

imix



ANNUAL REVIEW 2020





CHAIR'S FOREWORD

IMIX began as a response to the need in the refugee and migration sector for expert support on media, messaging and communications. From 2016, IMIX was hosted by Global Dialogue, and we are grateful to them for helping to develop and grow this essential work. With the commitment of a group of key funders, and passionate leadership from Emma, we were able to fly the Global Dialogue nest this year and begin life as an independent charity.

Being independent is important for IMIX only in that it enables us to be ever more responsive and supportive to the refugee and migrant sector, to grow our expert team, to focus our efforts on the most difficult issues and biggest gaps, and to amplify positive stories and narratives. We don't speak for ourselves or on behalf of others, our work enables small charities and the refugees and migrants they support to find their own voices and connect to opportunities to speak for themselves.

Thank you to everyone who makes IMIX not just possible, but powerful – our thoughtful Trustee Board, our tiny but impactful team, our generous funders and our practical partners.

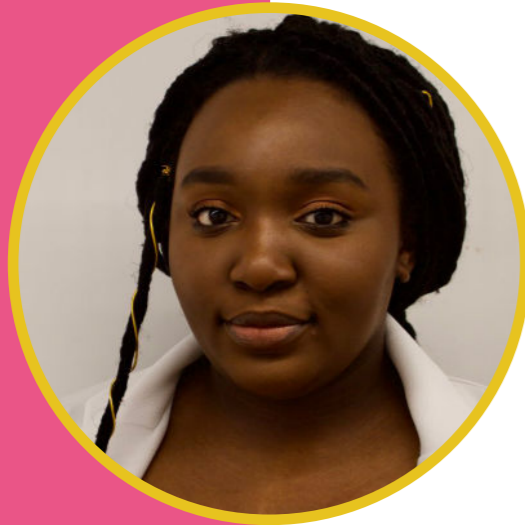
Geraldine Blake
Chair

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INTRODUCTION

VISION



Our vision is a society which **embraces and celebrates people who move to the UK**, one where **we can all live well together**.

MISSION



IMIX is **changing the conversation about migration and refugees**, challenging an often-hostile media agenda and altering public perception.



In June 2020 we celebrated our first year as an independent charity; in our first year we rebranded, developed our digital presence to give more platforms for people with lived experience of migration, and strengthened our governance structures. We have continued to offer partner organisations the support they need to achieve their communication aims, this included training, mentoring and providing one-to-one advice. We know our approach is working as our network is growing. We've welcomed new partners from across the UK, France and Greece and now have 350 members of our network.

In an ever-changing world we know that it's hard for our partners, many of which are small charities, to keep abreast of all developments, so we now provide a daily press briefing on the big stories about migration. We have increased the number of meetings we host and now convene monthly meetings where journalists, producers and broadcasters discuss their work and how to secure coverage for

stories. We've increased our provision around strategic communication advice, messaging ideas and tools kits.

Our first year has been dominated by two external factors: the increased political and media interest in people who are crossing the channel to seek asylum, and the Covid-19 pandemic. We've supported the sector to navigate how to talk about 'channel migrants' and have built strong relationships across the media to ensure a more balanced response to the challenge. Covid-19 gave us the opportunity to showcase the work of the many migrants and refugees who are key workers and the positive contribution people make to communities up and down the UK.

While public support for migration has grown in recent years, there is a lot to be done to shore up support, particularly in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the coming year will focus on new narratives to build the case for migration and refugee protection.

I'd like to thank all our partnersd funders for working with us, and all the experts by experience willing to share their stories publicly. Our successes belong to you. I hope you enjoy reading about our achievements and learning, if you'd like to hear more please do get in touch.

Emma Harrison
Chief Executive, IMIX

CHARITABLE OBJECTS

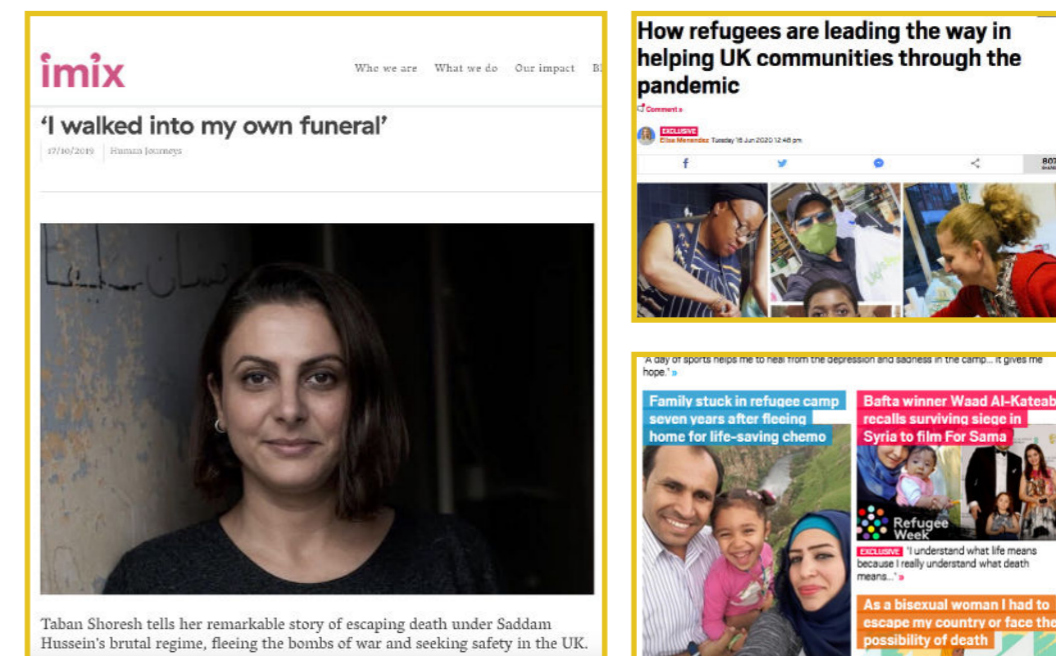
The objects of IMIX are:

- To advance the education of the public and media about issues relating to equality and diversity and social inclusion, especially regarding people who are migrants, refugees or seeking asylum
- To advance the education of the public and media about the issues relating to refugees, migrants and those seeking asylum
- To advance the education and training of the public, particularly charity and non-charitable voluntary organisations working with refugees, people seeking asylum and migrants in all forms of communications, especially the media
- To advance education among migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum

“Words cannot sometimes comprise everything you want to say but it is true that IMIX has helped us to give a voice to our efforts of achieving equality for all.”

Crina Morteau, Project Manager, Luton Roma Trust

CHARITY'S ACTIVITIES



IMIX works closely with organisations across the refugee and migration sector to train, support and build communications capacity. We deliver training courses on working with the press and media including interview techniques, social media and digital content, storytelling and audience insights. We also provide one-to-one support for small organisations lacking communications expertise, offering advice and guidance on how to make the best of limited resources and reach a wide audience.

We draw on our experience and contacts within the national and local press to ensure more first-hand stories are shared publicly in the media. By putting a human face and story to complex and divisive issues, we aim to create greater understanding and empathy for those who have made the UK their home.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE



The past 12 months have been exceptionally busy for the IMIX team. As the political landscape shifted, we worked hard to meet the demands of our partners and the media. We have collaborated with more partners than ever, increased our media coverage twofold, redesigned our website to be fit for purpose and enhanced our offer to partners.

Training and Support for our Network

We have continued to work closely with partner organisations to support them to achieve their aims by offering mentoring, training and consultancy to meet their specific needs – and help them reach as wide an audience as possible. Our network is growing. We now have over 350 members signed up to our Google Group. Members receive a daily press briefing, access to our messaging and toolkits and invites to monthly meetings as well as being able to access bespoke advice. Being responsive to the needs of the network is something we've worked on – and there is always room for improvement – this year we started to create messaging and framing guides for the sector including on housing, channel migrants and Covid-19. These short guides have been well received and used, particularly the one relating to channel migrants.

“What makes IMIX so special is their combination of specialist knowledge of the media and audiences, and their strong values and commitment to making media work a positive and empowering experience for the people sharing their stories.”

Emily Churchill Zarea, Refugee Week UK Coordinator

Pre-Covid, our face-to-face training courses were run across the country, for example, we worked with grassroots charities in the North East as part of our core objective of building a network of voices from outside London. We trained four experts by experience as well as holding meetings with local news outlets connecting them to small charities in the area. This has led to increased positive coverage in local papers, and a long read on the BBC about the consequences of trafficking and modern slavery. We continue to support important networks such as City of Sanctuary, including running media and spokespeople training for their senior team and volunteer networks in the West Midlands.

Giving a platform to people with lived experience of migration has been a vital component of our training programme. We've offered bespoke, one-to-one support to experts by experience as well as running training days. This focus has accrued significant value from a media engagement point of view, with stories told in The Guardian, on Channel 4 News and a variety of online platforms. We have continued to support the Roma community including the Luton Roma

Trust to enable them to reach out to their community on EU Settled Status. We had intended to focus on, and work more closely with young Europeans but Covid has meant that other voices were prioritised.

Our media training for established organisations working within the field of migration continues to be popular. We have trained a variety of organisations such as ECPAT which focuses on ending trafficking, Doctors of the World, Kent Refugee Action Network, Hastings Refugee Buddy Project and Refugee Rights Europe to meet our aim of increasing the range and type of organisations which can speak out on migration.

As well as our core offer of media and audience understanding, we've delivered training on digital outreach and how to manage in a crisis. We've super charged our support for people with lived experience of migration, including launching a new initiative **Human Journeys** on our website and Instagram, to give a platform for people with lived experience to share their story safely.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

“ I think IMIX’s work is so important for
a sector that depends on volunteers and
where many people are working at capacity.”

Nadia Chalabi, School Meals Advocate, Hackney Migrant Centre

We have secured significant international, national and local press coverage and helped shape the coverage regarding some of the toughest issues in the migration space. From the channel migrant’s story to EU citizens’ rights, we’ve had our thumb print on some of the biggest campaigns in the sector and are rightly proud of what we’ve achieved.

We know that journalists from The Times to the Daily Mail to Sky News want to engage their audiences with the debate on migration. They know that the evidence shows that people are ‘balanced’ on migration - they can see pros and cons - so outlets want to ensure they can represent this through their articles and broadcasts. Within the migration sector there is some nervousness of working with journalists, so we’ve been working with the media and the sector to build trust.

IMIX worked closely with ITN to change the conversation on immigration. ITN wanted to shine a light on the truth of vulnerable people’s lives and to humanise the issue

with stories about real people’s lives. Whether it’s about detention, asylum, Calais crossings, Windrush, refugees, EU citizenship or issues like access to health - which dovetailed with the Covid pandemic - ITV wants to know how the issue impacts people.

In March 2020 IMIX took a group of experts by experience and staff from the sector to meet News Editor, Jonathan Wald at the ITN studios. We got a tour, met the home and foreign news editors, reporters, editors and most exciting of all, sat in the command centre of ITN and watched the lunchtime news go out live. Following this tour, we worked with ITN on a big piece about refugee doctors, which was well received by ITN viewers and the sector.



Impact of Covid-19

As with many organisations within the migration sector and beyond, we had to radically change the way in which we work to ensure that staff, volunteers and the people we work with were safeguarded through the pandemic. We are very grateful for the support given by our funders which enabled us to reprioritise certain elements of our work, most notably the focus on the EU Settlement Scheme.

During lockdown, IMIX concentrated on creating the space for different parts of the migration sector to work together. Pre-existing issues with the UK’s immigration system that made people vulnerable have been exacerbated by the pandemic, while the sector’s communications capacity has dropped even further. Despite these challenges, IMIX achieved substantial, mainstream coverage on key issues such as health and destitution, including separate stories on BBC and ITV News at 10.

Alongside developing messaging and Q & A guides around COVID and other key issues for the sector, a key component of work has been daily rapid response support to hundreds of charities across the UK; from social media, campaigning and advocacy advice to providing proactive and reactive media relations support.

The team also identified Covid-19 as an opportunity, building a strategy to challenge negative stereotypes and misconceptions about refugees and migrants. We curated a suite of positive stories about individuals supporting their communities. These were often developed and placed with local partners in local news outlets and provided opportunities for many individuals with lived experience to speak to the media for the first time in a safe and positive manner. Coverage highlights include the Birmingham Mail, Coventry Telegraph, Chronicle (Newcastle), Express & Star (Wolverhampton) and Nottingham Post.

A vital facet of this positive storytelling strategy was tapping into public support for the NHS. Working with partners RefuAid and Help Refugees, IMIX led on securing media to raise awareness of the work overseas doctors deliver in the NHS, alongside awareness of those who wanted to work, but are hindered by an arduous process from doing so. Alongside aforementioned coverage with the BBC and ITV, this was also secured in The Observer, Metro and Daily Mirror amongst others.

While we have adapted well, providing training has been more challenging, particularly working with people with lived experience of migration.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

EU Settlement Scheme

During the summer of 2019 we secured significant media coverage around the challenges people were facing in getting their settled status. Focusing on people in more vulnerable situations we worked with, among others ITV, BBC London and the Independent to highlight how digital applications were problematic for a variety of groups. We worked with partners in the North West and North East to shine a spotlight on how things were working across the country. In the autumn we ran a messaging workshop with the Brexit Civil Society group to help a wider audience understand the impact of the EUSS scheme and how to communicate its challenges.

Following the Withdrawal Agreement, it became much harder to 'sell' the story of the EUSS. This became even more challenging come March 2020, nonetheless we managed to secure pieces to show the role key workers, who were EU citizens, were playing during lockdown. For instance, a piece in Al Jazeera highlighted how thousands of EU migrants were working on the frontlines of the coronavirus pandemic in the United Kingdom, as doctors, nurses, carers, porters and cleaners.

We also focused on the work of charities which were supporting migrants, for instance in both BBC Breakfast and Private Eye, we worked on stories that highlighted how the charity Doctors

of the World complemented the work of the NHS and Public Health England (PHE) by publishing the official PHE's guidance translated into over 60 languages.

Elsewhere, we were also able to show the serious impact that a policy like No Recourse to Public Funds (NPRF), in conjunction with the pandemic, was having on low-income families from a migrant background. Families were forced to reduce the daily amount of food, due to the fact that they were not receiving free school meals because of their immigration status. In this instance, we were able to forge new and proficient relationships with grassroots organisations working in some of the most deprived areas of London and bringing their first-hand experience of the combined impact of Covid-19 and the NPRF policy to a national audience.



Refugee Week 2020

Refugee Week 2020 was the fourth consecutive year which IMIX partnered with Counterpoints Arts to deliver the festival's media strategy. A global pandemic presented a myriad of new challenges to make it potentially the hardest for media efforts too.

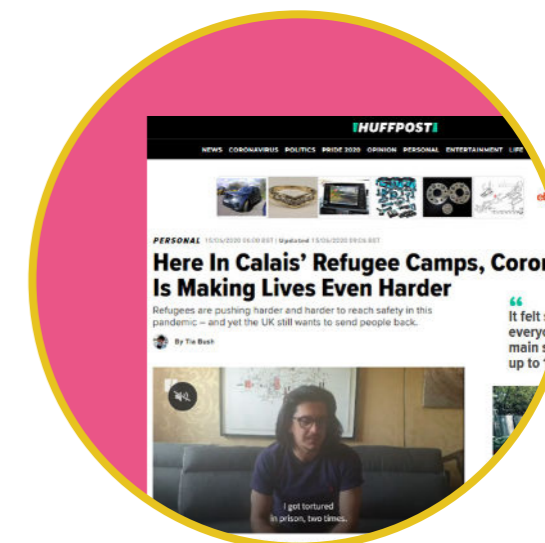
The festival was held solely in the digital space for the first time, which meant 900+ local, community-based events did not take place. It also meant IMIX was unable to deliver ambassador workshops which usually provide extensive training and support to enable individuals with lived experience of seeking sanctuary in the UK to positively and safely engage with the media. These events and ambassadors were the two key components of previous IMIX media strategies. In addition, the news agenda was chaotic, rapidly changing and dominated by the pandemic, presenting a difficult climate in which to secure coverage.

Despite this, IMIX helped deliver 100+ pieces of coverage for the third consecutive year, including 28 pieces of mainstream, national coverage and week-long series in Huff Post and Metro amongst others. 25 individuals were empowered to share their lived experience with the media; the majority for the first time. Coverage was also spread across the media landscape, enabling new audiences to engage with the festival and its messages for the

first time; from mainstream to niche, across the political spectrum and from local to national.

In addition, IMIX delivered two sets of media and digital training for festival organisers at Refugee Week conferences, providing initial, basic tools to equip over 20 community led and local charities to begin engaging with the media and in the digital space in a positive and safe manner.

A short online training session on social media was also delivered to over 200 people in preparation for the festival. This was part of the wider strategy delivered by IMIX across a six-month period and included hundreds of meetings and calls providing advice to individuals, groups and organisations about their respective media efforts for the festival.



ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

imix

Who we are What we do

11 stories of refugees making a difference during the coronavirus outbreak

15/05/2020 News, Positive Stories



The digital communications manager and digital intern worked together to collate positive stories from news outlets, social media channels and the IMIX network predominantly from across the UK but also other countries around the world. These ranged from a Syrian refugee in Bromsgrove delivering medicines on his bike to an asylum seeker in Derby volunteering at a food bank to a refugee project in North London working hard to support their members during lockdown with hardship grants, mobile phone credit and food parcels.

In total six blogs were produced covering 61 different stories. Two of these blogs were produced specifically for Refugee Week and drew on their vast UK-wide network to gather more stories. As Refugee Week has a celebratory theme the blogs worked extremely well situated within this year's first ever digital festival. In addition four videos were produced for Refugee Week, three which highlighted certain individuals stepping up to help their communities during Covid-19, and one which was a photo collage featuring many different people and projects working to support others.

This collection of stories has received over 8,000 pageviews to date with the first blog attracting over 2000 views alone. This is by far the most popular content which the IMIX website has ever seen which proves there is a strong appetite for these positive and uplifting stories. The videos promoted via the IMIX Twitter account also had a high number of views, shares and engagement.

The team is keen to continue promoting positive stories both through the IMIX channels and in the broader media when there is the opportunity. Through this commitment to drawing out the ways in which many people who seek sanctuary contribute and make a difference in their communities, negative rhetoric can be challenged and undermined, and a better conversation can begin.

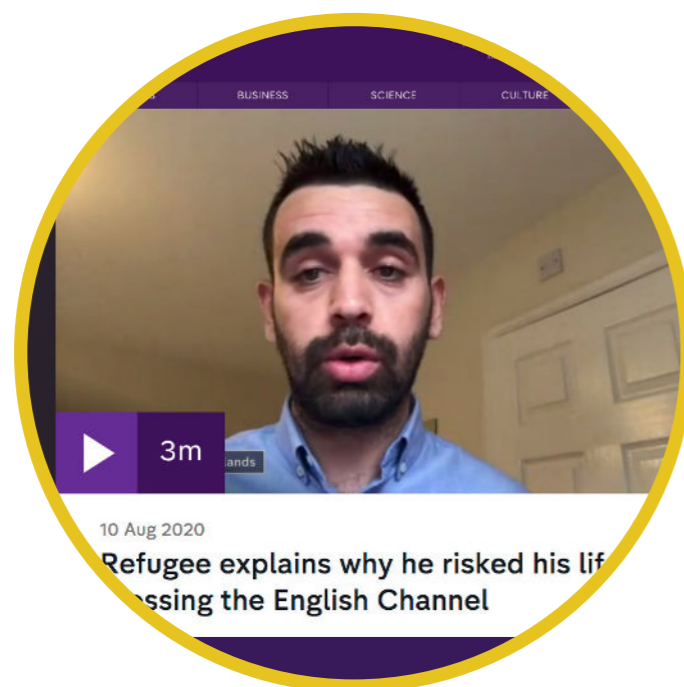
“ Since the Channel crossings started we have “
received an unprecedented amount of media requests due to our position working in Kent. The team at IMIX have provided absolutely invaluable support as dealing with an often hostile media can be a lonely and difficult job. Being able to call on IMIX for advice has been incredibly helpful and has meant that we have been able to start to take control of the narrative in our region.

Bridget Chapman, Kent Refugee Action

Promoting positive stories

During the coronavirus lockdown, IMIX were keen to highlight how refugees and the organisations which support them were making a difference in their communities. Through drawing attention to these positive stories, the hope was that people's perceptions of asylum seekers and refugees would be challenged and altered.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE



Channel Crossings

Over the past three years there has been an increase in interest in the people who have arrived in the UK via the Channel. IMIX has been working with organisations working in coastal communities, as well as those in Northern France, to enable them to meet the demands of the international press.

The summer of 2019 saw a spike in interest and IMIX was at the forefront of dealing with the media. As well as supporting organisations based in Kent and East Sussex which have been on the sharp end of the media requests, we visited Calais and Dunkirk to help them with filming requests from Channel 4, ITV and Sky News. We also worked with people who had made the journey across the Channel to tell their stories and put a human face to the debate. We created a messaging document and Q&A to help people respond to more challenging questions from the media.

The media interest in this area has continued throughout 2020 and we have convened groups to think through communications strategies as well as how they work with interested MPs from across the political spectrum. One of the greatest challenges we now face in terms of media relations and ensuring the narrative is balanced is how we identify, train and support people who have made this journey to tell their stories in a safe way.

Key learning points for the year

Our ambition often outstrips our capacity; this has led to the team being overstretched, to mitigate, we offer TOIL, emotional support via an online counselling service and encourage team members to take breaks. We'll explore how to rebalance our work over the coming year, part of this will be to have conversations with our partners to understand where they think our priorities should lie to make it easier to say no to some requests.

We believe the media is a powerful tool in influencing public opinion, and those pieces which have the greatest impact are those which are proactively planned with a media partner. The second half of the year has been dominated with reactive press work and this has meant we lost focus on proactive work, something we'll redress in the coming months.

As with many new, small charities, we need to focus in more depth on evaluation. During the last two financial quarters we employed a London living wage intern to help with media reporting which has enabled us to better demonstrate the types of media coverage we secure.

While we have increased our capacity, we are still unable to meet all the requests made of us and to deliver the local level support we know is much needed. We have however developed strong relationships with journalists and media outlets across the country in an attempt to address this.

While we have not made as much progress as we would have liked on making the UK a more hospitable and welcoming environment for those who move here, we are clear about our role in that endeavour and look forward to increasing our focus on this in the years to come.

We are however proud of the work which have done in presenting a more balanced, human view to some complex media stories, the new voices which have shared their stories publicly and our work in promoting the positive impact many people who settle in the UK make to their communities.

Our recent independent evaluation demonstrates that IMIX is a much-needed part of the migration sector.



FINANCIAL REVIEW

IMIX

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Total 2020
<u>Income from:</u>			
Donations and legacies	214,329	-	214,329
Charitable activities	4,092	160,833	164,925
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total income	218,421	160,833	379,254
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<u>Expenditure on:</u>			
Charitable activities	74,413	81,674	156,087
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net income for the year/ Net movement in funds	144,008	79,159	223,167
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Fund balances at 3 June 2019	-	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Fund balances at 30 June 2020	144,008	79,159	223,167
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the Period.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

IMIX

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2020

	2020 £	£
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets		3,039
Current assets		
Debtors	10,744	
Cash at bank and in hand	376,355	
	<hr/>	
	387,099	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(166,971)	
	<hr/>	
Net current assets		220,128
		<hr/>
Total assets less current liabilities		223,167
		<hr/> <hr/>
Income funds		
Restricted funds		79,159
Unrestricted funds		144,008
		<hr/>
		223,167
		<hr/> <hr/>

IMIX is creating a better conversation about our society: one which celebrates people who move to the UK and where we can all live well together.



Registered Charity Number 1183693

We are grateful for the ongoing support of our funders:

AB Charitable Trust
Barrow Cadbury Trust
Comic Relief
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation
Global Dialogue
Oak Foundation
Paul Hamlyn Foundation
Trust for London
Unbound Philanthropy

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