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## REFLECTIONS AND INSIGHTS

## INTRODUCTION

This was the first full year of operation for the Guerrilla Foundation and I think that throughout 2017 we were able to prove that a very small, agile team collaborating remotely can achieve quite a lot when united by a strong vision. Firmly grounded in lean processes and with bold communication, we established the Guerrilla Foundation as one of the key players supporting activists and social movements in Europe, even earning CIVICUS' recognition for 'Brave Philanthropy'.

We partnered with 31 organisations, groups and initiatives from 12 countries to provide them with financial support. One of our declared goals is to be a catalyst for early-stage initiatives and we are happy to be the first, or among the first, funders for nine of our grantees in 2017.

Last year we also sharpened our strategy. We defined two programmatic areas and imbued them with life: The Movement aims to support impactful and audacious campaigns with systems change objectives and a pan-European orientation. The Backbone aims to strengthen the activist ecosystem in Europe through network building, skill development and infrastructure support.

We validated our hunch that European activists also need a nimble year-round small grants fund. With The Reflex we were able to provide

urgent response money and make connections with exciting grassroots groups across Europe. For example, when the organisation of the De-growth Summer School in Germany was threatened by the decision of a large foundation to pull out promised funding for political reasons, we jumped in as guarantor to provide planning security to the organisers.

Our non-financial support has also proven to be impactful. Being part of the founding Facilitation Group of FundAction leveraged the impact of our founder's private donation for the set-up of this exciting participatory grantmaking tool for European activists. FundAction already made first grants to grassroots groups from across Europe, the next grant round is well underway whilst an annual assembly meeting is in the making. We at Guerrilla cannot wait to see who from the foundation world will join us in pushing for a paradigm shift as to who takes decisions about grant money in 2018.

Moreover, several of our partner organisations benefited from our networks and connections. We are proud to have facilitated numerous cross-pollinations among like-minded groups. Our early stage financial support and personal endorsement helped at least four organisations raise much-needed funding.

Having successfully prototyped our programme areas, we will continue our work this year along the same lines while striving to further increase our geographical reach, especially towards southern and eastern Europe and places where our partners identify political opportunities. We aim to connect even more to grassroots actors, both, with our grants but also for an exchange of ideas and with our network building efforts. Finally, we will actively engage those with power and privilege to rethink their roles in social change and encourage them to offer more resources in service of social movements by showing them that impactful, exciting and bold philanthropy is possible.

It's going to be a busy year full of action and we welcome your feedback, ideas and introductions to inspiring activists from Ancona to Zagreb!

**Romy Krämer**  
Managing Director

**73**

ORGANISATIONS  
SCREENED

**46**

ORGANISATIONS  
INVITED TO APPLY  
FOR A GRANT

**32**

GRANTS  
MADE TO **31**  
ORGANIZATIONS

## THE YEAR IN **NUMBERS**

Amount spent in each **grant category**:



**THE MOVEMENT:** €139,000 EUR, 8 GRANTS



**THE BACKBONE:** €155,000 EUR, 9 GRANTS



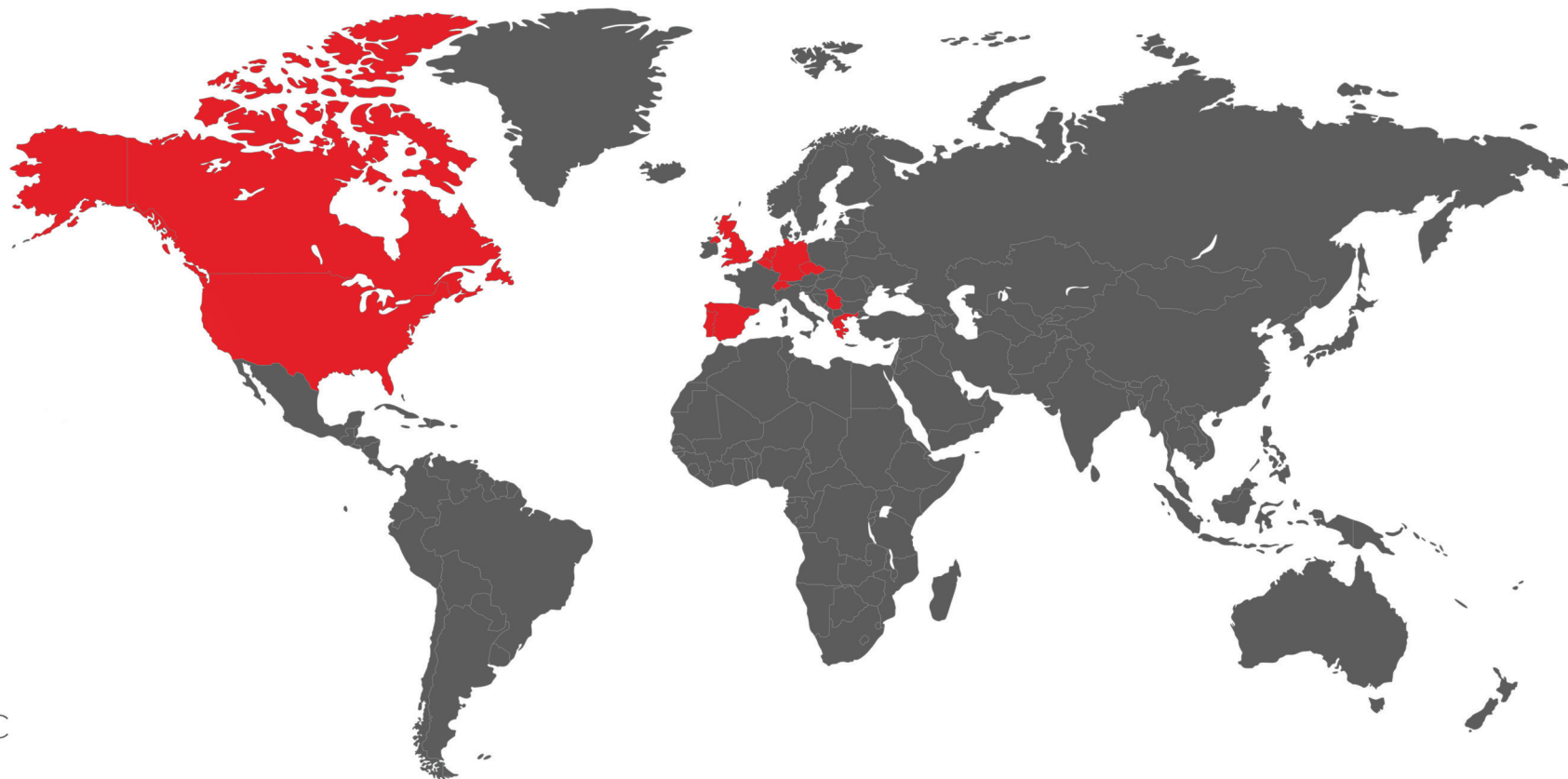
**THE REFLEX:** €65,000 EUR, 15 GRANTS



# 12

## COUNTRIES

GREECE  
GERMANY  
UK  
PORTUGAL  
USA  
NETHERLANDS  
CANADA  
BELGIUM  
SERBIA  
SPAIN  
SWITZERLAND  
CZECH REPUBLIC



For **9** organisations / initiatives, we were the first institutional supporter or one of a small group of first supporters.

We helped **4** organisations raise additional funding.



## THE MOVEMENT

### GOALS

Our movement grants allow activists to get creative and launch courageous campaigns that will mobilise diversely, unite strongly or block defiantly. We are keen to see initiatives that grasp the complexities of the world and use systems thinking as well as lived experience of those at ground zero. The most exciting movements will be strategic and take bold action around root pressure points while being open to failing, learning, failing better & learning more along the way.



## CASE STUDIES

### 1. Gastivists

*“Building a Coordinated Anti-gas Movement in Europe”*

A young, diverse and vibrant activist crew, confronting the massive push for construction of new gas infrastructure that would lock Europe into fossil fuels for another generation and increase pressures on the Global South towards expansion of fracking.

We offered them core support so that they may empower gastivists across Europe and the Mediterranean to start to understand themselves as part of an interconnected and international anti-gas movement through facilitating coordinated action(s). The current aim is to coordinate no less than 10 joint actions by fall 2018, and provide direct trainings and materials to support the start of 8 new groups in 5 countries.



Gastivists Action



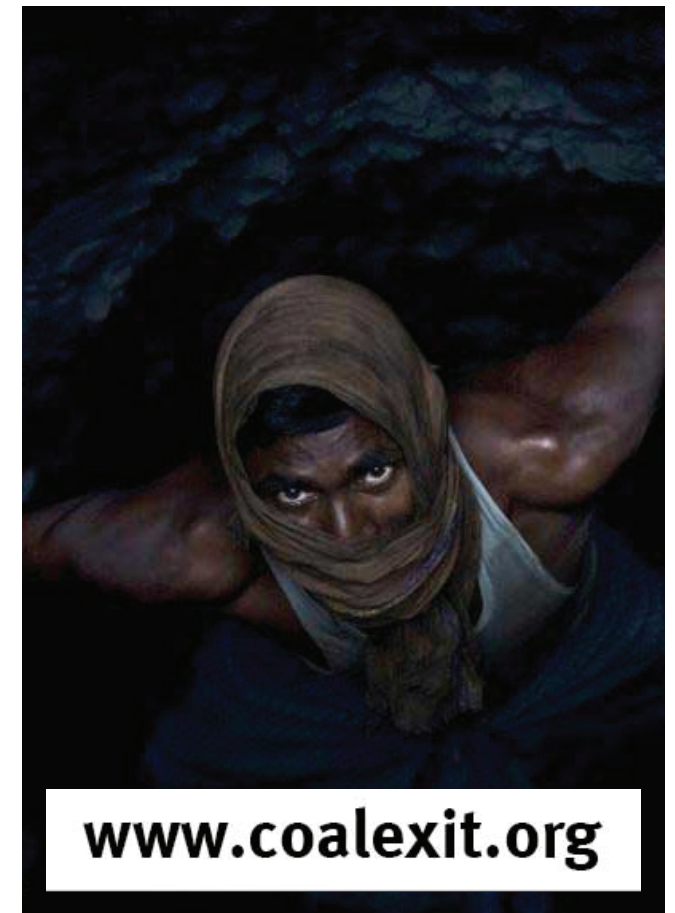
## 2. Urgewald

*“To Know Your Enemy (CoalPlants), You have to Identify them all First”*

Urgewald is an environmental & human rights non-profit with 25 years of experience in addressing the underlying causes of global environmental destruction and poverty. They monitor the activities of German companies & banks abroad and educate the public about the negative impacts of consumption patterns on people and the natural world both near and far.

Like us, Urgewald want to prevent banks and investors from financing companies that have far reaching plans to build new coal plants worldwide. We chose to fund a key element of this project, which was the production of the COALEXIT

list of the top 150 coal plant developers, which represent 80% of the new build pipelines (plans for over 1500 coal plant blocks worldwide). This list is a powerful tool for divestment campaigners worldwide as it identifies the companies that banks and investors need to avoid if they are committed to keeping global warming well below 2°C. With the list Urgewald want to target the top European banks most involved in financing the pipeline of new coal plants. The objective is to move banks to establish policies that effectively exclude financing of companies that are still expanding their fleet of coal-fired power stations.



## OVERVIEW OF MOVEMENT GRANTS

### **Vouliwatch (Greece - 32,000)**

Vouliwatch is a parliament watch organisation that engages Greek citizens in legislative politics and provides them with an opportunity to hold their members of parliament accountable.

### **Urgewald (Germany - 20,000)**

Urgewald focuses on influencing the financing of destructive industries like fossil fuels or arms trade via campaigns as well as direct work with financial institutions, pushing them towards the implementation of tougher standards and transparency. Grant for research and production of the Coal-Exit-List of the 150 top coal power plant developers as a resource and campaigning tool for other organisations in the field of climate and finance.

### **Sanktionsfrei (Germany - 15,000)**

Sanktionsfrei aims to overcome financial cuts and stigma that people are affected by when depending on social security benefits. Ultimately, the organisation wants to achieve the fall of the sanctioning law and inspire a reframing of social security more towards a Universal Basic Income. Grant for the Happy Hartz campaign.

### **Changing Cities (Germany - 15,000)**

Changing Cities wants to create more equitable, social, sustainable, and people-friendly cities and urban spaces by bringing about a major mobility transition, away from the dominance of automobile. From Berlin, they spread their knowledge and activities across Germany and beyond. Grant for an online platform and offline meetings for initiatives across Germany.

### **European Action Coalition for the Right to Housing and the City (UK - 15,000)**

The European Action Coalition is a network of 27 grassroots groups challenging the privatisation, commodification and financialisation of cities and housing in 20 countries across Europe. Support for coordination meetings among the coalition members and the development of joint messaging.

### **Linha Vermelha (Portugal - 10,000)**

Linha Vermelha is a national awareness campaign to stop oil drilling and fracking in Portugal. They want to mobilise mainly youth and elderly people around the country to knit the longest red line in the world to say NO! to fossil fuels.

### **Gastivists**

#### **(International, Germany - 12,000)**

Four experienced climate activists who expose the false narrative of 'natural' gas as a so-called 'clean bridging fuel' and organise a broad coalition of anti-gas movements in Europe and the Mediterranean.

### **The Rules (International, US - 32,000)**

Contribution to a large Universal Basic Income campaign with the goal to re-contextualise the basic premises of the debate to focus on decoupling humanity from 'bullshit jobs' and the tyranny of GDP growth. The campaign will be connected to the prototyping of a community-based crypto-currency.



## THE BACKBONE

### GOALS

Our Backbone grants support activities that educate and build capacity for mobilisation, develop skills and thus boost the effectiveness and credibility of activists, collectives or associations (e.g. online infrastructure, educational programmes). We aim to support activist platforms, networks and other effective ways for activists to connect and organise.



## CASE STUDIES

### 1. FundAction

A fund for European activists in which activist members call the shots about where the money goes. This is the idea behind FundAction. Though not directly involved as a grant giving organisation - our founder unbureaucratically supported the start-up of the fund with a private donation - the Guerrilla Foundation gave ample non-financial support to the project in its first year. Our Managing Director acted as the Funder representative in the first Facilitation Group, the main governing body of the fund. While her role in the Facilitation Group came with the restriction of not being allowed a say in grant-making decisions, Romy worked alongside the team of seven activists from various parts of Europe on all other matters relating to the establishment of the fund: selecting and implementing the online



platform for managing the community and grantmaking processes, fleshing out the procedures and design of the three types of grants, recruiting new members and planning the first annual assembly which will take place in April 2018.

FundAction was designed and set up with amazing speed and professionalism and has made the first grants within the course of only one year after the first planning meeting. Currently 155 members strong, the platform brings together activists from Moldova to Portugal, from Sweden to Bosnia Herzegovina who work across a broad range of issues: human rights and anti-discrimination, alternative economies, climate, right to the city and many more. Currently the fund is accepting its second round of applications. Following the kick-off with Rethink grants for capacity building and exchange amongst activists, now members are called to submit proposals for Renew grants of up to 20k EUR for projects that have a systemic change focus. Soon, the third type of grants, Resist will be launched to provide urgent response support to activists. A [blog](#) keeps those interested in FundAction's work up-

dated about the activities taking place but also allows members to transparently share their struggles and thoughts with the goal to increase learning across the sector. For us, FundAction truly is strengthening the backbone of the European activist scene and also contributes to our broader goal of stirring up philanthropy by providing a role model for progressive philanthropy that other funders can follow.

A couple of lessons learned already emerged. High participation is difficult to achieve! We need to better engage the community to achieve higher participation rates in the grant decisions. For that, building a strong community is essential - membership on the same platform does not make a community! Also, meeting diversity targets isn't easy. Despite the fact that FundAction is built on a strong set of values, among them inclusivity and openness, it has been hard to not be exclusive due to language issues and recruit a member base that is intersectionally diverse. There is especially a lack of activists above the age of 40 and a clear bias toward white men in the current scheme of things. All work in progress!



FundAction Planning Session



## 2. The OPEN

We sat down with the Open's European Coordinator, Stephanie Roth, to learn a bit more about how this sisterhood of the leading multi-issue, digitally-native campaigning organisations.

**What did the guerrilla grant allow The OPEN to do?**

It allowed Open to hire a European coordinator to support the start-up groups generally and focus on those based in the CEE region.

**What have been main highlights/exciting developments in 2017?**

The creation of a Hungarian Open start-up '*call a Hang*' (the voice) as well as witnessing the impact of people-power catalysed by Akcja Demokratia and DeClic in cutting back controversial judicial reforms in their respective countries. Organising the first ever CEE summit for Poland, Romania, Hungary & Austria groups to exchange on the similarities of the environments they operate in and to exchange/develop strategies in both operations and campaigning. This means looking at the Eastern European strategic context/learning about each others national contexts with a focus on the far right and xenophobia/nationalism. They were able to discuss campaigning and targeting decision makers in hostile political climates, non-accountable decision makers and weak legal systems.

**What were the main/most interesting obstacles?**

Supporting groups operating in authoritarian or identity-driven countries. Identifying and developing strategies and messaging to counterattacks to groups. Witnessing the creativity and determination of the groups despite these very real obstacles.

**Any cool observations about activism/movements in Europe you'd like to add?**

Humor is the most powerful antidote to fear AND we urgently need a group setting up a progressive multi-issue campaigning platform in the Czech Republic.





## OVERVIEW OF **BACKBONE GRANTS**

### **The Open** (International, Germany - 25,000)

OPEN is a growing sisterhood of the world's leading national, multi-issue, digitally-native campaigning organisations (like Campact & 38degrees). They create a space for learning and collaboration between the world's progressive campaigning powerhouses via regular summits, the production of learning resources and exchange opportunities. Our grant supported the creation of a European Campaigns Coordinator position to provide coaching and support to start-up teams in different European countries.

### **Transnational Institute** (Netherlands - 15,000)

Research and advocacy project about 'shrinking space' for dissent/activism. Activities include meetings of social movement representatives and the production of a framing paper, but also the compilation and dissemination of illustrative cases and a mailing list to connect movements across the world around this issue.

### **The Wellbeing Project** (International, Canada - 25,000)

The Wellbeing Project is a limited life initiative focused on bringing together inner wellbeing and social change. It focuses on prioritising support for everyone working in social change, by working with social change leaders,

and cultivating a culture shift in the field toward one that is healthier and supportive of inner wellbeing. Our grant supports the sharing of stories and communication of the outputs of the activities conducted in the past years.

### **The Good Lobby** (Belgium - 20,000)

The Good Lobby democratizes lobbying by connecting people with expertise to NGOs to make their voices heard in the policy process, especially with respect to EU politics. The organisation conducts pro-bono masterclasses and citizen lobbying workshops across Europe. Core support grant.

### **Campaign Bootcamp** (UK - 15,000)

The European Action Coalition is a network of 27 grassroots groups challenging the privatisation, commodification and financialisation of cities and housing in 20 countries across Europe. Support for coordination meetings among the coalition members and the development of joint messaging.

### **European Alternatives** (Germany - 20,000)

European Alternatives' mission is to promote democracy, equality and culture beyond the nation state and imagine, demand and enact alternatives for a viable future for Europe. Our grant supported a series of trainings and encounters for young activists from newcomer communities to fight for human rights, connect them

with their large network to fight against the normalisation of hate speech and racism, and increase the visibility of newcomer activists.

### **Ministry of Space** (Serbia - 10,000)

The Ministry of Space works towards a city of justice, solidarity and open dialogue. They work with various grassroots groups from Belgrade, offering their expertise and physical and technical infrastructure. Our grant supports the backbone of the organisation, allowing them to intensify their work and create visible manifestations of both, the need for change and the production of alternatives.

### **Zemos98** (Spain - 10,000)

Zemos98's mission is to produce social change by promoting a critical citizenry and a culture of participation. Our grant supports Caring for the Commons, a project with the goal to map and make visible care practices and affect management by activists and other collective social agents. The project will result in the production of a useful document for those who want to apply real changes in their communities related to their activist "care economy".

### **NEON** (UK - 15,000)

NEON is a network of over 1,600 UK organisers from 900 different civil society groups, all connected through their own online platform. They run powerful trainings and support campaigns to help progressives win social, economic and environmental justice. Grant towards core support.



## THE REFLEX

### GOALS

Our bureaucracy-lite year-round Reflex grants allow us to quickly respond to the needs of activists reacting to emerging and unexpected sociopolitical situations. While initially intended to support urgent mobilisations only, we quickly realised that there was a need for flexible small grants for other activities like meetings and network building, as well. We also learned that these grants are an amazing tool for us as an organisation to respond to arising opportunities as we expand our network.



## CASE STUDIES

### 1. Reacting to Urgent Needs

In summer, **Greenpeace Greece** approached us for support for staging a direct action in front of the Ministry of the Environment in Athens in response to the Argosaronic Gulf oil spill that was very poorly handled by the government and local authorities. An artificial 'oil spill' was produced with open canvas messages underscoring the dangers of dirty energy and the harm this will cause both to civilians and marine life. Read the full story [here](#).

We also supported Zain Raza, the founder of **AcTVism Munich**, with a basic income while he was fundraising and professionalising his organisation. Zain was threatened by bureaucratic sanctions - the German social system did not acknowledge his full-time voluntary engagement for the alternative media organisation he founded. Zain's case highlights the importance of flexible backbone support for volunteer run organisations that want to professionalise and grow. In the meantime, AcTVism Munich was able to fundraise and cover at least two years of operation.



stantinos Stathias / Greenpeace

Greenpeace Greece



## 2. Activist gatherings, networks and grassroots voices

We contributed to gatherings like the **Fearless Cities** conference in Barcelona and the first **European Lesbian Conference** via travel funding for activists from across Europe.



European Lesbian Conference



Fearless Cities Conference



We supported a European tour of a number of Standing Rock Water Defenders that helped strengthen the transatlantic ties between climate activists. We also attempted to hack gatherings with great transformative potential, like **Alter Ego** and **Unlikely Allies**, by adding the voices of grassroots activists to the usual 'influencers' that feature much more prominently in such contexts.



Standing Rock Europe Tour



Unlikely Allies Event





Alter Ego Gathering



### 3. Expanding the Network

Finally, our Reflex grants are a great way to reach out to and get to know the work of smaller, less well known groups. On the one hand, we supported the first ever Climate Camp in the Czech Republic, organised by the grassroots organisation **Limity Jsme My** which gave a massive push to a broader climate movement in the region.

On the other hand, we also used our small grants to reach out to organisations like **Habita** in Portugal which we encountered via an existing connection to The European Action Coalition for the Right to Housing and the City and that needed funding for a 'Housing Caravan' to inform people across the country about the housing crisis and financialisation of the housing market.



Limity Jsme My, Climate Camp



## OVERVIEW OF REFLEX GRANTS

### **Die Integrale (Germany - 4,000)**

Action weekend on populism in Berlin

### **Rob Greenfield**

(International, UK - 5,000)

Production of a series of videos (*like this one*) on good practices in environmental sustainability

### **Activism Munich (Germany - 1,500)**

Basic income for the founder to bridge funding gap

### **Fearless Cities Conference (Spain - 7,500)**

Travel costs for European activists to attend

### **Habita (Portugal - 5,000)**

'Housing caravan' through Portugal

### **The Good Lobby (Belgium - 5,000)**

Development and organisation of the first Advocacy School

### **Unlikely Allies (Germany - 5,000)**

Travel and conference costs for grassroots activists

### **Coordination Climat Justice Sociale (Europe, Switzerland - 5,000)**

Organisation of the European speakers tour of a group of Standing Rock Dakota Access Pipeline activists

### **Limity Jsme My (Czech Republic - 4,700)**

Organisation of the first Czech climate camp

### **Share Action (UK - 800)**

Attendance expenses of EDGE Conference for a member of the organisation

### **People and Planet (UK - 2,500)**

Covering participation of immigrant student activists with disabilities to participate at their annual PowerShift campaigners training in Manchester

### **Greenpeace (Greece - 3,000)**

Direct action around the oil spill in the Argosaronic Gulf

### **Degrowth Summer School (Germany - 1,000)**

Deficiency guarantee for lost funding

### **Alter Ego (UK - 5,000)**

Travel and conference costs for grassroots activists

### **Parlem Hablemos (Spain - 7,000)**

Online platform bringing together opponents around the issue of Catalanian independence to engage in friendly dialogue

### **Upstream Podcast (International, US - 7,000)**

'Production of four podcasts on cooperativism, feminism & economics, and debunking homo economicus

## REFLECTIONS & INSIGHTS

### Trust and Good Relationships

The last year showed us that trusting our gut feeling when developing close relationships with individuals and teams is essential. Especially when working with informal groups and networks of activists, like the **Gastivists**, or nascent organisations like The **Good Lobby**, much of the initial trust is based on shared values and the resulting approach rather than past achievements. Establishing good relationships with grantee organisations means more work: calls, meetings and many emails to build networks and give non-financial support where needed. However, it ultimately pays off and allows us to be increasingly audacious in what we fund. Positive vibes also have a ripple effect as our grantees refer us to exciting new groups.

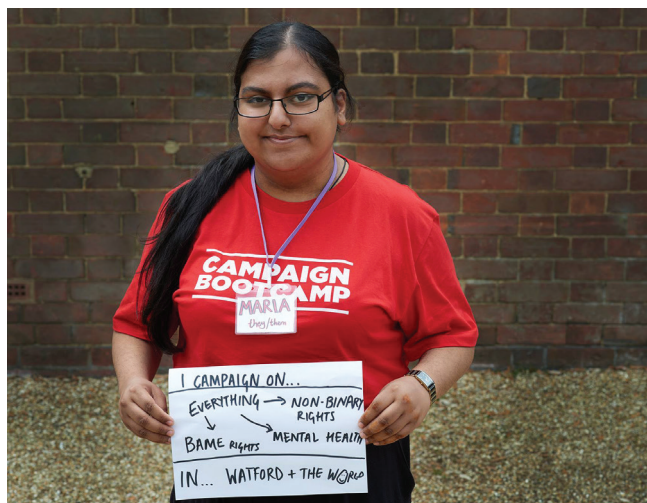


The Good Lobby

### Deepening and Broadening Movements

We met many campaigns and social change initiatives in the past year and realised that many still lack depth because they are run in a top down fashion usually by upper middle class, white people. This is why organisations like the **Campaign Bootcamp** are so important because they empower young people from a variety of backgrounds to speak for their own communities. We will get better at challenging activities that are not deeply grounded in the lived experience of those most affected by an issue.

Likewise, it is important to not accept simple 'us vs. them' narratives that create opponents based



Campaign Bootcamp

on stated identities. By funding campaigns like **Linha Vermelha**, we hope to help mobilise new audiences to join the fight against fossil fuel extraction and contribute to narrowing the divide that can often be found between activists of the 'left' and the majority population. We also hope to be able to contribute more to connections between unlikely allies. At the Wellbeing Project we catalysed the move away from a purely 'social entrepreneurs as social change leaders' perspective to one that also includes activists. In 2018 we hope to continue to reduce the siloisation of social change activities.



Linha Vermelha



## Decentering our Activities

Having started off with a clear majority of grants to organisations in Germany and the UK, we strive to increase our geographical diversity, venturing out more into Eastern and Southern Europe where there is often a lack of other funders and we can make a bigger impact with our grants. We are already speaking to organisations from Italy, Croatia and Albania and are excited to see what the new year will bring!

But even within countries, we hope to decenter our grantmaking and hope to identify groups that are not only focusing their activities on capitals and major cities. Again, creating connections where there otherwise might be division between the urban and the rural areas. This will require us to talk to and work with constituents from more diverse backgrounds. Language will always be a challenge in this process but we hope to increase our ability to understand and work with people from different contexts.

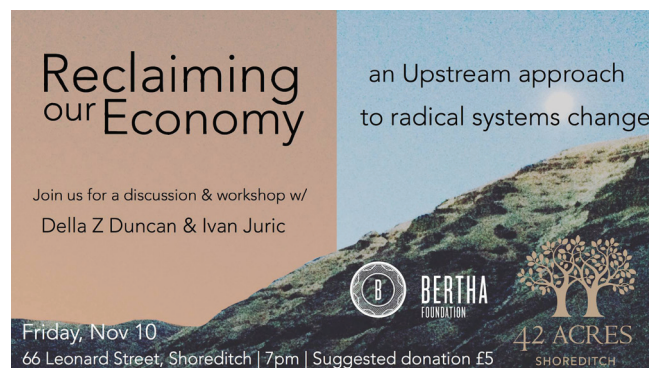


Rob Greenfield

## Smart Communication

We learned that with a tiny team you can make quite a big wave when doing good work that you communicate well. It is great to see that our work is met with enthusiasm by social change organisations and other funders alike. In 2018 we will keep on using our voice to promote the idea and practice of grassroots social change, the relevance of a systemic change approach and will try to influence narratives in philanthropy, e.g. on participatory grantmaking.

We will also strategically fund a small number of initiatives that contribute to this goal. People like **Rob Greenfield** or the team behind the **Upstream Podcast** who creatively engage and mobilise large numbers of people by sharing good practices or think and learn about the most pressing issues of our time.



Upstream Podcast

## Strategic Work

Together with the **Smart CSOs Lab** we worked on developing our communication with grantees and overall strategy, as well as grantmaking processes to better reflect our focus on systemic change. Our current thoughts on this are outlined in a comprehensive [blog post](#). We now have more in-depth conversations with our grantees to learn about their approach to systemic change and gather feedback about our thinking. We also revised our selection process and criteria to be better able to identify partner organisations that contribute to systemic change.



Smart CSOs Lab Workshop in Berlin

**GUERRILLA FOUNDATION**

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