

A group of children in winter clothing are participating in an outdoor activity in a snowy forest. Two children in the foreground are holding a large log horizontally. They are wearing heavy jackets, hats, and gloves. The background shows other children and trees covered in snow.

THE BEARR TRUST ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2021

The BEARR Trust

Supporting vulnerable people in Eastern
Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus

Front cover image credit: Sergei Shibaev's photograph was entered into the Eastern Europe and Central Asia category of BEARR's 30th anniversary photography competition on the theme 'Side by Side'. *'Untitled*. Sergei is a foster parent at Orion Children's Community in the Kaluga region, Russia.'

Highlights of 2021

- **BEARR celebrated its 30th anniversary with a photography competition on the theme 'Side by Side', marking three decades of building connections and sharing understanding between communities.**
- **We expanded our Small Grants Scheme, awarding 15 grants totalling £44,000 for projects to reduce the social isolation of people living with disadvantage.**
- **We gained vital information after 140 civil society organisations responded to BEARR's annual survey on the continuing impact of Covid-19 in the region.**
- **Representatives of civil society organisations took part in BEARR's first webinar on safeguarding.**
- **Three online lectures by well-known experts attracted record audiences and raised funds for BEARR.**

Contents

Letter from the Chairman

About The BEARR Trust

Achievements and Performance in 2021

30th anniversary photography competition

The BEARR Trust Small Grants Scheme in 2021

Survey of CSOs 2021

Design and launch of 2022 Small Grants Scheme

Safeguarding webinar

Lectures in 2021

Publications

Website and social media

Structure, Governance and Management

Financial Review 2021

Independent Examiner's Report

Administrative and Contact Information

Letter from the Chairman

We started BEARR's 30th anniversary year in 2021 with strong finances underpinned by the first of five annual grants from a private foundation. This enabled us to increase grants offered to small civil society organisations (CSOs) by almost 50 per cent.

The 15 projects we funded in 2021 were designed to combat social isolation, a problem exacerbated by the pandemic and identified by an extensive survey of CSOs in 2020. We ran a further survey in 2021. The valuable insights provided by these surveys help us to design each year's activities and to share awareness of challenges being faced in the sector. We hope to make them an annual event.

We continued to work under the constraints of lockdowns in 2021 but took advantage of opportunities to organise events online. Our webinar on safeguarding examined concepts that are not widely understood in the region, and which we will continue to promote and explain. Online lectures by Nigel Gould-Davies, Oliver Bullough with John Lloyd, and Maria Logan with Anastasia Burakova were intellectual and fundraising highlights of the year.

BEARR's Trustees continued to manage the organisation *pro bono*, supported by Information Officer Louisa Long and Small Grants Officer Anna Lukanina-Morgan. I would like to thank them, and all our volunteers, for their professionalism and hard work.

I would also like to thank BEARR's financial supporters, especially the regular contributors to BEARR's Friends scheme. We were grateful for the continued support by Just Trust of our Small Grants Scheme, and to a private donor for making a multi-year commitment to BEARR starting in 2021.

2021 was the first year of our five-year framework of objectives which we expected to be shaped by the impact of Covid-19 and by climate change. The invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 changed our focus overnight. Within three days of the invasion we launched an appeal for humanitarian aid, which by October 2022 had exceeded £350,000.



Partnerships built up over years of the Small Grants Scheme provided the basis for distributing funds rapidly throughout Ukraine and Moldova to procure desperately needed emergency supplies and deliver them to the most vulnerable people affected by the war. The response of civil society organisations to the tragic events of 2022 has been inspiring and we are committed to doing all we can to support their efforts to alleviate suffering.

Nicola Ramsden

About The BEARR Trust

The BEARR Trust is a UK-based, English-registered charity that helps vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus.

History of The BEARR Trust

The BEARR Trust was formed in 1991 and formally constituted in 1992 to act as a bridge between the health and welfare sectors of Britain and the newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union.

During the 1990s The BEARR Trust became a pioneering support organisation for new grass-roots voluntary groups in the region, sharing knowledge, skills and contacts with the aim of:

- protecting and preserving good health, both physical and mental
- relieving and rehabilitating those suffering from physical or mental disabilities
- advancing education and training, both academic and vocational, for those involved in the voluntary sector

Where we work

Our work focusses on the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

The BEARR Trust's objectives and activities

The BEARR Trust's main purpose now is to promote and support cooperation between small health and social welfare civil society organisations (CSOs) within the region and with those doing similar work in the United Kingdom.

The BEARR Trust has two main strands of activity, which we characterise as **supporting** and **sharing**. Our **supporting** activities are based on grants for small-scale health and social welfare projects. Our **sharing** activities consist of networking and information services, including regular newsletters linked to content on our website, conferences, lectures, and workshops. Our partners include CSOs, academics, research institutions, professionals, and students.

Our supporting and sharing activities are connected and mutually reinforcing through our system of project reports and evaluation, and follow-up conferences or workshops. They are designed to:

- encourage innovation, imagination and independence in organisations committed to reform in the health and social welfare sectors
- provide flexible and light-touch small grants to assist selected organisations to launch or extend partnerships
- share connections and help organisations working in the region to identify potential partners
- share experience, ideas, good practice, and lessons learned
- lobby with and on behalf of organisations that share our aims.

The BEARR Trust is the only UK-based charity working in this region that combines grant-giving and networking services: BEARR was a pioneer and remains unique.

Public benefit

When planning our activities for the year, the Trustees have considered the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

The Global Goals

Our work also sits within the broader framework of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (the Global Goals), which emphasise collaboration across all sectors of government and society. The seventeen Global Goals are interrelated, and BEARR's work is relevant to several:

- Good Health and Wellbeing
- Quality Education
- Gender Equality
- Reduced Inequalities
- Partnerships for the Goals.

Achievements and Performance in 2021

30th anniversary photography competition

BEARR Information Officer Louisa Long organised a photography competition on the theme 'Side by Side' to celebrate 30 years of building connections and sharing understanding between communities. Photographers were invited to submit photos celebrating community spirit.

Louisa assembled an impressive panel of judges: Nadia Beard, Editor-in-Chief of *The Calvert Journal*; Bridget Kendall, former BBC Diplomatic Correspondent and BEARR Patron; Jadwiga Bronte and Emma Brown.

More than 60 photographers from all over the world submitted over 100 photographs, many of extremely high quality. Winners were announced in an online prize-giving on 16 June.

We hope to hold an exhibition in London in due course. For a full report and to see the winning photographs follow this link:

<https://bearr.org/2021/06/21/online-exhibition/>

The BEARR Trust Small Grants Scheme in 2021: projects to reduce the social isolation of people living with disadvantage

Since 2006, The BEARR Trust has operated a Small Grants Scheme (SGS) through which we have made awards to small health and social welfare groups in the region. Up to and including 2021, BEARR has awarded 121 small grants throughout the region, totalling just over £322,000.

The SGS aims to support and encourage CSOs to:

- share experience and learning among CSOs with relevant aims
- disseminate good practice more widely in the region
- facilitate cooperation with and/or coordination among CSOs and other organisations working with relevant groups
- improve awareness, influence policy, or engage public institutions in addressing the relevant issues
- propose other, imaginative, ways of achieving the SGS's aims.

Administration of the Small Grants Scheme

Grants are awarded annually, and details of each year's themes, and how to apply, are published on our website (www.bearr.org), on social media and in our

newsletter. The BEARR Trust will match-fund up to half of a project's cost, subject to a maximum decided from year to year depending on available resources.

We are committed to ensuring that our Small Grants Scheme is **simple** in terms of process, **accessible** to the smaller community organisations that we aim to support, and **open** to new organisations with which we have not previously had a relationship.

Over the years, BEARR grants have covered diverse health and social welfare themes, often building on subjects discussed in our annual conferences. Themes have included mental health; attitudes to disability; drug dependency; homelessness; human trafficking; skills training for refugees and displaced people, and prevention of violence to women and children. Reports of completed projects are posted on the BEARR website.

Monitoring and evaluation of projects

BEARR asks grant recipients to complete a simple monitoring form as soon as their project is completed. More detailed project reports are then commissioned as articles for the BEARR newsletter and annual report: these publicise the project and enable others with similar interests to make contact and exchange experience.

We try to avoid mechanical auditing and we ask grantees to be candid about how their projects went — we want to demystify the process and encourage an open and honest approach to learning from things that did not go as well as hoped. We try to encourage an iterative process that helps our grantees to reflect on their projects, recognise their achievements, and adapt to the changing needs of their communities.

The pandemic continued to prevent project visits in 2021.

Sources of funding for the Small Grants Scheme in 2021

The principal source of funding for the 2021 Small Grants Scheme was a grant from a private foundation, increased by a grant from Just Trust and donations from individual BEARR supporters.

Small Grants Scheme 2021: Project Summaries

Reducing the social isolation of people living with disadvantage

BEARR's 2021 Small Grants Scheme sought applications from across Eastern Europe and Central Asia for projects to reduce the social isolation of people living with disadvantage, an issue which had only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. We did not specify the beneficiaries: instead, applicants were asked to describe the problems faced by the people they wished to help.

We asked for projects that would:

- involve partnership with, or extend collaboration to, other local organisations
- have an imaginative or unusual approach to reducing social isolation
- try to extend provision of support to other groups of people facing disadvantage or marginalisation resulting from their age, ability, ethnicity, gender or sexuality, or because of geography.

We had a fantastic response, receiving 227 applications in total. Over 60% came from Ukraine, with at least one application from every country which BEARR covers: Armenia 26, Azerbaijan 3, Belarus 1, Georgia 5, Kazakhstan 3, Kyrgyzstan 7, Moldova 6, Russia 11, Tajikistan 23, Turkmenistan 1, Ukraine 140, Uzbekistan 1.

After much deliberation, we awarded 15 grants, totalling just over £44,000, to organisations in Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, and Ukraine. Three organisations who were former grantees were awarded additional funding to improve their organisational resilience as they adjusted to working under pandemic conditions.

Full project reports were published in BEARR's newsletters and can be read on BEARR's website: <https://bearr.org/2021/06/22/bearrs-2021-small-grants-scheme-results/>

The projects are summarised below.

Association of Wives and Mothers of Soldiers Participating in ATO, Ukraine



We awarded a grant of £2,978 to Association of Wives and Mothers of Soldiers Participating in ATO for their project "United we are stronger!", a mutual self-help group for women in remote areas of the Donetsk region. 20 women whose lives had been uprooted by the war in Donbas received training on the themes of peer-to-peer assistance, stress management, psycho-social welfare and housing legislation. The beneficiaries have now set up 10 mutual support groups throughout the region and are regularly assisting more than 100 women in their communities.

We are delighted to have awarded the Association of Wives and Mothers of Soldiers Participating in ATO an additional funding grant under the B strand of our 2022 Small Grants Scheme.

Gender-Vector, Kyrgyzstan



We awarded a grant of £1,427 to Gender-Vector for their project to improve the socio-economic position of young LGBT people in the Chui region following severe job losses and housing difficulties during the pandemic. Participants met with the Kara-Balta employment agency, received support from LGBT-friendly housing shelters to negotiate rental agreements, and were invited to twice-monthly Zoom sessions with a psychologist and lawyer to discuss any issues related to housing security, employment and social exclusion. As a result of the project, 80 participants received jobs, 37 representatives trained in new fields and are in demand on the labour market today, and 68 were assisted in finding a new home.

Girls in Tech, Armenia



Girls in Tech™ Armenia



We awarded a grant of £2,800 to Girls in Tech for their project "I know you!", a programme designed to develop the digital skills of women and girls from Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. The project sought to equip participants with the

latest technological tools to create digital content, as well as to facilitate more socially inclusive and tolerant online communities. Girls in Tech received over 200 applications for the 60 places on the programme, with half of those enrolled either from Nagorno-Karabakh or displaced from the region since the outbreak of war in 2020. The project participants attended several digital training sessions, with the acquired skills then used to implement a social media campaign on the topic of gender stereotypes. Many of the posts received high levels of engagement, and the collaborative nature of the project has left the participants with not only vastly improved digital literacy skills, but a long-lasting supportive community, too.

Inclusive Studies, Ukraine



We awarded a grant of £3,000 to Inclusive Studies for their project “Inclusive Art Practices”, a series of accessible music and theatre, art therapy and paper sculpture classes for young people with disabilities. 12 participants, alongside their parents and a group of volunteers, attended a summer camp, where they devised and performed a play and sculpted an art installation on their hopes for a more inclusive and accessible home. The project hoped to increase public awareness about the issues facing young people with disabilities, as well as broaden their access to education and the arts. Several local organisations collaborated on the project, and Inclusive Studies hope to facilitate similar programmes in the future.

Kids are Kids, Russia



We awarded a grant of £2,850 to Kids are Kids to support a 3-month summer camp for children from marginalised and migrant communities, many of whom had fled war-torn regions or political oppression. The programme was an extension of Kids are Kids' usual activity, which runs throughout the academic year, and saw over 200 classes delivered during the summer holidays. Alongside daily classes on academic subjects, including Russian as a foreign language, students had access

The BEARR Trust Annual Report and Accounts 2021

to extracurricular music and art lessons, were taught about daily life in Russia, and received guidance on how to use public transport and read road signs. Kids are Kids were also involved in the 2021 Point of Displacement Festival, an annual celebration dedicated to migration and ethnocultural diversity.

Kuhhoi Pomir, Tajikistan



We awarded a grant of £2,796 to Kuhhoi Pomir for their initiative to reduce the social exclusion of 19 livestock breeders and their families in isolated communities on the Pamir mountains. The aim of the project was to identify the needs of the group, facilitate their participation in the formal economy, and assist them with administrative and legal procedures. Due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19 and a destabilisation in the political situation of the region, Kuhhoi Pomir was delayed in starting its project, and the project continues. However, they have already held meetings with a lawyer, psychologist and a representative of the Pasture Trust of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Trust, as well as hosted a seminar with the livestock breeders. The beneficiary families have also received aid packages comprising hygiene items, books, battery-operated radios and legal support documents.

PO MIR – Offices for Development, Tajikistan



We awarded a grant of £2,990 to PO MIR for their project to support the reintegration of vulnerable groups affected by COVID-19. The primary beneficiaries were older people and people with disabilities – groups who had been disproportionately affected in their access to social services during the pandemic. PO MIR also received an additional funding grant of £1,000.

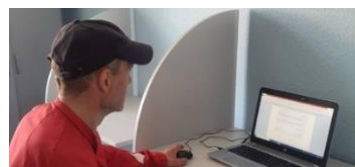
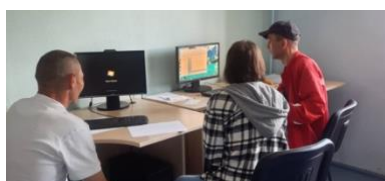
Under their social reintegration programme, PO MIR established three self-help groups in rural areas of the Asht district. Participants received advice on the various channels of legal, medical and psychological support available, and were offered skills training to provide counselling and targeted assistance to those in need. PO MIR also organised an outreach campaign entitled Health Caravan, which saw 499

The BEARR Trust Annual Report and Accounts 2021

women and families with young children undergo medical examinations. The community formation and capacity-building nature of the project has meant participants of the self-help groups continue to provide home visits and informational resources to vulnerable and isolated members of the community.

We are delighted to have awarded PO MIR another additional funding grant for 2022.

People Plus, Belarus



We awarded a grant of £3,000 to People Plus for their project “Breaking the loneliness”, an initiative that sought to reduce the social isolation and exclusion of elderly people living with HIV. People Plus conducted a series of mutual assistance sessions and online support groups, where beneficiaries were given access to psychologists and infectious disease specialists. Participants also received digital training and internet vouchers to establish long-term and long-distance relationships with those in a similar position to them. Throughout the project, over 420 people received specialised advice, 62 attended computer courses and received online counselling, 18 had Wi-Fi installed in their homes, and 170 received food and medicine packages.

Society of People with Disabilities TAUR, Moldova



We awarded a grant of £3,000 to TAUR for their project to reduce the social isolation of people with disabilities. Following the passing of their director in 2017, this was the first project TAUR had implemented in 4 years. More than 50 people with physical and intellectual disabilities participated in the programme, which consisted of online community sessions, handicraft workshops and individual legal consultations. On 3 December – the International Day of People with Disabilities – TAUR’s members hosted an exhibition and sale of their crafts. Beneficiaries also received food and toiletry packages, and a few participants were invited onto Radio Vocea Sperantei to share their experiences.

Tvory Dobropillya, Ukraine



Вільний простір
RePost



We awarded a grant of £2,985 to Tvory Dobropillya to support their project "To Babushka with Love". To combat the social isolation of elderly people from minority and migrant communities in the region, Tvory Dobropillya acquired premises to serve as a social, cultural and educational hub. Here, they ran cooking classes with teenagers, held an open-air festival, and exchanged stories, cultures and cuisines. Despite an initial delay to the implementation of the project due to COVID restrictions, 14 cooking masterclasses were held with more than 300 attendees. An unexpected outcome of the project was a request by the elderly participants to visit a local drug rehabilitation centre. 5 beneficiaries of Tvory Dobropillya's project are now regularly volunteering with the centre.

Ukrainian Down Syndrome Organisation (UDSO), Ukraine

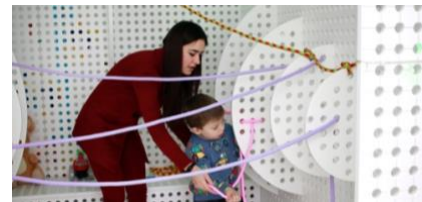


Всеукраїнська благодійна організація
Даун Синдром



We awarded a grant of £2,861 to Ukrainian Down Syndrome Organisation for their project to increase the employment opportunities for young people aged 16-35 with Down Syndrome. Alongside online training sessions for school-leavers, UDSO organised several workshops with employers to explore the possibilities of hiring their beneficiaries. Parents were also invited to a series of Discussion Clubs to reduce their anxieties about their children's futures. An important outcome of the project was the involvement of government officials in the business workshops. Legislation to promote the rights of people with disabilities in the workplace is still very much needed, and UDSO consider their completion of the project simply the starting point in changing public attitudes toward the thousands of people with Down Syndrome in Ukraine.

Vlada Brusilovska Charitable Foundation, Ukraine



We awarded a grant of £1,720 to the Vlada Brusilovska Charitable Foundation for their project 'CUBA BUBA', an innovative and creative leisure space to support the rehabilitation of children with neurological disorders. Based on academic research into healing architecture and evidence-based design, 14 portable play areas were installed in the Stepan Inclusive Resource Centre, each with age-appropriate zones for the 100+ children who receive treatment there each year. The BUBA matrix, designed by Katerina and Valeria Kuznetsov, is already in use in 7 medical centres in Ukraine. The expansion of the project to the Stepan Inclusive Resource Centre in the remote Rivne region has increased the accessibility of inclusive and innovative rehabilitation facilities.

Winds of Change, Ukraine



We awarded a grant of £2,980 to Winds of Change for the creation of a needlework social enterprise for Roma women and girls in Odesa. Winds of Change also received an additional funding grant of £960.

Over 20 illiterate Roma women attended professional needlework classes, received financial literacy training and attended stress management workshops. Upon completing the project, 12 members of the course have joined the social enterprise to sell their handicrafts online. Meanwhile, 2 have found their own work placements and another has set up their own training course. 1 in 6 participants are now training new cohorts of Roma women, ensuring the longevity of the programme.

YCF Next, Ukraine



We awarded a grant of £2,920 to YCF Next for their project “Hospital is not a prison”, an art therapy and leisure centre for children with eating disorders at the Odesa Regional Children’s Psychiatric Hospital. 164 children aged 6-18 had access to the centre, where 6-hour classes were held 5 days a week by an art therapist and psychologist. The children were taught exercises to promote self-care and personal hygiene, improve their motor skills, and nurture their art and sculpture skills. Since the project’s completion, 30% of parents whose children were discharged have continued to consult the psychologist, and a further 20% have recommended the facilities to a friend. With a huge rise in eating disorders among young children during the pandemic, Next is now exploring funding options to develop a preventative programme.

Zhytomyr Regional Association of Social Services (ZtRASS), Ukraine



We awarded a grant of £2,950 to ZtRASS for their mutual assistance initiative to support single women with children in remote towns of the Zhytomyr region. ZtRASS also received an additional funding grant of £1,000.

Supported by local authorities and other CSOs, ZtRASS established a series of self-help groups attended by over 90 women struggling with unemployment, poverty, domestic violence and drug abuse. Many of the women had previously been failed by state social services, with the self-help groups acting as a critical and often final lifeline. Since the project’s completion, the participants have continued their meetings, inviting more women to share their stories and gain access to much-needed support from their peers.

Survey of CSOs 2021

We carried out a second survey of CSOs in 2021, following the strong response to the first survey carried out in 2020 to find out how CSOs' work had been affected by Covid-19 and the measures taken to combat it. The 2020 survey had painted a vivid picture of an increased demand for services and reduced resources, but also of innovative practices which had enabled many CSOs, although not all, to continue their work. The Trustees were keen to understand how the situation had developed during a second year of pandemic conditions to inform BEARR's activities in 2022.

140 organisations responded to the second survey. Almost 80% of them reported an increase in demand for services in their communities, compared with just under 60% the previous year. Narrative comments referred to the increased support needed by disabled people while self-isolating and noted an increase in cases of depression and domestic violence during successive lockdowns. Around half of organisations had suffered a loss of finance during the pandemic.

More information from the 2021 CSO survey can be found on the BEARR website: <https://bearr.org/2021/12/17/2021-cso-survey-preliminary-review/>

Design and launch of 2022 Small Grants Scheme

BEARR's surveys of CSOs in 2020 and 2021 showed how the pandemic had made existing inequalities worse. The Trustees identified migrant workers and their families as one of the many groups of vulnerable people who were experiencing increased hardship over this period. We also recognised the continuing strain on civil society organisations trying to respond to the needs of vulnerable people. The 2022 Small Grant Scheme was therefore designed with two strands:

A – projects that propose ways of improving the social welfare of migrant workers and the wellbeing of their families.

B – projects to improve the welfare of staff and volunteers and to improve the resilience of civil society organisations (CSOs) that had previously received a grant from The BEARR Trust.

Applications were invited from CSOs in any of the countries in which BEARR works: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

2021 Safeguarding webinar: 'How to make sure that our assistance does not cause harm'.

Following the introduction of BEARR's safeguarding policy in 2021, we held a webinar on the subject for CSOs in the region. The webinar was moderated by BEARR trustee Ross Gill and focussed on presentations by Anna Raskina, director of St Petersburg-based children's charity Ulitsa Mira, and Tanya Buynovskaya, director of UK-based charity HealthProm.

A poll of the 30 participants at the start of the webinar showed that around two-thirds were familiar with the term 'safeguarding' and around a half had a safeguarding policy in their organisation. A poll at the end of the webinar suggested interest in further support on safeguarding practices, and BEARR will continue to share information on the subject.

A full report of the webinar can be found on the BEARR website:

<https://bearr.org/2021/12/13/how-to-make-sure-that-our-assistance-does-not-cause-harm/>

Lectures in 2021

BEARR traditionally organises an annual lecture by an eminent speaker as a fundraising event. Our first online lecture in 2020 showed the potential for reaching a wider audience, compensating to some extent for the missed social interaction of our annual lectures regularly hosted by the EBRD. Encouraged by this, we organised spring, summer and autumn lectures in 2021, all of which attracted large audiences to the live event and recordings on BEARR's YouTube channel

The Spring Lecture was given by **Nigel Gould-Davies** on the topic '**Belarus: what happened and what next?**' A full report can be found on the BEARR website:

<https://bearr.org/2021/03/02/the-bearr-trusts-spring-lecture/> and the

recording of the lecture can be seen on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xe3Wo1dxhCY&list=PLUv2gNwcE8LpYmXMciVWN4d4qmmNyZLCL&index=3>

The Summer Lecture was given by journalist and author **Oliver Bullough**, chaired by Financial Times contributing editor **John Lloyd**, on '**The Londongrad Laundromat and its consequences**'.

A full report can be found on the BEARR website: <https://bearr.org/2021/06/21/the-bearr-summer-lecture/> and the

recording of the lecture can be seen on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcduFnNPKZs>

The Autumn Lecture was a conversation between human rights lawyers Maria Logan and Anastasia Burakova exploring **'Media and civil society under attack in Russia: What can we do?'**. A full report can be found on the BEARR website: <https://bearr.org/2021/10/18/bearr-trust-autumn-lecture/> and the recording of the lecture can be seen on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6800nOtpu8&t=3244s>

Publications

We published a bi-monthly newsletter to email subscribers throughout 2021, drawing attention to news from the region published on the BEARR website, as well as BEARR's own news and events. The newsletters highlight project reports and contain longer articles on various topics.

An archive of print newsletters published prior to 2020 is available on the BEARR website. These provide an in-depth chronicle of BEARR's activities, the projects we have funded, and health and welfare developments in the region.

Website and social media

In January 2021, BEARR appointed Ali Lantukh as its first dedicated Digital Trustee, responsible for digital strategy. BEARR's new website had been launched in early 2020 just as the pandemic started, meaning that we were well positioned to pivot to an online focus. In 2021 we measured:

- an increasing audience: 14,300 visitors in 2021 compared with 12,100 in 2020
- more returning users: 2,000 visited the website more than once in 2021 compared with 1,370 in 2020 (although some of these 'visits' are by search engines)
- increased human engagement as indicated by time spent on each page: in 2021 3,500 visits were for longer than one minute, compared to 2,400 in 2020
- an increase in the number of visitors clicking through to BEARR's site from other websites – an indication of 'shareable' content on BEARR's site
- strong interest in BEARR's Small Grants Scheme
- evidence that BEARR was gaining traction in the region, with large increases in audiences in Russia, Ukraine, Armenia and Tajikistan.

BEARR continues to use its Twitter and Facebook accounts to promote events and share news of past and present grantees' projects and work. As of October 2022, the accounts had 611 and 1,367 followers respectively. Our Facebook reach increased sharply in 2021, with 6,381 users seeing and interacting with our posts compared with 951 in 2020 – a seven-fold increase. Since the launch of our Ukraine emergency appeal in early 2022, our Facebook reach has doubled, with 12,874 accounts reached in the period January-October 2022.

The BEARR Trust Annual Report and Accounts 2021

In December 2020, we set up a YouTube account, primarily to store recordings of all our online events and to ensure that they remain easily accessible to the public. To date, the account has received 1,100 views and has 31 subscribers.

In April 2021, BEARR launched an Instagram account to coincide with our 30th anniversary photography competition. This platform has been especially helpful in promoting the competition as well as connecting with younger people interested in the region in which BEARR operates. It has also helped us to connect with present and former grantees and promote their activities visually. BEARR's Instagram profile now has 227 followers. From January-December 2021, our Instagram posts were seen by 71,790 unique accounts.

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution and regulation

The BEARR Trust is constituted by a Declaration of Trust dated 27 April 1992 and Supplemental Deed of Variation dated 14 December 1995.

The BEARR Trust is regulated by the Charity Commission of England and Wales. Its registered charity number is 1011086.

Patrons

The BEARR Trust has a number of distinguished Patrons:

Vladimir Ashkenazy,
Elena Bashkirova Barenboim
Robert Brinkley CMG
Lady Ellen Dahrendorf
Myra Green OBE
Bridget Kendall MBE
Sir Roderic Lyne KBE CMG
Michael McCulloch
Mike Simmonds
Rair Simonyan
Dr Robert van Voren, PhD, FRCPsych (Hon),
Sir Andrew Wood GCMG

Trustees

The board of Trustees reflects a wide range of experience and relevant expertise. There were no changes in the trustee body in 2021.

Trustees who have served at any time during the period from 1 January 2021 until the date of the approval of this report are:

Megan Bick
Jane Ebel
Ross Gill
Janet Gunn
Ali Lantukh
Marcia Levy
Ann Lewis
Biljana Radonjić Ker-Lindsay
Nicola Ramsden (Chairman)
Michael Rasell
Charlie Walker

Appointment and training of Trustees

Trustees are appointed by a resolution of the Trustees. Potential Trustees are sought through recommendation by existing Trustees, or through advertising. Since 2014, new Trustees have been appointed for a period of three years, renewable by mutual agreement.

All Trustees are given a copy of the Charity Commission publication, 'The Essential Trustee: An Introduction', and are referred to the full version of this document on the Charity Commission website and to The BEARR Trust's annual report and accounts. New Trustees are given an induction pack consisting of The BEARR Trust's governing documents, minutes of the most recent meetings of Trustees, and policies and process notes prepared by Trustees and volunteers, describing all aspects of BEARR's operations.

Governance policies

The BEARR Trust's governance policies and internal process notes cover:

- conflicts of interest
- automatic disqualification
- risk management
- safeguarding
- equity, diversity and inclusion
- sanctions policy
- financial controls
- data protection
- management of volunteers
- monitoring and review

The BEARR Trust maintains a register of interests and declarations relating to automatic disqualification, in line with Charity Commission recommendations, that all Trustees are required to sign. Policies are reviewed annually at Trustee meetings and updated as necessary. Key current policies can be viewed at <https://bearr.org/about/governance-and-finance/>.

Trustee meetings and roles

Meetings of the full trustee board are held every two months. Sub-groups of Trustees meet more often to manage specific tasks such as conferences, workshops, publications, and the Small Grants Scheme. Individual Trustees take responsibility for different functional areas, such as fundraising, finance, volunteer management, digital development, and data security.

Volunteers

A significant amount of BEARR's work is done by volunteers, including by Trustees who manage operations *pro bono* in addition to their trustee duties. The Information Officer, the Small Grants Officer, and the Moscow Representative were the only people who received fees for their work in 2021.

In 2021, as in previous years, we relied on volunteers for many important tasks: preparing and examining BEARR's financial accounts, translating for publications, interpreting on the webinars, and supporting social media. Volunteers regularly give over 100 days in total to BEARR each year, and their efforts, as well as additional time given by Trustees, help to keep overhead costs low.

We aim to ensure that all volunteers have clear roles and feel supported by their managers, whether a Trustee or the Information Officer. BEARR provides interesting opportunities for volunteers of any age and at any stage of their career, including students and recent graduates. We particularly welcome volunteers with knowledge of the region and/or of its languages.

Networks

Networking is a key aspect of BEARR's charitable work, which depends on maintaining an active network of Trustees, Patrons, supporters and volunteers. We connect with other charities involved with countries in our area of interest through our website, newsletters, annual and regional conferences, and workshops.

Our annual lecture and our London conference are usually occasions when we can meet and engage with supporters — especially members of our Friends scheme — beneficiaries, donors and other contacts. Although we regretted not being able to meet people as normal in 2021, the webinars and the three online lectures enabled more people to participate, from a much wider area.

We are also keen to develop cooperation with the academic community in the UK and in the region, including organising joint events where possible.

Planning

All the Trustees participate in planning. We use a broad framework of objectives established for a five-year period, and then set an action plan for each year.

Five-year framework for 2021-2025

The Trustees agreed a new five-year framework for BEARR's activities, coinciding with the 2021-2025 period of our multi-year grant. This takes account of the global challenges arising from the Covid-19 pandemic and climate change, and

the specific challenges and opportunities for grassroots CSOs focusing on health and social welfare.

The five-year framework can be seen at <https://bearr.org/about/governance-and-finance/>.

Action plan for 2021

While the pandemic curtailed project visits, most of the plan for 2021 was achieved.

- Raise an additional £20,000 in external funding, with multi-year commitments where possible
- Maintain regular contact with civil society organisations, including through surveys, in order to tailor BEARR's activities in response to evolving needs
- Run a scheme offering small grants to civil society organisations, and evaluate the 2020 Small Grants Scheme
- Prepare an overview of grant-funded projects since 2007, and design a data archive
- Design a scheme for small grants in 2022 in the light of information received from civil society organisations throughout the year
- Issue six bi-monthly email newsletters and an online and printed annual report / almanac
- Maintain a flow of up to date and informative content on BEARR's website and social media channels
- Extend BEARR's use of online communications for meetings, webinars and public lectures
- Organise an annual conference or webinar series
- Organise two or more public lectures
- Develop cooperation with the academic community in the UK and in the region, including through joint events and the development of a data archive
- Maintain an active network of Trustees, Patrons and volunteers
- Ensure that all volunteers have clear roles and feel supported by their managers

FINANCIAL REVIEW 2021

Both income and expenditure increased in 2021. However, greater than anticipated income meant that the charity gained a surplus of £12,575, in contrast to the deficit incurred in 2019 and 2020.

Income

Income in 2021 was £82,557, some 42% higher than in 2020. Our largest source of income was from a charitable foundation, which has supported BEARR since 2016. In 2021, the foundation awarded BEARR a further multi-annual grant over five years. This is denominated in US dollars and is worth up to \$75,000 per year, with the value to BEARR fluctuating depending in on the dollar: sterling exchange rate. In 2021, the grant yielded £53,478.

In addition to this major grant, we secured a grant of £4,000 from Just Trust, as well as £1,545 in regular donations from BEARR's Friends Scheme. We were also especially fortunate to receive £2,416 in sponsorship funds raised by Luke Grenfell-Shaw for his Bristol2Beijing cycle journey.

While COVID-19 meant that we were again unable to hold our normal conference and lecture, we continued to develop a programme of online lectures and webinars. This proved to be an important source of income, securing £2,353.

Expenditure

Charitable expenditure was £69,982 in 2021, compared with £62,878 in 2020.

The largest item of expenditure was our Small Grants Scheme, which accounted for £44,027. This was substantially higher than expenditure on the Scheme in the previous year (£30,638), reflecting the increased funding capacity that our donors made available.

Other expenditure included fees paid to our Information Officer and Moscow Representative, as well as website, newsletter and administration costs. There were no events costs in 2021, reflecting the shift online.

Charitable expenditure accounted for around 94% of BEARR's total spend. We are able to operate with low overheads thanks to the voluntary work of our trustees and volunteers in delivering much of BEARR's activity.

Restricted and designated funds

BEARR had no restricted funds in 2021. However, we account internally for grants and donations that were intended for a specific purpose: in 2021, these related to the Small Grants Scheme.

Foreign currency

All funds received in foreign currency (principally, the large grant received in US dollars) are converted to sterling on receipt. BEARR held no foreign currency balances at the end of 2021.

Reserves policy

The BEARR Trust maintains unrestricted cash funds at a level sufficient to cover BEARR's operating costs and to pursue BEARR's principal objectives for at least one year. Unrestricted funds are monitored through regular budgets and cash flow forecasts, including accounting for funds that are designated for specific uses. BEARR has no investments.

Cash reserves at the end of 2021 were £54,225 (compared with £41,650 at the end of 2020).

Ross Gill

Treasurer

Receipts and payments accounts 2021

For the period from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021

Section A: Receipts and Payments

	2021, £	2020, £
A1. Receipts		
Donations	21,133	10,039
Friends' payments	1,545	1,580
Grants	57,478	42,873
Income from events	2,353	3,809
Other	48	27
Sub-total	82,557	58,328
A2. Asset and investment sales	0	0
Total receipts	82,557	58,328
A3. Payments		
Charitable expenditure	65,784	59,641
Fundraising and publicity	2,032	1,645
Governance	1,476	1,383
Other	690	209
Sub-total	69,982	62,878
A4. Asset and investment purchases	0	0
Total payments	69,982	62,878
Net of payments	12,575	-4,550
A5. Transfers between funds	0	0
A6. Cash funds		
Cash funds at year end	54,226	44,071
Liabilities (see Section B)	605	-2,421
Total funds available	54,831	41,650

Section B: Statement of assets and liabilities at end period

	2021, £
B1. Cash funds	54,226
B2. Other monetary assets	0
B3. Investment assets	0
B4. Assets retained for the charity's own use	0
B5. Liabilities (payments pending)	605

Approved by the Trustees on 4 August 2022

Signed by the Chairman, Nicola Ramsden

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The BEARR Trust

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The BEARR Trust (the Trust) for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charities Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- (2) the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Carolyn Davis
High Thrushbank Cottage
Loveswater
Cockermouth
Cumbria
CA13 0RU

Date: 23 October 2022

Administrative and Contact Information

CAN Mezzanine
7-14 Great Dover Street
London SE1 4YR

Tel: +44 (0)20 7922 7849
Email: info@barr.org
Website: www.barr.org

Registered charity number 1011086