

DAFNE Summer Meeting 2020 Report

#PhilanthropyDoesNotStop

Tuesday 19th May 2020 | 13:30-18:00h | online

[Participants List](#)

This year's DAFNE Summer Meeting was held online with more than 70 participants, allowing a wide range of colleagues of DAFNE member organisations to engage in breakout and plenary sessions on thematic discussions, peer exchange and exploring the learnings for themselves and their organisations from the COVID-19 crisis in a "looking ahead" session. The Summer Meeting ended with an online apero. Some participants captured their take aways in brief blog posts, which you can find on the DAFNE website: www.dafne-online.eu.

#PhilanthropyDoesNotStop

DAFNE held its annual Summer Meeting on 19 May 2020. This year, the Covid-19 pandemic shaped not only the theme of this year's meeting – #PhilanthropyDoesNotStop being the hashtag we have used to communicate philanthropy's work around the crisis – but also the format and means of participation in the meeting. Instead of meeting in Vienna as had originally been planned, the meeting was held online via zoom. Ruth Williams, General Secretary of the Austrian Foundations Association, welcomed everyone to this year's virtual Summer Meeting. Though the Sachertorte and Viennese coffee were greatly missed, DAFNE used this opportunity to extend the invitation to involve all colleagues within member organisations, and the meeting had over 70 attendees.

Thematic discussions: Climate Commitment, Gender & NextPhilanthropy

The first thematic session was a technical experiment in creating more interactive and engaging online experiences. Participants were sent off into a virtual "corridor", from which they could navigate between two different rooms with two different discussions: a **Climate Commitment** session led by Carol Mack (ACF/UK), and experiences shared by Raffaella Toticchi (AEF/ES) and Jean-Marc Pautras (CFF/F), and a **Gender** session led by Anke Pättsch from the Association of German Foundations. The two sessions ran as parallel spaces in which participants could exchange experiences, share best practices, and discuss developments in their national associations.

Those leading the **Climate Commitment session** presented on how they have been supporting their members with resources, developing tools, and regular check ins. In the UK more than 40 foundations have signed the Funder Commitment on Climate Change. In Spain AEF is raising awareness of the Funder Commitment with their members, using the UK Funder Commitment on Climate Change as starting point and in France the CFF as issued a survey to its members, is setting up two coordination groups and is also using the UK pledge as starting point. The discussion with members showed that there is an interest in principle to start connecting more focussed climate initiatives with existing discussions around SDGs.

The discussion in the **session on Gender** focused on the need for wider and more thorough research and data collection, as well as reflections on the need for age diversity. Both sessions were followed by a group Q&A session which created space for more individual exchange and case-specific suggestions.

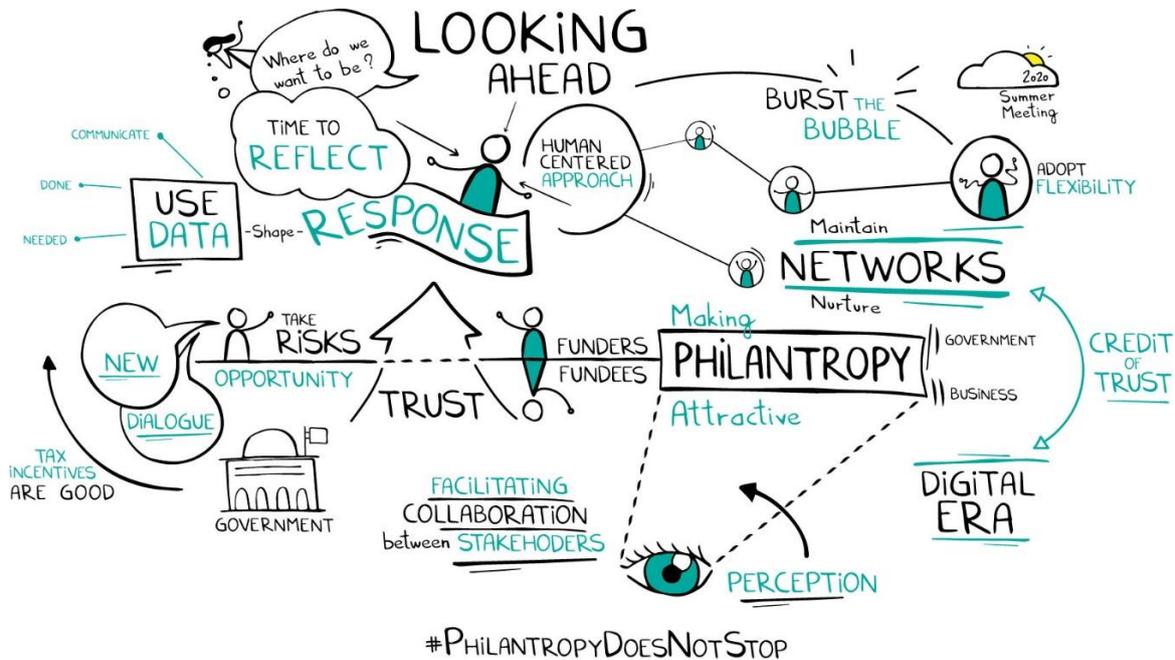
The next session considered **Next Philanthropy**, which participants had indicated as the most popular thematic session in a poll prior to the Summer Meeting. The session was divided into eight smaller groups to allow for greater discussions centred around three guiding questions: What do you associate with Next Philanthropy? What should Next Philanthropy look like? What must Next Philanthropy leave behind?



The smaller groups [noted their discussions on Google Jamboards](#) and subsequently reported back to all participants. In thinking through what Next Philanthropy should look like, the groups agreed it must be participatory, democratic, collaborative, inclusive, engaging, local and diverse. All these descriptive words imagine a philanthropic future that creates space and magnifies different voices, while building trust between partners and actors. It was highlighted that that Next Philanthropy should also be digital, data focused, and evidence based, speaking to a need to learn, innovate and upskill the sector. Funding should be flexible and core, rather than project based.

In order to shift towards what participants imagine Next Philanthropy to be, there are certain aspects present-day philanthropy must be left behind. Members echoed one another in stressing that philanthropy must become less elitist, arrogant, and opaque. They envisioned Next Philanthropy as purpose-driven rather than capital-driven. Several groups also stressed that existing silos and bubbles must be left behind and replaced with more sharing and cooperation. Looking forward, uncertainty about the future – especially in the current Covid moment – presents both challenges and opportunities, while conversations around Next Philanthropy are ongoing and ever-evolving. One participant offered a provocation to others in the meeting by posing the question: do you have to be progressive to sign up to Next Philanthropy, or is there room for conservatism?

The Covid-19 crisis had revealed that foundations are more flexible and responsive than the government, which has been a realisation of the sector's ability to act quickly, as well as helping philanthropy better communicate its role to the public and to government. It has also been a lesson in risk-taking and the need for building trust, and the important role of grassroots and working locally. One group referred to the lack of control as a 'new normal', and the Covid experience was also understood as an urgent lesson for future crisis management.



Going forward, DAFNE members saw these learnings as highlighting important potential shifts in their associations' operations. Many cited digitalisation, better digital training, increased use of new tools and technology, with some discussion of #techforgood. Participants also stressed the need for increased data collection for better evidence-based decision making. There was consensus around trying to maintain the current dynamic of flexibility, greater leadership and a stronger public voice post-crisis. This was paired with a general feeling that the collaborations, partnerships and connections we are seeing emerge in this moment of crisis must continue, both within philanthropy and with stakeholders beyond the sector.

The DAFNE team thanks all the members for an outstanding level of engagement throughout the DAFNE Summer Meeting 2020.

DAFNE team / 02.06.2020