



**ACTIVITIES AND LEARNINGS 2021  
(and a look ahead to 2022)**

## WHAT WE WANTED TO ACHIEVE IN 2021

Delivering learning that strengthens the field and in particular that which helps build a leadership role and encourages engagement with the SDGs.



## ACTIVITIES 2021 IN FIGURES

- ❖ In **47** Online-meetings on **10** different topics we gathered **202** individuals from **120** organisations, worked with **34** countries and shared learnings with **65** learning products
- ❖ Participants were from **24** different CFSOs and **65** CFs (**26** from other organisations)
- ❖ The range of topics showed **5** focus areas: Sustainability, Fund Raising, Digital transformation, SDGs and Emerging Field
- ❖ **1** topic raised most interest in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2021: Climate
- ❖ The group of interested associations increased with **2** newcomers in Europe: Netherlands and Portugal



## ACTIVITIES 2021 - WHAT REALLY MATTERED

- ❖ Digital first approach was almost the only way to connect with peers and the field
- ❖ On-line engagement with good preparation, dynamic activities and visual harvesting offered learnings, connection building & practical approaches
- ❖ Pandemic and environmental disasters need collective responsibility on the local level and CFs offer a meaningful framework for community philanthropy
- ❖ The interest in local philanthropy is high and ECFI was able to connect and participate in meaningful international events to represent the power of the local and to build bridges to the local level



## PEER LEARNING ACTIVITIES 2021 IN CATEGORIES

- ❖ Collective action learning with 6 meetings
- ❖ Thematic Meetings on 3 topics
- ❖ Stay at home Study Visit with 5 sessions
- ❖ 1 CF2CF exchange application, 1 exchange postponed from last year
- ❖ 11 Emerging Countries conversations
- ❖ Learning Lab with 6 online group meetings
- ❖ 4x4 workshops series SDG Wake-up Call in 3 countries



## COLLECTIVE ACTION LEARNING 2021

- ❖ A pilot Online Topical Working Group on Digital Transformation with 14 CFs who were going through a digital change process.
- ❖ Four months regular online support for participating CFs on their journey and a shared learning opportunity for others.
  - A process that directly supported CFs in their day to day work
  - A fruitful networking opportunity in smaller groups
  - Challenged by new online tools

(See report [5 Takeaways from the Collective Action Learning Process](#) and Action Learning reports by participants in the [Knowledge Centre](#))



## CF2CF EXCHANGES AND INTERSHIPS

- ❖ It was not the time for cross-border physical meetings, but online exchange was productive (See report [CF and CFSO responses to the pandemic - a comparison between Italy and Romania](#))



## THEMATIC MEETINGS IN 2021

- ❖ **Sustainability** concept of a CF while also considering the context changes induced by the Covid-19 pandemic with 15 participants from 11 countries (6 CFs, 3 CFSOs, 6 others) (see report [Community Foundation Sustainability: Co-creating a Shared Understanding of the Concept](#))
- ❖ **Fundraising** in times of crisis and uncertainty with 23 participants from 16 countries (10 CFs, 13 CFSOs)





## THEMATIC MEETINGS IN 2021

❖ **Climate** workshop with 23 participants (7 CFSOs, 9 CFs) showed examples from the field relating to climate action in three broad areas:

- Communication, education & advocacy;
- Strategy, programming & funding;
- Operations, endowments & assets

(see report [Acting on Climate](#))



## STAY AT HOME STUDY VISIT

- ❖ A new online opportunity for peers to see and hear from CF practitioners in Netherlands but also to prompt discussion around some of the challenges they face
- ❖ In 5 meetings LSA Bewoners, new kid on the block when it comes to being a CFSO in the Netherlands, involved CFs in understanding what makes them unique in terms of leadership role, sources of funding, how they are rooted in the community, and how they organise themselves
- ❖ A crash course which drew on the wealth of experience in the CF field around Europe:

*“getting questions and reflections from people who work in a different context help you figure out what is unique about your own context”*



## EMERGENT COUNTRIES CONVERSATIONS

- ❖ Monthly online conversations (11 in total, 9 in 2021) for associations that either started to establish new CFs or increased their effort in building the field (Serbia, Hungary, Spain, Albania, Austria, Georgia, Portugal) considering the variety of approaches in different cycles of life
- Growing interest to learn more from existing CFs and developed CFSOs

### AND [Learning Lab](#)

- ❖ 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort 2021 with 6 participants used this structured virtual learning space over a period of 6 months to deepen their knowledge and field understanding and to work on individual challenges



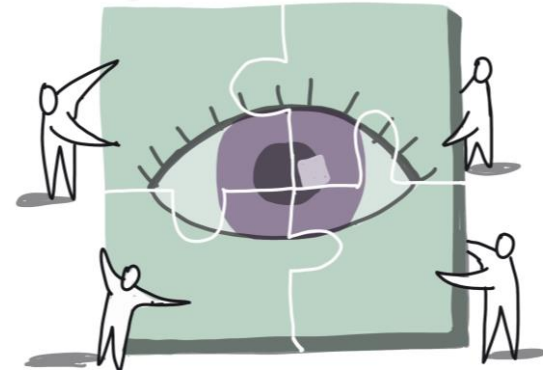
## CONNECTING COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS WITH THE SDGs

- ❖ In collaboration with 3 CFSOs from 3 countries 4 series of workshops (with 4 sessions) offered a learning to the *whole of organisation* approach to 26 CFs
- ❖ CFs adopt quickly: [‘From SDG Talk to Action’](#) and [‘Stories from the Field’](#) show the development of the field in using the *whole of organisation approach* and adopting the SDGs into their work
- ❖ ECFIs expertise and connection to the field was relevant for international meetings like the [COP26 Philanthropy Roundtable](#) as the culmination of a process of engagement with F20 and other networks through PEX



## CAPACITY BUILDING 2021 THROUGH KNOWLEDGE SHARING

- ❖ ECFI offered a rich and diverse variety of knowledge to the field
  - ❖ 10 Views from the field offered insights to learnings from 5 countries and 4 cross-section topics
  - ❖ The year started with the 2020 State of the field report
  - ❖ 16 Reports showed knowledge to the topic of digital transformation (12), embracing the SDGs (3) and the pandemic (1)
- 
- ECFI Website relaunch offers an improved use of knowledge through a searchable ([Knowledge Centre](#))



## CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH KNOWLEDGE SHARING

- ❖ The [customisable video](#) was meant to be a tool for CFSOs to better explain what a CF does



- What did not work with the customisable video?



## ACTIVITIES 2021 - WHAT WE LEARNED

- ✓ The balance between meetings that are too long and those that do not give enough space for individual conversations is fragile
- ✓ CFs adopt quickly: “From SDG Talk to Action” and “Stories from the Field” show the development of the field in using the whole of organizing approach and we brought this to a wider audience
- ✓ New kids on the block bring new spirit into online meetings: with the Stay at Home Study visit LSA Bewoners offered a bold and novel way of mutual learning opportunity
- ✓ The interest into the model of CF is high and was followed by the ongoing interest from emergent countries to learn from each other and others, but the way to the first CF is long



## ACTIVITIES 2021 - WHAT WE LEARNED

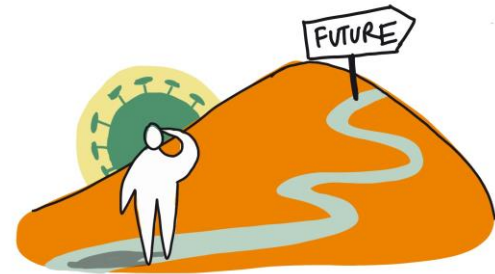
- ✓ Learning Lab of great value personally, for organisations and for the field
- ✓ The reach out to CFs is difficult and needs specific approaches like the collaboration with CFSOs on the SDG Wake-up Call
- ✓ Some countries are underrepresented
- ✓ We did not manage to get additional resources in terms of additional funding into the field
- ✓ The field research stepped behind peer learning and will have a stronger focus in 2022
- ✓ Your feedback:
  - build European CF movement
  - add value to CFSO work and accelerate learning
  - more strategic discussions
  - facilitate more engagement and knowledge sharing
  - support collaborative proposals
  - raise profile of CFs elsewhere in the philanthropy ecosystem





## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

- ❖ Digital First approach will continue with hope for some physical meetings in Spring through to early Autumn
- ❖ A concentration of effort on field research (see below)
- ❖ Continued peer learning activities with (with possible stratification of the field to reflect context and stage of development)
- ❖ More ‘strategic’ discussions on the SDGs
- ❖ ECFI team to participate where appropriate in relevant national events



## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

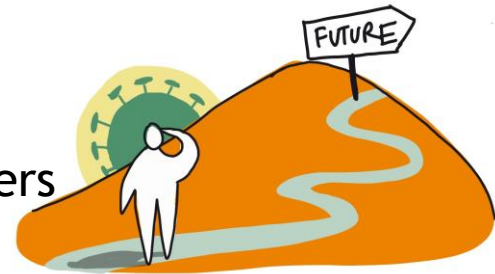
- ❖ A possible Action Learning Set on how to support CFs to meet the International Philanthropy Commitment on Climate
- ❖ A possible physical Study Visit in NL, Belgium, Germany and / or another Stay at Home Study Visit
- ❖ Another Learning Lab cohort if there is sufficient demand
- ❖ A field-led evaluation of ECFI to inform development of the initiative  
(Fagaras Inst, Romania with core team of practitioners from Latvia, Spain, UK)



# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

## What is the rationale for ECFI research?

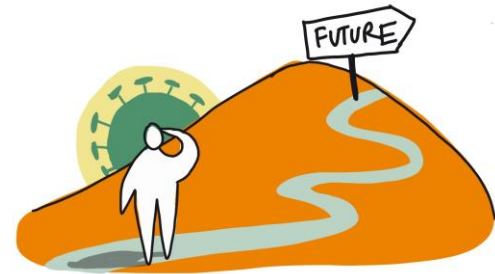
- ❖ consolidate a historical (longitudinal) perspective to track field development
- ❖ better understand contextual specificities and support needs in the field
- ❖ contribute to movement building
- ❖ build credibility for collaboration
- ❖ bridge between the research community and practitioners



# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

## Challenges of community foundation field research

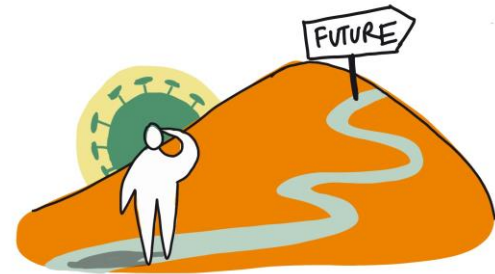
- ❖ taxonomy
- ❖ time and capacity of CFSOs
- ❖ existing data vs. collecting data in national settings



# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

## Research Products

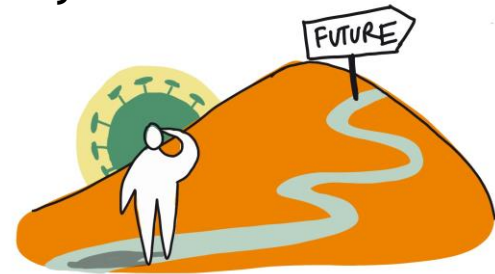
- ECFI State of the Field report (biennial)
- Country guides
- European Community Foundation Directory ?



# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

## Field research timeline and next steps

- December 2021 - short CFSO survey
- January - February 2022 - desktop research and individual interviews
- March 2022 - analysing data and writing the report
- March 2022 - Country Guide for the Netherlands
- April 2022 - publish State of the Field report after feedback from CFSOs
- September 2022 - potential launch of European Community Foundation Directory



We look forward to continuing to work with you

