

ASHOKA BELGIUM

# Impact & Activity Report



2022 — 2023

# WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF CHANGEMAKERS

**Dear Changemakers,**

Welcome to our annual Impact & Activity Report, spanning the period from September 2022 to August 2023. This report serves as a showcase of the journey, achievements, and progress of Ashoka Belgium and our Community.

We take a moment to appreciate the dedication and resilience of our team, the collaborative efforts with Fellows, our change leaders, the unwavering support of our committed ASNs and partners, and the positive impact made in the social entrepreneurship field. The report follows a three-part structure: firstly, a reminder of Ashoka's vision and positioning in Belgium, Europe, and the world; secondly, a focus on the collective impact of our Community of Changemakers; and thirdly, an outlook for the future of our joint efforts.

As we reflect on our achievements, we are energized to forge ahead, leveraging these experiences to propel us into a future where social change is not just a goal but a reality. For this, your engagement and support are pivotal, and we look forward to continuing on this journey with you.

Sincerely,

**Your Ashoka Belgium Team**

 To know more about our impact, you can explore the links underlined throughout this report.



# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Part 1: About Ashoka</b>	<b>4</b>
Our vision	5
Our team	6
Ashoka at a glance	7
Ashoka Europe	8
Resources to explore your Changemaker’s spirit	9
<b>Part 2: Our Community of Changemakers</b>	<b>10</b>
Community events	11
Ashoka Changemaker Summit 2022	12
Ashoka Belgium Community Retreat	14
Induction Event	15
The Changemakers	17
Ashoka Fellows	18
Ashoka Support Network	25
Our Programmes	27
Youth for Change	28
Impact Programme	30
Changemaker Europe	33
<b>Part 3: Looking Forward</b>	<b>36</b>
Our vision moving forward	37
Partnerships	39
Become an Ally on Our Journey	41

# Part 1

# About Ashoka



# Our vision



Ashoka Belgium is part of the **largest global network of social innovators** gathered from all sectors: leading social entrepreneurs, young changemakers, change leaders in education, philanthropists, and businesses, all united by a common goal of accelerating systems change.

Collectively, we encourage the emergence of a more inclusive, caring, and equitable society in which **everyone can become a changemaker** and has a role to play in the profound resolution of societal issues. We seek to empower these social innovators by giving them the confidence, support, and resources to do so. It is up to us to create the conditions to awaken the potential of each individual as a change agent to change the way we learn, live, and work together, in a collaborative spirit.

For four decades, Ashoka has **identified and supported social entrepreneurs** whose impact changes the world for the better. In an ever-changing world, our programmes are designed to unlock and better support the potential of these changemakers with the hope of producing a movement that builds resilience and collective prosperity.

From supporting individuals to co-igniting coalitions. From “Social Entrepreneurship” as a playground to “Social Change” as our groundwork. From a community of social entrepreneurs that benefit from Ashoka’s support to a **community of systems leaders that collaboratively achieve impact towards 'Everyone a Changemaker' (EACH)**.





# Our Team in Belgium



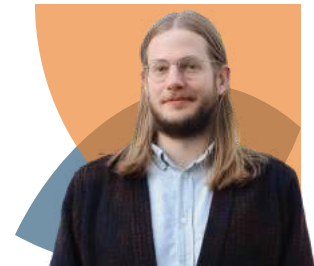
**Romain Gustot**

Co-Director Belgium  
- Community Lead



**Ashling Hoare**

Finances & Operations Lead  
- Global Talent



**Yannick Fischer**

Programmes Lead  
- Policy Hub



**Perrine de le Court**

Co-Director Belgium  
- Global ASN lead



**Laura Batalla**

Policy Hub Lead  
- Hello Europe



**Océane Collin**

Communications Officer



**Elien François**

Youth for Change  
Programme



**Olivier Orban**

Senior Advisor



# Ashoka at a glance

## Catalysing Worldwide Social Impact

For more detailed insights into Ashoka work and the incredible achievements of worldwide Changemakers, kindly refer to the [Unlonely Planet 2022](#).



# 3800+ Ashoka fellows redefining norms in 97 countries



# According to the NGO Advisor 2023 ranking, Ashoka is the 7th most influential NGO in the world



# 2 Ashoka Fellows are Nobel Peace Prize winners (M. Yunus and K. Satyarthi)



# 90% of Fellows feel connected to the Ashoka community\*



# 13 Ashoka Fellows are recipients of Goldman Environmental Prize



# In 2019, Forbes ranked Ashoka as one of the most innovative organizations in the world

### ASHOKA FELLOWS LEAD SYSTEMIC CHANGE



# 82% of Fellows have seen their idea replicated: 61% within their country, 42% internationally\*



# 72% of Fellows changed public policy at the national and/or international level\*



# 90% of Fellows place the change of mindset at the heart of their impact strategy\*

\*Ashoka 2021 Global Impact Study, «Measuring Big Change»

# Ashoka Europe Driving Change across the Continent

Ashoka Europe is a leading force in driving transformative change across the continent, empowering social entrepreneurs and changemakers to create sustainable and impactful solutions to society's most pressing challenges. With a strong focus on social innovation and systems change, Ashoka Europe has cultivated a vibrant and diverse community of individuals and organizations working together to create a flourishing future for all.

## Empowering Social Entrepreneurs



Over the past year, Ashoka Europe has added **35 new Ashoka Fellows** to its growing network, bringing the total number of Fellows to an impressive **3,890**

## Cultivating a Vibrant Community

The Ashoka Europe community continues to expand, welcoming **2,500 new members** over the past year, taking the total community strength to a remarkable **25,000 changemakers**. This community acts as a catalyst for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and collective action.



## Driving Systems Change



Over the past year, Ashoka Fellows have collaborated to drive changes in various sectors and policies. Together, they have contributed to the development and implementation of **25 new policies across European countries**, significantly **impacting the lives of 6 million citizens**.

## Inspiring the Next Generation

Investing in the next generation of changemakers is a fundamental pillar of Ashoka Europe's mission. Through the **Changemaker Schools Program**, Ashoka Europe has **engaged** with **over 500 schools** and **empowered more than 10,000 students** to become changemakers and leaders in their communities.





# Resources to explore your Changemaker's spirit



🔗 Visit our [Ashoka Europe Community](#) website to connect, learn and collaborate



🔗 Sign-up for our [transformative learning journey](#) on inspirational topics



🔗 Join our [Events in Belgium and in across Europe](#)



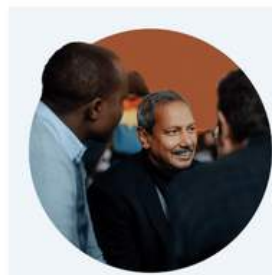
🔗 Learn more about [Changemaking](#) with our tools to spark deeper change



🔗 Use the [Changemaker Index](#) to assess your mindset



🔗 Explore our full list of close to [4000 Ashoka Fellows](#) in the world



# Part 2 Our community of Changemakers





# Community events

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# Ashoka Changemaker Summit 2022

In November 2022, 450 visionary individuals driving positive change from 38 different countries gathered in Brussels for the **Ashoka Changemaker Summit (ACMS)**.

This event rotates to a new host country each time, and the Belgian team was thrilled to host our extended community for this edition. The theme for this year was ‘**Decisions**’ and we reflected on questions such as:

- As a changemaker, how can you navigate and make equitable, future-focused decisions in an ever-evolving local and global landscape?
- How can we influence key decision makers to prioritize the public interest in their choices?
- How can we ensure that all citizens can participate in shaping policy decisions?



Creating a space for innovation, education, and networking – particularly after two years of exclusively online meetings – has generated a remarkably strong network effect. The summit presented an ideal platform for sharing numerous captivating entrepreneurial narratives and highlighting groundbreaking concepts.

The agenda featured **inspiring sessions, workshops**, and **discussions** on relevant topics such as sustainability, environmental stewardship, youth, migration, and inclusion.



The ACMS took place as part of the **Impact Week**, a collaborative effort by three interconnected communities: **Ashoka**, **Impact Finance Belgium (IFB)**, and the **European Venture Philanthropy Association (EVPA)**. It gathered organizations engaged in venture philanthropy and social investment, along with business leaders and social entrepreneurs from across Europe, in Brussels.

Click below to watch the summary video of the ACMS



We thank our co-organizers and partners for this successful event



### What's Next?

The upcoming **Ashoka Changemaker Summit** is scheduled for **September 5th-7th, 2024**, in the vibrant city of **Hamburg**. This edition will center around the theme of embracing 'Everyone a Changemaker' (EACH) through active participation and self-efficacy.



# Ashoka Belgium Community Retreat

Our Annual **Ashoka Belgium Community Retreat** took place in **March 2023**, involving the team, Fellows, ASN members and some of our closest allies. For two days, we embarked on a journey of reflection and action, celebrating the progress made over the last three years.

It was a pleasure to reunite with our community and collectively shape our impact. See here **five highlights from our retreat**:



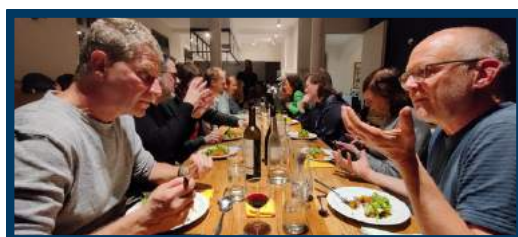
**1. Celebrating Our Journeys:** we took a deep dive into our individual journeys during the past three years, celebrating the progress we've made while acknowledging the challenges we've encountered.

**2. Embracing Change:** we acknowledged that change can be uncomfortable, emphasizing the need to adapt and find spaces where trust and belonging thrive.

**3. The Power of Reconnection:** it was unanimous among the group that in-person discussions and reconnection are pivotal in breathing life into our community.



**5. Fostering Collaboration:** brainstorming sessions led to innovative ways to collaborate and support one another, enabling us to envision the impact we can achieve together. ➔ We decided to put in place **collective impact working groups** (you'll hear here about the results soon...) and to organize **bi-monthly AshokApéro** to exchange in a cosy and informal setting.



**5. Creative Expressions:** we added a touch of creativity to our retreat, composing a brand-new 'Changemaker song' that captured our collective spirit. 🎵



# Induction Event

## Celebrating the new Fellows

We are thrilled to confirm and welcome our new Fellows 2022 and 2023 !



On May 31st, 2023, we had the chance to be mesmerized by the work and the journey of our new Fellows: **Maxime Zait & Sâm Rosenzweig of Communa for 2022** and **Koen Timmers of Take Action Global (TAG) for 2023**. These visionary entrepreneurs are pioneers in their fields of building sustainable communities and innovative climate education.



**Max & Sam** empower communities to co-create sustainable solutions in their own cities by spreading the concept of “Temporary Use with a Social Purpose” across Europe. Communa has already worked with 20 buildings, provided housing for 1000 refugees and 200 homeless persons and allowed more than 250 social organisations to set-up their activities.

**Koen** is building a global educational experience that unites students and teachers across the world to exchange ideas and projects to tackle climate change. So far, more than 3.4 million students and 21,000 teachers have participated in the learning journey of the Climate Action Project implemented by Take Action Global.





To exchange with them, we invited talented **young changemakers** to ask them all the burning questions they had in mind:

**Nicky Mwiza**, member of ASATT and working on Rayon de Bernadette;

**Fatima Azouag**, working at Les Ambassadeurs d'Expression Citoyenne on environmental issues;

**Inssaf Bel Haj Touzani**, working at Les Ambassadeurs on public speaking and inter-Brussels cohesion.

For those who missed it, the evening was also captured in a graphic recording by **Christopher Malapitan**, a Creative Facilitator and long-time collaborator of Ashoka.





# The changemakers

# Ashoka Fellows in Belgium

Since its establishment, Ashoka has been dedicated to identifying and assisting visionary social entrepreneurs whose ideas are geared towards instigating significant social transformations. Through a thorough examination of the unique qualities displayed by these entrepreneurs, Ashoka has formulated a meticulous and rigorous selection process designed to guide and incorporate them into the Ashoka Fellows network.

See below the **highlights from our Fellows between September 2022 and August 2023!**

*Click on the name of the Fellow to get to their Ashoka profile and on the name of their organisation to get to its website directly.*



Fellow since 2023

[Koen Timmers](#)

[Take Action Global](#)

- Launch of the new [Climate Action Schools](#) programme with 100 schools to bring on board a full environmental program, accredited by the UN Environment Programme.
- Release of their white paper '[Climate action education: a global view of challenges and best practice](#)', in partnership with Shift Sustainability and earthday.org.
- The [Climate Action Project](#) reached 3.4 million teachers and students across 149 countries in 2022.



Fellows since 2022

[Maxime Zaït & Sâm Rosenzweig](#)

[Communa](#)

- Responding to the needs for housing and inclusion of Ukrainian refugees, both for the emergency and with a long-term vision, in the framework of '[Brussels Help Ukraine](#)' programme from the Brussels Region.
- An ecosystem in constant evolution with [90 projects in 11 sites](#): Le 70-13, La Buissonnière, Le Tri Postal, Maxima, La Serre, AbC, Chassart, Emil, Youyou, Sorocité, La Maison de la Récup
- Sharing their expertise and expand their local work in Europe through their cooperative [Fair Ground Brussels](#) to help federate and anchor the concept of Common and Temporary Housing with a social purpose.





Fellow since 2020  
**Theo Vaes**  
**ArmenTeKort (ATK)**

- In 2022, they reached their goal of **creating 5000 buddy pairs**, and developed an expertise that can be implemented by other associations in all Belgian cities.
- They launched the **Empower to Work project**, which supports people in poverty to find a job or start their own business, in collaboration with the King Baudouin Foundation.
- KU Leuven's **research presented in June 2023 on ArmenTekort's buddy initiative** found it empowered individuals in poverty, with increased employment and housing stability for over 500 participants in 2022 and 2023.



Fellow since 2019  
**Alberto Alemanno**  
**The Good Lobby**

- Launched in October 2022, **The Good Lobby Tracker** evaluates and guides corporate political responsibility initiatives to foster corporate citizenship and social impact.
- **The Good Lobby Climate Incubator** trains and mentors 10 EU climate organisations on advocacy skills and strategies from January to June 2023.
- Published in April 2023, a study from The Good Lobby, **empowers civil society to influence EU party manifestos** and shape the future EU policy agenda.



Fellows since 2018  
**Frédéric Simonart & Matthieu Le Grelle**  
**DUO for a JOB**

- Duo for a Job launched 1,300 new duos in 2022 and 2023, matching young job seekers with an immigrant background with experienced mentors to support them in their job search.
- Duo for a Job **expanded its activities in France** (Marseille) and to four new cities in Belgium: Charleroi, Verviers, Turnhout and Sint-Niklaas.
- In 2023, Duo for a Job celebrated its 10th anniversary with a festive event that gathered its staff, volunteers, partners, and beneficiaries.

 **Watch their 10th anniversary video!**



Fellow since 2018  
**Sandrino Graceffa**  
**Smart Cooperative**

- In 2022, Smart **reached 35,000 members and achieved its highest turnover ever**, showing the increasing demand for its services and tools for self-employed workers.
- In June 2023, Smart **celebrated its 25th anniversary** with a myriad of events, activities and praising videos, reaffirming its values and vision for the future.
- They recently **switched to nomadic office**, freeing up spaces for other organizations and promoting mobility and collaboration among its workers.

*NB: Sandrino is not part of Smart anymore and we are working closely with **Yvon Jadoul**, new Secretary General.*



Fellow since 2017  
**Geertrui Serneels**  
**Solentra**

- In 2022, Solentra offered 5,717 therapy sessions to 1,284 refugees and newcomers, handled 644 helpdesk questions from support workers, and trained 1,450 support workers and volunteers.
- In September 2022, Solentra participated in the **TransForm's Changemakers Forum for Integrated Community Care**, to exchange on the how to enhance the quality of life and resilience of communities, which are summarized in the **Changemakers' Legacy report**.
- In 2023, Solentra conducted **Re-Imagine Covid**, an action research with young refugees and newcomers using the Photovoice method to explore the impact of Covid on their well-being and resilience.



Fellow since 2015  
**Bach Kim Nguyen**  
**BeeOdiversity**

- In October 2022, BeeOdiversity received **funding and support from the EIC Accelerator**, a European program that recognizes and promotes the most innovative and impactful deep tech start-ups.
- In December 2022, BeeOdiversity attended the **COP15 in Montreal**, a global conference on biodiversity and witnessed the collaboration of different stakeholders to imagine a world where biodiversity is preserved.
- In 2023, the **100+ Accelerator selected BeeOdiversity** out of over 1700 applications. It supported them to implement its **BeeOmonitoring solution** in South Africa and address sustainability challenges in supply chains.





Fellow since 2015  
**Marjan Gryson**  
**Touché / RESCALED**

- In 2022, Touché had a **direct impact** with 3.514 people, and 2.093 sessions through therapy & coaching, boxing training, stilness activities, artistic projects, training & workshops.
- This translates to **individual impact** of 96% feeling better and 87% experience more freedom of choice in a situation with anger; **relational impact** with fewer rifts in school, work and relations; **systemic impact** with the launch of a public tender towards a positive aggressive prison culture in all Belgian prisons.
- To sensitize and bring people together, they have launched their digital platform '**AngerHeroes**' and the publication '**Positively Aggressive: How to utilise rage**'



Fellow since 2013  
**Isabella Lenarduzzi**  
**JUMP**

- In February 2023, JUMP released a **Handbook on inclusion and gender balance in the post-pandemic work**, which offers a new framework and best practices for leaders, managers and HR/DEI officers.
- In 2022, JUMP **studied the representation of women in the BEL20 companies**, which showed the scarcity of women in top positions.
- JUMP's analysis and lobbying **influenced a new law in 2023** that reinforces the quotas in Belgium and aims to encourage listed companies to make their executive committees more balanced.



Fellow since 2012  
**Ingrid De Jonghe**  
**Therapie voor jongeren (TEJO)**

- Ingrid **received the Grote Prijs voor Opvoeding** for her pioneering work with TEJO, which provides short-term psychological help to young people. She was **a guest on Alleen Elvis blijft bestaan**, where she shared what inspired her to fight for the rights of young people. 
- TEJO **expanded its network of houses in Flanders and the Netherlands**, reaching more than 9,500 young people who needed professional and confidential support. TEJO also partnered with schools and youth centres to offer workshops on emotional literacy, self-care and coping skills, reaching more than 3,000 students and educators.



Fellow since 2012  
**Genevieve Moreau**  
**SiiN Institute &**  
**Intelligent Nutrition (IN)**

- In 2022, they launched two online platforms that offer personalized nutrition advice and coaching based on the IN approach: **ProNutriConsult**, designed for health professionals, and **MyNutriConsult**, for individuals who want to improve their health and well-being.
- In 2023, Genevieve published a new book titled **“Intelligent Nutrition: How to Eat Well for Yourself and the Planet”**, which integrates the main criteria of health and environmental sustainability for food choices.
- In 2023, Genevieve **received the MMH Fellowship**, a prestigious award that recognizes social entrepreneurs who are making a positive impact on health and well-being.



Fellow since 2011  
**Arnoud Raskin**  
**Mobile School & StreetWize**

- In 2022, StreetwiZe launched the **Immersive Leadership Expeditions**, transformative journeys that connect leaders with refugees and street children in different countries to foster self-awareness, empathy and resilience.
- In 2023, StreetSmart launched the **‘All Children, All rights’ toolkit**, including educational posters, games, audio stories that empowers youth workers and educators to promote children’s rights.
- During the reporting period, StreetwiZe delivered services to 97 companies, reaching over 9980 trainees, and StreetSmart conducted visits in 13 countries, training 200 youth workers reaching 8107 users on StreetSmart Play.



Fellow since 2010  
**Emilie Meessen**  
**Infirmiers de Rue (IDR)**

- Emilie Meesen was **ennobled by the King of Belgium** on the National Day for her efforts to end homelessness.
- IDR published in March 2023, a **new handbook titled “Sortir de la rue, manuel d’accompagnement de la personne sans-abri”**, which describes their methodology and know-how, gathered over the last 15 years.
- In February 2023, Infirmiers de Rue installed a site with **five new modular tiny houses** (adapted to urban regulation of Brussels) in Neder-Over-Heembeek, providing shelter and support for homeless people.




Fellow since 2010  
**Tobias Leenaert**  
**ProVeg International**

- Tobias Leenaert **set up an international NGO in China** to promote plant-based and cultured food and to reduce animal suffering and environmental impact.
- They organized the **first Food Pavilion at the COP27 in Egypt** in November 2022, showcasing the role of food system transformation in tackling the climate crisis. They also organised the **New Food Conference** with 600 key industry players.
- In 2023, they launched a **new food incubator in Latin America**, with the Mexican Association of Vegan Entrepreneurs, to support startups developing innovative plant-based and cultured food products and services.



Fellow since 2008  
**Ignace Schops**  
**National Park Hoge Kempen (RKLM)**

- In 2022, Ignace Schops became the new president of the environmental organization **Bond Beter Leefmilieu (BBL)**, an environmental organization in Belgium that works for a sustainable future and supports 130 member organizations.
- He participated in the **documentary Duty of Care**, about the climate crisis and the role of civil society, which premiered at the Docville festival in September 2022. 
- As chair of the **Klimaatzaak/Affaire Climat**, he supported the launch of their appeal on 14 September 2022, demanding a reduction of 61% of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.



Fellow since 2008  
**Didier Ketels**  
**Parc National Semois**  
**Droits Quotidiens (previously)**

- in January 2023, Didier Ketels became the **Coordinator of the Parc National de la Vallée de la Semois**, one of the two first national parks in Wallonia. The Parc covers 28,903 hectares of land, with high natural and cultural value, and aims to protect and promote its ecosystems and landscapes.
- In 2022, **Droits Quotidiens** helped thousands of workers resume their jobs in part-time medical leave, thanks to the new rules that allow them to work less than one-third of their normal hours. It also helped limiting the rent increase for tenants in Wallonia, depending on the energy performance certificate of their housing.



Fellow since 2007

[Olivier Gaillard](#)

[Obroni.be](#)

[Trans-Mission ASBL](#) (Previously)

- In June 2023, Olivier embarked on a transformative journey along the **Camino de Compostela**, gaining profound inner and collective insights.
- He also recently started a coaching programme via [Revival from Pulse Foundation](#), which ensure rebounds in an entrepreneur's journey.
- Olivier continues to provide support to social projects via his consulting company [Obroni.be](#). Reach out to him to collaborate and amplify your impact!



Fellow since 2006

[Bart Weetjens](#)

[Innerpreneur](#)

[APOPO](#) (previously)

- Even if he is not directly involved anymore, Bart expressed gratitude for the far-reaching impact of the [HeroRATs initiative](#) by Apopo, thanks to which 2 million farmers have found safer habitats with the creation of secure villages.
- Bart's new venture, [Innerpreneur](#), thrived with its second initiation adventure and continued bi-monthly fire circles. These gatherings offer a safe space for entrepreneurs to share their inner journeys and challenges.
- Bart and co-founder Vincent De Coninck received **crucial backing from the Ashoka Support Network** which empowers strategic enhancements for Innerpreneur.





# Ashoka Support Network

The **Ashoka Support Network (ASN)** is a global community of committed **leaders** who **share, support, and advocate** for **Ashoka's values and vision**, while unleashing their own potential as changemakers. Founded in 2004, the ASN is composed of **350+ members worldwide** in more than **40 countries**.

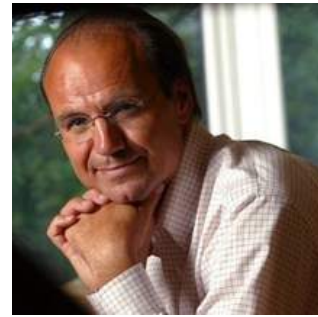
We are fortunate to have **17** exceptionally supportive **ASN members in Belgium** and have proudly welcomed three talented women in recent years to enhance gender balance.



**Piet Colruyt**  
Since 2010



**Bernard Meeus**  
Since 2009



**Michel Delloye**  
Since 2010



**Nicolas Janssen**  
Since 2011



**Michel Vandekerckhove**  
Since 2011



**Marc Nolet**  
Since 2012



**Gérard Bloch**  
Since 2013



**Edouard Janssen**  
Since 2013



**Miguel Del Marmol**  
Since 2014



**Myleen Verstraete**  
Since 2018



**Séverine de Sadeleer**  
Since 2019



**Olivier Orban**  
Since 2020



**Charles-Antoine Bodson**  
Since 2021



**Charles-Antoine Leunen**  
Since 2021



**Olivier Gillerot**  
Since 2022



**Yvoine Rémy**  
Since 2022



**Sabine Evereat**  
Since 2023



*Are you the next  
member of our Ashoka  
Support Network?*

*Learn more [here](#)*





# Our Programmes

# Youth for Change

**Youth for Change** is a powerful program by Ashoka Belgium that **empowers young individuals to positively impact our world, here and now**. These young changemakers bring innovative ideas to the table, making them ambassadors of social impact. The program serves as an inspiration and support system, equipping them with the necessary skills and tools to create and design solutions for the social issues they are passionate about. Our belief in the potential of youth as active actors of social change drives the core mission of this program.



In the 'Youth for Change Programme 2023', we are proud to have the **support** of **Schneider Electric Foundation, Changemaker Companies, Eurofins Foundation**, as well as two remarkable belgian youth organizations: **Les Ambassadeurs d'Expression Citoyenne** and **Talented Youth Network (TYN)**.



Through **reverse mentoring**, the **youth** engaged with **selected employees from Schneider Electric**. This unique approach allows both parties to **learn** from one another, **exchange** ideas and solutions, and **offer mutual support**. Together, they strive to make a profound difference in society.

The programme took them in a **transformative journey** to reflect on their impact:

- An exciting kick-off to explore mindful listening, reverse mentoring, and drew inspiration from the impactful story of Fellow **Arnaud Raskin**.
- A brainstorming session to delve into the intricacies of system change and mapping the problem-tree of their own projects.
- An online meeting to reflect on dynamics of the system they are operating in, gaining valuable insights.

The journey **continues in autumn 2023** with more inspiring exchanges:

- A first workshop to focus on their specific roles in their organisation and their fundraising approach.
- A second one to concentrate on public speaking, storytelling, and ensuring their overall well-being.
- Finally, the closing event will take place on 6th of December to celebrate the learnings together!



# The Youngsters



## Nicky's "Les Rayons de Bernadette"

Nicky established this non-profit organization, providing a nurturing playground centre for children with disabilities. This initiative also raises awareness about parental discrimination towards these children.



## Anais, Shahad, and Caroline's "Needie Paddie"

These 19-year-olds launched "Needie Paddie," a solidarity project aimed at assisting people in need and combatting menstrual precariousness.



## Ilias and the "Valio" App

At 29 years old, Ilias is developing the "Valio" application, which seeks to enhance student behaviour management in Belgian schools.



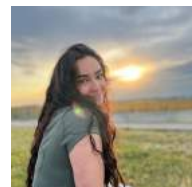
## Florence and "DYS/DIX"

Florence, at just 18 years old, is the co-founder of "DYS/DIX," an initiative that offers support to individuals with learning disorders. This remarkable initiative has received three awards.



## Yagmur's "Monda Pupo"

Yagmur, aged 18, founded "Monda Pupo," a mini enterprise that crafts dolls representing diverse body shapes and skin tones to challenge sexist and racist beauty norms.



## Kawtar's "MOYRA"

Kawtar established the responsible clothing brand MOYRA, with a mission to empower young people from low-income neighborhoods by promoting responsible consumption in the fast fashion industry.




## Adam and Moussia's Pathways Alumni Network

These 18-year-olds are creating a network for Pathways Alumni, dedicated to nurturing communication and negotiation skills. This initiative empowers youth through their shared journey of creative problem-solving.

# Impact Programme

In early 2023, we launched the **seventh edition of the Impact Programme** together with **Accenture BeLux** and **ABN AMRO Private Banking Belgium**, our long-term partners.

 Through the Impact Programme, Ashoka Belgium aims to **accelerate the scaling strategies of 10 entrepreneurs** working in the fields of **climate change and circular economy**. A key focus of our work is to engage social entrepreneurs in the debate how important systemic impact is to achieve impact at scale.

*How?*

Entrepreneurs participated in several workshops that were led by experts in the following topics:  
in the following topics:

- Systems Thinking & Change
- New Leadership
- Business Modelling
- Raising Finance & Investment
- Scaling

The workshops consist of different formats that challenge the entrepreneurs' assumptions, provide latest insights, give space for peer discussion or networking. As an **outcome** of the workshops, the **entrepreneurs** are required to **deliver a Scaling Plan**.

Each entrepreneur receives **weekly coaching** by two coaches (one from ABN AMRO, one from Accenture) who support the entrepreneurs through the programme and work with them on their individual strategic challenges.





# The participants



## Thomas De Groot - River Cleanup

River Cleanup aims to clean up rivers and waterways by organizing community-driven cleanup actions.

 [click here](#) to learn more about this project



## Laurence Claerhout - Linked.Farm

Linked.Farm is a cooperative platform that offers Software as a Service to connect farmers with consumers to facilitate direct sales of fresh and local produce.

 [click here](#) to learn more about this project



## Ine Bosmans & Jan Christiaens - Cycling School

The Cycling School is fighting mobility poverty by promoting sustainable mobility through teaching people how to cycle.

 [click here](#) to learn more about this project



## Gaylord Rouikine - BLED

Bled installs tiny-house-like stores in villages that sell eco-friendly and sustainable products.

 [click here](#) to learn more about this project



## Laetitia Cloostermans - Less Beton

Less Beton is raising awareness about the impact of concrete in cities, whilst advocating for sustainable, community-driven construction alternatives.

 [click here](#) to learn more about this project



## Bruno van Steenberghe - Kalani Home

Kalani Home produces and sells eco-friendly, sustainable linen products.

 [click here](#) to learn more about this project



### Anton Mertens - BC Materials

BC Materials specializes in the study of materials, with a focus on sustainable and advanced materials for the construction sector.

 [click here](#) to learn more about this project



### Nicolas Spineux - Copains des Bois

Copains des Bois develops thermo-treatment solutions to make locally sourced woods more resilient and versatile to use.

 [click here](#) to learn more about this project



### Alain Boribon - CitizenFund

CitizenFund is a cooperative fund where citizens decide together to invest in social and environmental impact projects.

 [click here](#) to learn more about this project



### Pierre-Alexandre Klein - Trois-Tiers

Trois-Tiers promotes the idea of third spaces where new forms of living and working together can emerge in line with nature.

 [click here](#) to learn more about this project



### What's next?

On **November 22**, we will have the **final pitch event** of the cohort, where they will present their scaling strategies to an expert jury and **compete for the Impact Programme awards**.

You are very invited to join! Please [register here](#).



# Changemaker Europe

## Bringing Changemaking into policy



The **Changemaker Europe initiative** aims at **bringing policy makers and citizens closer together**, fostering collaboration and co-creating policies through an inclusive decision-making process.



Our vision is to **activate policy makers as agents of change**, encouraging them to actively seek collaboration and create spaces for social innovators to contribute their bottom-up solutions. Our focus extends to touching the lives of millions of European citizens, particularly addressing changemaking in migration and other critical areas such as climate, technology, etc.

Our ultimate goal is to **cultivate a new European citizenship culture centered around changemaking**. This cultural shift is envisioned to permeate all EU policy areas and institutions, thereby strengthening participation from everyone involved.



To achieve this, we propose a three-pillar approach:

- 1. Transform Democratic Structures:** We advocate for a fundamental transformation of democratic structures. By doing so, we aim to pave the way for a more inclusive and citizen-led approach to policy and decision-making.
- 2. Activate Policy Makers:** We believe in turning policy makers into active agents of change. This involves not only encouraging collaboration but also instilling a proactive mindset among policy makers.
- 3. Establish a Culture of Changemaking:** The third pillar of our approach focuses on instilling a culture of changemaking within the European citizenship. This cultural shift is designed to extend beyond individual policies, impacting the overall ethos of EU policy areas and institutions.



# Ideas Lab on participatory democracy

To put these objectives into action, **Ashoka**, collaborated **with The Good Lobby to launch its first Ideas Lab**, with the aim of **transforming** the field of **participatory democracy**.

The process involved a **group of 22 changemakers in the field of participatory democracy**, who embarked on a collective thinking journey from March to June 2023. With them, Ashoka organized a series of “Ideas Lab” sessions to bring these often siloed stakeholders around one table and create room for imagination about what ideal democratic practices might look like, and how we might achieve them.

## Challenges identified by the Ideas Lab Participants

- 
- **Lack of self-efficacy and agency of citizens:** Citizens' lack of self-efficacy hampers engagement in civic activities and problem-solving, weakening democratic processes and diminishing diverse perspectives.
  - **Limits of the existing political culture:** The prevailing European political culture concentrates power, resisting transformation and hindering citizen participation, thus preventing the utilization of collective societal wisdom.
  - **Political polarization:** Political polarization in society leads to increased engagement but deepens mistrust, hindering productive public conversation, encouraging the spread of false information, and making it harder to accept opposing ideas.
  - **Underrepresentation and lack of inclusion:** Limited citizen participation results in the underrepresentation of marginalized groups, distorting decision-making and maintaining systemic injustices by prioritizing the interests of a select few over the diverse community.



### Find out more

**Empowering Change through Participatory Democracy: Reimagining the future of democratic engagement and collective decision-making**

Learn more about the solutions by downloading the report [here](#).

# From challenges to a new eco-system

The identified challenges are interlinked and often overlap, necessitating a collective vision towards the creation of a democratic ecosystem which aims to empower individuals with the necessary tools and opportunities to actively engage and stimulate transformative progress.

## For this democratic ecosystem to emerge it is necessary to:

- **Cultivate** a **sense of self-efficacy** and agency by unleashing individuals’ potential to make a difference and **providing** them with **accessible pathways** for **participation** across various spheres of society, including democracy, politics, schools, and families.
- **Transform** the **existing political culture** by **fostering a system** that **encourages widespread citizen participation** and **promotes the inclusive exercise of political power** to harness the collective wisdom of society and effectively address shared challenges.
- **Mitigate political polarization** by **promoting constructive public discourse, encouraging trust-building measures, and facilitating the development of shared narratives**. This entails fostering an environment that embraces diverse viewpoints, discourages the dissemination of misinformation, and addresses underlying insecurities and discontent.
- **Promote representation and inclusion** by **leveraging unbiased decision-making processes** and actively **engaging marginalized groups**, so that their specific needs will receive due attention and consideration.

## See how these solutions could look like to overcome the challenges identified:



# Part 3

## Looking forward



# Our vision moving forward

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Looking forward, Ashoka Belgium will become an ever more integrated actor in the European activities of Ashoka. With our strategic physical positioning in the heart of European Union policymaking, we will aim at building more capacities in **bringing our 'Everyone a Changemaker' Vision to the EU's institutions** and those decision makers and influencers that circulate around them. Since our office is in Brussels, at the heart of Europe, we think the European institutions can be an interesting multiplier for the work and impact of the fellows and the community.

In our efforts to engage social entrepreneurs in our network, we will focus on **unlocking the potential for systems change** through our acceleration program, as well as by delving deeper into eco-systemic work. To achieve this, we will establish systems change working group to align on the definition of Systems Change and explore avenues to fund initiatives in this area.

**We welcome anyone interested in contributing to this endeavour to reach out to us.**



Moving forward, our work at Ashoka Global, Ashoka Europe and Ashoka Belgium will focus on the **following themes & purposes:**



**Funding Systems Change** > Finding, funding, and supporting transformative solutions at a far greater pace than ever



**Public Policy** > Connecting social innovation with public policy



**Young Changemaking** > Transforming how young people grow up to empower them as actors of change



**Planet & Climate** > Rebalancing humans' relationship with nature



**Tech & Humanity** > Anticipating, mitigating and managing the consequences of technological development



**New Longevity** > Reversing age segregation and addressing the loneliness epidemic affecting all generations



**Gender** > Building a gender equal world, where everyone can be their authentic selves



**Health** > Creating a healthier world for individuals, animals and their communities



**Migrations** > Creating a better society for people on the move as well as for those who meet them



**Equity** > Enabling a fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all individuals



**Changemaker Companies** > Putting social innovation at the core of social transformation within the private sector

These themes represent our commitment to creating positive and impactful change across various critical areas. We look forward to continuing our journey with purpose, determination, and collaboration to shape a more inclusive and sustainable future.



# Ashoka Partners

The valuable insights and learnings we have gathered are universally applicable to any sector that aspires to bring about transformative social and environmental change. Our passionate fellows are eager to collaborate with leaders from all sectors, fostering a collective effort towards a better world. If you seek to amplify the impact of your organization or portfolio, Ashoka is the perfect partner to explore these possibilities alongside the world's most influential social entrepreneurs.

We are proud to have dozens of companies already on board, providing financial support and actively collaborating with us across the globe. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each of these partners for making our work possible and enabling us to drive meaningful change together.

## Our Supporting Partners



## Our Ecosystem Partners



## Our International Partners





## As an Ashoka ally you can be an engine for change in Belgium:

### Deepening Impact

Support Belgian social innovators in investing the time to scale their operations and maximize impact.

### Form Partnerships

Become a strategic partner to Ashoka to build an ecosystem prone to social innovation.

### Improve Branding

Positioning as a thought leader committed to identifying and supporting the most impactful social entrepreneurs.

### Peer-to-Peer Exchange

Engage with an ecosystem of entrepreneur's part of the Ashoka Fellow Network.

[Join the Ashoka Support Network](#) Global community of 300+ successful and innovative professionals in 25 countries who invest in Ashoka and support Fellows.

[Become a Strategic Partner](#) Our Strategic partners are forward thinking and leading companies / organisations who invest in Ashoka to increase our collective impact.

[Become a Pro-bono Partner](#) Connect your services to the greatest network of social entrepreneurs to inspire your organisation and to contribute to systemic change.

[Become a Volunteer](#) Support us in increasing our impact and reach our objectives in accelerating social entrepreneurship in Belgium.

### Invite Fellows into a Lifelong Community

Committing one's life to developing individuals, forming collaborations, and disrupting unjust systems is as demanding as it is rewarding. Some even say it can be a lonely journey. Knowing this, Ashoka invites Fellows into a global network of social entrepreneurs who can provide lifelong support and resources. Fellows gain key resources from this community including strategic guidance, wellbeing, new partnerships, mentorship and more.

### What You Can Do Right Now

Subscribe to our [newsletter](#)

**Become an [Ashoka Fellow nominator](#)** and help us identify and elect a new Ashoka Fellow. Check our criteria and nominate an Ashoka Fellow [here](#).

**Become an ambassador.** Talk about Ashoka and its community of Fellows to your network, put us in contact with people or organisations that might be interested to find out more about us, and help us spread the word that everyone can become a changemaker.

## Thank You.







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