



2025 Report of the Executive Committee



BIEN

Basic Income
Earth Network

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CHAIR & DEPUTY CHAIR REPORT

Sarath Davala & Hilde Latour

THE ELEPHANT IS NOW UNSTOPPABLE!

As we prepare to head to Brazil for the upcoming 2025 Congress in August, we take a moment to reflect on the year since the Bath Congress in 2024. This past year has been one of transition, marked by intense activity as we visualized and established BIEN's structure, direction, and portfolio of activities. The teams working on this transition have met more frequently than in any other year I can recall. Together, we've spent countless hours contemplating BIEN's present and future, and its role in a world grappling with chronic insecurity in various forms. What kind of hope can BIEN bring to this world, and how can we shape the global discourse? Such questions have been our main preoccupation during last year.

Strengthening BIEN's Team and Leadership Transition

We are proud to share with this august body, the BIEN community, that BIEN EC today is a strong, highly motivated, immensely competent collective. It has a great blend of experience, talent, youth and vigour. It works truly as a cohesive body driven by a shared vision.

The current chairs will complete their term in 2026, and we announced to the Executive Committee (EC) members in August 2024 that we will not seek any formal positions in the BIEN EC during the 2026 Congress. It's time for new leadership to take the reins. Since this announcement in Bath, we've held numerous internal consultations about the transition. A dedicated Transition Team has been appointed to address this and other critical matters, which we outline below.

Restructuring and Decentralizing BIEN

In 2004, BIEN transformed itself from a European Network into an Earth Network. Today, this vision is at the heart of our mission. The more we travel,

the more we see how deeply relevant Basic Income is to every country. The precariat is everywhere, and Basic Income offers a radical new way to envision a good and just society.

As we expand and bring the Basic Income conversation to new corners of the world, we've realized the need to adapt BIEN's structure by delineating governance from operations. A lean EC, supported by solid and competent teams, seems to be the most effective way forward. Equally important is empowering regional structures so they can eventually take ownership of building country- and region-level bodies.

Our experience has shown that while Basic Income is a global idea, it must always be expressed in local language, grammar, and music. That's why regional and country-level structures are central to our new approach. This decentralization comes with great responsibility: we must ensure it never compromises BIEN's core values or definition.

Empowering Volunteers

Over the years, we've learned that the primary energy driving BIEN's mission comes from volunteers—and this will always be the case. The passion, energy, and zeal volunteers bring are unmatched. By definition, volunteers are intrinsically motivated, but when they need resources to sustain their work—whether for technical support, travel, or organizing events—those resources should be available.

Too often, volunteers dip into their own pockets, sacrificing financially in ways they can ill afford. While this dedication is admirable, it can lead to burnout and discourage long-term engagement, undermining the very initiatives they work so hard to build. To foster innovation and sustainable projects, we must develop funding mechanisms and support structures that alleviate this burden and honour volunteers' invaluable contributions.

BIEN must secure resources to address this challenge. We urge the BIEN community to recognize this need. Volunteers will always be the backbone of BIEN, but now, they'll also be equipped with the tools they need to thrive. Our new team-based structure allows us to welcome more volunteers without the

formalities of elections, making it easier for passionate individuals to contribute.

The Mustardseed Grant and Building a Corpus

This year, we received a one-time grant of \$315,000 from the Mustardseed Trust—a tremendous opportunity to consolidate and accelerate our work. This final grant from Mustardseed enables us to start building a corpus for current and future needs, strengthen existing initiatives, and explore new ones.

The Transition Team worked tirelessly to create a financial blueprint that outlines how these funds will be used. Future leadership will inherit not only resources but also clear protocols to guide their decisions.

Acknowledging Key Contributors

We'd like to extend our deepest gratitude to the Hubs Coordinator, Wolfgang Wopperer-Beholz, for his critical contributions during this transition. His exceptional facilitation and analytical skills have been invaluable. Alongside senior EC members Neil Howard and Jurgen De Wispelaere, Wolfgang helped produce the transition documents that map out our vision, mission, structures, and protocols.

We also want to recognize the three Hubs Managers, who have acted as explorers in uncharted territories, bringing BIEN's conversations to the far corners of the world. Their work has been nothing short of inspirational.

TREASURER REPORT

Lindsay Stirton

I became BIEN Treasurer at a time of growth for BIEN. While this is welcome, there has been a corresponding increase in the complexity of BIEN's finances. For example, BIEN has gone from having a single project to (through the UBI Data project) having three, plus various people employed in consultancies and on bursaries. I have managed this project.

In particular, I have:

- ensured compliance with employment law obligations;
- led a review of BIEN strategy and Finance;
- contributed from a financial perspective to BIEN's strategy around transitioning to a new scale of working;
- proposed and obtained EC backing for a £50,000 starting investment in a 'Sovereign Wealth Fund for BIEN'.

This last point deserves some elaboration. BIEN has benefited from a generous grant (beyond what was initially bid) from Mustardseed Trust. With backing from EC, we have earmarked £50,000 for an investment fund, the dividends from which will meet a substantial portion of BIEN's funding requirement into the future.

In addition, the plan is to grow this initial fund, from additional donations. This gives BIEN members and partners certainty over BIEN's future.

In the month or so after this was written, I will be preparing BIEN's accounts, and the Charity Commission annual return. .

SECRETARY REPORT

Fabienne Hansen

2024/25 has been a dynamic and transitional year, marked by global challenges and renewed momentum for the basic income movement. Within this context, the Secretary's role has remained central to ensuring smooth internal operations, transparent governance, and effective communication across BIEN's internal structures and global network.

Throughout the reporting period, BIEN's EC met monthly and sometimes twice a month via Zoom. As Secretary, I prepared and circulated agendas, ensured documentation was shared in advance, and recorded comprehensive minutes of all meetings. A special emphasis was placed this year on revamping the agenda and improving post-meeting documentation to reflect BIEN's busy schedule, which, in its new form, hopefully will contribute to more agile follow-up and better internal priority setting.

In March 2025, I initiated a project to upgrade and reorganise BIEN's digital data storage to improve accessibility, transparency, and long-term sustainability. A key focus has been the development of a searchable, structured archive on our Google Drive platform, enabling Executive Committee members and future administrators to retrieve important documents easily. This includes organising materials by category and year, standardising file naming conventions, and creating an index for frequently referenced documents such as minutes, resolutions, and governance records. In parallel, a thorough cleanup process has begun to remove outdated, duplicate, or irrelevant files, thereby streamlining the system. This effort is ongoing and will continue into the later part of the year to establish a reliable and user-friendly digital infrastructure that supports BIEN's evolving needs.

Further, in response to ongoing administrative challenges, I am preparing to establish a redesigned membership sign-up system that integrates registration and payment on a single, unified webpage. The current setup,

which separates form submission from payment processing, has led to difficulties in matching new member entries with their corresponding fee payments. This not only creates delays in confirming memberships but also places an unnecessary burden on both the Secretary and Treasurer. The upcoming revision aims to simplify the user experience for prospective members while significantly reducing internal administrative work. By clearly linking member information with payment data at the point of entry, I expect improved tracking, faster confirmations, and a more coherent membership database overall. Implementation is planned for late 2025, in close coordination with the Treasurer and relevant technical support.

I also became part of the Local Organising Committee (LOC) for the 2025 BIEN Congress, taking place in Maricá and Niterói on August 27 to 29. One of my key responsibilities is co-organising the Early Career Day, a dedicated pre-conference event designed to support emerging scholars in the field of basic income. This initiative provides a platform for networking, mentorship, and skills development, reflecting BIEN's ongoing commitment to fostering the next generation of voices in the basic income movement.

HUBS COORDINATOR REPORT

Neil Howard

This has been a busy and exciting year for BIEN's regionalisation.

In the wake of the first ever regional congress held in Latin America, the Latin American team have been hugely busy working on the Rio Congress, which will be held in August.

In Asia, John Michael has been publishing a regular regional newsletter alongside attending and supporting the organisation of multiple high-level national or regional events, including in India and Malaysia.

In Africa, Chris has been busily constructing a Regional Council, while Hilde has supported with connections to the Bitcoin movement through which something like a regional congress will take place in Uganda in late 2025.

Inspired by the end of the first round of MST support, the Hubs Coordinator has been working with the BIEN Coordinator and the newly-established Transition Team to lead a conversation on BIEN's overall governance structure, including the governance of its regions work. This has taken many months and will culminate in a report shared for feedback with BIEN stakeholders.

At the end of the present reporting period, we will be saying goodbye to all three BIEN regions coordinators as the regions project moves in a different direction. We aim to keep all coordinators involved in the future Regions Team.

RESEARCH COORDINATOR REPORT

Jurgen De Wispelaere

2025 turned out to be a busy year for BIEN, for the EC and for me personally as part of the EC. As with many of my esteemed colleagues in the EC, much of my time and energy this year went into structural and strategic issues in relation to revamping the EC and its operations for the next decade or so. I played a key role in both the “Strategy & Finance” and “Transition” subcommittees and amongst others was the lead setting out the BIEN Financial Blueprint, 2025-2030, to be presented at the GA this year.

I also undertook the role of Congress Liaison for the 2025 BIEN Congress taking place in Maricá and Niterói on 27-29 August. This is following an EC decision to stop recruiting LOC representatives but instead designate an EC member as congress liaison, responsible for both assisting LOC and sharing updates and information to the EC. Collaboration with the LOC team headed by Fabio Waltenberg has really been excellent and very congenial.

More specifically on the research coordinator remit my main commitment this year has been to upgrading and expanding [UBIdata](#). At the start of 2025 UBIdata was very fortuitous to secure financial support for its next stage of development from the [Income To Support All \(ITSA\) Foundation](#). With the ITSA and some additional BIEN support UBIdata embarked on a new work plan to turn the current beta version (proof-of-concept) into a fully functional data explorer.

UBIdata upgrading involves a series of improvements, including:

- integration of table and graph visualisations expanded to all available experiments;
- more user-friendly display of descriptive information about experiments, treatment characteristics, etc;
- added customisation allowing users to select key features of interest to them;

- construction of a transparent coding protocol outlining in detail the process UBldata uses in collecting and processing data;
- completion of data collection of the 18 cases featured in the beta version and expanding of cases (contemporary as well as historical);
- construction of a robust data pipeline allowing seamless updating of information in real time

In addition, we are exploring options for UBldata to host key findings and published reports from US trials who are experiencing difficulties with the current Administration's approach to restricting public access to scientific research, and are hoping to extend this service to trials around the world soon.

A second area of work carried out this year relates to the research pages on the BIEN website, which were found to be outdated and not at all user-friendly. After review, in collaboration with our web manager, I effectively took out most of the outdated/defunct material since there are now much better sources for UBI community to obtain information – including UBldata of course. The archive of past BIEN Congress material is being retained but work is under way to turn it into a more user-friendly searchable archive feature, integrating presentations, papers and also video material.

I have also started formulating plans, and we are actively exploring options, to build several tools to facilitate future research dissemination. There are plans in the making for using the BIEN website as a hub for tools that facilitate research dissemination while avoiding the construction of web pages with actual information (since updating is too labour intensive and outdated pages are of little use to our community).

COMMUNICATIONS REPORTS

**Catarina Neves, James Grant,
Peter Knight, and Tyler Prochazka**

Communications Review (Catarina Neves)

Since joining the BIEN team early in 2025, I've been focusing on revising and proposing a new communication strategy that aligns with BIEN's evolving goals. My first step was to thoroughly review BIEN's current communication materials, which included the newsletter (news bulletin), its social media pages, podcast. In addition, I examined BIEN's website and relevant transitional strategy documents to understand the context and challenges that the organisation faces. This review provided valuable insights into where we stand and highlighted areas where improvements could be made.

To ensure that my recommendations are informed by the needs and perspectives of key stakeholders, I conducted a series of interviews with members of BIEN's Executive Committee (EC) and the communications team (total of 9 interviews). The interviews helped me identify common themes, key concerns, and aspirations for the future of BIEN's communications. Combining this input with my own assessments, I'm currently working on BIEN's communication strategy proposal, that outlines the feedback and provides recommendations for improvement.

Looking ahead, I'm also in the process of designing a new newsletter template, which will reflect one of the key proposals I plan to put forward. My goal is to ensure that the communication strategy is both practical and impactful, enabling BIEN to engage more effectively with its audience.

Social Media Coordinator Report (James Grant)

In the last year in my role, I have expanded our social media presence to support 9 total platforms, with recent gains including Mastodon and BlueSky. Throughout the last year, I have continued to maintain a schedule of one post

per weekday on each of our social media platforms per weekday, excluding Youtube. I have continued to automate this process, using Zoho Social to ensure that our social media platforms are active on a schedule to reach a range of international audiences. Further, with the help of BIEN Volunteer Rachel Hu, I have managed to annotate, edit and upload a series of videos from the BIEN 2024 Congress.

Looking ahead, I'd like to harness volunteer effort to undertake a 'Social Media Audit' in order to ensure that our social media presence is as compelling as possible. I'd also like to boost our social posting target from one post every weekday, and intend to attend, support and cover the BIEN 2025 Congress from Brazil.

News Editor Report (Peter T. Knight)

Over the past year I have continued to post some six-eight news items per month on the BIEN website and issue monthly BIEN News Bulletins with four selected news items, using Mailchimp to reach over 12,500 subscribers. I choose news items based on geographical diversity and relevance to BIEN objectives, making use of suggestions I receive and items in the BIG newsletter (BIG reciprocates picking up some of what I publish).

In March 2025 I was diagnosed with esophageal cancer and am currently undergoing chemo-radiological therapy at home after J-tube surgeries at Doylestown Hospital, so far without side effects. If all goes well, I will travel to my summer cottage in Maine in July and to Brazil in August/September for the 2025 BIEN Congress and to visit with friends.

Features/Opinion Editor Report (Tyler Prochazka)

This past year, my focus as Opinion Editor has been on expanding youth engagement and solidifying BIEN's role as a platform for academic exchange across cultures, particularly through our growing internship and translation initiatives.

Last year, my primary goal was to expand the publication opportunities for our interns from China. We achieved this through several successful research

outputs and bilingual publications focused on China and the broader Asia region. These pieces are part of my goal to create a richer, more globally representative dialogue on basic income for the Asia Pacific.

Building on this, we are now constructing a BIEN post for the Youth Scholars Program. This will serve as a central page for youth contributions and a launching point for expanding the program to other countries. Our aim is to make this a platform for youth-led research, opinion, and media. We have also expanded our translation, with translated pieces published in both English and Chinese. These translations can hopefully bridge audiences and make global basic income debates more accessible.

Looking ahead, I would like to see the launch of two key components:

- a subsection of the BIEN website for the Youth Scholars Program, showcasing youth contributions and research;
- a page dedicated to the academic debate on basic income, which can serve as a resource base and intellectual anchor for future debate tournaments sponsored or supported by BIEN.

My broader goal for the coming year is to diversify our contributors, amplify youth voices, and provide a multilingual platform for critically discussing basic income.

PUBLIC OUTREACH REPORT

Julio Linares

This year has been a transformative one for my role in public outreach at BIEN, particularly in the vibrant context of Latin America. Here are some of the key highlights from my work:

Public Outreach in Ecuador

In Ecuador, I had the privilege of engaging with a passionate group eager to establish a basic income network and initiate a pilot program. Our discussions centered around the experiences of existing basic income pilots globally, providing valuable insights that could inform their efforts. Notably, the Ecuadorian network is keen on focusing their pilot within the LGBTQ+ community, aiming to address specific needs and challenges faced by this group.

Weaving Together Different Movements

As we prepared for this year's World Congress on UBI in Brazil, I took the initiative to invite representatives from various social movements to participate that I'm actively in touch with. The goal was to explore how their struggles intersect with the basic income movement. This year, we welcome voices from movements advocating for debt cancellation and the Black and Indigenous Liberation Movement (BILM), enriching our discussions and broadening our understanding of social justice in relation to basic income. At a broader political level, this year is strategic for Brazil as many social movements converge there for many reasons.

Inter-Community Dialogues

In collaboration with comrades from the Latin American Basic Income Network (LABIN), we initiated inter-community dialogues among regions involved in basic income pilots. These conversations fostered a space for sharing experiences from a communitarian and Latin American perspective. We focused on insights from pilots that emphasized horizontal governance

and consensus-driven decision-making. Participants from countries such as Peru, Guatemala, and Brazil will be sharing their experiences at this year's BIEN Congress in Brazil, highlighting the diverse approaches to implementing a communitarian basic income, and learning from each other.

Basic Income Rainforest Pilot in Guatemala

My journey into Guatemala's Peten region began two years ago when I started discussing a potential basic income pilot with the community of Uaxactún. Nestled in the Guatemalan jungle, Uaxactún is not only an archaeological site with a rich Mayan history but also a community managing a forest concession. This unique arrangement allows them to steward 80,000 hectares of rainforest as a commons, while pursuing sustainable economic initiatives. The pilot aims to involve around 1,000 residents, providing them with financial support that could enhance their livelihoods while preserving their environment.

Overall, this year has been marked by meaningful connections and collaborative efforts across different communities and movements. I have to also share that I have not been as active in BIEN as other years because I have been busy writing my first forthcoming book, titled *Decolonizing Money* (Pluto 2026) and because I am going through some personal issues. Despite this, I am excited about the potential of these initiatives to create lasting change and look forward to continuing this vital work in the coming year.

UN LIAISON OFFICER REPORT

Diana Bashur

With the new UN Liaison officer position approved by the General Assembly in 2024, BIEN aims to advance Basic Income as an efficient policy instrument complementing traditional development and peacebuilding efforts and thereby become a partner of the United Nations (UN) system. We believe this to be particularly relevant at a time of ever scarcer international funding. The importance of partnering with the UN rests on its weight as a global actor in the field of international aid. The UN system is also a key gateway to national policy making in the Global South.

We have significantly expanded our engagement with UN entities over the reporting period. BIEN submitted inputs to two calls from UN bodies. Our [first submission](#) in December 2024, in partnership with Equal Rights, was presented to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, making the case for Basic Income as an instrument for a just transition. For the [second submission](#), the Office of the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights sought BIEN's input on how a Basic Income can contribute to eradicating poverty beyond growth. The significance of this latter submission rests in the number of supporting organisations: we are grateful to 70 of BIEN's affiliates and allies from over 32 countries who endorsed this submission. This adds considerable weight to our contribution, as was communicated to us from the UN Rapporteur's Office.

BIEN attended the fourth UN International Conference on the Financing for Development (Seville, Spain, July 2025) and co-hosted a basic-income themed side event at this conference. This marks the first ever basic-income centered event at a high-level UN conference. The UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights was our keynote speaker at this event. We believe this occasion solidified BIEN's relationship with the office of the Special Rapporteur, who has consistently advanced in successive reports the significance of basic income to his office's mandate.

Looking ahead, BIEN plans to attend the UN Summit for Social Development in Doha in November 2025. Our regular participation in such UN-hosted international fora including in the form of basic-income-themed side-events, upholds BIEN's role as an important player in international development from the perspective of national governments, international organisations as well as other civil society organisations. This will contribute to gradually carving out room for Basic Income in this important policy space.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR REPORT

Lee Seng Kiat

My first term in the BIEN EC as Volunteer Coordinator started with the aim to harness the foundations set by my predecessors in the recruitment of volunteers, namely Anja Askeland and Leah Hamilton. In doing so, I am in awe of the unwavering interest globally to volunteer for BIEN and contribute to the Basic Income movement. As such, I have set out my priorities with the EC to maximise fruition of this tremendous resource.

My first priority was to preserve the momentum of volunteers by engaging recent applicants to meet the EC's need for additional capacity. This has led to my first batch of engagement which includes the following volunteers, all of whom have since made key contributions to the Basic Income movement:

- Rachel Hu, UBIdata
- James Gray, UBIdata
- Scott Jacobsen, Basic Income News
- Mureithi Matu, Basic Income in Kenya

Upon the EC's cementing of a communications platform, I have then also initiated the BIEN Volunteers Network. This is aimed to maximise both the opportunity for synergy amongst the volunteers, as well as to showcase volunteer opportunities within BIEN. In doing so, I have engaged with past volunteers in an attempt to reignite momentum and grow the network, which needs to edge towards a critical mass.

Amongst the other priorities still to be carried out are of course to engage and onboard further volunteers, and to improve the interface between BIEN and prospective volunteers, which includes the website prompt and agreement form. Lastly, I am also looking into a pathway for volunteers towards BIEN membership, and the changes needed for this to take effect.

Outside of my capacity as Volunteer Coordinator, I have also provided an EC restructuring proposal and am involved in active discussions within the BIEN transition team. In Malaysia, I have continued BIEN's collaboration with Geoffrey Williams, which has thus far culminated in the in-person workshop and panel discussions on 18-19 April 2025, which we organised and attended, and garnered significant local media coverage. I have also participated in the working group for clarification of Basic Income definition, presenting 'Design by Definition', to make a case for maintaining the streamlined nature of the existing definition, and a case to further clarify the five characteristics of Basic Income.

AFFILIATES COORDINATOR REPORT

Olaf Michael Ostertag

Following the 2024 congress in Bath, England, the EC has embarked on transitioning the Regional Hubs to a new structure which allows for more regional representation at BIEN. As affiliates coordinator, I participated in the EC's Transitioning Team.

Since the concept of establishing a steady BI conversation within "Regions" affects the role of BIEN's affiliates and their participation, it is now required reaching out to all affiliates to collect their views on how to foster the BI conversation on a global level.

In the time passed, I need to admit that apart from the existing steady close contacts, many other affiliates have not been talked to by me. Therefore, many contacts were fostered by my colleagues, even taking on the goal on establishing new affiliate organisations in countries like Malaysia. I would like to thank the EC as a whole for making the connectivity a top priority.

Also, my participation in the working group for clarification of BI definition (BIEN-CBID) has been a source of inspiration and will hopefully be continued in some way or another. Here I would like to thank not only the co-chairs Annie Miller and Toru Yamamori, but especially our volunteers' coordinator, Lee Seng Kiat, who has been a fountain of thought-provoking ideas, ambition and enthusiasm.

This report summarises the work BIEN has been doing over the period from the 2024 General Assembly onwards.

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).