

INTERNATIONAL FORUM *for* VOLUNTEERING *in* DEVELOPMENT

Annual Report 2020



**A global movement of volunteers
working effectively for a world
where no one is left behind.**



'Most International Volunteer Cooperation Organisations and Volunteer-Involving Organisations have exhibited tremendous adaptive capabilities in the face of the shutdown of possibilities for face-to-face international volunteering ... IVCOs, VIOs and partner organisations changed their ways of working, responded to community needs, and found innovative means to keep programmes running, albeit in a limited form.'

— From COVID-19 and the Future of Volunteering for Development. Part 1: Research Report. Findings from a study conducted for the International Forum for Volunteering in Development.

Introduction

2020 presented new and unique challenges for the Forum community, and we saw Forum members and their volunteers demonstrate their resilience and adaptive capabilities. As a community, Forum members know that volunteers make a unique contribution to development cooperation, and also that volunteers and the organisations that support them have a particular resilience and commitment to the people they serve. These qualities came to the fore in 2020 as Forum's member organisations worked tirelessly to ensure the safety of their volunteers and partners, to maintain support to communities, and to consider what the 'new normal' will be for volunteering for development.

Much of Forum's work in 2020 focused on supporting our member organisations to navigate the challenges posed by COVID-19. This included convening a Security Working Group to support members in their immediate response to the pandemic, organising a series of webinars on aspects of COVID response, and dedicating a day to COVID at IVCO 2020. In July, Forum commissioned the research project *COVID-19 and the Future of Volunteering for Development*. Initial findings from this research were presented at IVCO 2020. In October, Forum and AVI hosted the first virtual IVCO conference on the theme Volunteering for Climate Action.

At Forum's 2020 Annual General Meeting on the 27th of October 2020, Forum members endorsed the Forum Strategic Plan 2021-2025 and welcomed the new Chair of the Forum Board of Directors, Heather Shapter of Crossroads International. They also heard updates from the Forum Board and working groups, where much of the work of our network happens. This report sets out details of this work, Forum's achievements in 2020, as well as financial statements.



Rinki Domin washes her hands using the Hygiene Kit provided to her during a campaign by VSO in Bahubari 24, Prasa, Nepal, through its Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (AYSRRH) programme. VSO, 2020. Photographer: Prakash Mathema.

Promoting Effective Knowledge Generation & Sharing Amongst Members

IVCO 2020

[AVI](#) and Forum jointly hosted the IVCO conference, on the theme Volunteering for Climate Action. The Annual IVCO Conference is a unique event, bringing together heads of volunteer organisations and delegates from public, private, academic and NGO organisations from around the world to network, discuss questions of impact and good practice, share innovative approaches, and strengthen collaboration between organisations.

[IVCO 2020](#) was the first virtual IVCO conference, bringing together 260 delegates representing the breadth of volunteering for development organisations. 38 speakers from 17 countries were featured over 19 sessions, including panels and workshops. The event also hosted 17 exhibitor booths and virtual networking in the 'Bula Lounge'.

Forum would like to acknowledge AVI for their exceptional work in hosting IVCO 2020, which succeeded in bringing the operational and social aspects of IVCO into a virtual space.

The Global Standard

Following the successful launch of the [Global Standard for Volunteering for Development](#) at IVCO 2019, the Forum Standards Working Group piloted the Standard in 2020. The Standard was piloted by a group of 18 organisations from within and outside the Forum network, working with all types of volunteers in a variety of programme areas and contexts. We are grateful to these organisations for supporting the pilot and sharing their insights with the Working Group. A report of the pilot can be found [here](#).

Based on this pilot, the Forum Standards Working Group will publish a revised Standard at IVCO 2021.

Forum's overarching aim in creating and managing the Standard is to promote more impactful and more responsible volunteering. The work of the Standards Working Group was led in 2020 by Co-Chairs Mark Cumming (Head, Comhlámh and Forum Board member) and Stephen Goodman (Chief Executive Officer, Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA) and Forum Board member), and coordinated by Rahim Hassanali of VSO.

Forum Research

The Forum Research, Practice, Policy and Learning (RPPL) Group led the development of three [IVCO 2020](#) Papers to frame and inform conversations at IVCO 2020.

[Volunteering for Climate Action](#) by Cliff Allum, Peter Devereux, Benjamin J. Lough, and Rebecca Tiessen explores the connection between volunteering and climate action. It includes an overview of the causes and urgency of climate change and how they connect to volunteering.

[Volunteering for Climate Action in Pacific Island Countries](#) by Bonnie Learmonth is a more focused exploration of the efforts of community, national, regional and international volunteers in Pacific Island Countries supporting climate action, as well as how Forum members operating in Pacific Island Countries are supporting climate action through their volunteer programmes and reflections on what the volunteering for development sector can strengthen these efforts.

[COVID-19 and Volunteering for Development: Impacts, Innovations and Implications](#) presented initial findings of a research project launched by Forum in July 2020 and carried out by Helene Perold, Jacob Mwathi Mati, Cliff Allum, and Benjamin J. Lough. This ambitious research project explores the volunteering sector's response to the pandemic, new and emerging volunteering modalities, and larger questions

of what COVID means for the future of volunteering in development. It resulted in a three-part research series to be published in 2021.

The Forum RPPL Group hosted a virtual 'RPPL Day' immediately following IVCO 2020, featuring a 'Talanoa' on volunteering research in the Pacific presented by Andreas Kopf and Dr. Litea Meo-Sewabu of The University of the South Pacific. The RPPL Group also reviewed their work in 2020 and identified priorities for 2021.

Throughout 2020, the RPPL Group hosted monthly meetings bringing together Forum members and researchers and academics who work in the field of volunteering research. These meetings featured discussions and presentations on topics including engaging returned international volunteers, research for the Global Technical Meeting on 'Reimagining Volunteering for the 2030 Agenda', and work by France Volontaires on the contribution of French international volunteers to the 2030 Agenda and by Norec on integrating temporary employees in workplaces.

The Forum RPPL Group was led for much of 2020 by Co-Chairs Paul Bird, Chief Executive Officer of AVI and Forum Board member, and Odette McCarthy, Uniterra Program Director – a World University Service of Canada-Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (WUSC-CECI) programme and Forum Board member. In October 2020, Lucie Morillon, Director of Studies, Communication and Advocacy at France Volontaires and a member of the Forum Board took over as Chair of the RPPL Group.

'For many, there is an unprecedented level of uncertainty that comes with operating in today's global context. In this environment, Forum's role has never been so important – to provide a vehicle for sharing of best practices in volunteering for development to empower adaptability and impact.'

– Heather Shapter, Forum Chair

Diversity & Inclusion

In 2020, Forum established a Community of Practice on Diversity and Inclusion. This community has hosted monthly meetings in which Forum members share and discuss good practice and innovative approaches. It also maintains a reading list on inclusion and diversity in volunteering, and it has helped to review the Global Standard for Volunteering for Development and to guide the development of the themes and programme for IVCO 2021. Issues of diversity and inclusion will take centre stage at IVCO 2021 on the theme Inclusive Volunteering for Global Equality. The Community of Practice is led by Co-Chairs Erin Bateman, Director of Volunteer Cooperation WUSC (World University Service of Canada) and member of the Forum Board and Ashraf Patel, Co-Founder of ComMutiny: The Youth Collective and member of the Forum Board.

Increasing Visibility & Recognition of the Impact of Volunteerism in Development

Forum continued to play a leading role in the Volunteer Groups Alliance (VGA) in 2020. Ashraf Patel, Co-Founder of ComMutiny: The Youth Collective and Forum Board member, chaired the VGA's side event at the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). The theme of the side event was Volunteers as Essential Community Heroes: the Role of Volunteering in driving action on Covid-19 and the SDGs.

Throughout the year, the VGA leveraged its role as one of the 'Major Groups and Other Stakeholders' to lobby individual governments, and to position volunteering for development at the HLPF.

Forum supported the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV), The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and civil society organisations in preparing for the Global Technical Meeting on 'Reimagining Volunteering for the 2030 Agenda', which took place at the United Nations in July 2020. Along with UNV, Forum co-led one of the meeting's four workstreams – 'Volunteering as an accelerator for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)' – and the Forum RPPL Group was a member of the Task Force for the workstream on 'Measuring volunteering for the SDGs'. Forum's Executive Director, James O'Brien, spoke at the meeting as part of a presentation on volunteering for SDG acceleration.



The sewing workshop of this training centre for persons with a physical disability in Ethiopia, supported by Unité member organisation Mission am Nil International, switched to the production of face masks. Photographer: Therese Ramseier/Mission am Nil.



Unité member organisation Mission 21 supported its local partners in the distribution of hygiene products to members of different ethnic groups in South Sudan, including the Dinka people pictured here. Photo: PCOSS/Mission 21

Building a Vibrant & Inclusive Constituency in Support of International Volunteering & Volunteering for Development

In 2020, Forum's membership was made up of 25 members and five associate members. A special and warm welcome is extended to our newest members: ActionAid Hellas, Fiji Volunteer Service, Volunteer Involving Organisations' Network Sierra Leone, Volunteer Involving Organizations Society, Kenya, and CNV Mozambique.

Combined, the Forum network now represents 141 organisations encompassing more than 10,000 skilled volunteers working across 124 countries.

Under the leadership of the Forum Board, Forum has four working groups and one community of practice:

- IVCO Working Group
- Research, Practice, Policy and Learning Working Group
- Standards Working Group
- Security and Risk Management Working Group
- Community of Practice on Diversity and Inclusion

Forum also supports the Volunteer Groups Alliance.

Strengthening & Focusing the Capacity of Forum

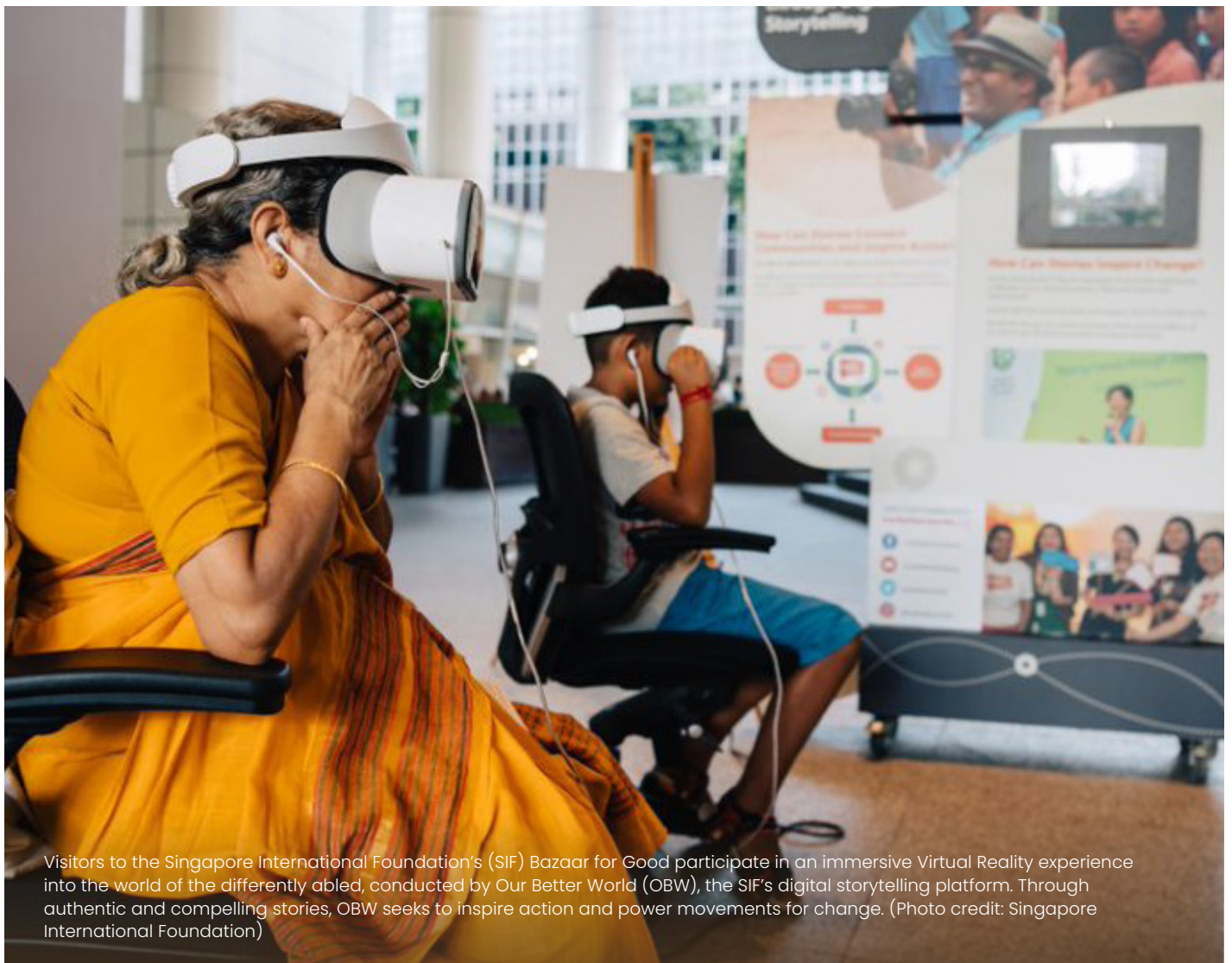
Forum is resourced by membership subscriptions, income generated from the IVCO conference, contributions of project-focused funds from members, as well as invaluable voluntary staff time. The work of Forum is led by the Forum Executive Director, with the support and guidance of the Forum Board.

In 2020, Forum's Executive Director was kindly hosted by Comhlámh in Ireland. WUSC (World University Service of Canada) provided in-kind secretariat support to maintain governance requirements and banking in Canada.

In 2020, Forum moved to a new online collaboration platform for meetings, communication and file storage. This platform is used by the Forum Board and working groups as well as the VGA and smaller project-focused groups.

On behalf of Forum, the Forum Board offers its wholehearted thanks to the Forum members who provided both in-kind and direct financial resources to working groups and the Forum Research Fund.

A copy of Forum's 2020 Chartered Accountant's Report and audited financial accounts accompany this report.



Visitors to the Singapore International Foundation's (SIF) Bazaar for Good participate in an immersive Virtual Reality experience into the world of the differently abled, conducted by Our Better World (OBW), the SIF's digital storytelling platform. Through authentic and compelling stories, OBW seeks to inspire action and power movements for change. (Photo credit: Singapore International Foundation)

Acknowledgements

The Forum Board acknowledges the substantial contributions of all member organisations that provided resources to Forum over the past year. Your energy, expertise, passion and resources enabled our working groups and other initiatives to achieve our shared goals as a network.

My heartfelt thanks to the hard-working members of the Forum Board, each of whom played a leading role in Forum's work in 2020. We acknowledge in particular Paul Bird, who served diligently as Chair of the Forum Board and whose energy and leadership took Forum to a new level. We express our gratitude to Jean-Daniel Balme, Philip Goodwin and Odette McCarthy. In 2020 I was honoured to join the Forum Board along with four exceptional colleagues – Erin Bateman, Gerasimos Kouvaras, Lucie Morillon, and Ashraf Patel.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to James O'Brien, Forum's Executive Director, for his tireless efforts in support of the Forum Board, working groups and membership. In 2020, Liz Gordy joined Forum and she has been invaluable in ensuring the smooth running of the network, especially our working groups and online platform. We would also like to thank David Styers, VGA Coordinator, for his excellent work throughout the year.

On behalf of the Forum Board of Directors:

Erin Bateman, World University Service of Canada (WUSC)

Mark Cumming, Comhlámh

Stephen Goodman, Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA)

Gerasimos Kouvaras, ActionAid Hellas

Lucie Morillon, France Volontaires

Ashraf Patel, ComMutiny: The Youth Collective

Jean Tan, Singapore International Foundation (SIF)

Heather Shapter, Crossroads International

Chair, International Forum for Volunteering in Development
September 2021

Future Directions

In 2020, following a consultation process with the Forum membership, we adopted the Forum Strategic Plan 2021-2025. This ambitious plan moves Forum beyond international volunteering to embrace the full breadth of volunteering for development. In the coming years we will work to expand our network and our focus to become truly global.

The Global Standard for Volunteering for Development will be central to Forum’s work, a key tool for promoting and supporting more responsible and more impactful volunteering, and ensuring that volunteers make the greatest possible contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2021 the Standards Working Group will review the Global Standard based on this year’s pilot and will launch an updated version at IVCO 2021, along with a self-assessment tool and online resource library.

We look forward to IVCO 2021, hosted by ActionAid Hellas on the theme Inclusive Volunteering for Global Equality. This is an opportunity for our community to explore questions of how volunteering contributes to systemic change towards a more inclusive and equal world, how volunteering itself can be more diverse and more inclusive, and the place of volunteering in discussions around the decolonisation of aid and development.

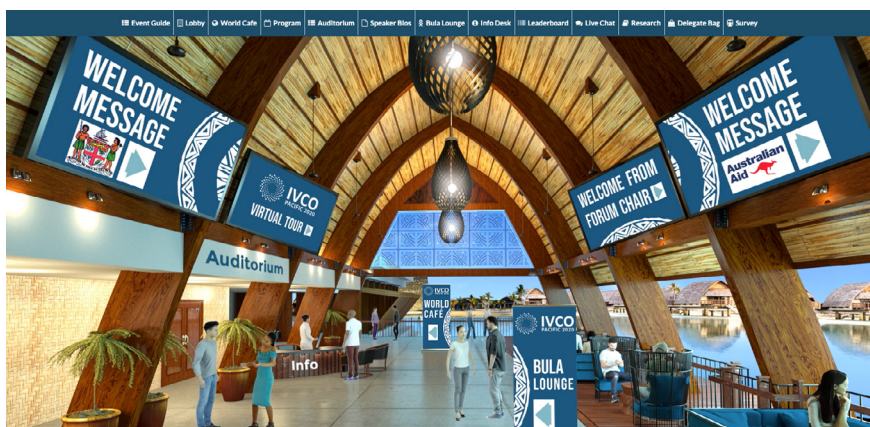
Forum will, of course, continue to support its members through the next phases of the COVID-19 pandemic and into the new realities of a post-COVID world.

As ever, Forum will continue to support our members by creating spaces to share knowledge, innovation and good practice, by framing conversations and debates, and through leading research and advocacy. We look forward to working with you in advancing our shared goal of harnessing volunteering for development to create lasting change.

Heather Shapter, Crossroads International
 Chair, International Forum for Volunteering in Development
 September 2021



Forum meetings moved to Zoom and Teams. This shot shows participants at the virtual Research, Practice, Policy and Learning Day.



Forum hosted the first virtual IVCO Conference, brought to us from Suva in Fiji by AVI.



Two women waiting for their medical examination at the Walga Clinic in Walga, Ethiopia. Photographer: Ernst Schulthess, Mission am Nil. Photo thanks to Mission am Nil and Unité.

Chartered Accountant's Report



CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT to International Forum for Volunteering in Development on the unaudited financial statements for the period ended 31 December 2020

We have compiled the review of the financial statements of International Forum for Volunteering in Development for the period ended 31 December 2020 which comprise the Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Accounting Policies and the related notes from the accounting records, information and explanations you have given to us.

The Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Accounting Policies and the related notes have been compiled on the basis set out in the accounting policies.

This report is made solely to you, in accordance with the terms of our engagement. Our work has been undertaken so that we might review the Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Accounting Policies and the related notes that we have been engaged to review, report to you that we have done so, and state those matters that we have agreed to state to you in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than International Forum for Volunteering in Development, for our work, or for this report.

We have carried out this engagement in accordance with technical guidance issued by Chartered Accountants Ireland and have complied with the ethical guidance laid down by Chartered Accountants Ireland.

You have approved the Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Accounting Policies and the related notes for the financial period to 31 December 2020 and have acknowledged your responsibility for them, for the appropriateness of the accounting basis and for providing all information and explanations necessary for their compilation.

We have not been instructed to carry out an audit or a review of the financial statements of International Forum for Volunteering in Development. For this reason, we have not verified the accuracy or completeness of the accounting records or information and explanations you have given to us and we do not, therefore, express any opinion on the financial information.

O'REGAN & CO
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Date: 15th September 2021

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Financial Statements for the Year Ending 31 December 2020

Income & Expenditure Statement

	2020 Actual	2020 Budget	2019 Actual
INCOME	€	€	€
Membership fees			
Full existing members	102,993	107,650	93,635
Associate existing members			
New members	4,000	13,340	
Conference income IVCO surplus	28,099	5,000	12,113
Research	13,301	17,853	13,977
Global Standard Income	7,691		
TOTAL INCOME	156,084	143,843	119,725
EXPENDITURE			
	€	€	€
Staff salary & admin support	83,177	84,467	70,790
Staff travel (Executive Coordinator)	700	10,000	1,349
Rent & facilities costs	7,432	6,793	
IVCO support	17	3,000	1,288
Research	21,759	17,853	15,940
Board expenses	50	5,000	305
Communications	282	500	1,492
Website & Information	5,899	5,000	12,437
Accounting	1,086	980	819
Bank charges	4,356	2,500	1,242
Other		1,000	2,540
Global Standards costs	4,530	4,000	9,303
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	129,288	141,093	117,505
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) for year	26,796	2,750	2,220

Research Fund Report for 2020

General Research Fund	€	€
Balance of Fund at 1 January 2020		-7,276
Add INCOME		
Norec Research Fund Contribution	10,000.00	
Unite Research fund Contribution	2,890.00	
AVI Research Fund Contribution	6,889.07	
Marriott Kigali Refund	798.00	13,977
		20,577
		13,301
Less EXPENDITURE	€	€
Opening Accrual for Jacob Mati reversed	-281	
Allum	137	
Payment to Jacob Mati	281	
Peter Devereux	396	
Jayne Craven	92	
Janet Clarke Accrual	3,448	
James O'Brien Accrual	86	
Helen Perold Accrual	7,950	
		12,109
Balance of Research Fund at 31 December 2020		1,192

Research Note 1: Research Income and Expenditure is incorporated into the overall Income & Expenditure Statement

VGA Fund Report for 2020

VGA Fund	€	€
Balance of Fund at 1 January 2020		1,347
Less EXPENDITURE		
United Way - Balance Repaid	19.02.2020	1,347
		1,347
Balance of VGA Fund at 31 December 2020		0

Statement of Receipts & Payments for 2020

	2020	2019
Opening balance at bank at 1 January 2020	€	€
Bendigo AUS Account (€16,341@.633)	1,092	10,344
Royal Bank of Canada EUR account	154	8,865
Royal Bank of Canada CAD account (\$5,920@.672)	3,980	1,779
	5,226	20,988
Add total Cash Receipts per accounts	183,390	114,640
less total Cash payments per accounts	121,677	130,402
Total	66,939	5,226
Balance at bank at 31 December 2020		
Bendigo AUS Account (€1,760@.621)	23,211	1,092
Royal Bank of Canada EUR account	34,064	154
Royal Bank of Canada CAD account (\$5,920@.672)	9,663	3,980
	66,939	5,226

Statement of Assets & Liabilities at 31 December 2020

	2020		2019	
	€	€	€	€
Assets				
There are no fixed assets.				
Current assets:				
Bank Balances				
Royal bank of Canada EUR	23,211		154	
Royal bank of Canada CAD	34,064		3,980	
Bendigo AUD	9,663	66,939	1,092	5,226
Debtors (note 1)		13,360		12,319
Total current assets		80,299		17,545
Current Liabilities (note 2)		-31,737		4,221
Net assets		48,562		21,766
Funds at 1 January 2019		21,766		19,546
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		26,796		2,220
Funds at 31 December 2020		48,562		21,7666

Notes to the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2020

Note 1: Debtors

	31 Dec 2020	31 Dec 2019
	€	€
To be reimbursed from 2018 IVCO Budget (Salary)	0	2279
To be reimbursed from 2018 IVCO Budget (Travel)	0	3360
GIZ - 2019 Membership Fee	6680	6680
GIZ - 2020 Membership Fee	6680	
Total Assets	€12319	€7234

Note 2: Liabilities

	31 Dec 2020	31 Dec 2019
	€	€
Research fund Balance	0	-7,276
VGA balance to be refunded	0	1,347
Accrued General operating expenses	11,707	1,708
Deferred 2021 Income received in 2020	20,030	0
Total Liabilities	31,737	-4,221



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