



2024 Report of the Executive Committee



BIEN

Basic Income
Earth Network

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CHAIR & DEPUTY CHAIR REPORT

Sarath Davala & Hilde Latour

We are proud to report back to the General Assembly the major strategic developments in the last one year. This was the year when some of our initiatives took a concrete shape. The funding that we obtained from Mustardseed Trust, Lankelly Chase Foundation and The Institute has enabled us to bring to fruition some significant aspects of our collective vision.

The Team – heart of the matter

We have a dynamic team with strong individual members who work with great freedom and autonomy, and contributing to and drawing energy from the collective vision. It is this healthy symbiotic relationship between the individual trustee and the shared collective vision that is our strength. The collective challenge is to sustain this healthy process. We are keen to bring in more talent to contribute to our strategic goals.

Reaching every last mile

An important strategic goal we have been working on in the last three years has been to take the basic income conversation to every corner of the world. Through our Hubs Project, we are beginning to realise this objective. We have established three Hubs – Africa, Latin America and Asia-Pacific – and have recruited paid managers in all the three Hubs now. We have invited all the three managers to attend the Bath BIEN Congress so that they get to meet members of the BIEN Community.

The first major development of the Hubs Project has been the first Latin American Regional Congress organised by the Costa Rican affiliate of BIEN. Given the extraordinary significance of this event, three EC members – the Chair, Deputy Chair and the Outreach Coordinator – have attended this Con-

gress. Basic Income researchers and activists from nearly ten Latin American countries were present physically and more have joined online. This event demonstrated the already existing energy around the idea of basic income in the region, and equally the event gave a big boost to the basic income movement in Latin America. In the coming years, more such regional congresses are planned.

World's most reliable source

Another strategic direction that received significant push this year has been the UBldata project. Given our strategic goal of becoming the world's most reliable source of information and rigorous analysis on basic income, with the collaboration and financial support of The Institute (based in the US), the first product of this initiative will be showcased in this year's Congress in Bath. The team that is working on this initiative is undoubtedly the best talent in the basic income universe. This is the first step in what could be the world's top website on basic income pilots and analysis. We have several steps ahead before we realise our vision in this aspect.

Pushing the Elephant – UN initiative

As part of engaging the big multilateral global institutions that have come to be the major players in development discourse, we have been working closely with the UNDP and the UN Secretary General's office to take Basic Income on board as we define it. It is important to be in that space as the guardians of the Basic Income idea since institutions and governments have come to define basic income as it suits them. Even though the UN is very slow, we are still making progress.

Planting seeds – Youth Internship Initiative

The internship program for university students started three years ago with Chinese students. This year we have completed the third such program for Chinese and Taiwanese students. The program is coordinated by Tyler Prochazka who is our EC member and based in Taiwan, and Cheng Furui based in Beijing. Recently, the Institute of Peace (located within the Distance

Education University) in Costa Rica has shown interest to collaborate with our team and develop two online courses in Spanish, Portuguese and English: (1) Introduction to Basic Income; (2) Basic Income as a tool for Peacebuilding.

Decentralised Networking and Subnetworking

Our vision is that over time BIEN becomes a decentralised Network of various thematic and geographical networks and subnetworks. Some recent initiatives in this direction include:

- 1) UBI PhD Students Network
- 2) UBI Piloters Network
- 3) UBI Youth Internship Network
- 4) Municipal Basic Income Network

The Municipal Basic Income Network is an initiative by BIEN to learn from and connect with the different municipal and regional government basic income policies that have been implemented to date. While we of course want a basic income to be truly universal, in recent years we have seen how a path towards universality starts at the local level. From Brazil to the United States, from Mexico to Korea, basic income is blossoming in a thousand plural ways. As BIEN, we have been planting seeds towards making such a network a reality across continents.

UBI Art and Multimedia – UBI TV

BIEN's footprint in the domain of art and media is very limited. We started last year with a podcast that is published on our channel called UBI TV. We hope to build on this initiative in the coming years.

Volunteer Management – let's give them a hug

Because of the turnover of the EC members managing this portfolio, we have been not very effective in mobilising and managing the volunteers. We need to give more energy to motivate volunteers. With a new coordinator Seng Kiat

Lee taking charge in this year's General Assembly (if the GA agrees), we are hoping to energise the overall coordination of volunteers.

Social media

Our social media presence has improved substantially in the last three years, and we are hoping to spread our wings wider through various other online interactive platforms.

Website makeover – the next level

Our website has grown organically for over two decades, acting primarily like a blog. Earlier this year we have rebrushed the design of the site and provided mild optimizations on the back-end to improve loading time. There are back-end improvements to be made to further increase loading speed, reduce hosting costs, and improve old device compatibility being worked on to improve global accessibility to our site. Our project to provide translations of our site into all languages has been revitalized and expect to launch in the coming months.

We are planning to grow our engagement with a broader global audience and community. We're expanding our capabilities of coordination and project management, and looking at new designs for the website that are more engaging and interactive. This has started with our recent new comments system and are in the exploratory stage of using the writing of our 4500+ posts to create a large language model assistant to instantly answer anyone's question about UBI and go beyond just AI generating answers from existing writing to allow people to ask questions of leading scholars to form a high quality knowledge base and active community forum. We are looking forward to helping basic income organizations support each other as they launch, organize and have the tools for hosting better conferences and better community engagement themselves to persist and build into the future.

Fundraising – Just enough is not good enough

In order to sustain our current level of activity, we obviously need funds. We need to make efforts more vigorously to raise the required funding.

TREASURER REPORT

Malcolm Torry

Submitted with this report:

1. Annual report and accounts for the financial year 1st January to 31st December 2023. These have been agreed by the Executive Committee, signed by BIEN's officers, signed by the independent inspector, and submitted to the Charity Commission.
2. Half year accounts for the period 1st January to 30th June 2024, along with a projection to June 2025 for Hubs Project income and expenditure.

Throughout this period BIEN's accounting processes, bank accounts and Paypal account in the UK have been running efficiently.

Grants from the Mustardseed Trust and Lankelly Chase will enable the Hubs Project to run for the full three years originally planned, that is, to June 2025. The hubs coordinator and hub managers for Africa, Latin America, and Asia Pacific, are now all in post and working well. Grants from The Institute are paying for BIEN's UBldata project. As shown in the appendix to the 2023 annual accounts, a small subsidy from the general fund might be required for the Hubs Project. No such subsidy is envisaged for UBldata.

At the 30th of June the general fund stood at £14,922, slightly above the £14,895 figure at beginning of the year. However, several of our major expenditures occur in the second half of the year (particularly the insurance premium and the website hosting fee), so we should envisage a £1,000 annual deficit. A declining general fund that is already relatively small in relation to total income and expenditure isn't a good idea now that BIEN is running expensive projects, and it is salutary that if BIEN hadn't received a donation of £10,000 three years ago we would be looking at winding up in two or three years' time.

A subgroup of the EC is now studying options for fundraising: but in a membership organisation like BIEN, members should regard themselves as at least partly responsible for raising the funds that the organisation needs. At the bottom of every webpage you will find a link to the donations page where it is possible to make regular as well as one-off donations. We would like to encourage better-off members to make sizeable regular donations if they are able to do so. General Assemblies have consistently agreed to retain life memberships, which means that every new member generates one initial contribution to BIEN's funds and then no more unless they choose to make donations. The few annual memberships that have been requested are often of short duration. It is clear that membership fees alone will never be sufficient to maintain BIEN's regular activity, which is increasingly expensive: for instance, the success of the news service means that the monthly Mailchimp emails now go to 14,000 individuals which locates BIEN's Mailchimp subscription in a higher cost bracket; the size of the website, and the number of visitors, also put us into a high cost bracket; and now that our income and expenditure are substantial the independent inspector of our accounts, who has generously charged us almost nothing for seven years, is now quite understandably charging a more realistic fee.

BIEN is operating effectively, and the need for its activities is greater than ever. We believe that now is the time for BIEN's members to show their commitment to its future by providing financial support to the extent that they are able to do that. And if any of you know any wealthy organisations or individuals who believe that the global Basic Income debate is more important than ever and might wish to contribute financially, then please let me know.

The next treasurer

My current term as treasurer finishes at this General Assembly, and as I intimated last year, I am not standing for a further three-year term. I have managed BIEN's financial affairs as general manager and treasurer since 2016, and in various capacities I have managed Basic Income organisations since the mid-1980s. It's time to move on; and it is also time for a new generation of administrators to take responsibility.

I and the whole of the Executive Committee are grateful to Lindsay Stirton for agreeing to stand for election as BIEN's new treasurer. The complexity relating to the role of treasurer is that the day following the GA at which the previous treasurer is not elected for a further term they cease to be able to function as BIEN's treasurer. This means that the new treasurer has to be in a position to take over the day after the GA, so they have to have access to the bank account, the Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs account, Wolfgang's pension provider, and so on, and this can take six months to organise. It already has taken that long, and we're still not quite there. So please vote for Lindsay to be BIEN's new treasurer. BIEN's financial affairs will be in safe hands if you do.

It has been a privilege and sometimes a pleasure to be able to serve BIEN as general manager and then treasurer. I wish Lindsay well in his role as BIEN's new treasurer.

SECRETARY REPORT

Diana Bashur

BIEN Administration

BIEN's Executive Committee (EC) meets monthly with a committed presence among its members. Currently the EC has 13 members: Chair, Co-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Social Media Manager, News Service Editor, Features Editor, Interim Volunteer Coordinator, Research Editor, Hubs Supervisor, Multimedia Coordinator, Affiliates Coordinator, with regular presence of acting Treasurer who will stand for election replacing the current outgoing Treasurer.

Thanks to the commitment of EC members to regular attendance, the EC has been an efficient meeting point to present updates on EC members' respective work areas as well as seek advice and joint decisions making in line with the charity's constitution. Through this joint effort, BIEN has been able to solidify its growth and expand its reach.

BIEN Membership

To date BIEN has close to 400 members, spread across 48 countries and 5 regions with high concentration in Europe and a majority male membership. The aim remains to increase our membership rate, diversify our geographical spread and increase our female membership through the expansion of our regional presence through the hubs.

Strategic Partnership with the UN

Throughout the past year, I have continued engagement with agencies, funds and programs of the United Nations (UN). Expanding our partnership with the UN is essential given the UN's position as a global player in the development

field and the potential of BI in contributing to key Sustainable Development Goals.

I have thus met with the International Organisation of Migration who is undergoing a review of their cash-based policies and is seeking input as to what research has shown in terms of different cash modalities and design. I intend to present the advantages of a close to universal unconditional and individual cash distribution. This collaboration is yet to materialise.

I have also started an engagement with the UN Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) who invited BIEN to submit a proposal for the 2025 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture. This proposal, submitted in June 2024, builds on our work in 2023 with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, which led to the inclusion of basic income as a conflict prevention tool in the [The New Agenda for Peace](#). A presentation to PBSO staff presenting my research on basic income's applicability as a peacebuilding tool held in July 2024 was very promising. We hope this engagement will translate into concrete next steps with PBSO.

After three years as Secretary, I do not plan to stand again for this post and would like to concentrate my efforts on taking forward partnerships with the UN and will therefore run as BIEN Liaison to the UN.

HUBS COORDINATOR REPORT

Neil Howard

This has been a busy and exciting year for the Hubs Project. The work of our African and Latin American coordinators has continued apace, with the former hosting multiple major online events and the latter organising and hosting the first ever Latin American BIEN Regional Congress in Costa Rica. This is a momentous achievement, made possible by expert organisation and alliance building, which has brought funding and participants together from across the Americas. In addition, the Hubs team has now expanded, with a successful recruitment process concluded in Winter, which saw BIEN hire an Asia-Pacific coordinator. This new team member – John Michael – has been collaborating closely with ongoing efforts to build capacity and strengthen advocacy efforts across South Asia.

Throughout this period, the Hubs team have been meeting regularly to share updates and set strategic priorities. One particularly exciting collaboration is a double panel session at the upcoming BIEN Congress in Bath, UK, where all our regional coordinators and the Hubs Manager will be discussing the possibilities and potentials around basic income in the Global South.

Our donor, Mustardseed Trust, has been kept happily abreast of the project's developments and has indicated willingness to offer further, follow-on funding to continue BIEN's impressive regional growth. As Hubs Manager, I have been heavily involved in these conversations with the Trust, as I have with securing alternative funding.

Finally, alongside work as the Hubs Manager, I am presently Chair of the Local Organising Committee for BIEN 2024. In this role, I have liaised consistently with the BIEN regional coordinators to plan their participation at Congress, as well as to find space and funding for their regional allies to attend in person. Over 20 bursaries have been offered for Global South attendees.

RESEARCH COORDINATOR REPORT

Jurgen De Wispelaere

I joined the EC as research coordinator in August 2023 and have been working on several projects and activities.

UBIdata Project

This is new initiative that I developed in collaboration with BIEN EC and several outside partners late 2023 and then lead the full project during 2024. The objective of UBIdata is to build a platform that systematically gathers and processes UBI data and provides tools for displaying this data in different formats to accommodate a wide variety of users. UBIdata obtained \$70,000 seed funding grant from The Institute and at the start of 2024, in collaboration with UBI Bath Beacon, Autonomy Data Science Unit and Common Knowledge Cooperative, started developing a limited prototype to be launched at the BIEN Congress in Bath. The purpose is for BIEN to seek out additional funding to continue developing the prototype into a full basic income data tool.

UBI PhD Student Network

I coordinated setting up a new international network of PhD students (and early post-doctoral researchers) working on basic income. The objective is to build a global network run by and for phd students that provides them access to resources and information and other forms of peer support as well as integrating PhD students as a group directly into BIEN and other UBI research communities. The initial group had several meetings and set up a mailing list inviting students from around the world their group (currently 47 students joined). The immediate plan is to hold an in-person meeting in Bath to formally constitute the group, select a governing committee and discuss activities. The longer-term plan is for the group to apply to become a BIEN affiliate in its

own right at the 2025 General Assembly. BIEN EC continues to offer support but the group is autonomous and entirely self-run by the PhD students.

Review of BIEN Congresses

In light of the rapidly changing basic income eco-system, I am chairing a systematic review of BIEN congresses as part of a new EC subcommittee. The review will explore fundamental questions about the purpose of BIEN Congresses in the current era of numerous basic income activities and the involvement of the BIEN EC in organising future congresses as well as a range of practical questions related to congress selection, logistics or funding. The subcommittee only met once to discuss the full remit and a work plan for this review. Following the BIEN Congress we plan to coordinate several fact finding meetings with past BIEN congress organisers and members of other basic income networks involved in organising related events. The subcommittee will use this information to discuss in detail both challenges and possible solutions and prepare a report and a set of recommendations for future congresses to be discussed by the EC and presented to the GA at the 2025 Congress.

Updating BIEN website research pages

I have undertaken a review of several pages on the BIEN website and developed a plan to revise, update and in some cases remove obsolete information. This plan has been approved by the EC and is being implemented in close collaboration of the BIEN web manager Kai Nau. Several short-term objectives will be met by the Bath congress while a thorough revision of the congress papers/videos will be executed after the congress with the aim of having all the congress material fully integrated and easily accessible (searchable) by the end of the year. We are also investigating the option for BIEN to host a global events scheduler which would serve as a user-friendly tool to facilitate organisation and promotion of UBI events and activities worldwide.

SOCIAL MEDIA, NEWS & FEATURES/OPINION REPORTS

James Grant, Peter Knight, Tyler Prochazka

Social Media Coordinator Report (James Grant)

Throughout the last year as BIEN's Social Media Manager I have continued to maintain my core responsibilities of keeping the BIEN channels (now including Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and Mastodon) regularly updated, whilst taking on new irregular projects.

In terms of regular duties, I have managed to maintain my agenda of two social media posts on each platform per weekday, with one post each weekend day, raising awareness of a range of Basic Income news from around the world. This equates to around 40+ posts on each platform each month. This frequency of posting has been facilitated by the purchase of a subscription to Zoho Social, which I selected after undertaking an audit of available social media management solutions. This has allowed me to schedule posts for days and times when I do not have capacity to hit 'send'. To improve in the coming year, it would be valuable to source a volunteer who would be willing to support me on the occasions when I am unable to manage the feeds. Ahmed Elbas has provided valuable support on this at various times throughout the last year, and building a regular collaborative setup with a volunteer would provide a lot of value to BIEN.

On average, the social feeds cumulatively achieve around 2,000 'engagements' in the forms of likes, retweets or replies each month. This popularity has also allowed me to champion and highlight initiatives and events undertaken either by BIEN, or by other advocacy organisations. Looking to the future, I have examined the desirability of a more expensive and robust Zoho subscription that would allow us to compare month-to-month or year-to-year engagement trends across platforms, which would allow us to optimise these feeds over time. Assessing the value, cost and viability of this upgrade in the coming months is an upcoming ad-hoc task of mine.

I have also undertaken various irregular responsibilities. These include helping execute last year's congress and sitting on the organising committee for this year's event, which I will be the first I am able to attend in person. Another ad-hoc task was the repackaging and distribution of video content from last year's event, undertaken with the help of volunteer Jenn Pavlik. I hope to continue to 'sweat the assets' from this year's congress, repackaging the video into shareable video snippets for viewers to enjoy after the event.

The largest project I look to undertake in the first half of next year is a 'Social Media Audit', in which I code different social media posts to determine which gain the most traction with BIEN's audience. With this in place, I can ensure that all social posts work harder and are viewed by a larger audience. I had been looking to achieve this with the help of a volunteer, but have not yet found the right candidate. I have also taken on a lot of responsibility as a BIEN Trustee, and have worked closely with Malcolm to ensure payments and finances are maintained in good working order.

Overall, I have enjoyed this last year with BIEN. I've had the pleasure of meeting a handful of fellow EC members in person, and look forward to meeting more at this year's Congress. I have also been a regular attendee and contributor at our monthly EC meetings, and look forward to continuing to do so throughout the next year.

News Editor Report (Peter T. Knight)

Over the past year I have issued monthly *BIEN News Bulletins* highlighting four key News items posted on the BIEN website over the relevant month. Each month I have posted News items on the website, usually six to ten items per month, seeking to maintain geographic diversity of the posts. Over the coming year I will encourage yet more geographical diversity by urging BIEN's regional hubs to solicit news contributors.

Features/Opinion Editor Report (Tyler Prochazka)

This year as the Opinion Editor for BIEN, I have focused on expanding youth involvement and diversifying our content. I worked with youth interns from

China to publish their research on basic income. This collaboration enriched our content and provided valuable experience for the interns. I am expanding our youth program to Taiwan to encourage more contributions from Taiwanese youth, aiming to increase the diversity and volume of our publications. This year, we aim to increase the number of countries participating and facilitating more publications from these youth programs.

I have overseen the publication of translation contributions, making international research accessible to a broader audience and highlighting the global relevance of basic income discussions.

My goal is to foster a platform that welcomes diverse opinions and ensures consistent contributions. By continuing to support youth programs and translation efforts, I aim to build a more inclusive and comprehensive forum for basic income news and research.

AFFILIATES COORDINATOR REPORT

Olaf Michael Ostertag

Establishing a steady conversation between BIEN and its affiliates is an ongoing task, and at times a demanding one. My predecessor Laura Bannister, with a little help from Wolfgang Wopperer-Beholz, had already reached out to all of our affiliate organisations in April of 2023, asking how things were going and how to get in touch more closely.

So I was able to send several follow-up emails on various topics, such as the job opening for the Asia-Pacific Hubs coordinator in October and the looking for support for the paper on “Basic Income and Climate Change” in November and our Proposal to the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (UN-PBSO) in June of 2024.

Apart from that, a few close contacts were established after responses by the French, German and South Korean Networks as well as the European “UBIE”. With the latter, we are hopeful to establish a cooperation to foster our respective Youth projects.

To reach out to the various affiliates in other regions, the help of our Regional Hubs Managers was required. We detected which organisations have been more out of touch than others, and are hoping to have a conversation with every single affiliated organisation by the end of this term.

On another note, as member of the Executive Committee, I joined the working group for clarification of BI definition (BIEN-CBID) in April of 2024 and am looking forward to collaborate with the co-chairs Annie Miller and Toru Yamamori.

This report summarises the work BIEN has been doing over the period from the 2023 General Assembly.

For further information about our work and up-to date information about basic income, please visit our website at <https://basicincome.org>.

The Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission in the United Kingdom (registered charity number 1177066).