Contributing to Nature & Society

Adessium Foundation strives toward a society that encourages people to live in harmony with each other and their environment. We strive to create a balanced society characterized by integrity, respect for the environment, and compassion.

We do this by supporting initiatives and organizations that target subjects of social importance. These beneficiaries strive to create lasting positive change in our society. We support organizations in the Netherlands, as well as initiatives targeting the European community and the factors that affect it. In addition to financial contributions, we provide organizational support focused on strengthening grantees’ capacity.
1. **PUBLIC INTEREST**
   - Digital Public Space
   - Availability of Quality Information
   - Building Europe

2. **PEOPLE & NATURE**
   - Circular Economy
   - Conserving Valuable Nature
   - Counteracting Plastic Pollution

3. **SOCIAL INITIATIVES**
   - Participating in Society
   - A Safe Place to Grow Up
   - A Respectful Society
Foreword

In this Annual Report, we look back on 2019. Once again, we and our wide range of grantees were privileged to contribute to positive change for the environment, for a democratic society that safeguards civil rights, and for social justice throughout the Netherlands and Europe.

Adessium works with civil society organizations (CSOs) to create positive, structural and—if possible—systemic change. Together, we focus on major social issues. These ambitious, lengthy projects require a long-term vision that involves working closely with partner organizations for several years.

Over the past fifteen years, we have entered into a large number of multi-year partnerships with CSOs, whether it meant backing a start-up’s innovative concept or providing more established organizations with long-term support in order to help them make a difference. During that time, we also gained valuable insights about both the opportunities and challenges of working together to achieve a long-term vision. We’re not only financial backers—we also want to be actively involved in an organization’s development. We want to help our partners work through any difficulties they may encounter. One of the major challenges that this involves is to strike the right balance between involvement and keeping an appropriate distance: although our grantees are in the lead, we share their ambition to strengthen their organization and create lasting impact.

Transparency and integrity

Transparency International Europe (TI EU) lobbies to fight corruption and to improve transparency and integrity in European politics. Adessium was among the first to support TI-EU after its founding in 2008. The organization has achieved significant successes regarding the protection of whistleblowers in Europe and the founding of a required compulsory lobby transparency register for rapporteurs and Presidents of the European Commission.
Healthy ecosystems

Oceana works to safeguard healthy oceanic ecosystems. The organization has achieved many victories since it was founded, including the establishment and recent expansion of the Cabrera National Park in the Mediterranean. Adessium has supported several of Oceana’s campaigns and geographical projects since 2010, including special initiatives like the launch of Global Fishing Watch, a unique resource that provides real-time information on deep sea fishing activities worldwide.

The successes our partner organizations have achieved are the result of unified efforts, persistence, and innovative campaigns. We are proud to have been able to contribute to this.

In this Annual Report, you’ll find interviews with several staff members of these organizations that highlight their commitment and the will to make a difference together. They bolster our sense of purpose and conviction: social change is possible, and we will continue to strive for it.

In 2020, we will celebrate our 15th anniversary. It’s a great opportunity to look back on our achievements, as well as look ahead to what the future may bring. In developing a new plan for the coming years, we will need to reflect on the part we have to play, deepen understanding of current developments, and examine existing as well as new priorities. One thing is certain: we will keep working closely with our beneficiaries and set ambitious goals to create lasting, positive change for important social issues.

Rogier van Vliet
Chairman of the Board of Directors

Rogier van der Weerd
Managing Director

Supporting vulnerable groups

The Rotterdam Pauluskerk plays a vital role in providing shelter and care for homeless, displaced and undocumented people, offering them temporary housing, overnight shelter, language courses and daytime activities. In addition, people can also turn to them for refugee aid, medical consultations and dentist appointments. We have supported the Pauluskerk since 2013, helping to keep their crucial activities going in times where these kinds of organizations typically have difficulties securing funding.
Our Approach

Adessium Foundation is a philanthropic fund that works with beneficiaries to create an open, democratic society, to conserve and protect healthy ecosystems, and to ensure equal opportunities for everyone.

In doing so, we tackle a wide range of social issues and challenges. We provide grants to support civil society organizations that play an important role in society. We are not an operating foundation.

Approach

Our support for organizations that target issues of social importance is structured into three programs: Public Interest, People & Nature, and Social Initiatives. We proactively reach out to potential beneficiaries and invite them to submit an application.

We support established organizations as well as innovative projects. We seek the right balance between direct forms of assistance and support for target groups, and the pursuit of structural improvement and systemic change. Providing direct support allows us to remain close to the issue, which offers valuable insight into possible solutions. We can then use this first-hand knowledge to develop a systemic approach to deal with the root cause.

Oftentimes, we will decide to extend our partnership beyond a specific project and instead provide core operating support, thereby enabling beneficiaries to pursue their mission. Before deciding to issue grants, we thoroughly investigate potential beneficiaries’ vision, approach, governance, and implementation capacity.

In addition, we believe it’s important to offer opportunities for capacity building. This can either be direct support by Adessium Foundation itself, or by providing resources to attract consulting or other external expertise.

In all of our partnerships, we explicitly take a back seat and let our partners be in control. We believe civil society organizations should remain independent and autonomous if they are to function well. However, we do offer constructive criticism on the ways our partners could create more impact, and facilitate them where possible.

We want to use our means as efficiently as possible, for maximum effect. An important factor in our selection process is the costs and potential benefits of an intervention. We also want to learn from and grow alongside the organizations and interventions we support. That’s why we devote a considerable amount of attention to monitor and evaluate their approach and effectiveness. To make sure we increase and improve our impact, we involve our grantees and other relevant stakeholders in the process. However, we also look at our own foundation: through assessing our daily operations, approach and method, we keep finding new ways to improve upon the work we do. We also share these findings with peer organizations, where relevant.
Multi-year partnerships

We deal with major and complex social issues that require a long-term approach. Adessium Foundation doesn’t believe in a quick fix—tackling structural issues and creating change requires unconventional methods, perseverance and long-term involvement.

In general, we issue multi-year grants based on ambitious, yet achievable goals supported by a solid course of action. Most of our partnerships run for a three-year period. In our experience, three years is sufficient time to see what progress was made, and to evaluate whether an approach works, how to develop it further and whether it needs scaling up.

However, because social change often takes longer than three years, we can prolong partnerships—some more than once. Whether a partnership is prolonged partly depends on current developments regarding the issue, as well as whether the partner organization is still best positioned to contribute to the issue. The ongoing development of our own approach and priorities also plays a part in the decision. As a general principle, we want to make sure organizations don’t become too dependent on us for long-term support.

There are many things to consider when entering into a successful multi-year partnership. It starts with a shared long-term vision on how to drive change, but agreeing on priorities for organizational development is just as important. In order to get there, we sit down with our partner to discuss current strengths and focus areas, as well as define priorities in strengthening their organization. Although many project backers tend to focus on project financing and reducing overhead, we believe in the importance of a well-established organizational structure. In order for our partner to execute their core tasks effectively, it’s essential for them to have a firm grasp on support functions like finance, human resources, and IT.

We’re familiar with what happens when organizations go through different phases of growth and development. One of the questions the organization may struggle with is how to redefine the founders’ role during that process. Although implementing structures and procedures will become more important as the organization grows, it’s important to hold on to its agility and capacity for innovation. When the initiative in question is run by volunteers, the transition into a professional organization can be a major step—and one that comes with all sorts of difficulties.

We strive to create an open and productive atmosphere that enables us to discuss all these aspects with our grantees. In this Annual Report, you will find three examples of how such relationships may develop in the long term.

Added value

Whenever we provide support, we look for the specific added value our foundation can provide.

Adessium is an independent, autonomous organization. That gives us the freedom to pick our own partners and choose our own methods — for example, by supporting projects that do not currently receive financial support, either from the government or from other funds. These may be initiatives we believe have the potential to innovate, but involve significant risk or haven’t had a chance to prove themselves yet.

We are flexible enough to adapt our strategy and method to changing or difficult circumstances. We ask our partners to be frank about any obstacles they encounter, so we can work with them to overcome those.

Our long-term philanthropic involvement often enables us to provide insight into which issues could benefit from more collaborative approaches. We increasingly see opportunities to play a convening role, and in some cases initiate and facilitate those co-operations. Finally, we also proactively seek to collaborate with co-funders for anything from coordinating activities to devising a shared strategy and pool our funding. This can significantly increase the impact of the different parties involved.

Joining forces with other funders not only adds to a project’s continuity, but also reinforces the support for that particular intervention in society. We share knowledge with the other financial partners, and paint a clear picture of the initiative’s prospects. This kind of positive, critical reflection by all financing bodies involved has a beneficial effect on project development.
Adessium Foundation strives toward an open, democratic society. A society in which the availability of independent and factual information safeguards the public interest and encourages ethical behavior. We promote the search for truth, the availability of quality information, and public discourse in a digital environment. This way we contribute to an ethical, democratic, and effective Europe. The initiatives we support focus on journalistic research, public awareness, and advocacy.
Availability of Quality Information

Any open democratic society requires access to factual information from independent sources. Quality information provides insight into social issues and enables public discourse among citizens, politicians and policymakers.

The media industry has changed significantly over the past few years. While digitalization has introduced new ways of storytelling and sharing, it also disrupts existing media revenue models. In order to foster the pursuit of truth and the availability of quality information in the digital age, we support several not-for-profit journalistic organizations that practice in-depth, investigative reporting. That way, we enable these kinds of organizations to maintain their innovative reporting on social issues. We also promote international cooperation between investigative reporters.

We believe that journalists should be free to do their job unhindered. However, as developments in parts of Eastern Europe and other regions have shown, freedom of the press isn’t always a given. Safeguarding a free and diverse media industry requires ongoing efforts by CSO’s and governments. That’s why we support organizations researching and advocating for freedom of the press.

2. According to the annual World Press Freedom Index issued by Reporters Without Borders, the number of countries where reporters can safely do their job is down once again. This is increasingly true for European countries as well.

3. Investico reveals years of fraudulent activity at Maastricht University: Researchers committed patenting fraud and pocketed the money, while management covered for them.

4. Correctiv leads a major investigation into widespread VAT fraud in Europe, titled Grand Theft Europe. The investigation involves over 60 reporters from 30 countries.

5. The Panama Papers have resulted in over 1 billion in fines and overdue tax payments. Journalism funders and journalistic organizations are currently brainstorming on how part of that reclaimed tax revenue might be used to benefit the journalism industry.
Making the effects of digitalization on public discourse and democracy visible

Protecting personal freedom and privacy in the digital world

Applying civic tech to safeguard the public interest
Digital Public Space

Public space is a crucial element of any well-functioning democracy. Within that public space, people form opinions that serve as input for elections and political decision-making. Those opinions also create a shared understanding of their environment.

Digitizing this public space results in both opportunities and risks to our democracy. On the one hand, there’s the risk of misinformation and algorithms that determine which stories get read. On the other hand, digital resources provide an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between voters and elected representatives. Digital tools are also a great way to mobilize people for social change, which offers new democratic possibilities.

We promote research on the effects of digitalization on our democracy. We also support CSO’s that advocate for the protection of democratic fundamental rights in the digital age, like personal freedom and privacy. And we encourage the use of ‘civic tech’ by CSO’s in order to safeguard the public interest when it comes to political decision-making.
Building Europe

If we want to offer sustainable solutions to international social issues, we need a reliable, democratic and effective European Union.

A series of recent European crises have put citizens’ trust in European co-operation to the test. The United Kingdom has elected to leave the European Union altogether. Both the European Commission and European Parliament worry about safeguarding democratic fundamental rights in member states where these rights are under pressure. We will have to redefine the way we think about the future of Europe and citizen engagement in the European decision-making process.

We support research, advocacy, and direct interventions in order to improve the quality of European decision-making. Some of those focus on democratic innovation. We also encourage finding European solutions to international social issues, like digitization and asylum policies.
1. Friends of the Earth Europe is leading a broad social coalition in launching #myEuropeanmix, a campaign to get out the vote for the European elections. It resulted in the highest voter turnout for European elections in 20 years.

2. Tax Justice Network publishes the Corporate Tax Haven Index 2019: The Netherlands comes in fourth, after the British Virgin Islands, Bermuda, and the Cayman Islands.

3. TI EU and CEO’s most successful joint lobbying efforts results in a transparency register for EU rapporteurs and Presidents of the European Commission.

4. A Global Witness report exposes passport sales as a golden opportunity for member states: thanks to lax, opaque and incorrectly managed Golden Visa regulations in member states like Malta, Cyprus and Slovakia, criminals and corrupt individuals have no problems entering Europe.

5. The European Parliament and European Council agree to introduce the EU’s first legislation specifically drafted to protect European whistleblower, following lobbying efforts from a broad social coalition led by TI EU.
Lighthouse Reports

Temporary international newsroom & hardcore investigative reporting

Lighthouse Reports is a journalistic nonprofit. Based in the Netherlands, they are active throughout all of Europe. Their reporters all have a strong track record in investigative reporting. Lighthouse Reports won the Citi Journalism Excellence Award 2019 for their ‘excellent financial and economic reporting’ on alleged corruption regarding major international tenders. For their ‘#EUarms’ project on European weapons export practices, they joined forces with Bellingcat and with reporters from Belgium, Italy, France, Sweden, Spain and Germany. What makes Lighthouse Reports unique is that they organize temporary international newsrooms: reports, media partners, developers, open source investigators and other experts are brought together for shorter or longer periods of time to get a running start on complex subjects and major issues like conflict, migration and corruption.

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism

Experimenting with ‘impact production’.

In order to maximize social impact through their stories, The Bureau of Investigative Journalism (UK) has hired an ‘impact editor’. Until recently, investigative reporters felt this was too close to lobbying and campaigning. The Bureau stresses that the creation of the impact editor role allows them to effectively navigate that tightrope, while at the same time strengthening their core task of providing high-quality reporting. The impact editor interacts with networks and other organizations actively involved with issues The Bureau is investigating, and ensures key audiences engage with The Bureau’s journalism off the page and in the real world. Having a role dedicated to impact ensures that strategic and targeted collaboration and outreach is built into the journalistic processes in order to consistently spark both top-down and bottom-up change.
Joint call for applications
(with SIDN Fund)

Staying in control of your online news consumption

Whose political ads show up in your Facebook news feed? How can activists deal with online harassment or attacks? And who decides what your Instagram feed looks like? Adessium and SIDN Fund issued a joint call to organizations and initiatives to apply for project-based support. We were specifically looking for projects that give people agency in how they are informed in today’s digital democratic society. After an exhaustive and thorough selection process that involved input from several third-party experts, we selected nine projects to support. These projects will kick off over the course of 2020.

mySociety

Tech for good

mySociety specializes in building technical tools to support social change makers. The support focuses on developing and improving Alaveteli Pro - the open source software behind websites that help reporters, social organizations and citizens submit requests to make information publicly accessible, such as through the Dutch Access to Information Law. While submitting these requests is vital to the public availability of information, and to the production of stories in the public interest, the process usually takes quite long and is quite complicated administratively. Alaveteli allows people to easily submit, manage and monitor A+I requests. Furthermore, it allows journalists to keep their requests private - an important feature for reporters who need to preserve a potential scoop. As part of the project, a new Alaveteli-powered website has recently been launched in the Netherlands: www.wob-knop.nl.

Friends of the Earth Europe

The Europe we want

Friends of the Earth Europe led a broad alliance of social organizations in creating an awareness campaign called ‘The Europe We Want’. In it, Friends of the Earth Europe asks, ‘What kind of Europe do we want?’ rather than ‘Do we want more or less European interference?’ The focus was on solidarity and cooperation as key to a sustainable and just future. Increased negative publicity following different European crises, as well as a large amount of media attention for Euro-sceptics, have contributed to a greater distance between EU institutions and citizens. This more positive approach is an attempt by Friends of the Earth Europe and allies - at Brussels and national level - to increase citizen involvement in Europe’s future, in order to create sustainable, fair and responsive societies in Europe.

Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)

Transparency of EU institutions

CEO strives to improve transparency, accountability and integrity in EU institutions, while also fighting corruption. It’s often unclear just how the different member states contribute to EU decision-making, and very little research is done on the subject. Because the Council of Ministers—in which all member states are represented—plays an important role in EU politics, CEO specifically targets the Council’s functioning. In 2019, CEO published a report titled ‘Captured States’ that details how member states are influenced by corporate lobbying, both in the Council of Ministers and in other EU institutions. The Council faced significant criticism as a result, and several member states including the Netherlands asked parliamentary questions about the report.
Transparency International EU

Carl Dolan — Director (until March 20 2020)
Michiel van Hulten — Director (from March 20 2020)

Adessium Foundation

Rogier van der Weerd — Managing Director
Tamara van Strijp — Program Manager Public Interest
A conversation with TI EU: improving the accountability and integrity of the EU institutions

We meet in the heart of Brussels, in an office buzzing with energy. Around eight young-ish people are hard at work to promote more transparency and less corruption in policymaking in Europe. The rest of the fifteen-strong team are busy holding lobbying meetings across the EU bubble. TI’s office is just a stone’s throw away from the main objects of its attention: the European Commission, the Council, the Parliament and the other European institutions.

We’re speaking with Carl Dolan, until last year director of TI EU, and Michiel van Hulten, who took over the baton from Carl. It’s been a few months since Carl stepped down and the staff gives him a warm welcome, complete with hugs, before we can retreat to a quiet room for our conversation. →
Personal motivations

Carl is Irish, a factor that has had considerable influence on him in choosing this line of work. In particular, the effect subsequent financial crises (such as the Euro-crisis) had on the Republic motivated him to study policy and decision-making at the political level. “People were hit hard by budget cuts, and for them the financial crisis was not an abstract thing, but daily reality.”

“These financial crises implied an injustice I never thought I would experience when I was going to university. Middle-class Europeans suddenly found themselves facing the prospect of a future where they might not be able to live the lifestyle or have the income or security that their parents had. In fact, for many people, myself included, it was the first time they began to question European institutions and how they were operating. When you talk to citizens, their main questions were who decides what, and what happens when you make the wrong decisions. These are very concrete questions and we try to clarify the answers to these questions. That is the accountability part of our work.”

Michiel is a strong believer in Europe as a political project. And in order for that project to be successful you need credible institutions that are viewed as being legitimate by the general public. “The institutions will only acquire legitimacy if they work according to the highest standards of integrity and accountability. I have always seen the fight for political integrity within the institutions as a way to make them stronger, more credible and in the end more effective in delivering for European citizens. As TI EU, we are politically neutral, neither left nor right, but we do want to make the policymaking credible and effective and ensure that it’s in the general public’s best interest. This is the motivation driving our political integrity work.”

Communications

One of TI EU’s main challenges is how to be critical of the institutions without undermining political support for the European project. “In order to clean up the institutions and make sure they work well, you often have to be critical of them. Some people may interpret this as an attack on the European project. It’s a narrow road we have to navigate,” Michiel says.

Carl confirms this. “Communications is a challenge. One of the most effective tools in the toolbox is the ability to go public with criticism but you should be very careful how you employ that tool. It’s a common dilemma in anti-corruption work: every time you expose a scandal or even a flaw, this exposure harms people’s faith in democracy in a more general sense.”

Results and wins

And they are seeing some results. According to Michiel, “The Commission has really changed the way it works, although it is still far from perfect. There is more introspection on better regulation and being much more critical about what kinds of laws we are adopting, how we are adopting them and the impact they have. This critical self-reflection was largely absent twenty years ago.”

TI EU’s work has led to other wins as well: new legislation was introduced that required the oil and gas industry to publish their payments to governments around the world, and the EU has adopted a directive that shields whistleblowers from retaliation. Legislation has also been put in place to fight money laundering, and to ensure that lobbying is more open and transparent. In broader terms, issues of political integrity have risen to the top of the agenda. Twenty years ago, these issues didn’t really play a role, and now they are considered to be important. →
Carl Dolan became TI EU’s director in 2013 after having worked there since 2011. At the end of last year, Carl left TI EU and became deputy Director & Head of Advocacy at Open Society European Policy Institute. Michiel van Hulten succeeded Carl in 2019 as director. Prior to that, he had been the managing director of VoteWatch Europe, the organization that monitors EU institutions’ decision-making processes. He was also a member of the European Parliament and an official serving the EU Council of Ministers.

Transparency International EU’s mission is to prevent corruption and promote integrity, transparency and accountability in EU institutions, policies and legislation. TI EU is part of the global anti-corruption movement, Transparency International, which encompasses over 100 chapters all over the world. TI EU leads the movement’s EU advocacy in close cooperation with national chapters worldwide but is particularly involved with the 23 national chapters in EU member states. TI EU and Adessium, one of their core funders, have a longstanding grant relationship.
Lobby

Carl and Michiel clarify that lobbying is a healthy part of the democratic process, where citizens and organizations aim to make their voices heard in the decision-making process. It is also a business and a profession, and this is the side of the lobbying industry that has given it a bad name as it has allowed for some unethical practices. Brussels has been playing catch-up over the past few years by issuing standards and rules that have turned lobbying into a different and more responsible profession.

On relationships with funders

Our conversation moves to the topic of working with funders. “For us,” says Carl, “Adessium’s support is the bedrock underlying what TI EU has achieved. It is significant that you provide core funding, which allows us to plan better, and shift resources when opportunities change. If you’re in it for the long term, then this kind of funding is crucial. This obviously requires a basic amount of trust, and with Adessium, the trust is always there.” Adessium’s constructive and neutral engagement is considered to be helpful, such as in the case of its recommendation for TI EU to improve its communications, for which Adessium provided additional support. Furthermore, Adessium has prospects of other grantees as well. This is an area that could be even better developed Carl says, “Because you have this broad experience and contact with organizations working on the same issues, you can play a unifying role and foster collaboration.”

Looking forward

Despite the progress that has already been made, TI EU still has a lot of work to do. “We need to address the growing influence of money in politics,” Michiel says, “And since this is a relatively new issue, there are no mechanisms in place yet to stop or regulate it. As TI EU and TI globally, we need to get a better handle on this process and see to what extent it’s possible to regulate these developments.”

Carl is confident about the future. “Michiel has the exact type of experience the organization needs now to take it to the next level.” Michiel adds that one of Carl’s big achievements is the experienced and confident team that TI EU can now build on to face the challenges ahead. We conclude this compelling conversation with this positive view of the future and take a stroll outside, surrounded by the buildings and offices of the institutions that are so closely monitored by TI EU.
Adessium Foundation aspires to a society that makes responsible use of nature and natural resources. Humanity’s dependency on healthy ecological systems is a central focus. We help protect valuable nature and combat environmental exhaustion and pollution. We also target the responsible use and management of our oceans. We support initiatives that work towards a nature-inclusive economy, and see the transition toward a circular economy as an important first step.
TARGETS

Accelerating the transition to circularity

Reducing waste emissions
Circular Economy

Our current economic system has created an enormous global increase in wealth. At the same time, we produce and consume more than the planet can provide. Issues like plastic pollution, loss of biodiversity, and climate change are the results of our current industrial model: take-make-waste.

A transition is needed to a more circular economy that provides everyone with the necessities, without depleting the earth’s resources beyond repair. This type of circular economy reuses the same resources in different cycles for as long as possible, thereby minimizing emissions and waste.

We want to help accelerate the transition to a circular economy that prioritizes preventing waste and reusing resources. We support initiatives that work to create the necessary policy frameworks to encourage prevention and recycling, and fund projects that reposition reuse as the new normal over our current throw-away society.
Conserving Valuable Nature

Much of Europe is marked as valuable nature. These natural areas provide society with often overlooked goods and services: food sources, timber, clean water through natural soil purification, insect-pollinated crops, and space for recreation and relaxation. However, we have seen a sharp decline in nature’s ecosystems and biodiversity over the past century.

We strive to halt biodiversity loss in the Netherlands and Europe, investing in nature restoration where possible. In doing so, we devote special attention to the Mediterranean, one of the most densely inhabited areas on the planet with three continents nearly enclosing it. The area has a rich underwater biodiversity, but is also the most overfished sea worldwide. We work towards marine protected areas and promote sustainable fishing practices, both of which will benefit the population and the local economy in the long term.
1. Several organizations have expressed their grave concern about the years of overfishing the Mediterranean has faced, and are looking for a joint approach. Adessium facilitates a two-day event at which 15 social organizations meet to discuss potential interventions for this particular environmental crisis. This initiative, titled ‘Med Sea Alliance’, will be developed further over the course of 2020.

2. BLUE Marine Foundation organizes an international event on the Italian island of Salina. They meet with five small-scale European fisheries to discuss sustainable fishing models that will improve fish stocks and help the fishers make a living.

3. Environmental Justice Foundation publishes a report and documentary about the widespread practice of illegally transferring fish from industrial trawlers to local canoes, and the destructive impact it has on small-scale fishing in Ghana.

4. A study by Good Fish Foundation shows that 89% of all Michelin star restaurants still serve at least one ‘red’ type (overfished) fish. When it comes to using sustainable fish, Dutch Michelin restaurants don’t exactly show exemplary behavior.
Reducing the production and use of single-use plastics

Closing the plastic cycle and reducing waste
Counteracting Plastic Pollution

Few people will be unaware of just how enormous the plastic pollution issue is. The amount of plastic waste is still growing and plastics can be found in even the most remote corners of the planet. The general estimate is that plastics production will increase exponentially unless policies change, which is why an increasing number of experts agree we can’t recycle our way out of the plastic pollution crisis. We need to fundamentally reconsider the way we deal with plastic, where the overall goal remains to stop plastic waste from polluting our planet. Doing so will help our environment recover as well as diminish the negative effects plastic pollution has on our health.

We first started financing organizations and projects that work to put plastic pollution on the agenda in 2011. It is a major issue, and tackling it will require substantial scaling up. That is why we look to work with other funds, for example in supporting the worldwide Break Free From Plastic movement. This fast-growing movement already encompasses nearly 1,500 NGOs and strives to decimate the use of single-use plastic worldwide from 2025 onward. In adopting the Single-Use Plastic Directive, the European Union has taken an important first step. However, it will need to take further action in order to break society’s dependence on single-use plastics.
CIRCULAR ECONOMY

**European Environmental Bureau (EEB)**

Integrating environmental and economic policies

The EU member states agreed that their transition to a climate-neutral economy should be completed by 2050. At the same time, the EU wants to maintain its current position as one of the leading trade blocks worldwide, in order to keep providing for its inhabitants. Balancing both is challenging. EEB, an umbrella organization encompassing over 150 environmental organizations with over 30 million members altogether, sees the circular economy as an important opportunity to unite EU climate goals with its competition policy. Circular policy is still not a priority in economic and environmental policymaking. The EEB is trying to change that by integrating circularity into the economic framework for European industry and the European Green Deal. This framework helps vital economic elements like the steel, chemical and construction industries become future-proof so they are part of the solution.

**Stichting Herenboeren**

Local and sustainable food production in the Netherlands

Stichting Herenboeren Nederland (Dutch Farmhouse Foundation) helps to develop nature-based farmhouse cooperatives. Current food production methods are often at the expense of biodiversity, animal welfare and the family agricultural business. Herenboerderij offers them an alternative. A Herenboerderij is rented by a collective of about 200 local households who employ a farmer to sustainably produce vegetables, fruit, meat and eggs for them. The Herenboeren dream is for everybody such a collective, so everyone in the Netherlands can be in control of their own sustainable, local and circular food production.

Two Herenboerderijen (in Boxtel and Apeldoorn) are already operational, with several more ready to follow suit over the coming years.
**WWF-MMI (Mediterranean Marine Initiative)**

Working on a sustainable Blue Economy

The Barcelona Convention is the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean. The 22 Contracting Parties’ specific objectives include: assessing and controlling marine pollution; ensuring the sustainable management of natural marine and coastal resources; and protecting natural and cultural heritage. WWF had an active role in the preparation and negotiations of this Convention. This contributed to the achievement of key outcomes such as the introduction of the Sustainable Blue Economy concept that aims to make all economic activities in relation to the oceans, seas and coasts more sustainable. Another important outcome is the adoption of a roadmap to reduce air pollution from shipping. The parties also agreed to develop, for the first time, a framework of specific indicators for assessing the impact of marine and coastal tourism in the region.

**ClientEarth**

Fostering participation and accountability in negotiating fishing quotas

Every December, the European Ministers for Fisheries decide on the fishing quotas for the following year. These negotiations are closed to the public and the Council refuses to inform the public. This makes it impossible for citizens and CSO’s to participate meaningfully in the decision-making process and exert their democratic influence through, for example, lobbying. In addition, Member States cannot be held to account because the various options and positions discussed are not accessible. In this context, ClientEarth, an environmental law organization, lodged a complaint with the European Ombudsman. The Ombudsman responded with a formal recommendation to the Council to “proactively publish” all relevant documentation during the process, in order to “promote increased transparency of environmental information.” This is an important step with regard to transparency of decision-making processes in EU institutions.

**The Ocean Cleanup**

Help prevent plastic waste from reaching our oceans

In late October 2019, The Ocean Cleanup presented The Interceptor: an invention the organization spent the last 4 years developing in secret. The vast majority of plastic waste in our oceans is carried there by rivers. The Interceptor intercepts plastic waste floating in the rivers, thereby preventing it from reaching the ocean at all. With a capacity of 50,000 kilograms per day, the Interceptor can play an important part in better plastic waste management. The Ocean Cleanup strives to have tackled the 1000 most polluted rivers by 2025. As such, it forms a vital addition to more structural, preventive measures to end plastic waste.

**Plastic Soup Foundation (PSF)**

The effects of plastic on human health

In October, PSF and Dutch health research foundation ZonMw organized the first Plastic Health Summit, where scientists presented the preliminary results of a study on the effects of micro and nano plastics on human health. Even in these preliminary results, the different effects were clear: microplastics appear to penetrate into the fetal placenta, inhalation of nylon fibers blocks airway development, and human immune cells die when trying to fight microscopic plastic particles. Research institutes, universities and social organizations have united into the Plastic Health Coalition to focus their efforts on further studies and more effective lobbying.
Oceana

Pascale Moehrle — Executive Director & Vice President
Andy Sharpless — Chief Executive Officer

Adessium Foundation

Rogier van Vliet — Chairman of the Board
Karlijn Steinbusch — Program Manager People & Nature
A conversation with Oceana: huge opportunities to restore ocean abundance

It’s easy to be pessimistic when considering the problems plaguing our environment, and more specifically, our oceans. Plastic waste is invading habitats, threatening oceanic wildlife; pollution is turning parts of the world’s seas into lifeless landscapes; and overfishing and destructive fishing are depleting and destroying the ocean.

Amazingly enough, meeting with Oceana and talking to CEO Andy Sharpless can easily turn this pessimism around. He calls from Washington to join in on our conversation with Pascale Moehrle at Adessium’s office. “Ocean conservation is a much more practical matter than people think it is, and we can solve it more easily than people think. It is a problem occurring on a global scale, but can easily be broken down into smaller pieces that we can make real progress on, and this is a huge opportunity,” he says. →
Motivation

Even though Andy’s been with Oceana for seventeen years now, when he first started out, he didn’t know anything about sea life or oceanic diversity. “I was concerned like anybody else. I liked the sea, I liked going to the beach, I had happy memories of the ocean. And of course, what I read in the newspapers worried me, but I was not overly involved.”

What really made him fall in love with the oceans was the realization that the benefits of ocean conservation are much greater than people understand. Rebuild ocean abundance helps feed people, protect biodiversity, fight pollution around the world, and even benefit people’s health. “And you can do all these things at the same time. Now there’s an opportunity!”

The other person in this conversation, Pascale Moehrle, is the new kid on the block, despite her 30 years of experience in nature conservation at WWF. Just like Andy, she didn’t start out in oceanic work either. “At the time, I didn’t care much whether it involved land, oceans, bodies of freshwater or whatever; all I cared about was that we were trying to do something that could only be better for the planet and people. That was my driver.”

She finds the focused concern of Oceana very rewarding. “To be able to step out of that huge complexity and focus on one theme and only that one theme was very refreshing to me.” Pascale also appreciates Oceana’s accountability. “This applies internally and externally to our organization. We are constantly pushed to make sure that we are where we need to be with our campaigns. Our practical approach to a global problem is very exciting for me.”

High Risk, High Reward

The most rewarding experience, especially in the partnership with Adessium, has been setting up the Global Fishing Watch. This global fishing vessel tracking system has been made possible by the availability of data from the Automatic Identification System (AIS) and is used by more than a 100,000 vessels worldwide. By analyzing this data to identify behavior consistent with fishing, government agencies are held accountable for their fishery management practices. People all over the world can access the information they need to put pressure on their governments to improve fisheries management and enforce fishing laws. This project is the result of a perfect confluence of technology and policy, which leads to much greater transparency on the activities of the world’s fishing industry. “If the history of the oceans is told one day, probably as soon as five or ten years from now, people will definitely be shocked that there was ever a world where big commercial vessels were able to fish in secret and were not held accountable in real time, weren’t transparent about their activities and the types of species they were fishing.”
Andy Sharpless has led Oceana Global since 2003 as its Chief Executive Officer. He calls from Washington to join our conversation here in the Netherlands. Pascale Moehrle is Executive Director and Vice President of Oceana Europe. She started at Oceana in 2019, after having worked for WWF for over 30 years.

Oceana is dedicated to protecting and restoring the world’s oceans on a global scale. Founded in 2001, it is the largest international advocacy organization focused solely on ocean conservation. Offices around the world work together to set up strategic, directed campaigns to make our oceans more biodiverse and abundant.
For Oceana, this is the perfect illustration of what to look for if you want to effect social change: the moments when technological progress coincides with a political willingness to address social or environmental problems. Andy explains: “The idea that fishing should be made more transparent was a strong concept, but it required policy action. And policymakers would not make a move until they saw a proof of concept of how transparency could come about. Thanks to the use of transponders, satellite technology and computing power, we could deliver that proof.” This positive virtuous cycle between policy and technology then becomes generally transformative. “We already have 80,000 vessels tracked. We see countries taking action and policy space to follow.”

Another area of work that Adessium has funded was influencing the World Trade Organization’s stance on harmful fishery subsidies. When global fishery negotiations at the WTO broke down, this was viewed as a failed endeavor. However, it actually proved to not be a failure at all. It had an indirect result; apart from the WTO, there are now two other agreements in force. The twelve countries covered in these agreements fish about 35 percent of the world’s global catch and they are now subject to limits on their subsidies for their fishing industries. These treaties were made possible thanks to the solid foundation of the work being done with the WTO. As Andy puts it, “We were only able to achieve a victory on reducing harmful subsidies because of the campaign we ran with the WTO.” This is a good example of the ‘high risk, high reward’ programs that Oceana runs. In the end, it did lead to a high reward.

**Plastic pollution**

The next big challenge involved the plastic pollution in oceans. There are already thousands of groups fighting to solve this problem so how can Oceana make a fundamental difference? Andy: “Second only to the fossil fuel industry, plastics is the most powerfully destructive industry we have ever taken on. It is a fight against an industry that chooses to use plastic in a way it was not originally intended: to make single-use packages out of material that lasts forever, instead of using paper, glass, cardboards or textile. Plastic packaging is meant to be used once and then thrown away. This is a flawed design.”

Plastic pollution has changed the public’s perception of the oceans in recent years. Pascale: “I see people connecting to the ocean because of the plastic problem. This is a real wake-up call for people; it affects
everyone. I think this helped sound the alarm in a big way. Europeans flock to the Mediterranean on their summer vacation and don’t want to see the beaches littered with plastic waste.” This impacts tourism, so there’s an economic incentive to tackle this problem, which in turn influences policy. Oceana is working with Denmark and Spain to turn European directives on reducing plastic waste into national policy.

**Donor relations**

Andy and Pascale’s slowly growing involvement with oceanic work over the course of their careers is a reflection of Adessium’s own commitment. “We were a young foundation at the time,” says Rogier, “and when Oceana showed how practical solutions could work, it proved its expertise as an organization on the subject. For us, it was an easy way to get involved with the issue and follow your recommendations. You became a strategic partner.”

Andy appreciates Adessium’s commitment. “It was a marker, or proof, when Adessium expressed its interest in working with us. It meant that we weren’t deluding ourselves. Adessium had a smart directness: let’s get to the heart of the issues. We were able to have calm, friendly discussions about difficult topics. I guess your very open but straightforward, business-like nature is probably rooted in Dutchness.”

It was great to talk to Pascale and Andy about the importance of ocean conservation. Andy ends the call to start his working day, while for us it’s almost the end of ours. We compensate for our lack of an ocean by going to get some fresh air on the North Sea coast, braving the elements and the strong wind.
Adessium strives toward a society in which people live together with respect and compassion for each other—a society that is characterized by humanity and solidarity. We support initiatives that help people escape poverty and social isolation, while improving their self-sufficiency. We also offer immediate relief for those in dire circumstances.
Participating in Society

Despite recent economic growth, the number of people living in long-term poverty is barely decreasing. Many are struggling with debts. It can be difficult to turn the tide once debts start piling up. That’s why we pay particular attention to prevention methods when it comes to dealing with debt issues. Volunteers who help with financial administration and credit counseling can prevent these debts from reaching a critical level. Sometimes, a modest donation may prevent someone from ending up in major debt.

Everyone in the Netherlands should have an equal opportunity to participate in society. However, the number of homeless or socially isolated Dutch people has increased steadily over the past few years. This is partly due to migration, the aging population, and financial cutbacks in the healthcare sector.

We strive to let everyone participate in society, particularly the homeless and the elderly. We support accessible community centers and help improve shelter and counseling options for vulnerable people, so they can move on.
1. Dutch Food Banks raise their criteria by of the maximum spending budget. People who have a little more to spend but do live in poverty are therefore also eligible for support from the food bank.

2. Thanks to joint lobbying by a group that includes SchuldhulpMaatje, Landelijk Stimuleringsnetwerk Thuisadministratie, Humanitas and Leger des Heils, the Dutch State Secretary for Social Affairs and Employment submits draft legislation to help people in debt sooner and more effectively. This puts the responsibility to initiate debt relief on the municipality rather than on citizens themselves.

3. The Rotterdam Municipality launches Reset Rotterdam, an action plan to make Rotterdam debt-free that includes a dedicated fund to prevent youths from getting into debt. The action plan was developed in co-operation with the Fonds Bijzondere Noden Rotterdam (Rotterdam Emergency Relief Fund).

4. Cardiff hosts the Homeless World Cup 2019. The Dutch team is accompanied by Life Goals and receives extensive coverage by radio disk jockeys Erik Dijkstra and Frank Evenblij of Bureau Sport.
Preventing traumatization in young children and boosting their resilience

Professional help for vulnerable children
A Safe Place to Grow Up

All children in the Netherlands should be able to grow up in a safe, stable environment that provides adequate care and room for personal development. For many children, the reality is different. Their environments at home, at school, at the sports club or on social media are unsafe or restrictive. Often, their parents or guardians pass their own issues from generation to generation.

We support organizations that work to prevent early childhood traumas and help make these children more resilient. Children in shelters are especially vulnerable; it's essential that they are made to feel safe. They should also receive professional care tailored to their situation and documented in independent case files, allowing them to make their own decisions about healthcare matters.
A Respectful Society

A society as diverse as ours requires solidarity and an open mind. However, the divide between rich and poor, between the higher educated and low-skilled, and between those of different origins is only increasing. Part of society feels uprooted and disrespected because of it. Sometimes, that leads to mistrusting politics and institutions, violence towards first responders, and general intolerance.

We care about treating others with respect and compassion. We strive to foster understanding and create connections between people, and to stimulate a feeling of harmony and oneness between different groups within our society. In doing so, we specifically target teenagers and newly graduated young adults; their formative years are when they develop their identity and their position in society. Outside schools, we mainly focus on preventing polarization and on bringing different social groups closer together.
1. The Respect Education Foundation’s annual Week van Respect (Respect Week) initiative reaches 200,000 youngsters through educational programs, guest lectures, and hands-on activities to create a more inclusive society.

2. Mardjan Seighali, Director of Stichting Vluchteling-Studenten UAF (Refugee Student Foundation) receives the Comeniusprijs 2019. The award is presented to people or organizations who demonstrate exceptional dedication to promoting the social importance of education and training.

3. Following a major campaign promoting dental hygiene, Dokters van de Wereld (Doctors of the World) provides 1,000 Dutch people who can’t afford dental care with treatment free of charge.

4. Funds and CSO’s join forces to reduce social isolation. The Nationaal Ouderenfonds (National Foundation for the Elderly) organizes a round table for funds and implementing organizations, in order to align and scale up existing initiatives that aim to reduce loneliness among the elderly.

Promoting positive manners among young people, both online and offline

Stimulating social engagement and respectful citizenship
Partners Highlighted

Schuldhulpmaatje
Helping people deal with debt
The Vereniging Schuldhulpmaatje helps people in financial difficulties through local chapters in 130 municipalities throughout the Netherlands. Through their buddy system, people can get their financial affairs back in order. Schuldhulpmaatje aims to reach people in an early stage, to make sure they don’t end up in problematic debt. Although the buddies offer support and guidance, they never take over responsibility. In addition to their buddy system, the organization maintains online prevention platforms that reach tens of thousands of people in the early stages of debt. With Adessium’s support, Schuldhulpmaatje can start additional chapters, offer higher quality support, and improve their financial sustainability.

Regenboog
Community centers for homeless people in Amsterdam
The Regenboog Groep supports Amsterdam locals living in social poverty by providing a volunteer buddy program, community centers, social work, and reintegration programs. Adessium supports these community centers. The organization’s eight community centers receive around 600 visitors every day. They provide homeless people with a healthy meal, a hot shower, clean clothes and counseling by social workers. By being proactively involved in keeping these community centers up and running, visitors increase their sense of self-worth. Adessium also supports a Regenboog Groep pilot aimed at helping homeless people become debt free.
**Leger des Heils**

Specially trained childrens’ coaches for families with complex issues

The Leger des Heils (Dutch Salvation Army) uses family coaches to help families cope with complex issues. The Salvation Army now also offers specially trained coaches, to provide children with individual, tailored support. These coaches help them become more resilient, learn new skills, and improve their self-confidence. With Adessium’s support, the Salvation Army can train more coaches and help more children. In addition, we contribute to scientific studies on the effects this type of social assistance has.

**Fier**

Stopping early childhood trauma (VVT)

Negative and traumatic experiences at a young age may lead to children developing serious issues at a later stage in life. Family counseling for children under five can prevent developmental issues and stop the cycle from being passed on to the next generation. However, young children that face domestic violence or child abuse often don’t receive adequate support. Fier is the national center for expertise and treatment regarding abusive dependency relationships. In their mission to prevent early childhood trauma, Fier focuses on the impact violence and trauma have on the very young. They are also developing a hands-on methodology offering support and guidance for vulnerable young families, based on their experience in the field. A current study is looking into the effectiveness of this methodology.

**Movisie**

Fighting discrimination on social media

Movisie is a national knowledge institute that deals with social issues like loneliness, poverty, and discrimination. The #datmeenjeniet (#youcantbeserious) project aims to diminish discrimination on social media by increasing awareness among young people: online discrimination is unacceptable, and they can help put a stop to it. Young influencers between the ages of 16 and 27 receive specific training that enables them to speak out against discrimination on their own social channels. Ideally, their followers will adopt these social norms themselves and will behave accordingly. The approach is part of an accessible e-learning module available to education professionals and youth workers.

**Dance4Life**

Respecting sexual boundaries

Dance4Life helps young people worldwide make safe choices about sexuality by giving them the necessary confidence, knowledge and tools. The Schools4Life methodology involves Dutch youths between the ages of 12 and 16 discussing values, relationships, and respect with their teachers. The methodology also includes classroom sessions led by experienced coaches. The group will talk about sexuality and how to respect the wishes and boundaries of everyone involved, so they learn how to recognize and deal with inappropriate sexual behavior, both online and offline. Schools4Life’s unique positive and playful approach makes it easier for young people to talk about difficult issues.
The Pauluskerk

Dick Couvée — Director and Diaconal Pastor
Hanny de Kruijf — Treasurer at Omzo Foundation

Adessium Foundation

Saskia van den Dool — Director of Programs
Job Rijneveld — Program Manager Social Initiatives
A conversation with the Pauluskerk: taking care of undocumented people

The motto “Conquering evil by doing good” graces the façade of the Pauluskerk in Rotterdam, and inside, these words are put into action. The homeless, refugees and undocumented people have been welcome here since the early 1980s. According to current estimates, there are around 4,000 homeless people in Rotterdam, and the city is struggling to provide them with shelter. Some of them sleep on simple mats in the sanctuary of the church.

A group of people are drinking coffee in the main hall of the Pauluskerk, and a few meters further on, a couple of men are playing cards. This is where we meet pastor Dick Couvée and Hanny de Kruijf. They have been dedicated to helping vulnerable residents of Rotterdam for decades now and play a prominent role at the Pauluskerk. →
**Motivation**

Hanny has been involved with the Pauluskerk since the early 1980s, having started out as a socially engaged volunteer. “I wanted to learn more about what goes on at this church. As a 22-year-old at the time, I ended up working here more than full-time.” She had already had some experience with refugees during that period. “I had taken someone in after renovation work started on a building where many refugees were living at the time.”

In addition to being a theologian, Dick is also a lawyer. He started out as a civil servant for one of the Dutch ministries because he “wanted to work in service of the public.” The growing free-market thinking in that sector didn’t suit him. “I would often get angry about the people who had spent too long on the wrong side of the social divide. I never could stand that. I guess this is because of my faith and how I translate this into my work as a pastor. I wanted to turn this anger into something constructive for society and the church.”

**Who the Pauluskerk helps**

The Pauluskerk’s work is rooted in practice and keeps up with the times. In the 1980s and 1990s, this work mostly involved providing shelter to the homeless and addicts. In the years that followed Dick’s appointment in 2012, there was a group of around 20,000 undocumented people in Rotterdam who were left to fend for themselves. Many of them came to the Pauluskerk. The church’s first contact with Adessium dates back to this period.

Dick points out the link between providing practical assistance and lobbying efforts. “We provide shelter to these people, but also try to remind the government of its responsibilities.”

Adessium has been supporting the Pauluskerk since 2013. Dick and Hanny have observed that the more the government withdraws and closes the borders for migrants and refugees, the more important the Pauluskerk’s work becomes. “Just letting everyone in isn’t good for the country or for the people themselves, but there are so many restrictions now.” New problems also arise, such as an ineffective return policy and a detention policy that is at odds with the principles of the rule of law. We are even hearing that people in urgent need of medical attention are being deported. As far as this goes, the government and bureaucrats are allowing themselves to be influenced by a broader social sentiment which involves less tolerance for refugees and migrants. As Dick says, “We can’t just look the other way when we see that laws and regulations continue to create problems for the same groups of people.”
The Pauluskerk helps people without a residence permit. It provides support to refugees in Rotterdam in the form of counseling, legal advice, temporary housing and medical assistance. It also organizes meaningful daytime activities and protects the interests of refugees without valid documentation in their interaction with local and national government and tells their stories to the city.

Dick Couvéé is the director and diaconal pastor of the Pauluskerk. After 12 years at the Pauluskerk, he will be retiring soon. Hanny de Kuijf is the treasurer of Stichting Omzo, the Pauluskerk’s foundation that helps undocumented people, and provides support for the work the Pauluskerk does. She is also the director of Samen010, an organization in which churches and volunteers actively work together on projects involving healthcare, poverty and social isolation in Rotterdam, as well as being the chairwoman of ROS (Rotterdam organization supporting undocumented persons).
**Results**

Thanks in part to the Pauluskerk’s advocacy, the ‘Bed-Bath-Bread’ regulation (a facility for people on the move) was implemented in 2015, followed by the LVV (national service for incomers). This is a basic shelter facility for asylum seekers who have exhausted all of their appeals, and for undocumented people. They are given a place to sleep, clothing, access to toilets and showers, breakfast and an evening meal. Based on the local practical situation, solutions are sought for the most vulnerable group of people without documentation. In spite of justified hesitation, the Pauluskerk has decided to take a constructive approach to participating in this system.

**Lobbying**

Dick and Hanny firmly believe that lobbying and political influence can only be truly effective when they are based on a shelter’s specific situation. “When you’ve got your nose to the grindstone, you have the right and the duty to say how things can and should be done. After all, you’re the one with a clear picture of the problems people at the shelter face, and you get all sorts of ideas about social and legal solutions that could transcend individual problems.”

Our question about any ray of hope is met with a brief silence. Hanny: “In the past, some people would be able to get a residence permit, but this rarely happens anymore. We can’t offer them much in the way of prospects, and this is really hard for the people themselves and for first responders. It’s not just about being able to stay in the Netherlands, we also always look at the options for return. After all, sometimes being able to return to your country with your head held high is better than living here as a marginalized person. This often isn’t possible for these people, however.”

**Partnership with Adessium**

Dick and Hanny are happy to be able to work with Adessium and are very grateful that Adessium has formed a long-term alliance with the Pauluskerk. There aren’t that many funds that focus on this theme and church income has been declining. Adessium’s considerable substantive involvement is also greatly appreciated, particularly since the church never gets the feeling that Adessium wants to start calling the shots. Dick: “I feel a real sense of engagement with and personal commitment to the problems we are trying to help solve. Adessium has started taking an increasingly more systemic approach to how they want to go about this as a fund.”

**Retirement**

Dick will be retiring soon and saying goodbye will be very hard for everyone involved after everything he has done up to now. When we ask Dick how he wants to be remembered after he leaves, he pauses for a moment before responding. “It’s not about me. I wanted to be of service to the entire community here. I would like to use the occasion of my departure to make very clear to the city of Rotterdam what is going on in the margins of society, why this is happening, what it means for these people and what we can do about it.”
CROSS-PROGRAM COLLABORATION

Some social issues are complex enough that they go beyond the constraints of a single program. These are our so-called Cross-program Collaboration. They allow us to call upon more knowledge and expertise, so we can take a broader approach. One example of these cross-program collaborations is Migration and Asylum, which combines our Public Interest and Social Initiatives programs. This allows us to advocate for better policies and direct refugee support.
Migration and Asylum

Over the past few years, more people than ever before tried to reach Europe in search of safety and a better life. Not all are newcomers; some are family members following after them. This resulted in fierce public discourse and a political crisis at EU level, revolving around humane asylum procedures and the importance of giving refugees a proper chance to integrate into society. We see value in an open dialogue and in connecting people to foster mutual understanding and solidarity. Defining the limits of refugee intake and appropriate policy can be a precarious process. Adessium Foundation works with a range of organizations advocating for humane and sustainable asylum policy, both in the Netherlands and in the EU.

Newcomers don’t always have sufficient possibilities to integrate into Dutch society. The language barrier, restricted access to employment and education, and the lack of a social network keeps them from developing themselves. At the same time, the number of undocumented people seems to be increasing. This group doesn’t always have access to basic necessities, which means they have fewer opportunities to create a future for themselves in the Netherlands or abroad. Adessium Foundation actively works to help refugees integrate into Dutch society. We also strive to safeguard access to basic necessities for undocumented people in the Netherlands.
TARGETS

CROSS-PROGRAM COLLABORATION

Fostering mutual understanding and solidarity

- European Program on Integration and Migration (EPIM)
- Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)
- Instituut voor Mensenrechten en Medisch Onderzoek (iMMO)
- Rode Kruis
- Human Rights Watch

Advocating for a humane and sustainable asylum policy

- Migration Policy Institute (MPI)
- Defence for Children
- Human Rights Watch
- Instituut voor Mensenrechten en Medisch Onderzoek (iMMO)
- Rode Kruis
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)
- European Program on Integration and Migration (EPIM)

Improving the integration of refugees in the Netherlands

- Jantje Beton
- Justice and Peace Netherlands
- IMC Weekendschool
- Stichting de Vrolijkheid
- New Dutch Connections (NDC)
- Stichting voor Vluchteling-Studenten UAF
- War Child

Safeguarding access to basic necessities for undocumented people

- European Program on Integration and Migration (EPIM)
- Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)
- Instituut voor Mensenrechten en Medisch Onderzoek (iMMO)
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Safeguarding access to basic necessities for undocumented people
Partners Highlighted

European Counsel of Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)

Lobbying for the rights of refugees

The rights of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants are facing increasing pressure, both nationally and at European level. ECRE aims to fair and humane European asylum policies that adhere to international laws for human rights. ECRE supports hundreds of asylum lawyers across Europe and engages in strategic litigation at the highest national, European and international courts. It lobbies with and on behalf of refugees, monitoring asylum policies in EU member state and proposing alternative policies to improve protection of their rights in Europe and their regions of origin. ECRE also communicates and campaigns across Europe to change the narrative on asylum and migration. With its 100+ members in 40 European countries, ECRE aims to increase the support for and understanding of refugee rights, working towards fair and effective long-term policies.

Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)

Respect the rights of undocumented people

PICUM is a consortium of organizations that focus on social justice and human rights for undocumented people. It aims to create more respect for the human rights of undocumented migrants in Europe. PICUM provides support for members engaging in public discourse on the subject, and helps them turn observations about current social issues into opportunities for lobbying. In addition, PICUM aims to make its knowledge, analyses and data easily accessible to policymakers, reporters, students and other interested parties. Through these facts, it ‘forces’ countries to amend their policies—recently, PICUM confronted the Swedish government with the fact that access to healthcare for undocumented people was more difficult in Sweden than it was in Spain, resulting in a policy change by the Swedish government.
ASKV Steunpunt Vluchtelingen

Supporting refugees and undocumented people

The Netherlands has few resources available for undocumented refugees who are unable or too scared to return to their home country. Their existence in the margins of society makes them vulnerable to exploitation or abuse. ASKV provides refugees and undocumented people in the wider Amsterdam area with multiple types of support. Through offering shelter, social and legal services, as well as language lessons, the organization helps their clients work toward a better future. The organization also lobbies for structural improvement to their clients’ situation. Because ASKV greatly values taking a proactive approach to independence, they also support clients who want to get involved in projects like local volunteering.
Board Members, Management and Team

Board members
Rogier van Vliet — Chairman
Jan Meijerman
Hendrik-Jan Laseur

Management
Rogier van der Weerd — Managing Director
Saskia van den Dool — Director of Programs

Operational team
As of December 2019, Adessium Foundation’s operational team comprises 13 people (11 FTEs). In addition to the two Directors, the team includes staff positions in the field of legal affairs & operations, monitoring & evaluation, communication and secretariat.
Final responsibility for Adessium Foundation lies with its Board of Directors (the Board). The Board approves management’s strategic multi-annual plan and thus determines the organization’s policy. The Board also ensures that this policy is correctly implemented. Pledges above a certain size require the Board’s approval.

Under the Board’s responsibility, the management team is charged with providing Adessium Foundation’s day-to-day leadership and is tasked with preparing and executing the organization’s policy.
Financial Summary 2019

In 2019, Adessium Foundation spent a total of €15 million supporting organizations and projects. 2019 also saw the start of 12 new long-term partnerships, with 31 existing partnerships being extended. In total, there were 119 active partnerships at year-end 2019, across 111 organizations.*

1) These data have been derived from Adessium Foundation’s 2019 financial statements
2) Including exchange results on grants, cancellations, project-related costs
3) Adessium Foundation’s offices and meeting spaces have been made available to the foundation free of charge
4) Programmatic-institutional support focuses on providing beneficiaries with the necessary means to achieve their long-term vision

*This number does not take into accounts any agreements for small and one-off grants.

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<td>Operational expenses ³</td>
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<tr>
<td>People &amp; Nature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Initiatives</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<th>Distribution by type of support</th>
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<tr>
<td>Programmatic-institutional ⁴</td>
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<td>Project-related</td>
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<th>Distribution by region/ intended results</th>
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<td>The Netherlands</td>
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<td>Other (worldwide)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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Amounts in thousands of Euros
Background

Adessium Foundation was established in 2005 by the Van Vliet family, which has a background in asset management. The Foundation is recognized as a “public benefit organization” (ANBI) by the Dutch tax authorities.

Under long term arrangements, Adessium Foundation periodically receives donations from an affiliated foundation that embodies an endowment set aside by the Van Vliet family. The management of Adessium Foundation’s public benefit donations and the management of the endowment are entirely separate from each other. Adessium Foundation does not receive resources other than emanating from the family.

Adessium Foundation is a member of the Association Foundation in the Netherlands (FIN) and the European Foundation Centre (EFC). Adessium Foundation subscribes to the EFC code of conduct and meets the FIN criteria for good governance.
Colophon

Content

Adessium Foundation

Design

Studio Lakmoes
Barbara Wagensveld — knowledge management
Maya Knepflé — design and illustrations

Joana Mühlenbrock — art direction
Jesse Kraal — photography

Productiemannen — printing

Translation

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