



**journalismfund.eu**

# ANNUAL REPORT 2017

*“STIMULATING IN-DEPTH AND INDEPENDENT JOURNALISM”*

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## MISSION

### OUR VISION AND MISSION

We believe that journalism is crucial to fostering living democracies throughout Europe. We are dedicated to advancing independent and in-depth journalism across Europe that serves the public interest, furthers accountability as well as transparency, and contributes to critical thinking and well-informed debate.

We aim to promote and develop professional journalism in Europe in response to the challenges and opportunities stemming from increased digitalisation, the internationalisation of political, business and criminal power structures, as well as changing revenue models.

We promote in-depth, independent journalism and journalistic innovation through:

- Administering editorially independent journalism grants with funds from foundations and other non-profit organisations;
- Capacity-building through editorial advice and mentoring of grant recipients;
- Advising and coordinating investigative teams;
- Advising journalism academic and training programs; and
- Facilitating networking opportunities for investigative journalists and other key stakeholders.

### OUR HERITAGE

Journalismfund.eu is a Belgian-registered independent non-profit organisation originating in the Pascal Decroos Fund for investigative journalism. The Fund was set up in 1998 by family, close friends and colleagues of Decroos to commemorate and further the legacy of the Belgian journalist.

What we stand for is what Pascal Decroos stood for in word and deed. He was dedicated to investigative journalism. He was committed to creating opportunities to develop young journalistic talent and had an ability to bring people from different facets of society to dialogue and work together.

### THE JOURNALISM WE STAND FOR:

The journalism we support is characterised by the two “I”s: in-depth and independent.

- In-depth journalism is fact-based, well-researched, uses the best available methods and respects the relevant professional, ethical, and legal rules.

- Independent journalism is credible because it is editorially independent from political, economic or other types of influence. Journalismfund.eu strives to provide the necessary structures to safeguard such editorial independence.

## OUR VALUES

- **Independent.** We operate independently from any political or economic influences, donor or other interests. We respect the editorial independence of the journalists we work with.
- **Transparent.** Our board, staff members, partners and the general public know what we stand for, how we operate and make decisions. We ask those we work with to be equally transparent. We are aware that transparency in the context of investigative journalism can expose people to risk and are therefore mindful of our requirements.
- **Collaborative.** Collaboration empowers. It amplifies the impacts of journalists and journalism. Our willingness and ability to collaborate with key stakeholders in our field strengthens our strategies. Collaboration within and between our organisational structures strengthens our operations.
- **Respectful.** We are respectful of the different journalistic traditions and practices in Europe. At the same time, we strive to support the highest levels of professionalism and rigour. We handle the information we publish with care. Our internal policies and working culture foster respect towards those we serve and throughout all levels of our organisation.
- **Responsive.** We act on the needs and interests of journalists. We adapt to changing external and internal opportunities and threats. We walk our talk.
- **Innovative.** We propagate new journalistic methods and skills. We encourage creative thinking and are willing to try new approaches.

## 1. ACTIVITIES I

### 1.1. PROJECT EUROPEAN GRANTS

#### OBJECTIVE

Political decisions are made across borders. Business and trade go across borders. Criminals establish networks to run their activities in various countries. If journalists want to match this power, cross-border cooperation is vital, for research as well as for publication.

Journalismfund.eu supports teams of journalists from several countries, who mostly work out of each their country on a common story. In that way, they combine their research competences and safeguard publication in several countries, which is considered important in order to address the various European audiences and achieve impact for the journalistic stories.

The aid takes the form of grants to individual journalists. They must demonstrate that their project is unusually costly or time-consuming in such a way that the normal support of editors or publishers is not sufficient for the project. The projects must exceed regular reporting, daily journalism or correspondence. The subject or theme must be European or have a cross-border perspective.

#### APPLICATIONS

For its European cross-border grant programme, Journalismfund.eu organised four application rounds in 2017: one in February, one in May, one in September and one in November. 65 applications were submitted by a total of 216 applicants.

17 applications, submitted by 65 applicants in total, were approved.

The total sum applied for in 2017 was €778,739.00. The jury granted €127,235.00.

#### APPLICANTS

The 65 applications were submitted by 216 journalists in total.

Most applications came from journalists from Italy (33), followed by Germany (24). The Netherlands (15) and France (15) followed in third and fourth place. As far as the gender of the applying journalists is concerned, 93 applicants (56%) were male, 51 (44%) female.

## GRANTEES

A total of 65 applicants spread across 15 teams saw their application approved. Most grantees are from Italy (20), followed by Germany (6), Greece (4). 36 (55%) grantees are male; 29 (45%) are female. The jury only applies journalistic criteria for the selection.

Overview of the applications published in 2017:

### Europe's Hidden War

- After more than two and a half years, the coalition has admitted to killing four members of the Hadid family in Mosul, Iraq in April 2015. Their story is told in Dagbladet Information as well as in a new 45-minute documentary on the Danish channel DR2.
- Team of a Dutch and Danish journalist.
- Working grant of €12,070 allocated in January 2015.
- <http://www.journalismfund.eu/EuropesHiddenWar>

### Gold Rush to Dam Balkan's Rivers

- The Western Balkan countries are faced with a rush to build new hydro power station but there is cause for concern that the standard of quality will be low with potential adverse impacts on nature and communities.
- Team of journalists from Norway and Macedonia.
- Working grant of €8,720 allocated in November 2015.
- <http://www.journalismfund.eu/BalkanDams>

### Operation Sophia

- The central Mediterranean is now the busiest corridor for irregular migration into the European Union. All past efforts to combat flows have resulted in more sea crossings and more deaths at sea.
- Team of English and Italian journalists.
- Working grant of €3,500 allocated in January 2017.
- <http://www.journalismfund.eu/OperationSophia>

### Passport for profit

- Thousands of refugees from Africa and the Middle East risk their lives to reach the shores of Europe and escape conflict and repression. But for the wealthy there are easier options available. With enough money, it's possible to purchase a EU passport - or at least residence.
- Team of English, Portuguese, Italian and Cypriot journalists.
- Working grant of €7,550 allocated in March 2016.
- <http://www.journalismfund.eu/PassportForProfit>

## The Watch List

- The watch list of "high risk" people and organisations is compiled by Thomson Reuters, the British firm. It is sold to almost all the world's major banks, the online payment processor PayPal, police forces, intelligence agencies and non-government organisations.
- Team of Dutch, English, American, German, Italian, Belgian journalists.
- Working grant of €4,880 allocated in February 2017.
- <http://www.journalismfund.eu/WorldCheck>

## The European Investment Bank: Africa's discreet financier

- European Investment Bank (EIB) is the largest multilateral borrower and lender in the world. But in several countries, EIB loans for development projects have caused discontent among locals.
- Team of Kenyan, Colombian, French and Slovenian journalists.
- Working grant of €12,095 allocated in September 2016.
- <http://www.journalismfund.eu/EuropeanInvestmentBank>

## Cash Loans Czar's Maltese Tax Escape Plan

- How Russian Billionaire and Fashion TV investor paid near zero-tax on small loans operations in Europe and USA.
- Team of Slovenian, Romanian, Maltese and Latvian journalists.
- Working grant of €9,900 allocated on the 27<sup>th</sup> of May 2016.
- <http://www.journalismfund.eu/CashLoansEscapePlan>

## How Israel Jails Palestinians Because They Fit the 'Terrorist Profile'

- To combat a wave of lone-wolf attacks Israel arrested hundreds of Palestinian youth suspected of being potential would-be-terrorists. Many, if not most of the Palestinians arrested were singled out by a computerised predictive system developed by Israeli authorities.
- Team of Danish, Israeli and British journalists.

- Working grant of €15,700 was allocated on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October 2016.
- <http://www.journalismfund.eu/HowIsraeljailsPalestinians>

## **The MEPs Project: the ghost offices of MEPs**

- In an unprecedented EU-wide collaborative effort, the journalists from "The MEPs Project" located in every member state investigated how members of the European Parliament (MEPs) make use of the general expenses payments they receive every month.
- Team of Belgian, British, Danish, Bulgarian, Czech, Italian and Hungarian journalists.
- Working grant of €11,900 allocated on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2017.
- <http://www.journalismfund.eu/MepsProject>

## **The Malta Files**

- How did the smallest EU country become a haven for global tax avoidance?
- Team of British, Romanian and Turkish journalists.
- Working grant of €10,000 allocated on 27 October 2016.
- <http://www.journalismfund.eu/MaltaFiles>

## **Mafias and the Far Right: The City of London Connection**

- Massimo Carminati, boss of an alleged mafia group in Rome, is said to have made millions of euros before his arrest in December 2014. But this financial treasure is nowhere to be found.
- Team of Italian and British journalists.
- Working grant of €6,000 allocated on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2017.
- <http://www.journalismfund.eu/MafiasandFarRight>

## **Security for sale**

- What price do we pay to protect Europeans? Since the late 1990s, the European Union has worked to encourage a European security market, where major defence and technology companies develop products and services that better protect us from crime and terrorism.
- Team of German, Dutch, Italian, British, Swedish, Belgian, Danish, French and Finnish journalists.
- Working grant of €29,000 granted on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March 2016.
- <http://www.journalismfund.eu/securityforsale>

## **How to fight the global Wall Street landlords**

- Wall Street giants—the so-called ‘vulture funds’—have been on a house-buying spree across Europe and the United States since the 2008 financial crash. The only way to fight back is to outsmart them, according to this research.
- Team of British, Greek and Spanish journalists.
- Working grant of €9,000 granted on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2015.
- <http://www.journalismfund.eu/FightingWallstreetLandlords>

## 1.2. PROJECT PASCAL DECROOS FUND

### OBJECTIVE

The Pascal Decroos Fund working grant programme aims to keep the memory of Pascal Decroos alive and continue his life’s work by:

- promoting quality and investigative journalism in Flanders and beyond;
- creating the possibility for young people to develop journalistic talents in practice;
- bringing together people from all corners and layers of society.

The Fund wants to support Flemish quality and investigative journalism financially through working grants. That way, starters as well as experienced journalists get the opportunity to develop their ideas.

The support takes the form of grants to individual journalists, who must demonstrate that their project is unusually costly or time-consuming in such a way that the normal support of editors or publishers is not sufficient for the project to be realised. The projects must exceed regular reporting, daily journalism or correspondence. The subject or theme must be of an investigative nature, or else the approach or perspective.

### APPLICATIONS

For the Flemish Pascal Decroos Fund project, Journalismfund.eu received 134 applications submitted by 184 applicants in three application rounds that were held in 2017.

The jury convened three times and granted a total of **€284,494**.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
# aanvragen	99	99	86	71	134
# projecten	52	40	38	37	34

Toegekend	209,488.00	189,150.00	183,565.00	195,504.00	284,494.00
Uitbetaald	189,771.40	161,020.00	180,871.70	174,666.00	209,666.66
Kleinste beurs	1,000.00	1,500.00	500.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Grootste beurs	15,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	20,000.00
gemiddeld	4,028.62	4,728.75	4,830.66	5,283.89	8,367.47
Gevraagd	737,068.97	734,394.83	555,968.00	469,210.00	875,629.65
Gemiddeld per zittijd	245,689.66	244,798.28	185,322.67	156,403.33	291,876.55
Zittijden jury	3	3	3	3	3

## Overview of the grants published in 2017:

### The Belgian Mothers

- In 1937 a group of Jewish women volunteers left Belgium for Spain, a country ravaged by civil war. The women wanted to support the Second Spanish Republic in their struggle against the military dictatorship of Francisco Franco. **Sven Tuytens** wrote their story.
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/LasMamasbelgas](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/LasMamasbelgas)
- €4.300
- Book – Uitgeverij Lannoo

### De Moneymakers

- Since its founding in 1850, the National Bank of Belgium is seen as the most trustworthy but also the most secretive institution in the country. In this book, **Véronique Goossens**, unveils the details of what goes on behind closed doors.
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/DeGeldmakers](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/DeGeldmakers)
- €6.000
- Book – Uigeverij Polis

### Lobbying in Law Street

- Companies, labour unions, interest groups, NGOs, professional lobbyists: they all want to leave their mark on the Belgian politics. **Dominique Soenens** wrote a book about how these groups influence lawmakers in Belgium.
- [Fondspascaldecroos.org/LobbyenWetstraat](http://Fondspascaldecroos.org/LobbyenWetstraat)

- €5.000
- Book – Uitgeverij Epo

## Congo's Violent Peace

- In Congo's Violent Peace, leading DRC expert **Kris Berwouts** provides the most comprehensive and in-depth account to date of developments since the so-called 'Congo Wars' – from Rwanda's destructive impact on security in Eastern Congo to the controversial elections of 2006 and 2011; the M23 uprising to Joseph Kabila's increasingly desperate attempts to cling to power.
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/en/CongoViolentPeace](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/en/CongoViolentPeace)
- €4.650
- Book – Uitgeverij EPO

## We hate each other more than the Jews

- **Els van Diggele** is a Dutch historian and a journalist. This is her third book on the underlying causes of conflict between Israel and Palestine.
- [Fondspascaldecroos.org/WeHatenElkaarMeer](http://Fondspascaldecroos.org/WeHatenElkaarMeer)
- €7.000
- Book – Uitgeverij Athenaeum

## Doctor behind the wheel

- While studying as a general practitioner, **Egmont Ruelens**, sees a number of bus and tram drivers who are suffering from stress and complain about being in physical pain. He decides to go undercover as a bus driver in order to examine the working conditions of these workmen. This book is a detailed account of his findings.
- €6.850
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/dokteraaanhetstuur](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/dokteraaanhetstuur)
- Book – Uitgeverij Lannoo

## Flanders biggest outlet but at what price?

- For the development of a Factory Outlet Center at Flanders Expo, the city of Ghent closed a deal in 2007 with a listed project developer. **Steven Vanden Bussche** went back thirty years in time in order to understand the construction.
- €1.200
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/TheLoop](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/TheLoop)
- Article – Apache.be

## Addicted to Colombian Coal

- **Raf Custers** went to the North of Colombia where he visited El Cerrejon, the site of the largest coal mine in Latin America. In El Cerrejon, the natural resources disappear leaving the people behind in untold hardship and misery.
- €7.425
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/ColombiaanseSteenkool](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/ColombiaanseSteenkool)
- Article – Mo.be

## Teherans Sexual Revolt

- In Iran, sex before marriage is punishable by flogging or confinement – adultery even by death. But behind closed doors, young Iranians couldn't care less, sexual transgressive behaviour has become the norm.
- €4.500
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/heteteheran](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/heteteheran)
- Article – De Morgen, Radio 1

## How migrant workers become ISIL-fighters

- Chorqisloq, a village in a remote region of Tajikistan, is under close observation by local police, security services, and other government agencies. In the past three years, 69 people left for Syria.
- €7.558
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/ArbeidsmigrantStrijder](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/ArbeidsmigrantStrijder)
- Article – Mo.be, The Diplomat

## Toxic Circle

- In Toxic Circle, **Maarten Schmidt**, shows the impact asbestos-producing multinational, Eternit, had on two different villages: Kapelle in Belgium and Kymore in India.
- €8.500
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/toxic-circle](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/toxic-circle)
- Article – Mo.be. Documentary coming out in 2018.

## Missing statistics stop any investigation into company crimes

- Since 1999, companies in Belgium can appear before the criminal judge for the crimes they commit, but this has proven difficult as government company records are incomplete. **Patrick Gijssels** looks for answers.
- €1.600
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/mankestatistiek](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/mankestatistiek)
- Article – Knack

## How trees combat climate change in Africa

- Deforestation is a big problem worldwide. At the same time, the climate change caused by the increasing emission of greenhouse gases is threatening not only nature but also humanity. The idea that we can combat both problems at the same time is therefore attractive. **Tim Vernimmen** analysed some tree planting schemes in Africa.
- €5,000
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/klimaataflaten](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/klimaataflaten)
- Article – EOS

## Why NGOs don't care about gay rights

- Uganda is one of the most hostile countries for the holebi community which is why **Jan Deken's** and **Arne Gillis'** research is quite surprising. While in Uganda they found that NGOs don't consider gay rights a priority even though they get government funding in order to tackle this issue.
- €3,346
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/NgosEnHolebirechten](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/NgosEnHolebirechten)
- Article - Knack

## Who run the world?

- Talented Flemish women rarely get top positions. **Tine Maenhout** investigates why, talking to ten Flemish women who've made it to the top.
- €4,190
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/whoruntheworld](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/whoruntheworld)
- Article – Charlie.be, Knack.be

## The history of the pig (within us)

- Everywhere, the pig carries with it a curriculum overflowing with stories and images. What we have done and still do to 'the pig' reveals 'the human being'. The gluttonous pig as a metaphor for our unquenchable greed? A documentary by **Jan Vromman**.
- €10,000
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/geschiedenis-het-varken](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/geschiedenis-het-varken)
- Documentary - feature

## Russia 1917-2017: Nostalgia or revolution?

- Russia 100 years after the October revolution: connecting revolution, memorials, activism, street protests and street art. Can the Russian people decide their own future? **Pieter Stockmans** and **Mashid Mohadjerin** travelled to Russia to find out.
- €5,500
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/rusland19172017](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/rusland19172017)
- Article – MO Magazine, Mo.be

## The chronically exhausted wallet of Professor De Meirleir

- An investigation by **Tom Cochez** has revealed how 'chronic disease specialist' Kenny De Meirleir prescribes his patients costly tests and medicines through a number of potentially unethical laboratories.
- €2,500
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/chronischvermoeideprof](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/chronischvermoeideprof)
- Article – Apache.be

## Belgian Policy in Congo: quod non?

- Kabila. Michel. Van Saksen-Coburg. De Croo. Four names that ring a bell in Congo as well as in Belgium. How and why did they determine the Belgo-Congolese affairs? **Goele Geeraert** poses the question.
- €3,000
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/hetbelgischcongobeleid](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/hetbelgischcongobeleid)
- Article - MO Magazine, Mo.be

## Nepal, when the dikes broke

- **Arnaud De Decker** and **Jules Devoldere** visited Nepal right after monsoon rains and floods ripped through the country wreaking unmeasurable havoc. They reported from the most affected areas.

- €2,000
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/Nepaloverstromingen](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/Nepaloverstromingen)
- Article – Mo.be

## The train from China to Europe

- In 2013 the Chinese president Xi Jinping launched the One Belt One Road (OBOR) project in an attempt to connect China to the European continent through a maritime route. **Jeanne Boden** investigates the growing Chinese influence in Europe and Belgium.
- €6,500
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/treinchinaeuropa](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/treinchinaeuropa)
- Article – Apache.be

## On the Edge of Happiness

- It's become easier for Bulgarians to move to Belgium since the country joined the European Union. In this documentary, **Will Mathijs**, follows a Bulgarian family as they try to make ends meet while living in a makeshift shelter in a public domain near Ghent.
- €5,000
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/grensvangeluk](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/grensvangeluk)
- Documentary – feature

## Pelikaanstraat 20

- Belgian actress Aminata Demba travels to Mali in the footsteps of her deceased father, to discover what drove him to undertake his journeys, before arriving in the Antwerp diamond district in the early 1970s. A documentary by **Leslie Verbeeck**, **Aminata Demba** and **Marijn Duijvestein**.
- €5,000
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/pelikaanstraat20](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/pelikaanstraat20)
- Documentary – Canvas (Vranckx en de Nomaden)

## The rebirth of Maarten Goffin

- **Kristof Hoefkens** accompanied Maarten Goffin to Brazil in search of his birth parents and the lives he could have lived.
- €5,649
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/maartengoffin](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/maartengoffin)
- Documentary – VTM (Telefacts)

## The distance between us

- 'The Distance Between Us' takes its starting point in some audio cassettes artist and photographer **Jan Locus** received from a Moroccan family in Molenbeek a few years ago. Probably going back to the early 1980s, the cassettes contain an oral correspondence between families in Brussels and Morocco.
- €2,000
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/distancebetweenus](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/distancebetweenus)
- Documentary – feature

## The saviour of the Kaja Kajas

- **Jimmy Hendrickx** travelled to a remote community in Papoea in the footsteps of the Belgian missionary Petrus Vertenten. A hundred years ago the missionary is said to have saved the community from extinction. As a result, the Kaja Kajas still honour him.
- €3,000
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/redderkajakajas](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/redderkajakajas)
- Documentary – Canvas (Vranckx en de Nomaden)

## The Flower Shop

- In the back room of a flower shop, Tomi, Rasto and Mižu are digging a tunnel in order to break into the safe of the National Bank. After heavy rainfall, the underground maze gets submerged by water and they are forced to stop working.
- €5,000
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/Lafleurière](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/Lafleurière)
- Documentary – feature

## LON

- Lon Landau is a promising Jewish stage designer whose life takes a turn during World War II. He is held captive in a Belgian nazi camp, but decides to stay positive and do what he knows best: building dream worlds. LON is an ode to the power of imagination and how people maintain their dignity in difficult times. A documentary by **Nina Landau**, Lon was her great-uncle.
- €4,930
- [fondspascaldecroos.org/lon](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/lon)
- Documentary animation – Canvas (4x7)

## 1.3. FLANDERS CONNECTS CONTINENTS

### OBJECTIVE

Journalismfund.eu's Flemish Pascal Decroos Fund project had announced another intercontinental grant programme in 2015: Flanders Connects Continents, a 'Flemish' spin-off of the Connecting Continents project. Teams of journalists consisting of at least one Flemish and one Sub-Sahara African journalist were eligible to apply.

Submitted story proposals needed to fall into the general scope of the UN's 17 sustainable development goals.

The project was launched at the end of 2015, so all but one application deadlines fell in 2016.

<http://flanderscontinents.org>

### APPLICATION AND APPLICANT INFORMATION

The Flanders Connects Continents project ran from December 2015 (1st round) until August 2016 (4th round). Across all four application rounds, 23 applications were submitted by a total of 66 applicants. Of those 66, 33 were employed while the other 33 worked as freelancers. 23 applicants were women (35%), 43 men (65%).

Out of the 23 received applications, 18 (78%) were approved and 5 (22%) denied. The total sum applied for was €249,068. The jury granted a total of €118,875.

The total amount of money paid out so far (in 2015-2016) is €87,402. Nine of the 18 granted projects were published in 2016. While the remaining four were published in 2017.

Overview of the grants published in 2017:

#### **Nigeria's artist village (€4,600)**

- Inspired by the staggering success of its film industry Nollywood, Nigeria now wants to boost its other creative industries. The government has labeled the cultural sector 'potentially the biggest source of economic growth' and accords it preferred status. A flourishing cultural sector is expected to provide jobs, improve Nigeria's international standing and attract foreign capital.
- Team of Dutch, Belgian and Nigerian journalist.
- [journalismfund.eu/nigerias-artist-village](http://journalismfund.eu/nigerias-artist-village)

#### **Fish & Ships: Europe's fishing deals in West Africa (€5,000)**

- In the imbalance of power in Europe's fishing deals with West African countries, locals get the short end of the stick.

- Team of Nigerian and Flemish journalists.
- [journalismfund.eu/fishships](http://journalismfund.eu/fishships)

## Europe in Africa: The Price of Partnerships (€10,561)

- The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) was hailed as the pact that will eventually liberalise trade between the European Union and the Economic Community of West African States. The negotiations for the EPA, however, ran into trouble waters when regional powerhouse, Nigeria, and a couple of other countries refused to sign the agreement last year.
- Team of two Nigerians and a Flemish journalist.
- [journalismfund.eu/epa](http://journalismfund.eu/epa)

## Beni Files (€3,500)

- Since October 2014 more than 1000 citizens have been killed in and around Beni, a town in North Kivu in DR Congo. The web documentary Beni Files shows what is happening right under the nose of the world's most expensive UN peace mission.
- Team of two Congolese journalists and a Flemish journalist.
- [journalismfund.eu/benifiles](http://journalismfund.eu/benifiles)

## 1.4. FoX GRANTS

In 2017, FoX grantees published three stories. The FoX grants date back to 2015 when we collaborated with the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF) for the Freedom of Expression grants. FoX grants are research grants for investigations or projects into freedom of expression in Europe.

Journalists all over Europe have experienced forms of obstruction while doing their jobs, seeing their rights to obtain and publish information violated. These forms of obstruction range from threats of violence or imprisonment, over surveillance, to denial of access to information. Newsrooms have been raided, material confiscated, and journalists have been subject to smearing campaigns and other attacks on their professional credibility. The threats come not just from organised crime, but also from white-collar business and from authorities.

Journalists living in Europe who know about a breach of freedom of expression in their country and need time and money to document it, were eligible to apply for the Freedom of Expression Grant. The application deadline was 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016; this year there was €15,000 to distribute.

The applications were assessed by a jury appointed by the ECPMF and Journalismfund.eu. 8 proposals were submitted, by 16 journalists from 8 different countries. The total amount applied for was €38,865. So far, four publications have been made. One in 2016 and three in 2017.

<http://journalismfund.eu/FoX>

## The Special Branch Files Project

- The Special Branch Files Project is a live archive of declassified files focusing on the surveillance of political activists and campaigners. The documents archived at the project reveal the intricate details recorded by Britain's secret police about a range of protest movements in Britain; from those protesting against the Vietnam War in 1968, to the Anti-Apartheid Movement, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and the Wapping industrial dispute of 1986-87. Other files relate to the psychological support available for undercover police officers infiltrating activist groups.
- Team of one Dutch and two British journalists.
- A working grant of €5,200 allocated on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2015.
- [journalismfund.eu/specialbranchfiles](http://journalismfund.eu/specialbranchfiles)

## The Hungarian “Zuckerberg” who keeps Orbán’s system alive

- Access to information in Hungary is particularly restrictive when the information is related to the activities of the mayor of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán’s home village, Felcsút. How come?
- Team of Hungarian journalists.
- Working grant of €3,000 allocated on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 2016.
- [journalismfund.eu/HungarianZuckerberg](http://journalismfund.eu/HungarianZuckerberg)

## Slaves, Lies and Videotape

- Journalists from west Europe have broadcast and printed stories about east Europe that are distorted or false, leading to a fake presentation of reality which victimises nations and some of their poorest and most vulnerable citizens.
- Team of Moldovan and British journalists.
- Working grant of 3,300 allocated on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 2016.
- [journalismfund.eu/workinggrant/slavesliesvideotape](http://journalismfund.eu/workinggrant/slavesliesvideotape)

## This is how Hungary’s ‘independent’ news media is being tampered with

- “We lost our media”, stated Hungarian PM Viktor Orbán in a rare interview in early 2015. He was referring to the media empire of a longtime ally-turned-enemy.

- Hungarian journalist.
- Working grant of 1,615 allocated on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 2016.
- [journalismfund.eu/HungarysMedia](http://journalismfund.eu/HungarysMedia)

## 1.5. ADVISING AND COORDINATING INVESTIGATIVE TEAMS

### INVESTIGATE EUROPE

Investigate Europe is a team of nine experienced journalists from eight European countries. Back in the context of the EIJC & Dataharvest 2015 in Brussels two founding members approached Journalismfund.eu to ask if we could assist them in making their vision of a European investigative team come true, together we crafted a work plan, started fundraising and set up an editorial structure. Investigate Europe always researches as a multinational team. They share, merge and crosscheck facts – tackling the usual national bias. They point out responsible transnational structures and actors in issues of European-wide relevance to make it possible to hold them accountable.

Picking up the work as of September 2016, the team published three major investigations:

1. The European Border Regime
2. Software Colony in Europe
3. Race to the bottom: Europe's precariat

The team has published with a wide variety of national media in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Poland, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, France, the UK, Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal. The team also maintains a blog; the format aims to debunk national myths about European affairs and to inform about national developments with relevance for Europe.

Journalismfund.eu assists the Investigate Europe team with editorial advice on cross-border journalism, project development, fundraising and reporting, finance and bookkeeping.

The total budget for Investigate Europe up until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017 was €415.306,37 of which Journalismfund.eu administrated €305.306,37.

Read more on <http://www.investigate-europe.eu/>

## EUROPEAN INVESTIGATIVE COLLABORATIONS NETWORK

In 2017 Journalismfund.eu started to work with the European Investigative Collaborations Network, short EIC.network. Initiated by Der Spiegel with our long-term networking contact Stefan Candea, the EIC.network attempts to build a strong network of trusted journalists and media throughout Europe. Founding partners include Spiegel/Germany, Le Soir/Belgium, Mediapart/France, Politiken/Denmark, Newsweek/Serbia, Falter/Austria, L'Espresso/Italy, El Mundo/Spain and TheBlackSea/Romania and the Romanian Centre for Investigative Journalism/Romania. While the wealthier partners contribute by paying own team members and a contribution to the running of the network, for example the salary of the coordinator, the poorer partners have obtained funding from a foundation and are looking for further support.

Journalismfund.eu has stepped in to assist on the administrative side, the purpose is not only to assist the team but also to provide security particularly in countries with less space for critical media.

Our collaboration with EIC.network started in late 2017, read more on <https://eic.network/>

## 1.6. PRIZES AND AWARDS

Every year a number of projects that were realised with Journalismfund.eu's support (either in the European cross-border working grant or the Flemish Pascal Decroos Fund working grant programme) garner attention outside of the journalism community. In 2017 a number of Journalismfund.eu-supported projects got noticed.

**Malta Files**, a project by Craig Shaw, Michael Bird and Zynep Sentek were nominated for the [British Journalism Awards](#).

**The Watch List**, a project by Eveline Lubbers, Tom Wills, Cora Currier, Jasmin Klofta, Stefan Maurizi, Lars Bové and Sanne Terlingen were nominated for the Dutch online prize, [VOJN](#).

**Kaliningrad, invisible battleground**, a project by Prune Antoine, Gil Skorwid and Jan Zappner won the [Prix Phillipe Chaffanjon](#) prize.

**Lon**, a Fonds Pascal Decroos-supported project by Nina Landau, was nominated for the Best Short Documentary at the [International Documentary Filmfestival Amsterdam](#) (IDFA).

**And the trees will speak again**, a visual essay by David Bert Joris Dhert inspired by the Journalismfund-supported documentary, We Must Be Dreaming, was nominated for the [Social Art Award](#).

## 1.7. TRAINING

### POSTGRADUATE COURSE IRJ: INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNALISM

The IRJ course was conceived in 2004 as a collaboration between the Thomas More Hogeschool in Mechelen, Belgium, and Journalismfund.eu. The idea was for Journalismfund.eu to be responsible for the content of the course (finding journalists to give lectures, selecting the students...) and Thomas More would support with infrastructure, logistics, administration and communication.

#### Goal

The course is aimed particularly at people with a bachelor degree in journalism or with any type of master degree, gives insight into how to successfully set up a journalistic research project that is well-founded and credible. The course consists of three modules: Research Journalism, International Reporting, and Portfolio. The course takes up 136 hours on Tuesday and Thursday evenings (during the academic year).

The ultimate goal of the course for students is to learn how to make news. The students are familiarised with techniques that regular journalists have never even heard of. There is, for example, a heavy focus on data analysis and visualisation, searching on the Internet, making use of FOI legislation, etc.

#### The Netherlands

In 2016 a collaboration was set up with the Fontys Hogeschool in Tilburg to organise a Dutch counterpart of the IRJ course. Communication, administration and planning are kept separate. The added value is that there is now a cross-border journalism course. The synergy lies in the two sets of students (Dutch and Flemish) eventually forming cross-border groups to do their investigative group projects with. As expected, the first academic year (2016-2017) of this collaboration brought some challenges with it, but all in all, the students brought their investigations to a successful conclusion.

#### 2017-2018

In September 2017, at the start of the academic year 2017-2018, we struck a cross-border collaboration with the journalism master's programmes of Gotenberg University in Sweden and the University of Madrid. We expect there to be a few hiccoughs as we attempt to introduce our students to cross-border journalism, hands-on.

## Publications by the students

That the course is still relevant, is proven by the cases that last year's students have managed to publish in Flemish media:

- Wat gebeurt er met de 'verwarde' Rotterdammers? I (*Vers Beton*, 31 augustus 2017) door Fred Smid
- Gedwongen opname: "daar lag ik dan, naakt op de grond in een vierkant kamertje" II (*Vers Beton*, 14 september 2017) door Fred Smid
- Dwang: afwegingen van de crisisdienst onder grote spanning III (*Vers Beton*, 9 oktober 2017) door Fred Smid
- Steeds meer gedwongen opnames in Vlaanderen en Nederland (*StampMedia*, 20 oktober 2017) door Julie Debusschere

## 1.8. MENTORING PROGRAMME

An evaluation of the Journalismfund.eu's pilot mentoring programme was conducted in February 2017.

### 1. CONTEXT

In February 2017, consultant **Kim Brice** interviewed mentors and journalists of four projects that received mentoring support. This was a pilot phase of a mentoring programme that the Fund would like to continue and expand and eventually integrate into its grants programmes.

The Annex contains the names of the interviewees and a summary of the interviews that were conducted as well as the interview questions.

### 2. OVERALL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### *Was the objective of the mentoring successfully met?*

All journalists interviewed appreciated and were satisfied with the mentoring they received and recommend that the programme continue. One journalist described it as the best learning experience of her journalistic career. The mentoring helped her achieve the best investigative journalism she has ever done.

Only in one of the cases did the team leader feel the mentor did not offer the team what they had expected even though the mentor added value to the project in several other ways. In this particular case, the Fund had originally identified a mentor with expertise in online investigative tools. Once assigned to the project,

the mentor realised that he did not have sufficient time to dedicate to the project. The Fund assigned a new mentor who did not have these specific skills. According to the team leader, the fact that they now have to try out tools they are learning from a book has slowed down their investigation.

Each project was given a mentor based on either the focus of the investigation or the need for competencies in a specific skill. Here is a list of the different ways mentoring added value to the journalists and the projects:

- Tips related to research including securing information sharing and communication
- Identification of sources
- Interview methodologies
- Sharpen the focus of the story
- Fresh perspective on story
- Motivation to continue the work despite stumbling blocks
- Broadening one's network

### ***What factors increase the effectiveness of mentoring?***

According to interviewees, these following factors contribute to an effective mentorship:

***Availability.*** The mentor must be clear from the outset that s/he has time to dedicate to mentoring. One mentor is a retired journalist and this makes for an ideal candidate.

***Understanding respective roles and responsibilities.*** One team leader was concerned that the mentor would be a supervisor, someone who monitors progress for example. He is pleased with the division of labor between the Fund and the mentor. The Fund reviews interim reports and makes sure the investigations proceed and the mentor is the sparring partner.

One mentor was unsure about her exact role. She feels she was not sufficiently debriefed about the project and her responsibilities. She was paired with a team leader who was also not clear about what she could expect or ask of a mentor. For example, she assumed she could not ask the mentor to review a draft article for example, because it would have taken too much of their time.

The journalists received general information about the objective of the mentorship but not about the role and responsibilities of the mentor or about their responsibilities in the relationship. The mentors receive a contract that lays out their responsibilities in very general terms.

As a matter, of course, one mentor suggests that they should have the responsibility of reviewing a draft of an article before it is pitched to publications.

***The right attitude and approach.*** A mentor should remain positive and re-assuring when the work gets difficult. S/he should be patient as the work evolves and changes and sometimes slows down. In one case, both the team leader and the mentor are asking themselves whether the mentor should not have been more critical. Despite the mentor's enthusiasm, a story was rejected by two media outlets because it did not contain sufficient data.

***Knowledgeable and passionate.*** Mentors should be knowledgeable but also passionate about the topic or skills they are transferring. It should be clear to both parties what the initial objective of the mentoring is intended to be. There were two cases where the journalists missed a specific expertise. One case was mentioned above. The other case would have needed someone who could help with data research in a specific country. The team leader recognizes that this would have been very hard to find and that he cannot expect mentors to be able to help on all fronts.

***Good communication.*** Most mentors and journalists met via skype even though a budget is made available for a face-to-face meeting. In one example, communication between the mentor and team members was difficult. Skype connections were sometimes bad and it was difficult for them to find a time to talk so they only had their first conversation quite late into the process. The mentor felt a face-to-face meeting to kick-off the process would have been helpful. Only in one project did the mentor and team leader meet face-to-face and that was because the journalist travelled to the mentor's home base for another project. In their view face-to-face meetings help build a stronger connection and understanding between the two parties.

One mentor suggests that the Fund should require and facilitate that its grantees learn how to exchange data and communicate safely through the use of encryption software.

***Timing.*** Most mentors and team leaders were introduced to each other shortly after the grant was approved. All interviewees agreed that this was the right moment. The Fund's Editorial Coordinator says that the setting up of mentors took a lot more time than she had expected. She had expected that this may have created delays in the investigation. None of the interviewees mentioned this however.

***Budgets.*** With regards to budgeting time and resources, the time dedicated to mentoring ranged from a few hours to several days of work. The Fund might consider decreasing the number of days it allocates to each project.

***Deciding on mentoring.*** Most of those interviewed believe it is a good idea to include the option for mentoring in the application process. One mentor felt that jurors were best placed to make these decisions. In his view "jurors know the realities behind the submissions which tend to be over optimistic."

In one case, the jury decided to assign a mentor to a project because one juror would not approve a grant without this being a requirement. The Editorial Coordinator wants to make sure that mentors do not become a tool for approving projects. Projects should be approved on their own merit.

### ***How should the Fund measure success?***

There are different views on the topic.

Most believe that the ultimate measure of success is the publication of the investigation and some add in a quality publication with influence. One mentor suggests it could also be if a story is killed because it simply did not hold up. One mentor expressed it this way, “

The mentoring has succeeded when the investigation results in an article (or another journalistic product) that was published widely and caused a reaction or even a change to the better in society. It also succeeded when it helped the investigative journalists to establish that the 'story' investigated was not valid.”

One mentor and a journalist as well as the Editorial Coordinator believe that a measure of success is whether the objective of the mentoring has been met. There are so many factors outside the mentor’s sphere of influence or control that will result in an investigation being published that one cannot hold the mentor accountable for this. One mentor suggests “when the team feels better equipped to submit a story based on broad and high-quality research after mentoring than before.” The Editorial Coordinator suggests that the Fund could use the jury criteria as indicators of success.

Some point to other important outcomes that could be considered an indicator of success such as:

- transfer of skills that journalists will continue to use in their daily work
- motivation to continue conducting investigative journalism. This was also true for a mentor who feels ostracized in his country.

### 3. OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS TO CONSIDER

1. The mentoring program should continue because of the overall added value it brought to individual journalists and the investigations. This said, the Fund needs to be clear about what its measure of success is for the program which leads to the following recommendation.
2. Going forward, the Fund should develop indicators of success for the program and evaluate it accordingly. There were different views about how to measure success. The Fund should start with developing clear objectives for the mentoring that all parties understand and agree to. These might have to be developed on a case-by-case basis. Some overall indicators may be useful and could be extracted from the list of criteria judges use to decide on grants. In my view, successful publication is not necessarily an indicator of success. Specific skills or knowledge transfer, motivation and network building are also possible indicators.
3. The Fund should suggest that as part of the process, the mentors receive feedback from the journalism teams so that they can learn and improve. Alternatively, the Fund would conduct a review and share the results with the mentors.
4. The Fund should make sure that the journalists on its list of potential mentors are prepared to dedicate sufficient time to the projects. Availability is essential. It would also be useful that the current list is further updated and developed and that competency areas are listed for each mentor

which the mentors identified themselves. This could be gathered by sending out a short questionnaire.

5. Should the mentoring program expand, it is important to make sure that the Editorial Coordinators have the time to manage the process which, from experience, is far more time consuming and involved than what was originally thought. I recommend that the Fund avoid substantially increasing the program unless it is sure that staff members will be able to manage it properly or additional human resources are hired.
6. Given the fact that most mentors have only spent several hours to a day or so on average working with their teams, the Fund can easily budget fewer days for each contract which will allow them to provide more mentors for the same budget.
7. It is important that both mentors and journalists understand their respective roles and responsibilities in the partnership. The Fund should not take for granted that everyone has a common understanding of mentoring and what it entails. The Fund might consider preparing a check list of issues that the mentors and journalists should discuss during their first meeting to make sure they start from a common ground. Details about the project and the team, the needs of the journalists, the objectives of the mentoring, the time the mentor has available and what s/he can offer, how they would like to work together and whether a face-to-face meeting would be useful are some basic starting points.
8. Consider recommending and facilitating to all grantees safe data sharing and communication via encryption.

## 2. ACTIVITIES II - NETWORKS

### 2.1. EUROPEAN INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM CONFERENCE & DATAHARVEST

Since its inception, Journalismfund.eu's European Investigative Journalism & Dataharvest Conference has been working on bringing together two communities: investigative journalists and data specialists. The need for collaboration between these two worlds has only increased since the very first edition of the conference in 2011.

The very first edition of the conference saw some 30 journalists gather. In 2012, the number of participants more than tripled to about 95, a number that increased even further to 150 in 2013 and kept growing in subsequent years: 194 in 2014, 270 in 2015 and 320 in 2016.

This year's seventh edition, which took place in Thomas More Journalism School in Mechelen was the most successful edition yet. In total, 386 people from 45 different countries attended the conference, in comparison, last year 320 participants from 41 countries attended. Attendees came from Europe and beyond.

Unsurprisingly, Belgium (101 participants) was the best represented country, followed by Germany (69), the Netherlands (41), the UK (28), France (27), and Italy (18). As far as non-Europeans are concerned, there were five American participants, two Nepalese, two Zimbabweans and one participant from China, Japan, South-Korea, India, Sierra Leone and South-Sudan each.

Spread over **the three-and-a-half-day** conference were 134 sessions (136 if we include the pre-conference Hack Day and Train the Trainers) divided into ten tracks: **Algorithm Accountability, Cross-border, Data, Entrepreneurial and Funding, Journo & scholar collaboration, Local, Online Research and Security, Tax and Finance, Wobbing and Data Lab**. For the second time, Journalismfund.eu organised the Data Lab track, a collection of hands-on sessions that took place mostly in computer rooms. With its 38 training sessions, where SQL, R, Excel, Python, OpenRefine was taught, it was the most successful round yet and we are just getting started. The pre-conference Train the Trainers session which took place for the first time attracted many (aspiring) data journalism trainers craving inspiration from the most seasoned names in the game.

There were two keynote speakers at the conference: **Edouard Perrin**, a top-notch ICIJ investigative journalist and **Nicholas Diakopoulos**, director of Computational Journalism at the University of Maryland. Edouard Perrin opened the conference on Friday morning with a breakdown of his landmark investigation into tax avoidance dubbed #LuxLeaks. On Saturday, computational journalist Nicholas Diakopoulos' revealed the power of Algorithms and how to investigate it.

As always, the conference focused on innovative journalism techniques and recent developments in journalism. As far as data is concerned, we provided European data sets for journalists to understand and take home to their newsrooms. In this respect, we invited EU-institutions (or their partners) like Eurostat, European Structural and Investment Funds, European Open Data Portal and EU Open Data Portal to explain their official data.

Furthermore, during the pre-conference Hack Day, coders and journalists gathered and prepared data sets of public interest. The data covered a range of topics starting from media ownership, OpenSanction (a global database of persons and companies of political, criminal, or economic interest), Farm subsidies (tracking down the millions handed by The Common Agricultural Policy), Open trials (aims to locate, match, and share all publicly accessible data and documents, on all trials conducted, on all medicines and other treatments, globally) and data available on the management of water in post-conflict zones.

Like every year, several speakers shared their research and data with the participants. Ana Lutzky from French newswire AEF was invited to present her investigation on The European CO2 market. The session was followed by a hands-on workshop on how to access data on CO2 trade in the participants' respective countries.

Eva Belmonte from Spanish data journalism initiative Civio had done research on medicine prices in Europe and – as a 'side product' of her own she had collected research on European data sets – which she shared with our participants.

Anders Pedersen from the Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI) presented and instructed on extraction data about mining in Europe, Africa and globally.

Moreover, a lot of attention went to transnational collaboration between journalists. The team behind Investigate Europe, a JF coordinated network, covering complex European topics was presented as a case study. The same went for Security for sale, a JF-supported project that investigated the cost of security in Europe. With 29.000 euro allocated to this team by Journalismfun.eu's cross-border programme, it's safe to say that it was our biggest investment last year.

The European Investigative Collaborations ([www.eic.network](http://www.eic.network)) which was hatched at EIJC & Dataharvest 2016, reflected on how to deal with legal threats in cross-border journalism. Following their widely published #FootballLeaks investigation, the team was hit with an injunction.

The conference participants were wildly enthusiastic. In addition to their warm praise to the organisers and positive feedback through the online survey, they sent out an abundance of tweets, resulting in the conference hashtag #EIJC17 trending in Denmark.

## 2.2. MEDIACAFE

This event is organised by Journalismfund.eu in collaboration with VVOJ, deBuren and Zebrastraat.

### IS MEDIA BASHING A POLITICAL STRATEGY?

The last couple of years, the media has been accused of polarisation and partiality. Where does this trend come from and is it a political strategy? Practicalities: Thursday 23 March 2017, 7.30 pm at Zebrastraat, Ghent.

*[fondspascaldecroos.org/journalistiekwetenschap](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/journalistiekwetenschap)*

### JOURNALIST-SCHOLAR COLLABORATIONS: A MODEL TO PURSUE?

A debate between scholars and journalists. How can both groups collaborate without losing independence and thus credibility, without compromising the quality of their work, which types of collaboration make sense and which do not. Practicalities: Thursday 4 May 2017, 7.30 pm at Zebrastraat, Ghent.

*[fondspascaldecroos.org/journalistiekwetenschap](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/journalistiekwetenschap)*

### REPRESENTATION OF MIGRANT YOUTH IN THE MEDIA

An event addressing the question of the inclusiveness of mainstream media – are media adapting to more diverse societies? Practicalities: Thursday 9 November 2017, 7.30 pm at Zebrastraat, Ghent.

*[fondspascaldecroos.org/nieuwsbeleving](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/nieuwsbeleving)*

### BREAK OUT OF YOUR MEDIA BUBBLE

We organised an event addressing the question of media bubbles: Are the media responsible? Do media bubbles create divisions in societies? Practicalities: Thursday 7 December 2017, 7.30 pm at Zebrastraat Ghent.

*[fondspascaldecroos.org/mediabubbel](http://fondspascaldecroos.org/mediabubbel)*

## 2.3. EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION

Conferences we have spoken at:

- [Pascal Decroos commemoration](#), 4 December 2017, GHENT - Ides Debruyne reflects on 20 years' after Pascal Decroos' death and what that means for Journalismfund.eu.

- [Madrid Press Association](#), 28 - 29 November, 2017, MADRID - Trine Smistrup participates in roundtable on collaborative journalism, celebrating Mar Cabra's exit from the Journalismfund.eu crossborder jury. Followed by workshop on how to plan and fund crossborder investigations.
- [GIJC17](#), 16 - 18 November 2017, JOHANNESBURG - Brigitte Alfter speaks and moderates at the 10th Global Investigative Journalism Conference, this time in Johannesburg. Also in attendance were Ides Debruyne and Trine Smistrup (Editorial Coordinator).
- [GETJ017](#), 10 - 11 November 2017, BRUHL, Brigitte Alfter gives a keynote address at the Clean Energy Wire's conference for journalists covering the climate ahead of the Global Climate Summit COP23 in Bonn.
- [VVQJ](#), 3 - 4 November 2017, MAASTRICHT - Ides Debruyne moderates a panel about investigative journalism in Flanders.
- [WCSJ](#), 25 - 30 October 2017, SAN FRANCISCO - Ides Debruyne speaks about cross-border journalism.
- [Data SKUP](#), 28 October 2017, OSLO - Brigitte Alfter was a speaker at this conference.
- [#IJEU17](#), 25 September 2017, BRUSSELS - Brigitte Alfter was the key-note speaker and Ides a speaker at the [European Parliament conference about cross-border journalism in Europe](#).
- [Future of libraries](#), 14 September 2017, OSTEND - Ides Debruyne took part in a panel about libraries: libraries as neutral information distributor.
- [M100 Potsdam Sanssouci Y](#), 8 - 14 September 2017, BERLIN - Brigitte Alfter speaks at this one day seminar on cross-border journalism and foundation supported journalism.
- [Expertgroup Quality Journalism of the German Foundations](#), 8 September 2017, DORTMUND - Brigitte Alfter kickstarts a discussion on the need for a *balance of credibility* in foundation supported journalism.
- [SciCAR](#), 6 - 8 September 2017, DORTMUND - Brigitte Alfter was a member of the programming expert group about a new form of collaboration between journalists and academics. The University of Dortmund and Volkswagen Foundation put this to the test with work grants for eight teams and a conference. Initially limited to datajournalism, the SciCAR conference had a broader [programme](#) this time around.
- [ERNOP](#) seminar, 12 July 2017, COPENHAGEN - Brigitte Alfter presented a poster about donor-supported journalism and editorial independence at the pre-[ERNOP](#) seminar of CBS and Carlsberg Academy, Copenhagen. Interesting talks with peers about philanthropy, foundations, society. Read the recap [here](#).
- Kolloquium Europafunk, 30 June 2017 - BERLIN - Brigitte Alfter participates and speaks at an expert round table on the idea of a European public service platform. Meeting held at the German Bundestag invited by [German MEP Jakob von Weizsäcker](#). [Background](#) on Weizsäcker's idea in Der Spiegel. Mrs Alfter argued to strengthen cross-border collaboration and to strengthen in-depth, independent European journalism.
- [Berlin Storyhunt](#), 30 June 2017 - BERLIN - Brigitte Alfter speaks about cross-border data journalism at Berlin Storyhunt seminar of the [Open Knowledge Foundation Germany](#).

- [Journalism Funders Forum](#), 15 June 2017 - PARIS - Ides Debruyne speaks at JFF, a European event series bringing philanthropists, donors, journalists and media executives with the aim to help create transparent, ethical and sustainable ways to fund journalism.
- [ECPMF Conference](#), 13 - 14 June 2017, LEIPZIG - Ides Debruyne speaks at a ECPMF conference on "Defending the truth in a post-truth era".
- [Netzwerk Recherche](#), 9 -10 June 2017, HAMBURG - Brigitte Alfter speaks and coordinates panel on cross-border journalism, with Elisa Simantke from [Investigate Europe](#).
- [EIJC17 & Dataharvest](#), 18 - 21 May 2017 – MECHELEN - Ides Debruyne, Brigitte Alfter, Trine Smistrup and Marjorie Blomme speak and moderate sessions at our very own European Investigative Journalism & Dataharvest Conference.
- [Journalism Funders Forum](#), 11 May 2017, LONDON - Brigitte Alfter speaks about donor-supported journalism and editorial independence.
- [World Press Freedom Day](#), 3 May, BRUSSELS - Ides Debruyne leads a session about fake news.
- [European Press Prize seminar](#), 20 April, AMSTERDAM - Managing Editor Brigitte Alfter [speaks about cross-border journalism](#). Managing director Ides Debruyne and Communication officer Lisa May participate.
- [International Journalism Festival](#), 5-9 April 2017 - PERUGIA - Ides Debruyne speaks at the conference. Trine Smistrup participates.
- [SKUP 2017](#), 31 March - 2 April 2017, TØNSBERG - Brigitte Alfter speaks at the Norwegian national Conference. Trine Smistrup participates.
- [ECPMF/ECtHR](#), 24 March 2017 - STRASBOURG- Managing Director Ides Debruyne takes part in a meeting about "Promoting dialogue between the European Court of Humans Rights and the media freedom community".

## 3. STRUCTURE OF THE ORGANISATION

### 3.1. MANAGEMENT

- Seat: 4b Rozenweg, 1731 Zellik (Belgium)
- Publication: 1998-05-21 N. 009338
- Number of the organisation: 9338/98
- ID number NIS: 15262553
- National number: 463312580
- NACE-BEL code: 9112
- VAT number: BE043312580
- Managing Director: Ides Debruyne (1 FTE – contract)
- Editor Europe: Brigitte Alfter (1 FTE – freelance)
- Communication: Lisa Akinyi May (1 FTE – contract)
- Financial Manager: Linda Berckmans (9/10 FTE – contract)
- Project Manager Journalismfund.eu: Trine Smistrup (4/5 FTE – freelance)
- Project Manager Fonds Pascal Decroos: Marjorie Blomme worked for Journalismfund.eu until June 2017 (1/2 FTE – freelance)
- Contact in the organisation: Ides Debruyne (+32 2 705 59 19)

### 3.2. ORGANISATION

#### MEMBERS GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2017

1. Brigitte Alfter
2. Bart Castelein
3. Wim Coessens
4. Scott Crosby
5. Ides Debruyne
6. Ann-Sophie Decroos
7. Isabel Decroos
8. Paul Decroos

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9. Tom Decroos
10. Lieve Dekeyzer
11. Piet Depuydt
12. Anne-Mie Desterbecq
13. Anne Fort
14. Sylke Gruhnwald
15. Rob Heirbaut
16. Joris Pollet
17. Ludo Poppe
18. Ann Soen
19. Jacques Van Hee
20. Kurt Vandenberghe
21. Ton van Lierip
22. Koen Van Wichelen
23. Teun Voeten
24. Hans Wolters

The General Assembly convened once in 2017.

21<sup>st</sup> February 2017:

- Approval of the annual report and account of 2016, and the budget for 2017
- Update General Assembly members' list
- Update Board of Director members' list

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Coessens Wim (Belgium)
- Crosby Scott (UK)
- Depuydt Piet (Belgium) - chair a.i.
- Vandenberghe Kurt (Belgium) - treasurer
- Van Hee Jacques (Belgium)
- Ton van Lierop
- Wolters Hans (The Netherlands)

## DAILY BOARD

- Alfter Brigitte (Copenhagen)
- Debruyne Ides (Gent)
- Depuydt Piet (Gent)
- Gruhnwald Sylke (Germany)
- Vandenberghe Kurt (Zellik)

## JURY

A highly professional and dedicated jury helps ensure that we offer grants to sound proposals. The evaluation of the applications is done by this independent jury. There are separate juries for the European cross-border grants and the Flemish Pascal Decroos Fund grants.

**The European cross-border jury** consists of four experienced personalities knowledgeable in the field of journalism and media. To guarantee its independence, the jury is anonymous. Membership is rotating, and once a member steps out of the jury, her or his name is made known. In 2017 one jury member was replaced.

The jury members meet via teleconference. Former jury members are:

- David Leigh (UK) (2009-2011)
- Nils Mulvad (DK) (2009-2013)
- Hans-Martin Tillack (DE) (2009-2013)
- Tiit Hennoste (EE) (2009-2015)
- Joop Bouma (NL) (2012-2015)
- Mar Cabra (ES) (2013-2017)

**The Pascal Decroos Fund** jury consists of four media experts who are not affiliated with any specific newsroom or medium. Three jury members have thorough journalistic experience and one has another relevant background. Membership is rotating: every two years, two jury members are replaced, which means that each member stays in the jury for four years in total. The fact that the names of the jury members are not made known, guarantees their maximal independence.

## THE INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

The international advisory board is an advisory body without formal influence. Its members are representatives of national investigative journalism initiatives from all over Europe or distinguished journalists; our advisory board is the only place in Europe where all these are gathered.

The board convened once in the context of the EIJC & Dataharvest 2017 in May in Mechelen, discussed, commented – and widely endorsed – ongoing activities by Journalismfund.eu. The International Advisory Board will convene again in the context of the coming EIJC & Dataharvest 2018.

- **Sheila Ahern** is an Irish TV researcher and leader of the [Mary Raftery Fund](#).  
[@SheilaPAhern](#)
- **Tanja van Bergen** is a Dutch journalism lecturer and director of the Dutch-Flemish association of investigative journalists [VVOJ](#).
- **John Bones** is Managing Director at SKUP, the Norwegian Foundation for Investigative Reporting. He was responsible for the data journalism tracks at GIJC in Lillehammer in 2015 and has done training at GIJC in Lillehammer 2008, Kiev 2011 and Rio 2013. He has been speaker at NICAR and Dataharvest several times.
- **Tamás Bodoky** is a Hungarian journalist and the founder and director of [atlatszo.hu center for investigative journalism](#) in Budapest.
- **Stefan Candea** is a co-founder of the [Romanian Centre for Investigative Journalism](#). He is the coordinator of the [EIC.network](#) and a PhD fellow at the University of Westminster and the [European Institute for Journalism and Communication Research](#) in Leipzig.
- **Wojtek Ciesla** is a Polish journalist working with Newsweek Poland. He also is among the founding fathers of the Polish [Fundacja Reporterow](#) who aim to stimulate investigative journalism in Poland and neighbouring countries.
- **Stephen Grey** is a special reporter at Reuters with a long experience as independent and staff writer, in international reporting and as a Brussels correspondent. [Stephen Grey](#) works out of London, United Kingdom.  
[@StephenGrey](#)
- **Sanita Jemberga** is an award winning Latvian investigative journalist who has worked in the press and television since 1996. In 2014, she joined [Re:Baltica](#), the Baltic Center for Investigative Journalism, where she serves as executive director and editor along Inga Sprinģe.  
[@jemberga](#)
- **Eva Jung** is an investigative journalist with the Danish newspaper *Berlingske* and vice chair of The Danish Association For Investigative Journalism (FUJ).
- **Nicolas Kayser-Bril** is a French journalist based in Berlin and the co-founder of [Journalism++](#).
- **Minna Knus-Galán** is a Finnish investigative journalist working for Finnish Public Broadcaster Yle. She was given the Finnish Journalist of the Year Award 2014.
- **Sasa Lekovic** is the founder and director of the [Investigative Journalism Center](#) in Zagreb, Croatia. He is a freelance reporter and investigative reporting trainer.
- **András Löke** is a Hungarian journalist working with ultralocal news in Budapest. He also works with the [Soma Foundation](#), who give annual awards for investigative journalism.

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- **Ilona Moricz** is the director of the [Centre for Independent Journalism](#) in Hungary.
- **Xhelal Neziri** is a Macedonian journalist and co-founder of [Scoop Macedonia](#).
- **Andras Petho** is a Hungarian journalist and co-founder of [Direkt36](#), a nonprofit investigative journalism center based in Budapest. Previously, he had worked at Hungarian news site Origo, the BBC World Service in London, and the investigative unit of The Washington Post.
- **David Schraven** is a German investigative journalist and publisher of [CORRECT!V](#), Germany's first non-profit newsroom. He previously worked with taz, Süddeutsche Zeitung, Welt and WAZ-Gruppe.  
[@David\\_Schraven](#)
- **Margo Smit** is the ombudswoman of the Dutch public broadcaster NOS. She is also the former director of the Dutch-Flemish association for investigative journalism [VVOJ](#) and she teaches journalism at the university of Groningen in the Netherlands.  
[@margosmit1](#)
- **Julia Stein**, journalist at German broadcaster NDR, chairwoman of German [Netzwerk Recherche](#).
- **Martin Stoll** is a member of the investigative desks of *Sonntagszeitung* and *Le Matin Dimanche*. He is the deputy chairmain of [Investigativ.ch](#) and the chairman of [Öffentlichkeitsgesetz.ch](#).  
[@freiedokumente](#)
- **Stanimir Vaglenov** is the founder of [Bulgarian Center for investigative journalism](#). He works for the daily newspaper 24 Casa in Sofia, Bulgaria.
- **Tarmo Vahter** is deputy-editor-in-chief of the weekly newspaper [Eesti Ekspress](#) in Tallinn, Estonia. [Mail](#).
- **Zaklina Zafirova** is a Macedonian journalist and co-founder of [Scoop Macedonia](#).

## DONORS

Journalismfund.eu is supported by a large group of sympathisers. In 2017 Journalismfund.eu received donations from individuals for a total amount of € 10,578.00.

## COMMUNICATION

### WEBSITE JOURNALISMFUND.EU

Since its complete makeover in July 2012, the website [www.journalismfund.eu](http://www.journalismfund.eu) has been our primary source of communication. In 2017 55,607 visitors were recorded, a significant drop from 66,102 the year before. This may be a result of the shift in communication focus, in 2017, we communicated more via social media. As a result, we gained more followers on Facebook and Twitter.

In comparison to the years before: 54,344 people visited the website in 2015 and 44,559 in 2014 (other numbers: 28,576 in 2013, 17,147 in 2012 and 11,269 in 2011).

Figure 1A shows the number of visits per month from 1st January to 31st December 2017 compared to the same period the year before. Figure 1B does the same per week. As every year, the small peak in May has to do with the EIJC & Dataharvest Conference but also because we had a cross-border grant deadline in May.

The site is used as a communication platform for the European cross-border working grants that have been published, as well as for events that Journalismfund.eu organises, such as the EIJC & Dataharvest Conference. However, the website is also supposed to be a broader source of information for investigative journalism in Europe, displaying interesting developments and events that have to do with investigative journalism. It also provides an overview page with other research grants for investigative journalism. However, the website has become old, a new website would be a good investment to the organisation in terms of outreach to those interested in our projects.

The website reaches visitors from all over Europe and beyond. Remarkably, most visits to the website came from the US: almost 14.32% of all visits, which shows Journalismfund.eu's international outlook. 9.46% of visits were registered in Germany, 6.9% in the UK, 6.62% in Belgium, 4.6% in India, almost 4% in the Netherlands, and 3.12% in Italy.

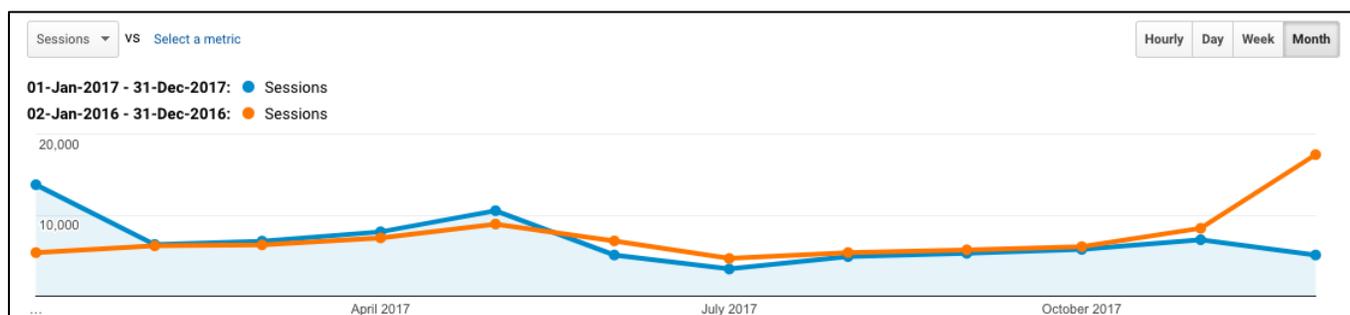


Figure 1A – number of visitors for [www.journalismfund.eu](http://www.journalismfund.eu) per month in 2017 vs 2016.

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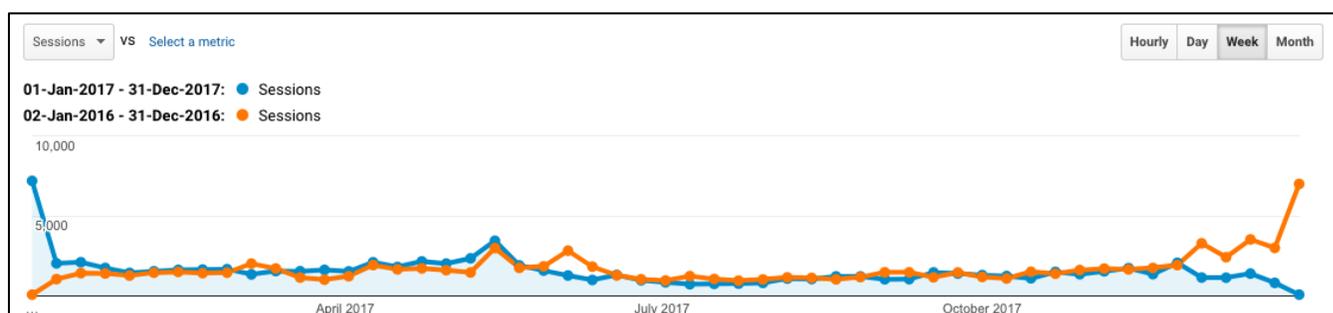


Figure 1B – number of visitors for [www.journalismfund.eu](http://www.journalismfund.eu) per week in 2017 vs 2016.

## WEBSITE [WWW.FONDSPASCALDECROOS.ORG](http://WWW.FONDSPASCALDECROOS.ORG)

The website [www.fondspascaldecroos.org](http://www.fondspascaldecroos.org) is the communicative headquarters of the Pascal Decroos Fund grant programme.

Anyone can visit it for information about published working grants, the application process and application form, and news and events that involve the Pascal Decroos Fund. Furthermore, all activities of the Fund are announced and discussed on the website, as well as events attended by the Fund.

The website also includes a knowledge centre where information can be found about journalism organisations, Belgian and international awards, journalism education programmes in Belgium, etc.

In 2017, 26,132 people visited the website up from 23,434 in 2016. The increase in page visits could be as a result of our extra grants call in December. In comparison to the previous years: in 2015 the website attracted 27,974 visitors (a higher number than in 2017). In the preceding years, the number of visitors had been decreasing: in 2012 the website still attracted 39,482 visitors and in 2013 33,264. The decrease might have to do with the increased workload of the communication manager, especially with regards to the international projects, which results in less time for Pascal Decroos Fund communication. Figures 2A and 2B show the number of visitors per month and per week respectively, compared to 2016.

Another explanation for the continuing decrease of visitors to the Pascal Decroos Fund website might be that people are increasingly following the project via social media.

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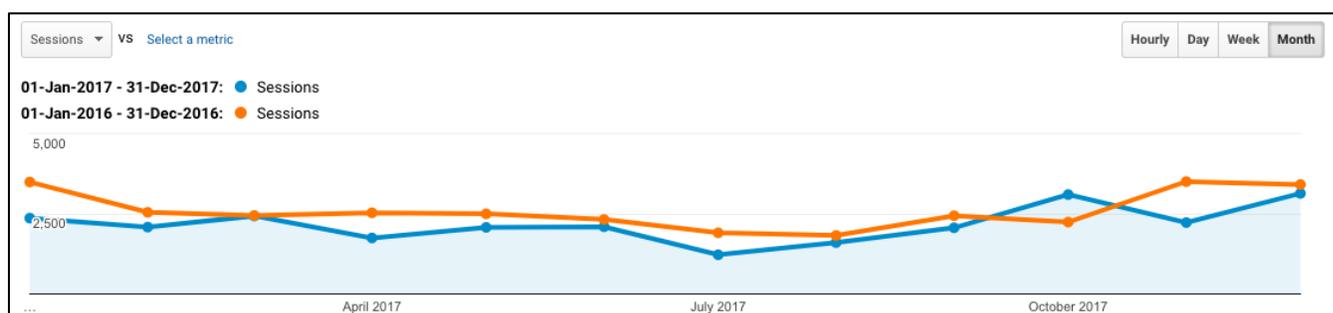


Figure 2A – number of visitors for [www.fondspascaldecroos.org](http://www.fondspascaldecroos.org) per month in 2017 vs 2016

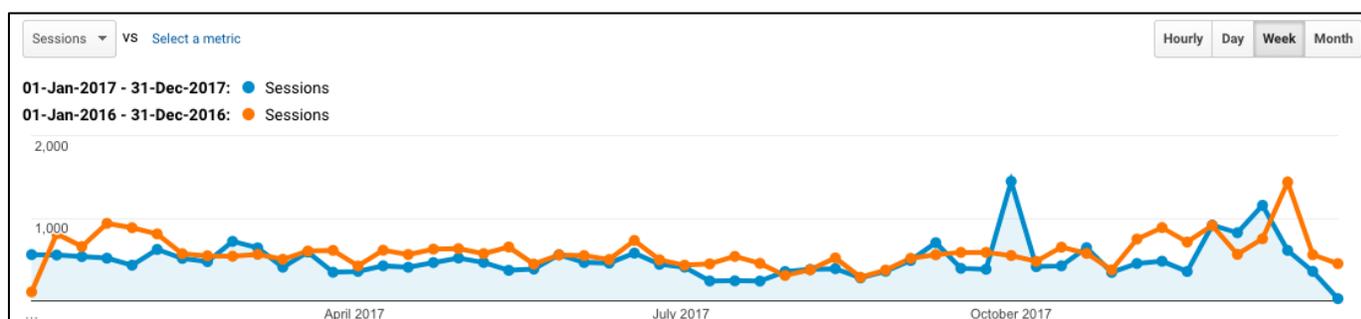


Figure 2B – number of visitors for [www.fondspascaldecroos.org](http://www.fondspascaldecroos.org) per week in 2017 vs 2016.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

### Journalismfund.eu cross-border grant programme

Together with Journalismfund.eu's new website, a Facebook page was launched in July 2012. At the end of 2012, 210 people had liked the page, at the end of 2013 480. In 2014 we intensified our social media communication. That resulted in 1,193 likes at the end of 2014 and spectacular increases to 1,985 in 2015, 2,790 in 2016 and 3,996 in 2017.

The Twitter account @journalismfund maintained its steady increase of followers through 2017 and is now at 4,061, up significantly from the 3,000 the year before.

Journalismfund.eu also remains active on LinkedIn. Its group now brings together 4,875 journalists from a cross the globe, a slight decrease from 4,938 journalists the year before. In 2015, the number was at 4,500 and at the end of 2014 the group had 3000 members.

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## PASCAL DECROOS FUND GRANT PROGRAMME

The Pascal Decroos Fund's Facebook page and Twitter account are fast becoming the spearhead of its communication strategy.

While [www.fondspascaldecroos.org](http://www.fondspascaldecroos.org) publishes news items that are either directly connected to (the working grants of) the Fund, or highly relevant for the Flemish media landscape, Facebook and Twitter have a much more general approach. Via those communication channels the Fund also spreads items that are less self-related. Still, the website will remain the Funds communicative headquarters.

The Fund's Facebook page kept growing through 2017 and went from 2,298 likes at the end of 2016 to 2,562 at the end of 2017. On Twitter, @pascaldecroos was followed by 1,445 people, up from 1,339 people at the end of 2016 and 1,176 a year before.

## E-NEWSLETTER JF

Journalismfund.eu sent 14 electronic newsletters in 2017, versus 19 2016. Since 2015 Journalismfund.eu has a communication planning of sending out about 2 newsletters per month. We fell slightly short of that in 2016 and 2017. The e-newsletters are an addition to Journalismfund.eu's communication strategy since the makeover of its website in July 2012. They are used to highlight working grants, news and events that have to do with Journalismfund.eu or partnering organisations.

## E-NEWSLETTER FPD

Fonds Pascal Decroos sent 22 electronic newsletters in 2017. The number has been steady since 2014. The Pascal Decroos Fund sent out e-newsletters with information about its working grants, events, actions, important media news, etc.

## PRINT NEWSLETTER FPD

Until 2013 the Pascal Decroos Fund published two print newsletters of eight pages every year and sent them to donors, journalists and sympathisers. Since 2014 we have scaled that down to just one issue per year — mostly a cost-cutting operation.

## ADVERTS FPD

In 2017 the free advertising space that the Flemish print and online media industry offered the Pascal Decroos Fund grant programme amounted to a net worth of €119.082 up from €114,139 in the previous year. Thanks to the support of Flemish newspapers, magazines and news websites, the Pascal Decroos Fund can increase its brand recognition among journalists, publishers and the broad public alike.

## Company Information

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