

# BOOSTFOUNDATION



## ANNUAL REPORT 2019

STICHTING BOOST FOUNDATION



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Nearly every start up goes through a tough time in the beginning. You start with a lot of energy and motivation but when the difficult questions are asked and the situations are complicated it's up to the strength of the entire team to pull through and still stay on top of it all.

This is something Boost Foundation has gone through as well. The year 2019 was full of change for us with some difficult decisions but positive outcomes. It has been a successful year and I am thankful to all the strong members that we have and that had done some amazing projects and events.

I think it's safe to say that we have all developed and learnt a lot from our role in Boost Foundation but also from the projects we have done and the people we have helped. We have grown as individuals and as a team. Building on our skill set and network. I thank the team members that have an active role in all the projects and decisions we make. Your effort and hard work have been powerful and inspirational. Without your support and guidance, we would not be here today, so thank you for standing together as one.

To the individual people and organizations that stand by us and support us through donations, advice or resources: A big thank you to you as well, we hope you are proud of what Boost Foundation has done and will continue to grow with us as we look forward to 2020.

On behalf of Boost Foundation, I would like to thank everyone for their effort, help and support. Together we can change the world.

With friendly greetings,

Erudini Smits

President Boost Foundation

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## WHO ARE WE?



Boost Foundation is a charity organization that has dedicated its work to helping those in need. We support humanitarian and environmental projects of small local charity organizations with the idea that together we can make a difference. Together we can make this world a better place.

We use our core values and our purpose as a moral compass through all our actions in running projects. Our promise is what we give to you and we question ourselves every time we make a decision on whether that promise is being kept.

When Boost Foundation started 4 years ago our Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG) was to boost 10000 projects in the next 40 years. Our BHAG is to directly influence a million people worldwide positively.

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## WHY BOOST FOUNDATION?

There are many people in the world who need our help and many people who have the resources and the desire to help these people. But what's stopping them? Most donors we speak to have little faith in charities and this is not without reason.

Even amongst the most famous foundations and non-profit organizations in the Netherlands, only 50 to 80% of the donations actually reach a project and often the project results are difficult to test or are not transparent. We believe that this can be done differently.

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## WHY ARE WE DIFFERENT?

We distinguish ourselves by:

- Make clear agreements with local parties that have already proven themselves.
- Applying and upholding a strict selection criteria for projects to be tested on the basis of sustainability and added value for the local population.
- Maximum knowledge sharing, by creating educational projects for young talent, volunteers and students.
- Use maximum ICT and technology to achieve a high degree of automation.
- Being fully transparent in all activities, decisions and finances.
- Operating with no buildings, no lease cars, no salaries, no bonuses, no seat fees and operating as a flat organization with short lines.

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## WHAT DO WE DO?

We choose and support humanitarian and/or environmental projects with a relatively small budget of up to € 20,000 and try to help as many people as possible.

This can vary from building or renovating a primary school, to refurbishing a piece of land or infrastructure for a remote village or (re-)planting a piece of forest.

1. The purpose of the foundation is: protecting nature and the environment worldwide, including promoting sustainability and promoting humanitarian projects; to perform all further actions that are related to the foregoing in the broadest sense or that may be conducive thereto. This purpose does not include making distributions to the founder or to those who are part of organs of the foundation.
2. The foundation only serves the public interest and does not aim to make a profit.
3. The foundation tries to achieve its goal by, among other things, selecting humanitarian and environmental projects worldwide and supporting the non-profit organizations and other public benefit organizations that implement these projects with a high degree of efficiency. The support in the form of, but not limited to, knowledge, effort by volunteers, kind and / or financial nature. In addition, the foundation will select and guide volunteers and offer them the opportunity to contribute to projects or other supporting activities. The foundation will also organize (Network) events to recruit sponsors and create awareness.

(Source: Stichting Boost Foundation, Article 2)



The board consists of a group of multidisciplinary professionals with equal say within the organization. Decisions are made according to statutory guidelines and the household regulations. The board supports all activities and events done by Boost Foundation.

The core board consists of:

- Erudini Smits – President & HR manager
- Remco Scherpenzeel – Secretary & Vice President
- Osman Akin – Commercial & Marketing manager
- Tu Hong – Treasurer
- Martyna Grochowska – Project Manager



Figure 1. Organizational chart of the board

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## EXTERNAL MEMBERS (ADVISORY BOARD)

These are external support members that are ready to help us when need be. These are previous board members that still want help Boost Foundation but do not want to take part in the day-to-day activities. They are there to advise the board if required.

- Henk Bethlehem (Legal Adviser)
- Ian Upton (Commercial Adviser)
- Justin Sloove (Financial Adviser)
- Gert-Jan ter Schure (IT Adviser)

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## LOCAL VOLUNTEERS

These are our local heroes and the truly hard-working people. These are the people that conduct the projects and that have direct contact with the beneficiaries of the projects. They are the people that do all the field work and make this successful.

- Ramani Smits – CEO of FutureCare
- Sameera Bandara – Project Manager at FutureCare
- Camila Solaris – Volunteer at Boost Foundation
- Cerasela Somersall - MSMGA volunteer member
- Amber de Vries - MSMGA volunteer member

## INTERNAL CHANGES

In 2019 there were changes in the core team. We had to say goodbye to a few board members and welcome a few new members.

Ian Upton, the main founder and previous president of Boost Foundation took a step back and became part of our advisory board. The amount of work and effort he put into Boost Foundation was tremendous and we will forever be grateful for it. It is because of him that we came together and started the foundation. He is an admirable leader that had a great vision for the foundation. It was a joy working alongside him and we all learned a lot from him. He knew how to guide the team in the right direction and worked in a smart and efficient manner. We gained a lot from him and even though it hurts us to see him leave, we thank him for all that he has done and promise to keep making decisions based on the core values we have in place.

Ian, thank you for starting Boost Foundation and bringing us all together so that we can make this world a better place by helping those in need. You believed in us and made it possible for us to stand on your own feet. We will miss you but we take comfort in knowing that you will be there in case we need your support.

Unfortunately, we also had to say goodbye to two other core members, Justin Sloove and Gert-Jan ter Schure. Both of them have decided to join our advisory board but leave the core team.

Justin was our financial compass and a great team mate. He hardly missed a meeting and knew exactly where the foundation was in all financial aspects. He worked hard on projects and was committed to drive them to success.

Gert-Jan was our IT genius and he contributed by figuring out how we could improve and automate a lot of our processes. He thought about ways we could work smarter and supported us on any technical issue.

As much as they will be missed, we wish them good luck in their future endeavors and hope to see them again. Thank you for all the work and memories you have created with us. We will treasure them forever and meet you soon.

With tough goodbyes comes also warm welcomes to a few new board members. This year we introduced Tu Hong our treasurer that joined Boost in January and Martyna Grochowska our project manager in November. Big welcome to the team and we are excited to work closely together with both of you. The change in board members and their titles meant an official change in the chamber of commerce (KVK).

## GOALS FOR 2019

At the end of 2018 the decision was made to bring back fun into Boost foundation and to make that the goal for 2019. With this as the main goal we had a few sub goals and objectives:

1. Conduct 2 fund raising events – bring in our own funds
2. Broaden the team – add a few new members to the foundation
3. Add one more project – start or rejuvenate a project

At the end of every year the policy plan and the statute are reviewed and based on these documents the strategy is made for the next year. These documents together with the household plans will change according to the plans made for the following year. In 2019 there were no changes made to the statutes and house rules.

## RESULTS FOR 2019

The purpose of Boost Foundation is to conduct projects that help others. Whether it be teaching children or building a school: We want to make this world a better place. The work we do has affects and consequences and these are our results. Below is a more detailed explanation of each project that we have conducted during 2019 and its results.

### SHARING KNOWLEDGE

Sharing knowledge projects consist of ways in which we can transfer information, skills and knowledge to others. Whether it be teaching children or adults, it's about helping them learn something new which will improve their lives.

In this particular instance we sent a volunteer – Camila Solari, to Sri-Lanka to help teach English to a poor school called Kinigama Junior School to teach children from grade 1-6. We believe that education and a good schooling can give children and the society a brighter future. She went in January and stayed there for 3 months. She taught children from different age groups that were at a different level of English. For the very young classes it was more about teaching them the basics through creative interactive methods through music, sports and dance. For the older classes it was more about improving their English writing, listening and speaking skills and preparing them for the English exams.

She spent 5 days a week teaching the children and getting to know the school and the staff members. She also conducted workshops where she thought them about hygiene and ways in which they can improve their living habits.

The children in the beginning were shy but also very curious to get to know their new volunteer teacher. But this quickly changed and soon the children and the school eagerly waited for her to

come in every day to teach them something new. Camila enjoyed teaching them and the children learn a lot from her. After the 3 months were over the school was sad to see her go and wished they had more volunteers like her.

We want to thank Camila for the great work that she did over there. The smiles she brought to those children and the knowledge that she shared with them. She tested their English knowledge before she started and at the end of her 3 months found that there was an improvement. It was not always easy and there were definitely situations in which she had to make difficult decisions or struggled. But she came out of them as a champion and learned a lot herself. She was an amazing person to work along with and we are grateful to have her on the team. This was a successful project and hopefully we can find someone like her again to share their knowledge in the future.



Figure 2. Camila with some of her students

## BUILDING A FUTURE – PATTAPOLA PRIMARY SCHOOL

There are different ways in which someone can help others. Projects under Building a Future usually involve the material and physical aspect that are required to improve lives. This includes renovations and construction of infrastructure such as school buildings, classrooms, sanitary facilities, water, electricity, play grounds, etc.

This year we managed to donate a fence to a school that protected the children and provided them with safety. A poor school called Pattapola in Sri-Lanka located on a mountain was in need of a fence and some renovations to the school building. The fence was needed to protect the children from not falling off the steep cliff that one of the school buildings were built on. But also to protect the buildings and playground from large wild animals living in the jungle area around the school. A fence would allow the children to walk and play around the school area safely.



**Figure 3. The fence under construction**

This project was funded through donations given by a generous couple that wanted to do a project to help a school who wish to remain anonymous. Once a project plan was given and we transferred the donations, our partner FutureCare found a few local volunteers to help buy the materials, transport them to the remote school, and build the fence. They needed the fence to be roughly 100 meters long with a mesh (metal net) of around 4 feet high. This project cost in total 2000Euros.

This project was successfully completed and we are proud so say that the 40 children and 7 teachers at the Pattapola Primary School are now safely enjoying their surroundings making it easier for them to go to school. A big thank you to our partner FutureCare and to the generous couple for their donation and support.



**Figure 4. Pictures of the finished fence**

## BUILDING A FUTURE – AKADE PRIMARY SCHOOL

We also started with the first stages of another building the future project for a school called Akade. This is a small school in a faraway rural area in Sri-Lanka which has roughly 58 children and 7 teachers. The school built a small open-air stage for when they have events but it is only a concrete block outside. They school is happy with it and it is sufficient for them to have their events. The only problem is that there is no roof. This means that when it is raining or when the sun is burning hot, it's

difficult for them to use the stage. They requested to start a project where we can get the funds to maybe build a roof.



Figure 5. Pictures of Akade Primary school and the stage

We started working on the project plan and gathering the required information to start the project. We decided that if we were going to take on the project then we will have a fund-raising event to collect the money. The decision to start the first few phases of this project was done in 2019 and we also conducted a pub quiz to gather the donations. More details about this under the section fund raising.

## EQUAL CHANCES

A project that focuses on providing children from the poorest families a chance to go to school and get an education.

A lot of families in rural Sri Lanka live below the poverty line and have difficulty in getting even the basic needs. Parents can't afford to give their children shoes, uniforms and educational material such as books or stationery. Without these things children are not allowed to attend school and as a result the children go and help their parents by working on the fields.



Figure 6. Part of the package that is handed out to the children

What FutureCare does is that it helps these families by providing the children with the most basic needs to attend school so that the families are not restricted to keeping the children at home or in the fields. For the past 3 years Boost Foundation committed to donating the money for 80 children

per year. This project was successfully completed in 2018. For 2019 we decided to do this project in a different way.

We decided to do crowd funding for 2 months and see how much money we could collect for this project to then donate it to this project. We got donations from various individuals and ended up collecting 1700Euros which would sponsor 34 children. The project was from December 2019 and January 2020 so officially the money will be transferred in 2020 and will therefore be a project that is completed next year.

Equal Chances is a very nice concept with a lot of potential. The schools attract more children, giving the government more attention for these schools. Children that we reach radiate as much joy as if it were Sinterklaas or Christmas. Children from low income families can go to school with a new uniform next to financially fortunate children without feeling out of place in that regard.

## HELPING HANDS PROJECT

This year we started a new project category and new project. Helping hands are projects that we will do for unique cases that usually help smaller groups or individual people. While most of our other project categories are designed to help big groups of people at once this project focuses on 1-3 people and looks at ways to help them improve their lives.

This is the story of a girl called Anushika and her family. We know her from one of our previous projects – equal chances where we helped her go to school. We knew that her family had a very low income and therefore the equal chances project gave her the chance to go to school for a few years. Sadly, this year the family had two major incidents and Anushika lost her mother and her father had an accident. This is a very personal and private story where we noticed that Anushika needed help for not only school but she also needed financial support for the rest of her school life for also living expenses. Anushika has to support herself and her father. He is unable to work and requires medication.

In Sri lank you cannot get a part-time job and you are not able to get work while being a student. Therefore, she needs to find a way to get enough money for food and medicine. The teachers in the school that she attends had somehow collected some money to help Anushika with getting food for



Figure 7. Pictures of Anushika, her father and their home

the first 2 months. It's a sad story but the truth is that Anushika and her father need some help. At

least until she finishes school. Anushika is 14 years old and she still wants to go to school so she can finish her education as best she can. The expenses that we are helping with are for essentials such as food, water and medication for her father.

For this project we were asked if we could help her until she finishes school (another 4 years), with a monthly living cost of €76 per month. In December we had a private individual donate €900 specifically for this project for 1 year. We decided that FutureCare would provide the money every month to her and that she provides the bills.

## FUND RAISING EVENTS

We realized that a fun and interactive way to gain funds was through organizing a pub quiz. We realized in 2018 when we had the 1<sup>st</sup> one that we enjoyed conducting it and we were good at it. It gave us energy and also brought in funds for our projects. This year we managed to organize two of them.



Figure 8. Pub quiz at CIC

The first one was in combination with our annual meeting. It was held on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July in the location provided by CIC Offices close to the Rotterdam central station. It was a lovely success and we collected €415 euros. For this event all of our costs were donated. CIC gave us the location and donated drinks for all guests that attended. We had 7 teams compete against each other and the winning team received a prize which was donated by Felix de Wijk (a supporter of Boost Foundation) that made

a 3D printed gold cup. Each board member had a crucial part to play from being the pub quiz master to collecting the answer sheets and checking them. We also got on site support from members from CIC who helped with getting the drinks and from Erhan Akin (another supporter of Boost Foundation).

The second pub quiz was specific to one company: OGD ict-diensten. They have donated and sponsored us in the past and was therefore no stranger to Boost Foundation. We conducted it on the



Figure 9. Pub quiz at OGD ict-diensten



29<sup>th</sup> of November and focused on funding a 'building a future' project called Akade project to help build a roof for a stage for a poor school in Sri Lanka. This event gave us in total €1092 euros and was extremely fun for us and the guests. OGD donated the location and allowed us to get some money as donations on some special drinks. They also allowed us to auction a food platter (x5) in which the money was donated to Boost Foundation. Chef Martin Faber made all the snacks and the food platter which we auctioned off and we had two volunteers from OGD to help behind the bar for drinks. We also got help from Jaco Verhage and Bas van Elk who were the pub quiz masters and also bought some small prizes for the winning team. This evening was a big hit and we enjoyed it a lot.

We want to official thank everyone that has helped us in realizing these events. It is because of your support and help that we did them so successfully.

## PARTNERS - FUTURECARE

FutureCare has been our first and most important partner in Sri Lanka. The most admirable and consistent attribution that they possess is that they donate all of their funds to the projects that they do. All the costs are paid as a donation from the CEO of FutureCare. She minimizes her expenses by only having unpaid volunteers that help with the physical work and most of the work is done by her and the project manager, and neither one of them get a salary for their work. She donates all traveling costs and fixed costs, so that any money that she gets into the organization from external volunteers goes 100% to the children and schools in her projects. This is why we believe her core values are in line with that of Boost Foundation.

FutureCare was founded in 2006 by Ramani Smits (CEO), a lady from Kandy in the Central Province. After she completed her agricultural education, she met a Dutchman, Henk Smits. Henk worked at the United Nations and immigrated to Sri Lanka at the age of 45. Henk is an inspiring person who has worked for mentally handicapped orphan boys in Sri Lanka over the last 30 years. A few years after FutureCare started, Sameera joined as his passion is to help as many people as he can. He was immediately drawn to project management and helps with all the heavy lifting and networking with the locals. The amount of schools and children that come to them for help keep increasing on a yearly basis so they can use all the support they can get.



Figure 10. Our partner FutureCare in action

## PARTNERS IN THE NETHERLANDS

**AVIGHNA**  
REMOVER OF OBSTACLES

Thank you, Avighna, for the regular donations, which we use to pay our IT and administration costs, and for believing in Boost Foundation and our mission from day one!

**OGD**  
ict-diensten  
samen slimmer

Thank you, OGD ict-diensten, for the provision of office space and facilities. And of course, thank you for helping to realize a pub quiz in 2019.

**IMMATURE**

Thank you, Immature, helping us with our website and providing office space.

**cic**

Thank you, CIC, for helping with the realization of a pub quiz in 2019.

## BOOST FOUNDATION IS POWERED BY...

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