

PARTNERING FOR IMPACT

NEWSLETTER JUNE 2025



Edito

Dear Readers,

Reflecting on the 2022–2024 period for our NEF triennial report has offered us the chance to take stock of our progress, acknowledge the challenges we've encountered in growing our collaborative funds, and share the lessons we've learned along the way. In times of turbulence across the continent and beyond, the demand for — and the value of — philanthropic collaboration and instruments like NEF become even more apparent. Together, the philanthropic sector can help shape the key societal debates of our rapidly evolving times.

One of the highlights of this spring was bringing together our communities around collaborative projects for the NEF Collaborative Day. This year, our discussions focused on risk and reputation management in the context of collaborative funds, particularly as we navigate the increasingly constrained civic space in Europe. We are keen to nurture innovation, solidarity and flexibility as antidotes to this shrinking civic space.

Below, you'll find updates and insights from our collaborative projects.

As always, we welcome your thoughts and feedback.

Warm regards,

Peggy Sailler

NEF Executive Director

Highlights-----



The NEF Collaborative Day

The main objectives of this collaborative day were to enhance our risk management approach within the context of NEF collaborative funds and to exchange knowledge and best practices in risk management. Through scenario/role-playing, participants were made aware of the different perspectives that come into play when assessing and managing those risks. Interesting discussions and commitments to progressing risk preparedness were certainly our key takeaways.

[Read More](#)

Triannual report

This report highlights the NEF Hub approach, which we believe plays a pivotal role in fostering collaboration and amplifying impact. To illustrate its effectiveness, we also interviewed several partner grantees, gathering success stories that showcase the tangible difference their work is making across our areas of focus.

[Read the report](#)

Project Updates - - - - -

Alliance for Gender Equality in Europe

In April, the Alliance for Gender Equality published its annual [Impact Report](#), proudly highlighting our achievements, lessons learned and – most importantly - the work of their grantee partners.

The 2024 report showcases how, over the past year, we supported many grassroots organisations doing essential work on women's economic inclusion, LGBTQ+ rights, reproductive rights, protecting migrants, helping women stay safe, and many other issues. Their stories – some of which are featured in this report – serve as a reminder that positive change is always possible, even when the odds seem insurmountable.

The Alliance for Gender Equality in Europe launched its [new website](#) in April.

To meet the needs of a growing pooled fund, we welcomed a [new Programs Assistant](#) in May, who will help us implement our grant-making, capacity strengthening, and communication activities. We are also recruiting for new members of our advisory committee, which provides vital guidance to both our steering committee members and the program team.

Looking ahead, our next Steering Committee meeting will take place in Paris on 16 and 17 June where member foundations will validate grant renewals for our Economic Opportunities sub-fund, discuss insights from the sector mapping, and begin shaping our funding strategy on movement building.

Civitates

Following the USAID funding freeze, several Civitates foundation partners have joined forces to mobilise emergency funding for embattled media outlets in Central and Eastern Europe. As a result, €1 million was raised, which will enable Civitates to support five new outlets (in Cyprus, Czech Republic, Romania, Lithuania and

Slovenia) with 3-year core grants, and will start a new partnership with OCCRP (the Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project) to provide tailored support to these outlets to enhance their organisational resilience and sustainability.

Civitates' annual report is available [here](#).

In parallel to this emergency funding, we are finalising the selection of our new cohort of media partners across Europe, as well as the selection of our new cohort of tech and democracy grantees. We also just launched an open call for projects in Italy, one of our new priority countries in our Civic Power portfolio.

European AI & Society Fund

The European AI & Society Fund recently awarded €2 million to 15 bold, adventurous projects that explore how to hold accountable those misusing AI and causing harm in Europe. Defending workers' rights, holding data centre operators accountable for environmental and social damage, and tackling AI-enabled profiling affecting black and migrant communities, are just some of the projects that organisations will be implementing over the next year with funding from the [AI Accountability grants](#). In February, the Fund also awarded €400,000 across 10 grants to organisations which will be focusing on the [AI Act's implementation](#) by 2026.

Both of these are part of European AI & Society Fund's [€4 million "Making Regulation Work" programme](#), supporting public interest advocates to challenge the harmful impacts of AI on society and secure accountability for AI use by supporting the effective implementation and enforcement of legislation in Europe.

European Fund for the Balkans

The European Fund for the Balkans ([EFB](#)) organized the third edition of the Engaged Democracy Convention (EDI2025), which was held from 21 to 23 May 2025, in Skopje, North Macedonia.

Under its powerful theme “Engage, Inspire, Empower!”, the convention gathered over 100 engaged citizens, journalists, changemakers, movements, initiatives and civil society representatives from across the Western Balkans.

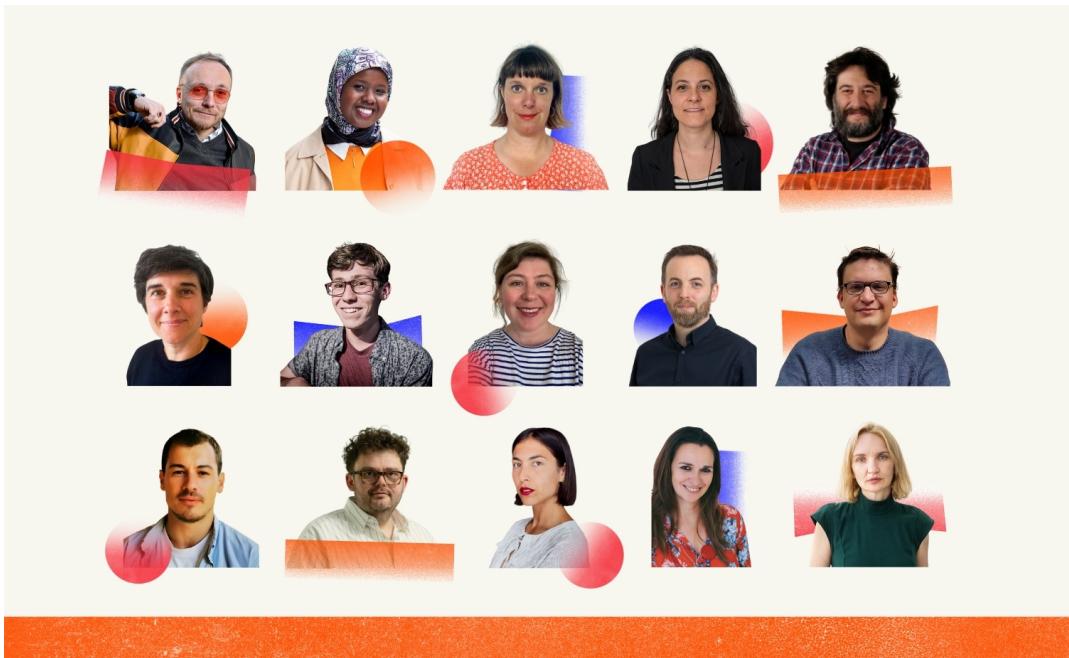
Together the participants tackled key regional issues—environment, public spaces, media, decent work, and civic rights, and spotlighted emerging topics including mental health, digital security, and the rise of anti-gender movements.

Once more, EDI2025 emphasized the necessity to align local needs with regional action, strengthening cross-movement alliances, and leveraging crises as catalysts for collective change.

The Alliance for Socially Engaged Arts

The Alliance for Socially Engaged Arts launched its inaugural Fellowship earlier this year, a programme designed to connect and support visionary leaders of arts organisations driven by community engagement and social change across Europe.

In June, the Alliance [announced the first cohort of 15 fellows](#) who have been awarded a place on the Fellowship programme. The selected fellows represent a wide range of artistic disciplines, geographies and social issues.



Their organisations address urgent challenges like the climate crisis, homelessness and peacebuilding through participatory and co-creative arts approaches deeply anchored in their local communities. Over the next 18 months, the Fellows will embark on a collaborative learning journey rooted in action learning and peer exchange. The programme will provide leaders with tailored resources, capacity-building and cross-border connections to strengthen their organisational models and collectively drive advocacy efforts to scale the impact and recognition of this field across Europe.

EPIM

EPIM hosted on the 27th and 28th of May the CEE Network for Migration and Inclusion Convening, a dynamic two-day event in Bucharest that brought together actors from across Central and Eastern Europe to strengthen collaboration on migration and inclusion. Throughout the convening, participants explored the role of civil society in fostering inclusive and welcoming communities, the potential of the private sector to unlock opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship for

migrants, and the connection between migration work and the reinforcement of democratic institutions and civic trust.

Epim annual report is available [here](#)

The event was marked by rich dialogue, cross-sector exchange, and a shared commitment to building ecosystems of belonging. Participants left with renewed clarity, stronger networks, and a collective sense of purpose. EPIM extends its sincere thanks to all who contributed their insights, experience, and imagination. The momentum continues—grounded in trust, collaboration, and a shared vision for a more inclusive Europe.

Jafowa

JAFOWA has just refined its theory of change and has updated accordingly its [roadmap](#) for the period 2025-2028.

This roadmap has guided the launch of JAFOWA's fourth call for proposals, recently issued to approximately forty farmers' organizations in Burkina Faso and Senegal. Currently in the selection phase, this call is expected to result in the approval of nine new 24-month projects by September 2025. By the end of 2025, JAFOWA will be overseeing a portfolio of around fifteen active projects.

[View email in browser](#)

[update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe](#)