring every beautiful drop out of life. I want people to leave the screening-room emotionally moved and feeling that they appreciate life, no matter what obstacles they may face.”



UNITED VISION

KBF-MANAGED FUNDS JOIN FORCES AGAINST BLINDNESS

Pioneering genetic scientists have received a combined award from two Funds to pursue research that could unlock the secrets of “dark matter” in the human eye, to help families living in the shadow of inherited retinal diseases (IRDs).



The grant worth 116,300 euros, provided by the [John W. Mouton Pro Retina Fund](#) and the [Marie-Claire Liénaert Fund](#), will support work on unravelling how the genome of the retina, the light-sensitive area at the back of the eye, works in three dimensions. It is part of a “paradigm shift” in genetic research that is taking science beyond identifying

genes to understanding how exactly they fit together within cells.

The project, entitled '3D-RET: unlocking 3D genome architecture in human retina, a novel target for intervention', could also have an impact on the diagnosis of other illnesses, such as cancer.

IRDs affect some two million people worldwide. Long considered incurable, new treatments are making promising progress.

Yet around half of patients still do not have a genetic diagnosis, often due to missed changes in their DNA's ‘dark matter’ – genetic material that

is not yet understood. Identifying these changes is challenging; interpreting them even more so.

This study aims to decipher one of the crucial missing layers – the 3D genome structure of the human retina. The genome is the set of genetic material found in a cell or organism. Scientists will investigate the effect of genetic changes in the mysterious dark matter of the genome on this 3D architecture in patients' cells.

Ghent clinic

The grant was awarded to Professor Elfride De Baere, head of clinic at the Centre for Medical Genetics at Ghent University Hospital and senior clinical investigator at the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO). Her work combines running a lab that offers genetic testing to patients with rare diseases and heading a research team that works mainly on rare eye diseases, including IRDs.

"Every day I feel very privileged because I am at the forefront of developments in the field. And on the other hand, I can immediately translate this to the clinic and to individual patients," she says. "Such work is important not only for the patient, but also for family members, who want to know the risk for them."

The core work of the funded project will be carried out by FWO post-doctoral researcher Eva D'haene, who will investigate the 3D architecture in retinal cells from donors. "We were absolutely delighted

to receive this funding, because this work is so topical and important," says De Baere. "The preliminary data is very promising, so we have high expectations."

Exploring the unknown

A bioengineer by training, D'haene's doctoral work was in neurodevelopmental diseases and she has already investigated the 3D genome: "Up until now, we have only focused on a tiny fraction of our genomes," D'haene explains. "The goal of this project is to focus on the part that has been under-explored so far."

Having spent two decades examining the key 2% of the genome that is responsible for the building blocks of our cells, De Baere says the research in Ghent was part of a "paradigm shift" in which scientists are looking beyond two-dimensional notions of the genome into the unknown third dimension.

"We expect that this will mean a lot to patients in the future, because we will increasingly find explanations for diseases," she forecasts, adding that the impact could also be felt in other areas, such as developmental disorders and cancers.

"If you know how the DNA is wrapped up in the cell, this can help you to understand the cause of the disease. In the longer term, this is important for diagnosis. And, in turn, this can become a target for therapy in the future."

MOUTON-LIÉNART: TWO FUNDS, ONE GOAL

To maximise the impact of project support, KBF encourages cooperation between funds with similar missions.

The 3D-RET project was awarded €116,300 following a joint call by the John W. Mouton Pro Retina Fund and the Marie-Claire Liénaert Fund for projects supporting medical scientific research in ophthalmology.

Further research in the field, and its subdomain ophthalmic genetics, is much needed for the benefit of patients. Belgium has a strong track record for research in this area.

A lack of money for academic research means philanthropic support is particularly welcome.





STRONGER TOGETHER AGAINST CANCER

Six organisations that fund cancer research are joining forces to create the [Belgian Cancer Research Consortium](#) with the aims of strengthening their strategic cooperation with researchers and promoting a more patient-oriented use of resources. The Consortium wants to be a learning network that shares best practices and identifies unmet needs among medical practitioners, patients, and communities. Joining the International Cancer Research Partnership (ICRP), a global network of cancer research funding bodies, it will be open to collaboration with other organisations, at home and abroad. ICRP membership will raise the international profile of Belgian research and researchers. Among its first initiatives, the new Belgian consortium will compile data on research funding from its member organisations and make that data available to researchers, patients, patient organisations, and funders via the ICRP platform.

MARVELS UNMASKED IN MILAN

Surprise followed astonishment for Belgian art restorers working on an early 16th-century retable in the Basilica of San Nazaro Maggiore in Milan. Under the aged varnish coating of 'the Adoration of the Magi', the original polychromatic painting sprang to life. Veins, whiskers, pearls, all came into sharp focus.

Details emerged as layers of gilt were stripped away. Perhaps the greatest wonder was the discovery on the retable's casing of the mark of the Brussels guild of sculptors and carpenters – debunking its long attribution to German craftsman Adam Kraff and restoring credit to the gifted Borman dynasty and workshop from Brussels. Two KBF-managed Funds made these revelations possible: the Comhaire Fund, which supported the research mission at Belgium's IRPA-KIK Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage, and the Jonckheere Fund, which made possible the final restoration.





INTEGRATED COMMUNITY CARE: JOINING THE DOTS

Poor health and poor access to care and support often go hand in hand. Integrated Community Care accepts that social causes may account for physical symptoms and asks patients for their own preferences and needs, to determine what can best be done by health and social care practitioners and what might best be left to the individual, or to a supportive community.

The approach is gaining supporters, among professionals and those concerned, but many are less sure about how to put ICC into practice. This was the subject of a workshop run by Transform, the Transnational Forum on Integrated Community Care, organised with the support of KBF at the annual conference of the European Forum for Primary Care at Ghent in September. fondsdanieldeconinck.be

WINTER TIPS: A WARM GLOW OF ART AND HERITAGE

For those seeking more than festive fare and revelry, Belgium's museums offer a seasonal feast this winter that includes masterpieces preserved for the nation by the KBF Heritage Fund, as well as by KBF-managed Funds established by individual art lovers.



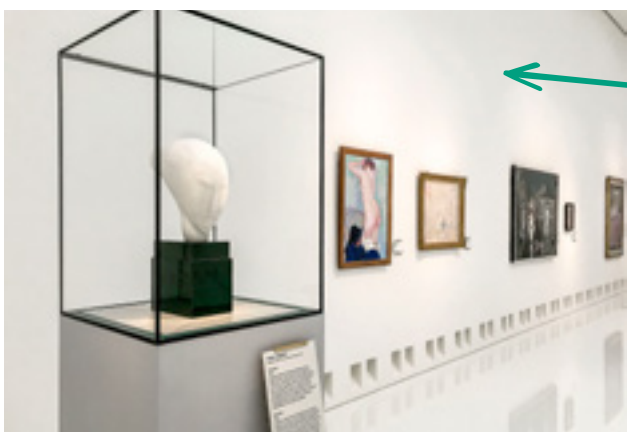
NEW YEAR, NEW ART (OR RATHER, ART NOUVEAU...)

Step into 2023 and the Year of Art Nouveau in Brussels. No need to wait for May, when the [Heritage Fund](#) will present KBF's Art Nouveau collection at the BELvue Museum. Venues across the city that gave birth to the movement in the 1890s will be showing off their curves, with KBF pieces in the Fin-de-Siècle Museum, Horta Museum, the Art and History Museum, and the Wittrockiana. Ghent's Design Museum, the BAL in Liège, and the Gilliot & Roelants Tile Museum near Antwerp also feature Art Nouveau pieces from the KBF collection.

CHRISTMAS MARKET, MEDIAEVAL TREASURE HUNT

An hour beyond the Belgian border and you can be wandering the famed Christmas markets at Cologne. An occasion also to wonder at elements of the 13th-century Treasure of Oignies. Two reliquaries that form part of this Belgian marvel of mediaeval church silverware, entrusted to KBF in 2010, are on display in the Magic Rock Crystal exhibition at Cologne's Schnütgen Museum. Until 18 March.

museum-schnuetgen.de/Magic-Rock-Crystal.



GLIDE OVER SNOW-WHITE FLOORS AT THE KMSKA

Freshly restored after 11 years of renovation work, Antwerp's world-renowned Royal Museum of Fine Arts, the KMSKA, offers a new chance to see works from KBF's collection, including some 30 terracotta sculptures from the Van Herck Collection. Also presented in a new context are the notable 'Visit to the tomb of Rubens' by the 19th-century Antwerp painter Philippe-Jacques van Brée, and 'Perle Fine', an outstanding example of 1920s avant garde sculpture by Oscar Jespers. kmska.be

CALL OF THE NORTH: INUIT ART AT SPRIMONT

Fashioned in volcanic basalt close to the Arctic Circle as unique expressions of the ideas and traditions of the Inuit, 26 contemporary sculptures from Baker Lake in Canada that form part of a private collection donated to KBF are on display at the Centre d'Interprétation de la Pierre, next to the stone quarries at Sprimont, near Liège. cip-sprimont.be



DRIVE OUT THE DARKNESS OF WAR IN YPRES

"War is night. Through my work I want to drive out the darkness," says surrealist film-maker Raoul Servais. Ypres' In Flanders Fields Museum stages an exhibition with film screenings on the theme of war in the works of Servais, now 94. Het Perron nearby is showing the retrospective travelling exhibition which KBF created of the filmmaker's work. KBF, which has owned his Fund since 2019, is also publishing Servais's memoirs of the Second World War.

You can find news and information about our role, our collections, and our publications at heritage-kbf.be

THÉÂTRE: ONE WORK, TWO GENIUSES

'Théâtre', the collected plays of Maurice Maeterlinck, illustrated by Léon Spilliaert, is now a part of Belgium's public heritage. KBF facilitated a collaboration between the Flemish Community and the Royal Museums of Fine Arts in Brussels to display this unique work for the nation.

Two geniuses – one working with words, the other with images – finding each other in feelings of melancholy and existential fear: that is the essence of 'Théâtre', the collected works of playwright Maeterlinck, illustrated by fellow Belgian symbolist Léon Spilliaert in 1902-1903. The three volumes – the personal printed copy belonging to Maeterlinck's publisher, in which Spilliaert drew 348 illustrations – were purchased from a private owner.

The imaginative fusion that was commissioned from Spilliaert is formally classified by the regional government of Flanders as a Flemish Masterpiece to preserve it for future generations. At the request of the federally run Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium in Brussels, KBF entered into an unusual collaboration with the Flemish Community to have 'Théâtre' acquired by the KBF-managed Eliane Vercaempt Fund and displayed to the public in the federal Fin de Siècle Museum in Brussels. KBF will also present it at the BRAFA Art Fair (p.11).

fine-arts-belgium.be



BOOST: TEN YEARS OF TRANSFORMING YOUNG LIVES

Young people from underprivileged neighbourhoods have huge talents, yet the obstacles they face make it harder to pursue their dreams. This year, KBF's talent development programme Boost celebrates 10 years of helping young people improve their chances of academic and professional success.

Our education system should give all young people the same opportunities for higher education, but this is not the case. Underprivileged young people are five times less likely to go on to tertiary education and as a result they are more likely to end up in poorly paid jobs or become unemployed. On average, it takes four generations for an underprivileged family in Belgium to reach an average level of income.

Boost breaks this vicious circle. It is a unique programme providing intensive guidance to talented and motivated

young people to help them realise their potential, improve their chances of success, and become inspiring role models for other youngsters. Workshops and other activities allow them to extend their networks and strengthen skills that will be valuable to them in the labour market.

Every year a new intake of young people arrives. They start at the beginning of the fourth year of secondary school and receive support until they have graduated with a degree or diploma. To help these young graduates go on to find jobs

more easily, Boost has plans to introduce a mentor system. This 'employment cell' will propose placements, student jobs, or job days, and allow more networking with professionals.

Boost – a joint venture between KBF and the KBF-managed Sofina Boël Fund for Education and Talent – is now active in eight towns across Belgium (see map). Over the coming five years it will expand into a further three.

More information: boostfortalents.be

930

Boosters selected
since 2011

7

national and local **partners:**

National Bank of Belgium,
Belfius Bank & Insurance,
Colibri Foundation, Nike,
Vanbreda Risk & Benefits,
Candriam and 1000x1000

A total of
58%

have gone on to university and 40%
to a college of further education,
with a success
rate between 65% and 73%.

10

KBF-managed

Funds contribute: Sofina Boël Fund for Education
and Talent, Strandschelp, Pierre François Tilmon,
Pierre van der Mersch, Philippe de Dorlodot,
Baudouin van Bastelaer, Vandewynckele, Steldust,
Le Compas and Génération Future



THE BOOSTERS



"These have been fantastic years, with unforgettable moments and experiences that will stay with me all my life. A group leadership course at Sporta, a United World Colleges short course, a long course, all the workshops (including GLOW, KU Leuven, Randstad, and others), sports days at Nike, all the people I met... I am so glad I decided to start out on this adventure, because it has been such a positive influence for me and my life. It has opened so many doors. Boost has changed my life."

Hasan Jashari, Boost Antwerp, 2016 intake



"Thanks to the support from Boost, I got through my difficulties and developed more self-confidence. That allowed me to get my secondary school leaving certificate. The extra tutoring played an important part in my progress at school. Then I started the Commercial Engineer course at Solvay and afterwards switched to Economic Science, also at Solvay. My ultimate dream is to start my own business. I want to be an inspiration for many other young people like me."

Othmane Dahman-Saidi, Boost Brussels, 2012 intake



"Boost has helped me to become more adult and build more self-confidence. Through the workshops I am more aware of my strengths and weaknesses. I have learned how to control my emotions better. Boost is a helping hand to help you overcome the obstacles in your life. I want to make it clear to everyone, especially my own family, that nothing is impossible!"

Kyra Spineux, Boost Liège, 2015 intake

THE PARTNERS

"The Sofina Boël Fund for Education and Talent aims to concentrate on three areas: young craft workers wishing to complete their training; university students with excellent results who want to continue their studies abroad; and talented secondary school students. Boost matches the Fund's mission, supporting young people over a long period to allow them to develop all their talents. This approach has delivered proven added value, and the programme's success rate in higher education is well above the national average. The social values that Boost promotes fit perfectly with the mission of the Fund and its founders."

François Gillet, member of the Monitoring Committee of the Sofina Boël Fund for Education and Talent

"A person who is aware of their potential and understands what they have to offer can achieve great things. Great performance is not easy, for individuals or collectively. We know, however, that we can do it together. We are convinced that developing exceptional but untapped talent is at least as important as recruiting the best talent. We work with experts, non-profit associations, athletes, and employees to eliminate barriers and help build a fairer future for everyone – especially children and young people."

Heidi Gillemot, Social Community Impact Manager, Nike

USING DATA TO COMBAT MALNUTRITION

One in two children in South Kivu is chronically malnourished. With KBF support, Kesho Congo is developing software to monitor patients in the eastern province more closely and use data research to find solutions to this complex problem.

For decades now, the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo has been in the news for all the wrong reasons. Rebel armies are making the region unsafe. This has consequences on every level, not least for children. Officially one in two are chronically malnourished. But that's just "the visible part of the iceberg", says Dr. Adolphe Nyakasane, a paediatrician in the provincial capital Bukavu. "The real figures are even higher."

In 2015, he founded Kesho Congo, an NGO that works on the related areas of health and nutrition, education, agriculture, and livestock farming.

"Violence has led to extreme suffering for the people living in the villages," Nyakasane continues. Farmers are leaving their fields fallow and moving to the cities, where life is safer but much more expensive. Big families lack money to provide enough food for everyone.

Other factors are also driving malnutrition in children: ignorance about nutrition, mothers suffering domestic violence, or diseases such as gastrointestinal disorders.

With KBF support, Kesho Congo has developed a programme at its nutritional centre, where a team of nutrition experts, doctors, and healthcare assistants organise weekly workshops. These focus on healthy eating, hygiene,





vaccination, and family planning, as well as identifying and treating chronically malnourished children.

Under-fives are weighed and their height and head and arm circumferences measured. They are given a porridge of maize, sorghum, and soya, enriched with a protein concentrate made from black-eyed peas. Children who need closer monitoring are given portions of the meal mix and concentrate to take home for the rest of the week.

The protein, whose base legume is also known as cowpea, is processed by Kesho Congo in Luvungi. The organisation supplies it to 15 other nutrition centres and clinics, including the Panzi hospital led by Dr. Denis Mukwege, the obstetrician, Nobel Peace Prize laureate, and winner of the 2011 KBF Africa Prize.

Over the years, Nyakasane's team has gathered a great deal of paper-based data on those treated. He approached KBF with a proposal to develop software to simplify monitoring the child patients. "Digitally, data are kept secure for a longer period, making them more accessible for scientific research," Nyakasane says.

"The data collection will help us to monitor the impact of our work and better understand the factors associated with malnutrition.

"Moreover we would like to study the contribution of local solutions compared to imported solutions, and find out how paediatricians in hospitals and health stakeholders in the community can act to avoid malnutrition relapse in children."

Based on the answers to these research questions proposals for improving children's health and nutrition will be formulated for the National Nutrition Programme and health policy makers.

Kinshasa Digital Academy, supported by the KBF-managed Marie Antoinette Carlier Fund, had the technical expertise to create this software. Nyakasane says: "We gave them a list of data we wanted to introduce into the system: the identity of the children, their weight and height, arm and head circumference, vaccinations, and other relevant information. We also asked them to integrate growth curves, to give us a sense of delayed growth and insufficient weight."

Kinshasa Digital Academy set to work and has continued to refine the software since the initial delivery. As nutrition centres in remote villages lack reliable internet, an offline version is also available.

Kesho Congo ultimately wants to see the software used throughout Congo: "We are starting in our own centres and then our partners in South Kivu," its founder Nyakasane says. "Based on our experiences, we can improve the software before distributing it to the rest of the country."



NEW LIFE FOR BRUSSELS' EUROPEAN QUARTER



The pandemic has changed office habits forever and the European Quarter Fund, coordinated by KBF, is moving swiftly to ensure that the Brussels district at the heart of the EU institutions enjoys a new lease of life in the age of teleworking.

What do you do with the biggest concentration of office space in Belgium when people stop going to the office? That's the challenge that the European Quarter Fund faced when Covid-19 struck – and it's one

that the building owners and managers among the Fund's contributors have wasted no time in addressing, now that hybrid working, partly at home, partly in satellite offices, is set to remain the post-pandemic norm.

"Before Covid, the European Quarter was definitely more vibrant," says Alain Deneef, the Executive Officer of the Fund, which for over 20 years has brought people together to improve an area that accommodates one in four of the Belgian capital's office workers. "Covid threw all of that overboard. We need to rethink everything from the beginning."

On the immediate agenda are opening up often forbidding ground-floor facades to bring in more cafes, shops and other public facilities, adding greenery in the streets but also encouraging more planting in inner courtyards and rooftops, and improving vehicle-sharing and cycling infrastructure, as well as enhancing the cultural offering in the neighbourhood.

Longer term, the European Quarter's central Leopold district, home to 90,000 office spaces but only 3,000 residents and stretching roughly between the Brussels and Cinquantenaire Parks, seems likely to see more

space converted to residential as the EU institutions, which occupy a significant part of all offices across the Quarter, move permanently to hybrid working.

The Fund, managed by the King Baudouin Foundation, promotes cooperation among real estate professionals, tenants, residents, and experts, as well as civil society at large, along with observers from local and national government and the EU institutions, for the benefit of the local environment. It turned last year to urban development consultants Urbanite Advisors to conduct a survey of buildings, employers, and employees in the heart of the Quarter, as well as other stakeholders. In mid-2022, they proposed a pilot scheme to diversify the district.

Estimating that the typical office worker in the area would now be working from home for 2.2 days a week, compared to 0.8 days before Covid, the survey found that demand for office space from current occupants would drop by between 8% and 22% over the next five to seven years. The European Commission plans to cut its office space by a quarter.

At the same time, there is potential for demand for space from other users. In the Leopold district, where 89% is devoted to offices, adding 700 homes a year over seven years could boost the share of residential from 7% to 26%, easily absorbing even the full 22% “worst case” decline in demand for office space at the heart of the EU Quarter.

Among initial proposals which the Fund hopes will inspire major institutions and the public authorities over the coming years, are increasing the functional mix, especially at

street level, creating a greener space that traps less heat amid the concrete as global temperatures rise, and reducing car traffic and the barriers that busy highways create to cyclists and pedestrians.

One immediate difference, the Fund points out, could be the removal of swathes of adhesive posters covering the plate-glass ground-floor exteriors of many EU buildings. Introduced for security and privacy, these floor-to-ceiling stickers also conceal the life and activity of the Quarter, depriving it of animation. Talks are under way with the Commission on ways to open up without exposing

employees to additional risks. A further step would then be to find public-facing street-level tenants, such as stores, cafés, bike repair shops, coworking spaces, and pop-up cultural exhibitions.

“We would like to convince tenants to open up the ground floors,” says Alain Deneef. “To that end, the European Quarter Fund would play the role of a broker, helping to match demand from users looking for retail or catering space with supply from building owners and managers. This is something that we hope to begin in the coming year.”



RECLAIMING STORIES

BOOK BUNK REINVENTS NAIROBI'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES



A vibrant group of libraries is emerging in the Kenyan capital. Turning once racially segregated spaces into palaces for the people, Book Bunk provides access to literature that reflects the cultural richness of contemporary Africa and creates a living encyclopaedia of its past.

Kenya continues to find inspiring ways to reappropriate its legacies of colonial exploitation. One such is the grand, stone-porticoed McMillan Memorial Library in Nairobi, opened for whites only in 1931 and off-limits to indigenous Africans until independence three decades later.

Publisher Angela Wachuka and writer Wanjiru Koinange came upon the McMillan while scouting for venues for literary festivals. They discovered a space that had scarcely changed in 90 years. "It felt like we had stepped into a time capsule," says Wachuka. "The library had remained much like it was during British colonial rule."

With the support of Commonwealth Writers – which brings together authors from Britain and its former colonies – Koinange decided to study the McMillan and its smaller branch libraries, set up outside the city's historically white Westlands district. It was time, she thought, for Nairobi's libraries to serve their communities – not just with book collections reflecting Africa's literary vibrancy, but also as centres for the

community. She and Wachuka launched the Book Bunk Trust, a social enterprise, in 2018.

People's palaces

They quizzed residents and library users about their visions for the facilities. In their minds, public libraries should be more than just repositories – they should act as sites of knowledge, shared experiences, cultural leadership, and information exchange.

"Book Bunk is now part of the economic ecology of the community. We create employment opportunities. We hire qualified individuals and invite them to join our team, and whenever we can, we take the time to train local community members into positions," says Wachuka.



A living encyclopaedia

Taking advantage of pandemic-enforced closures in 2020-21, Book Bunk worked flat out to complete its first physical renovations of two branch libraries. They also secured permission to manage the “mother ship”, the venerable McMillan itself, and discovered that its collections were in disarray.

“In nine months, with an army of 30 student interns, we turned a Dewey decimal card catalogue into a digital catalogue of 140,000 books,” Wachuka recalls.

“We found unique historical records sitting in mould in the basement, so we began a process of creating a digitised archive for over 50,000 items. With these now online, Book Bunk has launched a project crowdsourcing archives from Kenyans who wish to share their impressions about these colonial documents. These will then be added to the platform.

In fact, we are creating a sort of living encyclopaedia about our collective past.”

“KBFUS provides a great platform to support impactful projects in Africa. And giving through them has allowed me to increase my donations to Book Bunk.”

Brooks Washington,
board member and donor

Wish lists and fundraising

Book Bunk published a ‘wish list’ from which donors can select titles to purchase for the libraries in local shops.

“Book Bunk aims to bring libraries alive. We also need financial resources,” says Wachuka. “Our board members and other individual givers provide much needed monetary and other support.

That will be especially useful going forward, as on the horizon is the planned physical upgrade of the McMillan.”

Friends abroad

As Book Bunk Trust started fundraising online, they looked for options to receive contributions from U.S. donors and decided to work with the giving platform provided by KBFUS. “It’s not solely about purchasing books – sometimes we need to pay for shelves, and we have to cover our staff members’ salaries as well,” says Wachuka.

KBFUS not only facilitates the transfer of U.S. donations; the Foundation’s staff have also acted as a sounding board for how Book Bunk can continue to develop its fundraising. Being part of the KBFUS family gives Book Bunk Trust an alliance where the importance of its mission is appreciated and understood.



The King Baudouin Foundation United States (KBFUS) facilitates thoughtful, effective giving across borders – it is a trusted adviser for US donors seeking to support their favourite causes and non-profits overseas.



To learn more about our donor-advised funds, legacy funds and KBFUS ART, please visit kbfus.org. Or contact us at (212) 713-7660 or info@kbfus.org.

FIRST RESPONDERS

DISASTERLINK BUILDS TRUST TO SAVE TIME – AND LIVES

Give2Asia has launched a platform for urgent disaster relief that builds on longstanding relationships with trusted local NGOs. DisasterLink gets help to where it's needed faster, while giving donors flexibility and confidence that funds are reaching their target. All these services are available via Myriad through KBF in Europe and its North American affiliates.

Asia is no stranger to natural disasters and climate change. Population growth in the region means that the human impact of floods, droughts, typhoons, wildfires, earthquakes, and the like will only increase, putting a premium on both rapid response – and good planning.

But when a disaster strikes, donors can be at a loss to identify and fund those key local organisations bearing the brunt of relief efforts – while those on the ground can suffer additional stress if they

must divert time from saving lives to filling in forms to secure urgently needed resources.

Listening to these frustrations and difficulties on both sides, Give2Asia, the King Baudouin Foundation's founding partner in Myriad, saw a way as a philanthropy facilitator to close the gap. It has launched DisasterLink, a curated network of trusted response and recovery organisations, to which donors can despatch instant aid, confident in their capacity to use it effectively. Key to this network is

having partners who are deeply embedded in their communities and who are addressing disaster needs before, during, and after events.

"It's based on our deep network of non-profit partnerships in the region and the long, historical experience that we have in responding to disasters," explains Vice President of Operations Sheena Agarwal.

Starting line-up

DisasterLink features an initial 20 NGOs, four each in five





Jahangir Alam of the Dhaka Ahsania Mission, a leading relief organisation in Bangladesh.

DisasterLink also builds on Give2Asia's longstanding focus on preparing for crises, providing a network to share knowledge and experience with peers in other countries. "We work to strengthen the capacity of civil society and our partners to prepare for the next disaster, which in Asia is more of a 'when' than an 'if'," says Sajben.

DisasterLink is built to grow, with more partners in more countries and more capacity.

Noting how Give2Asia's networking played a significant role in accelerating high-impact responses to the Covid-19 pandemic across India, Yezdani Rahman of SEEDS, which has been helping Indians hit by disastrous flooding in 2022, said: "DisasterLink's flexible approach helps us in rapidly deploying funds for relief and recovery needs of local communities."

countries – Bangladesh, India, Japan, Nepal and the Philippines. They offer a range of emergency and ongoing services.

"Donors naturally struggle to get the detailed compliance information they need from organisations who are in the midst of responding to a crisis," says Alex Sajben, Director of Corporate Partnerships.

At the same time, local first responders can spare few resources for fundraising in the early days of a crisis. That can mean looking on in frustration as aid flows to high-profile outfits from abroad that lack their grassroots know-how – and which may soon move on elsewhere.

With DisasterLink, donors can give to any of the selected NGOs, secure in

the knowledge that these have a track record of performance, are respected by citizens and local authorities, will provide transparent accounting, and are being continuously monitored by Give2Asia's local advisers.

Each has its own Friends Fund in the United States, established at Give2Asia. Give2Asia also organises centralised campaign funds in the event of a disaster. Tailored donation services and matching funds for employee-giving are also available. All these services are available via Myriad through KBF.

Not 'if', but 'when'

"Give2Asia's DisasterLink is one of the fastest grant-making platforms to raise funds and support people in need, rapidly and effectively," says

Myriad, the alliance for borderless giving, is a partnership between KBF Europe, its North American affiliates, KBFUS & KBF Canada, and Give2Asia.



myriad.org

NEW VOICES

MARK THE BIENNALE

Since 1895, Venice's Biennale has nurtured and celebrated great artists and helped bring the world together after times of great disruption. Thanks to generous Canadian donors, KBF CANADA supported the participation of four unique Canadian talents in the delayed, post-pandemic 2022 edition of what many see as the art world's foremost exhibition.

"We can think of artists as ambassadors and as prophets in a way that can help us look at the present moment with different eyes, different lenses," said curator Cecilia Alemani, whose programme spotlighted young artists and those who lack commercial representation.

Delayed by a year by Covid-19, the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, normally held every other year (hence the name), ran from 23 April to

27 November. The theme, 'The Milk of Dreams', was an exploration of the body, metamorphosis, technology, and the relationship between humans and the planet.

Each of the artists supported by Canadian funds had a singular voice that was deeply relevant to that theme, employing unique approaches to making works that push traditional boundaries of various media.

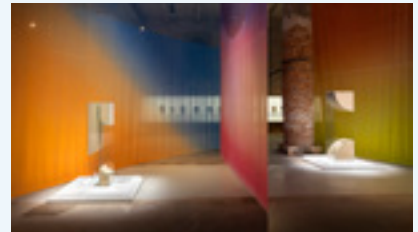


With commentary from Biennale Arte 2022 curator Cecilia Alemani, they were:

- Elaine Cameron-Weir's sculptural objects evoke the merging of body, technology, and machine: "I always love her work and it fits so well within the theme of the show, and so that came quite naturally."
- Jes Fan's glass pieces infused with hormonal substances make evident the fraught intersection between biology and identity: "Jes is someone that very much works with their own body and using pieces of the body. I wanted to challenge us to try something new."
- Kapwani Kiwanga focuses on a critique of systems of power through a combination of conceptual and architectural strategies: "What I appreciate about her work is that she can use abstraction to convey very relevant political themes."



- One of the exhibition's youngest artists, Tau Lewis created epically scaled masks, hand-stitched from foraged textiles: "I really tried to give a platform to artists who can really use it, to kind of push their work further."



- KBF CANADA is a registered charitable organisation in Canada.
- It works with individuals, families, corporations, and foundations to enable donors to support charitable activities outside Canada.
- KBF CANADA crafts personalised solutions for one-time gifts or recurring donations through donor-advised funds.

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 (1)514 481 2000

FUTURE CLASSICAL

FOSTERING YOUNG TALENT AT VERBIER

Every summer, the Swiss mountain resort of Verbier transforms from ski playground into a premier destination for the international classical music scene. Thanks to Canadian donors, KBF CANADA helped bring some of the world's best young talent to the 2022 Verbier Festival and support programmes to engage new audiences.



"Verbier is unique in that it's both a festival and an education project," says Stephen McHolm, Director of the Verbier Festival's Academy and UNLTD programmes, who is originally from Canada. "The Who's Who of classical music is here for 17 days every summer."

Masters and young talent meet

Launched in 1994, the Verbier Festival welcomes 400 musicians and over 40,000 visitors from around the world to hear music-making at the highest level. Organisers search the globe for the most promising

young talent to take part in its Academy and Orchestra Programmes. "To be accepted into the Academy is like winning one of the major competitions of the world," said McHolm. "It can really be a rite of passage for a lot of young musicians."

Donor generosity allows the festival to offer this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity free of tuition fees, levelling the playing field for musicians of all nationalities and economic circumstances. Canadian funds supported a scholarship for 16-year-old Israeli cellist Nahar Eliaz to be mentored by renowned musicians. They also supported the participation of four Fellows in the Academy's Orchestra Conducting Mentorship programme, to learn alongside some of the world's top conductors.

Engaging new audiences

The Verbier Festival is also dedicated to offering affordable learning opportunities that demystify classical music and engage new audiences through its UNLTD division. "We can't have a future for classical music without an enthusiastic audience," explains McHolm.

UNLTD's Classical Code Crackers programme features performances and visual learning opportunities for audiences of all ages. The popular 'Vous trouvez ça classique?' (You think that's classical?) series moderated by conductor Mathieu Herzog mixes live performance with entertaining and informative talk. Canadian musicologist Hannah Chan-Hartley also presented her innovative Visual Listening Guide, deepening audiences' understanding of famous symphonies in a visually engaging way.

Heading toward the Festival's 30th edition in 2023, McHolm wants to encourage young artists to take the initiative in bringing people back to classical music. "They can't just sit back and wait for audiences to come into the concert hall," he says. "We're taking important steps to prepare our Academy and orchestra musicians to play a part in the future of classical music by becoming relevant to 21st century audiences."

ENERGY EMERGENCY

3 MLN EUROS FOR THE HELPERS

Organisations supported:

494

Total KBF support:

2,970,000 euros

Distribution by region:

34% Brussels

32% Wallonia

31% Flanders

2% German-speaking

Distribution by size of grant requested

2,500 euros **15%**

7,500 euro **55%**

5,000 euro **30%**

Solidarity in the sector is high: nearly one organisation in two requested a less-than-maximum grant so that as many organisations as possible could be helped.

Some 500 Belgian NGOs helping the poorest in the community will make it through the winter in better shape thanks to three million euros from KBF. Organisations supporting vulnerable people through the cost-of-living crisis face their own sharply rising costs for energy and wages. With an [urgent appeal](#), KBF sought to provide them with some relief. Via a simplified application procedure, the organisations will receive grants to maintain their services. The groups supported are very diverse: social canteens, food aid, help for the homeless, shelters for young people and women etc. The total budget for the emergency appeal comes out of KBF's own resources, from the National Lottery, from Funds managed by KBF, and from donations that finance KBF's annual 'Poverty' appeal.



King Baudouin
Foundation

Working together for a better society