Caring for each other and our environment
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Caring for each other and our environment

Adessium aspires to help build a society in which people live in harmony with each other and their environment. A society where actions are taken with the public interest in mind, where we treat nature responsibly and take care of each other.

We support initiatives and organizations in the Netherlands and Europe that are committed to an open and just society, healthy ecosystems and equal opportunities for everyone. We do this by helping our grantees to work on positive, lasting change in our society.
Our programs and themes

**Public Interest**
- Availability of quality information
- Responsible digitalization / Good public governance

**People & Nature**
- Valuable nature /
- Healthy environment

**Social Initiatives**
- Help and opportunities / Migration and asylum
- Youth and society
Foreword

This 2020 annual report looks back on an unusual year in many respects. Adessium was founded 15 years ago by the Van Vliet family. We would have loved to be able to celebrate this anniversary with our stakeholders. The wonderful program we had put together for this momentous occasion sadly had to be cancelled this year because of the coronavirus, like so many other events.

Nevertheless, it was an appropriate moment to stop and think about the organizations and initiatives that we supported in the past years. We look back, full of appreciation for everything our partners have achieved during this period, and we are so proud we were able to contribute to their missions and impact.

Our 15th anniversary was also an occasion to not just look back, but definitely also to look forward. The Van Vliet family, the board of Adessium and the Adessium team have all reflected on the role we want and are able to play in society. We are in agreement that we want to stay the course we have embarked on and maintain our typical approach and methods.

This means that while we will continue our Public Interest, People & Nature and Social Initiatives programs, these will be more clearly defined, and we are also adding a few new themes such as Good public governance, Healthy environment and Youth and society. If we have learned one thing from the corona crisis, it is that our commitment to generate positive change on important social issues facing nature and society is no less relevant.

The long-term outlook this demands remains important. At the same time, the past year also showed us how valuable it can be to be able to quickly shift gears in times of crisis. The coronavirus has presented us all with new challenges, and our partners and target groups they focus on are definitely no exception. Many of our partners have had to adapt their activities or working methods through major efforts to scale up, or to be able to serve new target groups, for example. Our role and challenge is to support them and meet their needs the best we can. A crisis like this simply demands more flexibility in a partnership.

Public values in a digital society

Adessium is committed to an open and democratic society. The increasing digitalization of our society has put pressure on the position of individuals’ information and thus the functioning of democracy. We joined forces with SIDN Fund to look for innovative and scalable solutions that will help strengthen online news users’ control and contribute to a better information position for individuals in the democratic process.
Corona and the effects on fish stock in the Mediterranean Sea

Adessium advocates for the protection and restoration of valuable marine ecosystems. We have been placing a more substantial emphasis on the Mediterranean Sea in recent years since this is where we see the greatest opportunities to achieve our objective. How has the corona crisis impacted this area?

For those living in poverty or who are homeless or on the run, the crisis means an acute emergency situation. We freed up resources in 2020 to support a number of aid organizations during this difficult time for this very reason. Our primary focus has been on relief for the urgent needs of people in the Netherlands, and emergency aid in and around the refugee camps on the Greek islands, among others.

Looking ahead, we expect the crisis to continue to have a major impact during the coming period on people who are already vulnerable due to their social and societal situation. We worry about the consequences of the crisis for them. Together with our partners and other foundations we work with, we examine how we can contribute to providing these people with prospects.

During the past year, we took steps with our partners to achieve our goals of making positive change when it comes to important social issues. In this annual report, we focus on three themes that were important in our programs in 2020.

And finally, 2020 was also the year in which we said goodbye to Rogier van der Weerd, our Managing Director. After over ten years at Adessium, Rogier decided to pursue other paths. We are so grateful for his enormous commitment and the direction he has given Adessium.

We are proud to be able to contribute to our partners’ innovative campaigns and effective projects. Time and time again, we are humbled by the dedication and resilience of all parties involved at these organizations. Their creativity, passion and perseverance make a difference in our society. We will continue to invest all of our energy to ensure we can keep supporting their work.

Like so many others, we hope that the coronavirus will be quickly defeated, and that we as a society can move towards lasting social recovery, with renewed prospects for the future for the many people who have been affected.

Rogier van Vliet  
Chairman of the Board

Saskia van den Dool  
Managing Director

Getting out of debt; the road to self-reliance

Adessium places a high value on a society in which everyone can participate on equal footing. This is why we support civil society organizations that help people with problems arising from debt. How can we spot problems at an early stage and help prevent worse problems from arising?

Read the full story on page 46
Approach & Method

Adessium Foundation is a philanthropic fund that contributes to an open, just society, to conserve and protect healthy ecosystems, and to ensure a level playing field for everyone.

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

Characteristics of our approach

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

We support both established organizations and innovative initiatives, always looking to strike a balance between providing direct aid to target groups and maintaining our long-term vision of creating 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 apply this know-how to our support for structural improvements by tackling the underlying causes and looking at policy change.

Oftentimes, we will decide to extend our partnership beyond a specific project and instead lend them broad programmatic institutional support, thereby enabling organizations to work on the pursuit of their mission. Before deciding to issue grants, we conduct a thorough evaluation of an organization’s vision, approach, governance, and implementation capacity.

We also believe it’s important to offer them an opportunity for organizational capacity building. This can either be direct support by Adessium Foundation itself, or by providing the financial means necessary to outsource consulting or other external expertise.

In all of our partnerships, we explicitly take a back seat and let our partners remain in control. In our view, civil society organizations should remain independent and autonomous. However, we do offer constructive criticism from the start of the relationship on how our partners could improve efficiency in their work and try to facilitate this wherever possible.

We want to put our resources to use as efficiently as possible, for maximum effect. An important factor in our selection process are the costs and potential benefits of an intervention. We also want to learn from the organizations and interventions we support and invest a relatively high amount of energy in monitoring and evaluating their approach and effectiveness. We involve our partners in this process to take advantage of the opportunities this presents to improve and increase impact. We also learn from our own practical experience. By assessing our daily business, approach, and method through a critical lens, we keep finding new ways to improve upon the work we do. We are also happy to share these findings with other philanthropic funds.
**Multi-year partnerships**

We deal with major and complex social issues, and this demands a long-term approach. There are no fast or easy solutions to these problems. Adessium doesn’t believe in a quick fix; tackling structural issues and sparking systemic and other change requires a bold approach, 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 kind of progress has been made, and to evaluate whether an approach works, how to develop it further and whether it needs scaling up.

However, since social change often takes longer than three years, we often extend partnerships and, in some cases, several times. This is of course not a given, and the decision to renew a partnership depends in part on current developments affecting the issue and our own approach and priorities, and whether the partner organization is still best positioned to contribute to this. As with any partnership, the basic premise is to ensure organizations don’t become too dependent on us.

There are many factors that play a role in establishing a successful multi-year partnership. Even though it starts with a shared vision on change strategy, agreeing on the partner organization’s development path is also important. We sit down with our partner to examine current strengths as well as to define priorities in efforts to strengthen their organization. Although many financiers tend to focus on project funding and reducing overhead, we believe in the importance of a well-structured organization. In order for our partner to complete their core tasks effectively, it is essential for their finances, human resources, and IT to be in order.

We are very familiar with what is involved when organizations go through different phases of growth and development. One of the questions the organization may struggle with is how to redefine the initiators’ role in this process. Although implementing structures and procedures will become more important as the organization grows, it can’t lose its agility and capacity for innovation in the process. When the initiative in question is run by volunteers, the transition to a professional organization can often be a major step. We apply our experience in trying to support our partners the best we can during these types of transitions.

**Our added value**

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

Adessium is an independent, autonomous organization. This gives us the freedom to pick our own partners and choose our own methods. For example, by supporting projects that aren’t receiving any 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 methods to rapidly changing or complicated circumstances when necessary. We ask our partners to be open and honest about any obstacles they encounter, so we can work with them to find solutions.

Our long-term involvement as a philanthropic foundation often offers us good insight in a particular field, and where collaboration between organizations can create added value. We see an opportunity to play a role in initiating and facilitating these partnerships.

We also proactively seek out fellow financial backers, and our role can vary from coordinating activities to joining forces within the scope of pooled funds. This significantly increases the impact of the different parties involved.

Joining forces with other funds not only adds to a project’s continuity, but also reinforces the support for that particular intervention. We confer with the other financial partners to arrive at a clear picture of an initiative, and also share knowledge with each other. This kind of positive, critical reflection by all financing organizations involved has a beneficial effect on project development.
A conversation with Adessium’s new management team

Martijn gets his inspiration from the image of Kate Raworth’s Donut that is a very powerful representation of the major challenges society faces. One side of the donut depicts how we are using more than our planet can provide, or overshooting this capacity in several areas. The other side of the donut shows that a dignified life through access to work, housing or safety is not a reality for many. Thanks in part to a boost from a strong civil society, these challenges have now garnered a solid position on the social agenda. Recent examples such as the European Green Deal or the Deltaplan for Biodiversity Recovery reflect this momentum. “Contributing to this strong, well-organized civil society is what Adessium is committed to,” says Martijn.

You two are taking over the management baton during an anniversary year: Adessium has turned 15. What typifies the organization you are leading?

“Adessium has acquired a great position in the philanthropic sector in recent years. I think a large part of this is due to how we work,” says Saskia. Adessium has a long-term vision, both for institutional support and reinforcing organizations. The organization is also open to more innovative initiatives with higher risk. “Collaboration is also important to us, and this is appreciated in the field.”

“Our antenna is tuned and alert to developments and opportunities. We identify partners who can respond to these,” she explains. “One good example of this is the funding of investigative journalism in a time that this became subject to major pressure because of budgets drying up at media companies,” Martijn adds. Adessium has been able to help innovative, international journalism initiatives such as ICIJ and Bellingcat. “We are now also actively stimulating other foundations to provide journalism organizations with financial support.

Plastic pollution is another area where Adessium was able to help a few frontrunners in an early phase to move this problem higher up on the agenda. This put Adessium and a few other foundations at the basis of much broader mobilization efforts on this topic in the philanthropy sector. “And the results are there,” says Martijn. “Now people want to get rid of these mountains of single-use plastics, and politicians are slowly starting to take action.”

A 15th anniversary is also an opportunity to look ahead. Do you foresee any important changes of direction for the future?

Saskia: “Adessium’s 15th anniversary coincided with the last year of our three-year policy cycle. It was a great opportunity to sit down and talk to our founders, the board and the team to review our strategic framework and our methods.” The outcome of this process doesn’t bring any fundamental changes of direction with it. Adessium will continue to work according to its distinctive methods.

“We will have a lower donation budget at our disposal during the coming period. And this means making choices,” says Saskia. The current programs will remain in place, but the way themes are expanded on will be

You are both dyed-in-the-wool veterans at Adessium. What motivates you to do this work?

Saskia: “Doing my part to contribute to a better world has been the theme running through my professional career. Adessium has a wonderful way of making this possible. It’s so inspiring to be able to work with our often very committed partners and to truly help them make a difference for a more just and sustainable world.”
more focused. “This is important; we don’t want to take a ‘cheese slicer’ approach to our budget, making small cutbacks everywhere. We would rather make very targeted choices to be able to provide proper support to the organizations that are a good fit for our mission. This can be a painful process, particularly during a time that our contribution is needed more than ever.”

The upcoming year is an interim year in which we will be working on a plan for the 2022–2024 period. The team is working on the further fleshing-out of the themes. “There is also room for experimentation, such as our goal to work on a more cross-program basis,” says Saskia. “This means we will be looking for unique initiatives at the interface of our programs or themes.”

The corona pandemic has really come to characterize this year. What has this meant for Adessium’s work?

If corona has shown us one thing it’s that all of the topics Adessium works on are and will remain relevant, according to both directors. These themes demand long-term attention. “At the same time, we don’t want to lose sight of short-term needs; these have only been magnified by corona,” according to Martijn. “We were able to free up almost a million and a half Euros in 2020 to rapidly respond to the needs of vulnerable people in society. This involved providing relief to people hit hardest, such as the homeless, or emergency aid to people who are trapped in refugee camps on the Greek islands. Funding has also gone to research on sewer testing for faster detection and identification of virus infection hotspots.”

Just like other funds, Adessium has tried to offer maximum flexibility to its partners. Martijn: “Projects either couldn’t go ahead or weren’t proceeding according to plan. By indicating that the financing would continue, and thus creating the room partners needed to adapt to the new reality, we tried to give them some peace of mind in that regard. It makes us proud to see how much our partners have accomplished this year in spite of the corona crisis. There is so much power in human creativity and inventiveness.”

How do you picture the new normal after corona?

The fact that the corona pandemic has had a structural effect on how we work was to be expected. People might travel less than before the pandemic, the alternatives also appear to be working. However, room for networking and interaction is also key. Saskia: “We normally visit our partners on a regular basis to learn more about their work and to exchange ideas on current developments. These visits are often very useful and inspiring, and we really missed this aspect. I expect us to do some catching up in this regard.”

The effects of the corona pandemic will continue to be felt for a long time. Adessium’s partners are already preparing for different types of requests for help and target groups than they had to contend with in the past, such as ‘involuntary’ freelancers who suddenly found themselves without work for an extended period. At the same time, the expectation is that organizations’ resources will only be under more pressure since many foundations have less to spend and government subsidies will decline. It’s hard to estimate the consequences of this.

This is why both definitely envisage an important role for Adessium in the short-term when it comes to supporting partners who are in close contact with the people who need this support the most. Examples of this include offering access to healthcare for undocumented people, or increased attention for the situation homeless youth face.

“We will still remain the foundation with a Dutch-European view that will continue to work on changes that demand a lot of patience,” Martijn adds.

Finally, what are you two looking forward to the most in your new positions?

“I’m looking forward to working with our team in its new configuration to build further on our organization, and to continue providing our partners with the best possible support for the important work they do,” according to Saskia.

Martijn adds, “The growing trend for increased collaboration in the philanthropy sector is a good and important development and one that Adessium supports wholeheartedly. I look forward to building on this foundation and strengthening it. The only way to ensure we end up inside Raworth’s Donut, in this safe ecological and socially just space where people can flourish, is by working together.”
## Overview of grantees

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Program

Public Interest

For an open, democratic and just society

Adessium is committed to an open, democratic and just society. We strive to create a society in which every citizen can participate and stay informed based on independent and reliable reporting. It’s important to us for freedom, safety and privacy to remain guaranteed in a digitalizing society, one in which government and public bodies function effectively, and act with integrity in the interest of citizens and the community.

We support initiatives focused on finding the truth and interpreting social issues, in part through our grantees’ investigative journalism. We are dedicated to ensuring the responsible digitalization of society. We help civil society organizations fulfill their role as a watchdog, and to stimulate public institutions to engage in good public governance and act with integrity.
Availability of quality information

Contributing to a well-informed society

A well-informed citizen is an engaged citizen. The availability and interpretation of reliable and independent information are necessary conditions for an open, democratic and just society. Quality information enables citizens to gain insight into social issues and to engage in public discourse with each other, leaders and policymakers. The trust in and production and dissemination of quality information in society are however under pressure.

We contribute to the strengthening of journalism organizations and alliances that supply reliable and independent information, enabling them to continue their innovative reporting on socially relevant issues, without losing sight of the connection between local, national and international perspectives.

The availability of quality information contributes to a balanced public debate.
Responsible digitalization

Contributions to a safe and responsible digital society

Society is digitalizing at a rapid pace, and this development affects nearly every aspect of our lives. Although a sense of optimism dominates in terms of the opportunities this offers, vigilance is also needed to monitor the potentially negative social consequences of digitalization. The centralization of power between a few large platforms has dramatic effects on citizens’ freedom, safety and privacy. This demands a vigilant and constructive countervailing power. Integrity in the use of personal data by government and business must be permanently guaranteed.

We contribute to the creation and implementation of the conditions that are necessary for a responsible digital society. We enable civil society organizations to offer constructive criticism on how we digitalize our society. We support organizations that sound the alarm when fundamental civil rights are at risk, and also back initiatives that can outline responsible technological alternatives.

Freedom, security and privacy in our digitalizing society are guaranteed through international policy, legislation and regulations.

Good public governance

Contributing to good public governance that serves the interests of citizens and society

Good public governance and effective regulatory bodies are of paramount importance. Our society is in perpetual motion, and this demands skilled public administrators and well-equipped official bodies that act with integrity. Society demands the continuous consideration of a vast array of social interests. This requires public bodies that function well and inspire confidence, and also serve the welfare of citizens, at a local, national and European level.

We support civil society organizations that aim to apply the principles of good governance. We help them fulfill their socially vital role as watchdogs, and to offer constructive, solution-oriented input to public bodies. In doing so, we help public institutions effectively fulfill their role in the interest of citizens and society.

Vigilant supervision of public governance guarantees a balanced weighing of interests in policy development, promotes acting with integrity and leads to more trust in public bodies.
1 Bellingcat receives the Machiavelli Award for its "quality impulse" in journalism. 2 ICIJ publishes the Luanda Leaks which accuse Angola’s richest woman of mismanagement and fraud. 3 The Public Interest Litigation Project (PILP) is part of the Dutch Commission of Jurists for Human Rights (NJCM). The judge pronounced the decision in the arguments PILP brought in the SyRi case: although it is important for the government to fight fraud, there was no fair balance here between the public interest and the violation of privacy. 4 Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) repeatedly denounces the dangers of the sponsored presidency of the European Council. There is a high risk of conflicts of interest when companies such as BMW and Coca Cola support EU Council presidents financially and with other perks. They achieved their goal this year: the Germany EU Council presidency was free from sponsors. 5 Adessium hosts a meeting on the transparency of the EU Council of Ministers. One important result of this event is cooperation in civil society when it comes to the German presidency, the role of Frontex and sustainable fisheries. 6 EDRi publishes recommendations for the EU on the Digital Services Act, the goal of which is to protect the safety and rights of citizens online. 7 Reporters without Borders launches the new World Press Freedom Index. A clear correlation is visible between violations of press freedom in response to the coronavirus pandemic and a country’s standing in the index. 8 Based in part on the advocacy efforts of Picum and ECRE, the European Commission promises to present humane and effective solutions to migration problems in a New Pact for Asylum and Migration. 9 Adessium hosts a webinar on funding journalism specifically for foundations new to the field, with a particular focus on the Journalism Funders Forum and for Civitates’ new journalism fund. 10 Lighthouse Reports launches a pop-up Borders newsroom for reporting on incidents such as violence against refugees on the Turkish–Greek border. Lighthouse Reports also investigates the spread of disinformation on events there.
Background
Adessium is committed to an open and democratic society. The increasing digitalization of our society has put pressure on the position of individuals’ information and thus the functioning of democracy. A variety of developments play a role in this, such as the effective dissemination of disinformation and the microtargeting of individuals using political advertising. Increasingly more complex algorithms determine which information we see even though we aren’t able to exert any influence over this.
Within the scope of the open call for proposals, “Public Values in a Digital Society”, we joined forces with SIDN Fund to look for innovative and scalable solutions that will help strengthen online news users’ control and contribute to a better information position for individuals in the democratic process.

SIDN is a fund that focuses on innovative Internet projects that contribute to a stronger, more secure Internet and skilled Internet users. This partnership with SIDN Fund was unique for us since we normally don’t work with open calls. SIDN Fund, on the other hand, has a lot of experience in this area. The partnership was very informative thanks to their broad network of experts and their knowledge that enables them to evaluate more technical proposals.

This call generated a mix of projects that didn’t focus exclusively on research and advocacy but also more practical applications and tools for individual users. The projects focus on political microtargeting, building resilience to online hate and manipulation, diversity in news algorithms and education in a digital society.

In early 2020, we started with a session in which the nine organizations involved presented their plans to each other. Later in the year, the organizations shared their progress with one another. This mutual exchange of knowledge led to the strengthening of and collaboration between projects.
Political microtargeting

Platforms gather our data and use this information to sell custom advertising space to third parties. A large digital advertising industry makes microtargeting possible so that various parties can communicate their political messages to the general public in a very focused manner. Taking a stand against this is difficult due to insufficient legislation and regulations and the absence of transparency and accountability mechanisms at Internet companies.

For the project Personal data for political purposes, Tactical Tech commissioned research on the situation in the Netherlands. Even though there are examples of targeted online political campaigns, there is no indication that political parties in the Netherlands are involved in large-scale manipulation of citizens through targeted advertisements. What has been shown however is that Dutch legislation imposes few if any requirements on political parties when it comes to transparency. Tactical Tech’s Digital Detox Kit provides information on political parties’ online strategies and how you as a citizen can defend yourself against these practices.

Tech companies aren’t very transparent about how political parties use their platforms. Two projects in this call researched political advertisements on tech platforms. AlgorithmWatch’s Towards a monitoring of Instagram focuses on the popular social media platform. Together with media partners NOS, Pointer and De Groene Amsterdammer, AlgorithmWatch called on people to share their Instagram data using a special app that is added to your Internet browser. In the run-up to the Netherlands’ elections in March 2021, this will enable them to conduct research on the effects of political messages on Instagram.

Who Targets Me is studying political advertisements on Facebook with its project Who’s using Facebook ads to win your vote. They have already performed research on elections in several countries. Within the scope of this project, political advertisements placed in the prelude to the upcoming Dutch parliamentary elections will also be studied.

Via this call, we supported the projects initiated by AlgorithmWatch, Bits of Freedom, Civinc, DeGoedeZaak, KU Leuven’s Institute for Media Studies, UvA’s Institute for Information Law (IViR), SkillsDojo, Tactical Tech and WhoTargetsMe.
Resilience to online hate and manipulation

Basic digital skills are important, but they are not enough to equip us for the bigger problems created by the Internet and data, such as hate and manipulation on social media. Increasingly more complex algorithms make it hard for individuals to understand what exactly happens to their data, never mind trying to verify this for themselves. Two projects focused on strengthening the position of Internet users in trying to stop manipulation and online hate.

Bits of Freedom conducted research for a Short Manipulation Course on the ways tech companies manipulate our information landscape. In its “taxonomy of online platforms”, it makes a distinction between five forms of manipulation: profiling, prioritization, censorship, dark patterns and self-manipulation. The Short Manipulation Course is an online tool that educates a broad audience on these five forms of manipulation and what people can do to counter this. The research also forms the foundation for a report on the effects of online manipulation for policymakers, activists and researchers.

Online hate campaigns targeting social changemakers are a specific problem in the digital landscape. The campaign platform DeGoedeZaak commissioned a study for the project More power to you! How social influencers can face down hate. Different social changemakers were interviewed to gain insight into strategies used by “trolls”. The research showed that online hate campaigns are often organized in nature, and this is the idea behind a “troll toolkit” that contains tools and strategies designed to support changemakers facing attacks from Internet trolls.

Diversity in news algorithms

The media feeds our world view, and a diverse news offering is vitally important to our democracy. Much of the news we get served up online is the result of recommendation systems based on algorithms. One problem with this is that these systems often provide recommendations on the basis of what keeps someone’s attention as long as possible or what people have been interested in in the past. When news recommendations are done right, they can be used to broaden people’s views of the

The projects focus on research and advocacy as well as practical applications and tools for individual users
world. This can however lead to a one-sided supply of news and “filter bubbles”. The American elections and Brexit have made it clear that this can have major societal repercussions.

Streamer: A reliable and diverse news offering is vitally important to our democracy.

The University of Amsterdam’s Institute for Information Law (IViR) is studying how the diversity of the outcomes of news algorithms can be expanded in its project *Algorithms for freedom of expression and a well-informed public*. With the aid of a “diversity toolkit”, news organizations can make their news recommendations measurably more diverse.

News users currently have hardly any influence over the recommendations they receive. KU Leuven’s Institute for Media Studies is looking into how to give users more choice from the various news algorithms. The project *Who would you like to be guided by?* is developing a concept involving different “recommendation personas”. Each persona represents a specific recommendation algorithm. This enables the user to choose “the Expert”, for example, for more in-depth and background information, or “the Challenger” if they want to see articles outside of their substantive and ideological comfort zone.

### Education in a digital society

Young people are the citizens of the future. Today’s youth are growing up using the Internet and social media. How can they be prepared for the possibilities and pitfalls of the digital society? SkillsDojo’s video class series *Ethics of artificial intelligence, data and democracy* uses DIY, maker and programming projects to introduce children from ten to fourteen to artificial intelligence and encourages them to think about the social consequences of this technology.

Entering into a dialog with people who have different opinions is an essential skill for a healthy democracy. There is nonetheless a tendency in today’s online landscape to amplify the contrasts between people. Civinc’s digital education activity *Vox Pop Academy MBO pilot* for intermediate vocational education (MBO) students facilitates online discussions between young people with different views.

### In conclusion

The SIDN Fund partnership has been very valuable for us and has led to support for several promising projects. It has also provided us with more insight into civil society organizations and initiatives committed to a safe and democratic digital society.

We have applied the knowledge we have gained through this partnership to further refine our annual plans on this theme.
Are We Europe
An innovative perspective in the European media landscape

Are We Europe is a magazine available in both print and online versions and is full of international stories about the European culture and identity. These personal stories and critical analyses cover European themes such as religion, migration, colonialism and climate change that go beyond the national perspectives that often prominently emerge in traditional media. In addition to its own production team, Are We Europe also works with a network of local media and around 800 freelance writers and producers from all over Europe who write articles and produce podcasts, videos and photojournalism reports. This is another way that Are We Europe contributes to the evolution of a new generation of journalists with innovative forms of storytelling. One recent production is Unsilencing: The Colonialism Issue, with stories about Europe’s relationship to its colonial past and the consequences of this we see today.

Transparency International Nederland
Fighting corruption at every level in society

Transparency International Nederland (TI-NL) is the Dutch division of Transparency International (TI). This organization is dedicated to creating a world that is free from corruption by promoting transparency, integrity and responsibility at every level and within every sector of society. TI-NL conducts research to make corruption in the Netherlands visible, and is also active in advocacy. TI-NL takes a constructive approach and engages in dialog with politicians, policymakers and businesses. This has contributed to the adoption of a code of conduct for members of Dutch Parliament concerning their ancillary activities, interactions with lobbyists and the acceptance of gifts. This is an important step toward more transparent and ethical politics.

European Consumer Organization (BEUC)
Protecting consumers in the digital world

As consumers, we are constantly making choices, but to do this, we need accurate and reliable information. We are protected by legislation that ensures that we as consumers are provided with complete and accurate information. The digital environment on the other hand is much more complex because we are followed everywhere online, through the personalization of what we see online and how our online behavior is influenced. The consequences of microtargeting even harm modern democracies. The strong disbalance in this new relationship between consumers and sellers proves that information is no longer enough as a regulatory tool. BEUC researches how modern society can be protected from these practices. They study how individuals’ freedom of choice as consumers and as citizens can be safeguarded from manipulation, and how better regulations can guarantee this as the standard, even as early as the design phase.
Bits of Freedom
Right to privacy and freedom of communication on the Internet

Bits of Freedom is a Dutch organization dedicated to protecting two rights that are fundamental in today’s digital age: the right to privacy and freedom of communication. BoF works to achieve its goals through advocacy, research, campaigns, awareness and litigation, bolstered by help from grassroots organizations. In 2020, BoF launched the Safe Against Corona manifesto that sets out the criteria that must be satisfied in order for the app to be used for contact tracing with a minimum risk of violating human rights. BoF led a coalition of experts in law, information security and human and consumer rights. BoF contributed by ensuring that, by the time the ultimate national app was launched, it considered privacy in the design, transparency and security and legal guarantees for the protection of fundamental basic rights.

Investico
In-depth investigative journalism

The non-profit platform for investigative journalism, Investico is dedicated to in-depth investigative reporting. Investico provides insight into the complex reality of current cases and offers a counterbalance in a time when the fastest scoops and the latest incidents are the focus. Investico works with several media partners on its investigations, all of which publish the results. This helps to maximize the public impact of every investigation. Investico has published several in-depth investigative reports on topics such as tax evasion, privacy violations, the debt industry and labor exploitation. In 2020, Investico won a Tegel, the most important prize for journalism in the Netherlands. A group of four journalists won the Tegel for journalism talent with their article on the police’s manipulation of crime statistics. The article is the result of the Investico Masterclass, a practical training program for investigative journalists.

Investigate Europe
More transparency from the European Council

Investigate Europe’s cross-border investigative journalism helps citizens call government agencies to account. Investigate Europe focuses on the nontransparent decision-making processes of the EU Council of Ministers (“the Council”) and publishes its findings in the various member states. It explains how the Council’s negotiating process works, and why its lack of transparency is harmful to democracy in Europe. This might be because a member state conveys a different point of view in its own country than the position it adopts within the Council, for example. In March 2020, Adessium brought civil society organizations, journalists, policymakers and other stakeholders together to discuss how the Council’s transparency could be improved so that member states may be held to account.
Overview of grantees

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<td>Seas at Risk</td>
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People & Nature

Room for nature and a focus on a healthy environment

Adessium aims to create a society that takes a responsible approach to nature and the environment. Part of our work involves the conservation of valuable nature in the Netherlands and Europe. We are committed to healthy ecosystems where nature has the room to regenerate. At the same time, we aspire to a clean environment, free from visible and invisible pollution, also in the interest of our own health.

We support initiatives that focus on the conservation of valuable nature and the restoration of biodiversity, both on land and at sea. We also work on the prevention and reduction of various forms of pollution, such as plastic and harmful chemicals.
Valuable nature

Contributions to the conservation and restoration of vulnerable ecosystems

There is so much valuable nature in Europe, and healthy ecosystems provide important goods and services to society. Examples include the production of food and timber, the pollination of crops by insects, and room for recreation and leisure activities. Human activities have however put major pressure on the diversity of plant and animal species, increasingly limiting the value that this nature can provide.

We contribute to initiatives that focus on the conservation and restoration of areas with important ecological value. We look for innovative interventions such as restoring natural processes in valuable landscapes in the Netherlands and Europe. In addition, we pay special attention to the Mediterranean Sea, the most overfished sea in the world. In order to protect the biodiversity of this region, one of the things we concentrate on is the creation of marine protected areas and sustainable fisheries.

Nature conservation and the sustainable use of what nature can provide us with contribute to the recovery of valuable nature.
Healthy environment

Contributing to an environment free from visible and invisible pollution

We depend on a healthy environment for our well-being, one in which we can breathe clean air and have access to good quality water. Our current production and consumption patterns are leading to considerable pollution, however. While some of this pollution is visible, such as plastic waste, some of it is invisible, such as that caused by harmful chemicals, microplastics and particulate matter. This leads to major environmental risks and can have - often unknown - harmful effects on our health.

We are dedicated to gaining better insight into the causes and effects of pollution and how it impacts our health. We are also looking for solutions that will tackle the pollution problem at the source, and which offer potential alternatives for switching to sustainable means of production and consumption patterns. We encourage the conversion of these solutions to both policies and practice.

More insight into the causes and consequences of pollution as well as ways to reduce it will ultimately have a positive effect on the environment and our health.
This is what happened in 2020

1. 30 NGO representatives join forces in the Med Sea Alliance campaign movement. They are developing a shared vision to improve the health and productivity of the Mediterranean Sea.

2. The Wildlife Justice Commission’s work in Africa and Asia results in the arrest of 24 high-level wildlife criminals and the disruption of five criminal networks, all of which traded in live animals and parts of animals.

3. The European Commission publishes the Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP), part of the European Green Deal for a cleaner and more competitive Europe. The crux of the CEAP is the introduction of minimum circularity requirements for products that are allowed entry into the European market. European Environmental Bureau, ECOS and Zero Waste Europe have fought hard for this.

4. The Dutch cabinet decides to introduce a return-deposit system for small plastic bottles starting in 2021. This was a historic victory that our partners Natuur&Milieu, Plastic Soup Foundation, Recycling Netwerk Benelux, Plastic Soup Surfer and Stichting De Noordzee have worked hard to achieve.

5. The Netherlands food banks and the Dutch Farmhouse Foundation (Herenboeren) make the Sustainable 100, a list that the newspaper Trouw publishes each year. The focus this year was on citizen initiatives, and De Jonge Klimaatbeweiging (Youth Climate Movement) made it to the number one position. Our partners Herenboeren and Voedselbanken are also on this list.

6. African Parks focuses on nature and wildlife management through its activities involving nature preserves. The two new areas that African Parks now manages in Benin and Rwanda bring the organization’s total to 19 parks in 11 different countries.

7. Rewilding Europe organized the first Rewilding Symposium in December, which was attended by over 2,000 people from 50 countries. The high level of interest shows that the Rewilding approach is enjoying increasing support and is being used more frequently.

8. Stichting VEEN draws up a vision document plotting out the future of the Reeuwijkse Plassen. The vision aims to conserve the beautiful and robust nature, providing room for living, working and recreation, intended for all of the area’s stakeholders: owners, residents, businesses, users, and visitors.

9. The Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management publishes the Luchtvaartnota 2020-2050 (aviation policy memorandum) for a safe and sustainable aviation sector. The good news is that a CO2 emissions cap will be introduced. Stichting Natuur & Milieu, the Natuurmilieufederatie Noord-Holland and others expressed their concerns that the current aviation policy memorandum was not concrete or ambitious enough.

10. The funder collaboratives Funding Fish and Oceans 5 focus on sustainable fisheries and marine protection. The merger between the two organizations and the resulting joining of forces will lead to an expansion of the work area from European to worldwide, an important boost for marine philanthropy.
Corona and the consequences for fish stock in the Mediterranean Sea

Adessium focuses on the protection and restoration of valuable marine ecosystems. We have been placing a substantial emphasis on the Mediterranean Sea in recent years where 74% of the fish stock studied are suffering from overfishing.
In 2020, the corona crisis had the entire world in its grip. Dramatic measures have been taken worldwide to mitigate the spread of the virus. Social distancing became mandatory, borders were closed, and lockdown measures were put in place. For the fisheries sector, this had an effect on the sector’s sales, management, control and research. Aside from personal suffering and the economic crisis, we have also seen positive signs pointing to the recovery of nature as a result of this near standstill.

What are the consequences of the corona crisis for the Mediterranean Sea? And do they make this crisis a blessing in disguise for the recovery of fish stock? We asked our partners Oceana and Marilles Foundation to share their findings with us.

Is this crisis a blessing in disguise for the recovery of fish stock?

Impact of corona on fisheries pressure in the Mediterranean Sea

According to the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), the Mediterranean Sea catch decreased by more than 75% in March and April. The
expectation was that the substantial reduction in fishing activities during the very first phase of the pandemic would lower pressure on fish stock. The fact that larger numbers of marine mammals were now being observed along the coasts than before was seen as one of the positive effects of the reduction in shipping, tourism and fisheries. Nonetheless, it is still too early to establish whether or not there will actually be significant positive effects on the ecosystems for the longer term.

Marilles Foundation reports that the fishing activities in the Mediterranean Sea in the spring of 2020 have in fact shown a considerable decrease, primarily due to the reduced demand from hotels and restaurants from the absence of tourism. During the full lockdown in Spain from mid-March to mid-May, hotels and restaurants were closed and tourists stopped coming to the area. The fishing fleet took advantage of the downturn and got organized to reduce fishing activities and keep the prices stable. As the restrictions were slowly relaxed, the catch rose gradually to reach the level it was at before the crisis, varying by region and fisheries type.

Concerns about the progress of monitoring and enforcement at sea

The COVID social distancing measures can result in temporary (or permanent) limitations on monitoring and enforcement at sea. One major concern is that this can lead to an increase in illegal activities. Additionally, the pandemic has limited the ability of fisheries scientists to collect data at sea. This has potential consequences for the quality and quantity of information that is available for research.

Oceana believes it’s crucial to prevent the sea from becoming a free zone for illegal activities, and to ensure that attention for monitoring and enforcement in times of crisis doesn’t taper off. There are good digital options available for following what is happening on the water. The OECD sees promising opportunities in the analysis of remote sensing, satellite data, and information from various technologies used to track and trace ships.
Thanks to support from Adessium, Oceana has set up Global Fishing Watch, a worldwide tracking system for fishing vessels, and has recently added transport ships. The information obtained will allow the detection of fishing vessels involved in (potentially) illegal activities at sea. Anyone can follow activity at sea in real-time, online on the Global Fishing Watch map. The results of the study Global Fishing Watch is currently conducting on illegal activities in the Mediterranean Sea are expected to be available in May 2021.

**Opportunities**

While Oceana is cautious in calling attention to the positive effects of this crisis, it does believe that the coronavirus pandemic offers society an opportunity to reflect. We have seen how important nature is to us in times of crisis and how our actions sometimes have a harmful effect on nature. This heightened awareness is a good breeding ground for changing our actions and behavior, transforming them into efforts to conserve and restore nature.

This crisis also offers an opportunity to gather more knowledge on the effect of reduced fisheries pressure on the recovery of fish stock, thereby allowing better choices to be made for the future. Good data monitoring is a requirement for research, and part of this can be done with existing instruments. It is also important to explore new possibilities for exchanging data and information about the consequences of the crisis.

Marilles Foundation has seen a rising demand from local people for local products, born of their desire to support local fishermen. This is part of the reason the fishing fleet managed to survive the crisis relatively well, at least in the Balearics and Catalonia, where the fisheries sector only suffered minor economic losses compared with 2019. The data shows that some fleets adapted very well to the situation. They cut back on their fishing activities, improved the economic results and succeeded in keeping profits comparable to those from 2019, despite the fact that they fished a few number of days. Marilles views this as proof that “you can fish less and earn more, or at any rate, the same amount”, and that the Mediterranean Sea fishing fleet can compensate for the reduction in fishing activities without this having substantial economic effects on the fleet.

It is high time to turn the tide and to work on the transition from overfishing to a sustainable fisheries sector and conservation of the marine environment. This requires collective action and the combination of expertise from different fields. A group of around 25 representatives from several NGOs are working together under the name Med Sea Alliance to put...
an end to overfishing and destructive and illegal fisheries practices in the Mediterranean Sea. Adessium supports this alliance by developing a common vision and course of action.

In conclusion

All in all, the corona crisis has had an effect on marine ecosystems and fisheries in the Mediterranean Sea and steps will have to be taken to build back better. Now is the time to learn from the effects of the crisis. It is also the perfect opportunity to take measures to fight overfishing, destructive and illegal fisheries and to work on the recovery and rebuilding of the sector.

Adessium supports a range of organizations in the Mediterranean Sea region such as Blue Marine Foundation, Marilles Foundation, Marine Stewardship Council, MedReAct, Oceana and WWF/Mediterranean Marine Initiative.

Oceana believes it’s crucial to prevent attention for monitoring and enforcement in times of crisis from tapering off
Marilles Foundation
Marine conservation in the Balearics

Marilles Foundation is committed to making the Balearics a leading example of marine conservation. Funded by a variety of foundations, Marilles supports projects designed to improve protected marine areas, promote safe sustainable fisheries and getting important sectors such as tourism involved in these efforts to protect the sea. Marilles also shows how healthy seas benefit the economy and well-being of people and supports projects that reduce pollution from plastic and wastewater. With the publication of the report on the state of the Balearics and bringing different stakeholders together to deal with marine issues, Marilles has expanded its role as a provider of grants to that of an opinion leader and convener in the Balearics.

Global Fishing Watch
Transparency as a weapon against illegal fisheries

Global Fishing Watch (GFW) is an international nonprofit organization that is committed to promoting ocean management through more transparency about human activities at sea. Through the creation and public sharing of data visualizations, information and analysis tools, GFW wants to make scientific research possible, and to improve the ways in which our oceans are managed. In order to be able to protect the world’s oceans for the common good, GFW believes that everyone should be able to consult data on human activity at sea. The data are analyzed to track down illegal fisheries and to call government bodies to account on their fisheries management practices. Together with Flotilla Foundation, Adessium supports Global Fishing Watch in setting up a European program including a team that focuses specifically on the Mediterranean Sea.

Deltaplan Biodiversiteitsherstel
Teaming up for biodiversity recovery

Biodiversity is essential to keeping ecosystems intact and maintaining a healthy environment. In the Netherlands, the decline of the animal and plant kingdom is continuing at a rapid pace. The Deltaplan Biodiversiteitsherstel (Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery) is a broad-based social movement that aims to reverse the biodiversity loss and chart a course to recovery by 2030. Nature organizations, farmers, banks, knowledge institutes and businesses all work together on these efforts. With the aid of the biodiversity monitor for the dairy farming sector for example, farmers will receive financial compensation for the recovery of biodiversity on their land. Cooperation is also being sought at the local level between all of the landowners to coordinate efforts to make management nature inclusive. One example is Hoeksche Waard Zoemt (Hoeksche Waard is Buzzing) in which citizens and land users work together: they planted trees and bushes along the Randweg in Strijen to offer butterflies, bees and other insects a better environment to live in.
Zero Waste Europe
Moving towards a zero-waste economy without single-use plastics

Zero Waste Europe is a European network of communities, local leaders, experts and changemakers who are all working to eliminate waste in our society. They advocate sustainable systems and a redesign of how people treat resources in order to accelerate the transition to zero waste to benefit people and the planet. Consisting of more than 32 local and national organizations, the network contributes to creating waste-free societies that are circular, resilient and safe, and whose experiences can be applied toward creating policy at a European level. Zero Waste Europe coordinates the Rethink Plastic alliance that played a key role in anchoring these ambitions in the Single-Use Plastic Directive that was adopted in December 2018. This directive is an important step in the fight against plastic pollution and aims to limit single-use plastics in the European market.

Mission Reuse
Single-use packaging replaced by reusable solutions

In 2020, Enviu, Natuur & Milieu and Recycling Netwerk Benelux joined forces in the Mission Reuse program to permanently anchor reusable packaging in our society. The organization looks for solutions to the three billion disposable coffee cups that end up getting tossed in the trash annually in the Netherlands. Mission Reuse combines setting up smart pilots for coffee cups and single-use packaging from take-out meals, for example, with targeted advocacy and public awareness campaigns with impact. Mission Reuse hopes to work with municipalities, businesses and consumers to make reuse in everyday life visible, accessible and affordable, thus positioning reuse as the new normal.

CHEM Trust
Replacing chemicals harmful to humans and wildlife with safe alternatives

CHEM Trust is dedicated to protecting wildlife and humans from harmful chemicals, particularly substances that are detrimental to the development of children’s brains, including chemicals in materials that come in contact with food (such as food packaging and other plastic products) and endocrine-disrupting chemicals. The organization works closely with policymakers, scientists and civil society organizations. CHEM Trust uses advocacy to exert influence on politicians and policymakers to improve EU legislation such as the reinforcement of the REACH directive that regulates the production and use of chemicals in Europe, and the reform of the Food Contact Materials legislation (FCM). Thanks in part to CHEM Trust’s efforts, the European Commission will be conducting a thorough review of the FCM legislation, presenting the opportunity to ban harmful chemicals that are currently still allowed such as Bisphenol-A or so-called softening agents.
Overview of grantees

Amnesty International
ASKV Steunpunt Vluchtelingen
Critical Mass
Dance4Life
De Pauluskerk
De Regenboog Groep
Defence for Children
Doctors for Homeless
Dokters van de Wereld
Dutch Cell Dogs
EPIM
European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)
Fonds Bijzondere Noden Rotterdam (FBNR)
Goudse Weekendschool
Haëlla Stichting
House Of Hope
IMC Weekendschool
Instituut voor Mensenrechten en Medisch Onderzoek (iMMO)
Justice and Peace Netherlands
Kansfonds
Landelijk Stimuleringsnetwerk Thuisadministratie (LSTA)
Leger des Heils
Migration Policy Institute (MPI)
Movement On The Ground
Movisie
Nationaal Ouderenfonds
New Dutch Connections (NDC)
Open Up, let youth be heard perMens
Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)
Prinses Máxima Centrum
Protestantse Diaconie
Radboud Universiteit
Respect Foundation
Rode Kruis
SchuldHulpMaatje
Stek voor stad en kerk
Sterk Huis
Stichting Blendin
Stichting De Tijdmachine
Stichting de Vrolijkheid
Stichting Fier
Stichting Helden van de Wil (fíkks)
Stichting Het Vergeten Kind
Stichting Kinderpostzegels Nederland
Stichting Lifegoals Nederland
Stichting LOS (Landelijk Ongedocumenteerden Steunpunt)
Stichting Nederlands Debat Instituut
Stichting Urgente Noden Nederland
Stichting voor Vluchteling-Studenten UAF
Stichting Zwerfjongeren Nederland
Vereniging Leergeld Nederland
Vier het Leven
Villa Pinedo
Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland
Voedselbanken Nederland

Smaller and one-time gifts are not included in this overview.
Social Initiatives

For a humane and engaged society

Adessium strives to create a society in which people live together with respect and compassion for one another and in which everyone can participate equally. We are working on a society that is characterized by humanity and solidarity.

We support organizations in the Netherlands that offer help and assistance to people who have become vulnerable as a result of the situation they find themselves in. We also support initiatives for the humane treatment of refugees, as well as initiatives that encourage young people’s involvement in society.
Help and opportunities

Contributing to support and opportunities for people who need it

Everyone in the Netherlands should have an equal opportunity to participate in society. This requires mutual understanding and concern and help for people who need it. There is a large group of people who cannot hold their own in society because they don’t have a permanent residence, live in poverty, or have a very limited social safety net. They run a great risk of living in social isolation as a result, and of losing control over their own lives.

We support organizations that assist people in need of help, and that don’t just provide direct support and relief, but also offer prospects for the future. We contribute to initiatives designed to prevent poverty, social isolation and intergenerational trauma. This is how we work on structural improvements for people in need of help.

Providing direct help and assistance gives people the feeling they have support, opportunities, and prospects, and helps them feel connected to society.
Migration and asylum

**Contributing to the humane treatment of refugees and undocumented people**

Society is for everyone and should offer equal opportunities and prospects for all. Successful integration gives newcomers the chance to build a dignified life and enhances support for receiving refugees in Dutch society. The language barrier, restricted access to employment and education, and a limited network often prevent newcomers from developing to their full potential. We are also seeing a large group of undocumented people who don’t always have access to basic necessities, limiting their opportunities to work on a dignified future for themselves in the Netherlands or abroad.

We contribute to organizations committed to the just and humane treatment of refugees and undocumented people, and support initiatives focused on providing shelter for and the integration of refugees. We strive to safeguard access to basic necessities for undocumented people in the Netherlands. We support organizations that offer direct help to refugees and undocumented people, and that are able to lobby for structural policy improvements based on their experience.

*Fair treatment and access to facilities help refugees and undocumented people feel connected, offers them long-term prospects, and enables them to participate in society.*

Youth and society

**Contributing to involving young people in social issues**

In an engaged society, people take responsibility for each other and their environment. This also applies to young people; they are, after all, the future and should be involved in helping to shape it. They have the possibility to use their enthusiasm and conviction to effect change in society, which is why it is so important for them to be able to develop their ideas and talents, and make sure their voices are heard.

We want to empower young people and contribute to the development of their awareness about and involvement in social issues. We encourage them to make a positive contribution as active citizens to their community and society at large. We support initiatives that give young people a voice and in which they are actively involved.

*When young people can voice their opinions and be heard, they feel more involved in society and are able to develop to their full potential and make valuable contributions to society.*
**This is what happened in 2020**

1. More and more local food banks switch to the supermarket model: low-income residents of Amsterdam living in Amsterdam-Zuid are shopping for their groceries themselves by browsing the shelves and adding items to their baskets.  
2. Amsterdam is helping young people with debt and is forgiving (part of) their debts. At the moment, this is still a pilot project with 150 young people between the ages of 18 and 27.  
3. Het Vergeten Kind (The Forgotten Child) focuses on the continuous relocation of children in the Youth Care system and presents a petition with 82,661 signatures to the Minister of Public Health, protesting the constant reassignment of social workers in youth care.  
4. The Netherlands makes adult sextexting with minors punishable. This crucial success was made possible in part by the lobbying efforts of our partners, Fier CKM and Defence for Children.  
5. In a manifesto, a group of mayors declare that the corona crisis increases the gap between rich and poor. They are trying to draw attention to issues such as domestic violence, poverty, and the need for debt assistance.  
6. The Dutch House of Representatives adopts a motion to improve the income position of vulnerable young people. Zwerfjongeren NL, Valente and the Salvation Army have lobbied for this cause.  
7. Queen Máxima awards the Appeltjes van Oranje prizes to the three best buddy projects and announces that Villa Pinedo is the winner.  
8. The Dutch cabinet launches a plan to set up a guarantee fund to provide better and faster support to people with problematic debt.  
9. The future home of the Daniel den Hoed Family House, across from Erasmus MC, has been completed and will be opened later. The house welcomes family members of cancer patients admitted to the hospital and those getting treatment on an outpatient basis.  
10. Movisie launches its #datmeenjeniet campaign that trains young people in speaking out when they encounter online discrimination.
Background
Poverty and debt are major problems both for people with debt and society as a whole. Some people accumulate debt because they borrow more than they are able to repay, but more often than not, financial problems pile up because people have trouble paying their fixed costs such as healthcare insurance, rent and utilities. Although the majority of people with debt are on welfare, welfare recipients are not the only ones getting into trouble; more and more people with jobs, particularly the self-employed, are also struggling.
For a large group of people with debt, society’s inherent complexity is too great for them to solve their problems alone. They are up against an incomprehensible web of regulations, allowances, taxes and so on, and many even stop opening their mail, ultimately just giving up. It can be difficult to turn the tide once debts start piling up.

Temporary employees and the self-employed have been hit particularly hard over the past year as a result of the corona crisis. Government relief measures can provide the self-employed with temporary protection from bankruptcy, but the question is whether or not they’ll be able to keep their heads above water in the near future. The childcare benefits scandal that came to light in 2020 proves how the rules and laws can also cause things to go terribly wrong. The Dutch tax authorities accused an entire group of families of making fraudulent benefit claims on their childcare benefits applications.

This drove these families into severe financial hardship, causing them to run up major debt and end up in terrible situations.

An estimated one and a half million people have problematic debt or run the risk of this. Most households with debt do not get formal debt assistance. The approval criteria are strict, the procedures complicated, and there are long waiting periods. People applying for debt assistance have average debts totaling around 40,000 Euros.

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Lurking behind all of these figures is a tremendous amount of personal suffering. Anyone with debt also often suffers from an accumulation of psychological and social problems. If a gift is too expensive, you have to forgo birthday parties. Going for a drink or night out on the town with friends is a substantial problem. These situations are usually a huge source of shame and puts those in debt at a high risk of stigmatization and isolation.
Early detection and prevention of social isolation

In order to prevent isolation, it’s important for people to get help at an early stage. Personal attention and help from buddies focuses on these problems. Buddies from Schuldhulpmaatje are trained volunteers who provide direct assistance online or in person to help these individuals get their finances in order, or plan and manage their spending. Some of these buddies have been through a debt process of their own and are able to provide help based on their own experiences.

Employers often also play a role in alerting others to problems when they see their employees asking for advances on their salaries, or when creditors garnishee their wages. Employers can offer help through the fiKks app that enables people with financial problems to seek personal help, anonymously, from a colleague. This buddy is a volunteer trained by fiKks.

Personal attention and help from buddies focuses on providing timely help
Help with imminent debt

Even though some people don’t have debt that is problematic, they can still find themselves in a vulnerable situation. A broken washing machine or bicycle a child needs to get to school becomes an insurmountable expense. When people are facing acute and urgent expenses that they are not in a position to bear themselves, Fonds Bijzondere Noden Rotterdam (FBNR) can provide support to prevent these types of costs from leading to debt problems.

One out of every 12 children in the Netherlands grows up in poverty. These children often can’t go on school trips, don’t have a bicycle or computer, or are unable to participate in activities that are very normal for their peers, due to financial reasons. Not only is this sad for these children, it also hinders them in their social development. Leergeld Nederland makes it financially possible for children to participate in activities both at and outside of their schools.

Effects of the crisis

Over the past year, the debt problem in the Netherlands has grown as compared to previous years. Many people lost their jobs as a result of the corona crisis. During the second quarter of 2020, the unemployment figure rose by 26%. Although the substantial financial support measures for businesses resulted in more people than normal finding work during the last three months of the year, the fear is that the major effects won’t be felt for a while yet once government support is cut back again. This will show which companies ultimately won’t survive and will have to start laying off employees. It will also become clear in the near future what the effect of the crisis will be on the self-employed and temporary employees.

Organizations are preparing for a changing group of clients and requests for help
In its efforts to help prevent debt and social isolation, Adessium works with Fonds Bijzondere Noden Rotterdam, Helden van de Wil, Leergeld Nederland, Schuldhulpmaatje, Stichting Urgente Noden Nederland and Van Schulden naar Kansen.

Adessium

It is important to us that everyone can fully participate in society. Debt and social isolation present a huge stumbling block to this. We support social initiatives designed to help people avoid debt so that no one has to face these problems alone.

The form of the debt problem that aid organizations in the Netherlands are focusing on is changing due in part to the corona crisis. Organizations are preparing for a changing group of clients because they expect the group of young people with debt to grow. They are also trying to get out in front of an increased surge of people in need of aid by actively looking for entrepreneurs who have had their own problems with debt and to deploy them as volunteers with expertise because of their experience in these matters.
Leergeld Nederland

Preventing the exclusion of children from poor families

One out of every 12 children in the Netherlands grows up in poverty. These children can’t go on school trips or participate in activities that are very normal for their peers, due to financial reasons. They often end up on the sidelines, literally. Leergeld wants to prevent children in families with minimal financial means from being excluded socially so that they can start participating again. Leergeld arranges home visits, mediation, financial assistance, and follow-up so that children can take part in activities at and outside of school. This is important so that children can develop knowledge, skills and self-esteem. There are 109 local Leergeld groups that work together in three-quarters of all Dutch municipalities. Based on its practical experience, Leergeld also directs the attention of policymakers, politicians and other organizations to structural issues that prevent children from participating.

STEK

Support for people who need it the most

There are many people in need in The Hague; the city has high numbers of undocumented people, there is a lot of segregation and the poverty and debt problems are dire. In The Hague, the organization Stek - Stichting voor stad en kerk supports the city’s most vulnerable residents with the help of 45 employees and over 900 volunteers. Stek works on the basis of the demand or need of residents who maintain as much control over the projects as possible. Stek focuses on the support for and the empowerment of African women and children, sometimes with emergency financial relief and often by helping them navigate the Dutch language and bureaucracy, use of computers and economic independence. The Kinderwinkel offers a safe place for children in the underprivileged neighborhood Moerwijk, providing them with a place to play and develop. Den Haag Wereldhuis is an advisory and knowledge center, and place for undocumented people to meet.

Wereldhuis

Meeting place and advice for undocumented people

The Wereldhuis of the Protestantse Diaconie in Amsterdam is both a meeting place and advisory center for people without a residence permit. An estimated 15,000 undocumented people live in Amsterdam, and their situation is often problematic. They are looking for new prospects yet have very few possibilities. Thanks to various projects in Amsterdam and the surrounding area, the Wereldhuis helps them to regain control over their lives. The Wereldhuis offers counseling, office hours, language lessons and a buddy program. Most of the activities in the Wereldhuis are organized by volunteers who, in some cases, are also undocumented.
Justice and Peace

Refugee newcomers find their place in society

Justice and Peace believes that solidarity is the best response to a polarizing society. For nearly 50 years, it has been working on promoting respect for human rights and social justice. In its project Samen Hier (here together), Justice and Peace gets “welcome groups” in various Dutch municipalities involved in welcoming refugees. For a period of one year, these groups of five friends, neighbors, colleagues or acquaintances will be matched with a refugee (family). During this year, they share time and interests, knowledge, and networks with the support of counselors, training courses and events. These efforts help newcomers feel at home as soon as possible in Dutch society. In cooperation with the University of Toronto, research is being conducted on which forms of social support contribute the most to this mutual integration.

Prinses Máxima Centrum voor kinderoncologie

Mission: to cure every child of cancer, with optimal quality of life

Each year, around 600 children in the Netherlands get cancer, and one of four children even dies from it. The Princess Máxima Center for Pediatric Oncology brings together all of the highly complex care and research for children with cancer from all over the Netherlands. Adessium contributed to the development of a biobank to improve the coordination between research, diagnostics, and care for children with cancer. Children and/or their parents are asked to make DNA material available for research purposes. This research focuses on deciphering a variety of genetic mutations in pediatric cancer and is essential to the development of better treatment methods and improving the chance of survival for children with cancer. The research based on biobank data contributes to a faster and better diagnosis. All of these efforts have in common the ambitious goal of curing as many children and adolescents with cancer as fast as possible while preserving their quality of life.

Stichting Nederlands Debat Instituut

Debate education for active citizenship

Young people are the future of our democracy. Stichting Nederlands Debat Instituut (Dutch Debate Institute Foundation) works on educating children and young people about democracy. Through debate training, young people learn verbal and critical thinking skills that they can use to become active citizens. Learning to listen to each other, asking critical questions and respecting other people’s opinions are skills that young people can learn in practice through debate. The foundation reaches thousands of children and young people each year by giving debate training in classrooms, providing continuing education for teachers, developing readily available teaching materials, and organizing national debate tournaments.
Board Members, Management and Team

**Board Members**

Rogier van Vliet — Chairman  
Jan Meijerman  
Hendrik-Jan Laseur

**Management**

Saskia van den Dool — Managing Director  
Martijn Meijer — Director of Programs

**Operational Team**

Adessium Foundation’s operational team consists of eleven people. In addition to the two directors, the team includes six program managers and three general staff members: a monitoring & evaluation manager, a communications manager, and an office manager.
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.
In 2020, Adessium Foundation spent a total of €12 million supporting organizations and projects. 2020 also saw the start of seven new long-term partnerships, and the renewal of 30 existing partnerships. In total, there are 112 active partnerships at year-end 2020, across 105 organizations.*

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### Overall grantmaking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>11,977</td>
<td>15,005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational expenses</td>
<td>1,442</td>
<td>1,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,419</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,587</strong></td>
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</table>

### Distribution across programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Interest</td>
<td>3,337</td>
<td>5,748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People &amp; Nature</td>
<td>3,748</td>
<td>4,363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Initiatives</td>
<td>4,892</td>
<td>4,894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,977</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,005</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Distribution by type of support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Support</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programmatic-institutional</td>
<td>9,261</td>
<td>10,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project-related</td>
<td>2,716</td>
<td>4,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,977</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,005</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Distribution by region/ intended results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>5,452</td>
<td>6,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>5,249</td>
<td>5,848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>1,276</td>
<td>2,553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,977</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,005</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1) These data have been derived from Adessium Foundation’s 2020 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

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

As stipulated in multi-year agreements, Adessium Foundation periodically receives donations from an affiliated foundation which oversees capital set aside by the Van Vliet family. The allocation of donations by Adessium Foundation meant for public benefit is strictly separated from its asset management. Adessium Foundation does not receive any other resources than what is gifted by 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.
Caring for each other and our environment
Credits

Content

Adessium Foundation

Allison Klein, ABK Translations — English translation

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Marjolein Pijnappels — project management
Maya Kneple — design and illustrations

Joana Mühlenbrock — design and art direction

Productiemannen — printing

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