

**Study Tour “RESILIENT FUNDING: STRENGTHENING CIVIL  
SOCIETY BY FINDING ALTERNATIVE NON-INSTITUTIONALIZED  
FUNDING FOR INCLUSIVE HEALTH NGOS”**

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## CONTEXT

Prevention of infectious diseases such as HIV infection, viral hepatitis and tuberculosis for key populations, which include people who use drugs, sex workers, men who have sex with men, homeless people, migrants, etc., is one of the most important tasks of public health systems. Russia and EU countries, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have made a lot of efforts to reach out to key groups with their services. However, financial resources for communicable disease prevention programmes are extremely scarce. Governments do not always have sufficient monetary and non-monetary resources to provide comprehensive assistance to key populations. Though, the financial support from international donors in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region, including Russia, is constantly shrinking.

Today, for many Russian NGOs working in this field, the question is where to find the means to implement their daily activities such as project implementation, staff salaries, expert fees, rent and utility payments. The lack of funding for the most pressing issues eventually forces NGOs to withdraw. As a result, the people for whom the NGOs were the sole pillar remain without support.

Taking the above mentioned into account, it is crucial to explore alternative methods of fundraising. This is particularly important in a situation where there is less space for civil society. We see many organisations forced to choose public funding as the main one. This creates for NGOs a dependence on conditions of the state, which means either unification with state programmes, or impossibility to criticize actions of state authorities because of fears about the loss of funding.

The report was prepared by the entire team of participants who took part in the study trip.

Main sources of financial support to NGOs<sup>1</sup> working in the field of HIV prevention in the Netherlands:

(brief overview, more information in the description of each organisation's experience)

### Source № 1- government agencies

Almost all organisations we have met in the Netherlands receive some form of government support at various levels from the Dutch Foreign Ministry or from municipalities.

### Source № 2- Funds

One example of how to obtain funding is the Lottery Fund. Aidsfonds receives such type of funding. The amount of such contributions is several million euros a year. Restriction for ordinary Russian NGOs working "in the field", lies in the fact that today there are no infrastructure organisations in Russia that could accumulate funds and keep the topic of HIV prevention on the agenda of the federal level, attracting the appropriate amounts of resources.

### Source № 3- funds from businesses

Almost all organisations in the Netherlands attract corporate donor funds.

Organisations use special gala events, such as dinners for companies, politicians or show business stars. For such events, tickets are sold at a high price.

Dutch NGOs pointed out that in recent years, the profitability of such events has started to decrease, and with one euro investment it is possible to get only 1.5 euro profit.

The AmsterdamDiner Foundation collects 500,000 euros annually from events in this format. The NGO Dance4Life decided not to hold gala events any more due to their low profitability.

The unique experience of Dance4Life is establishing corporate partnerships: an NGO enters into a partnership with large and medium-sized companies, as well as with government agencies for the joint implementation of projects. Another good practice is to form and support a network of "medium donors" called Friends4Life. Currently, the network consists of about 70 people who provide financial as well as other types of support to Dance4Life. The annual contribution of a member of the network is 2,500 euro.

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<sup>1</sup> Classification is taken from the publication "On the Main Sources of Financial Support for Russian NGOs" by Anna Orlova, Chairperson of the Board of the "NGO Development Center" (CRNO).

## Source № - 4 – Financial support from Society (private donations)

An example of the collection of donations from Aidsfonds is an approach that is little used in Russia and debatable: Volunteers of an NGO ring at residential houses to tell the residents about the work of the NGO and ask for donations. The NGOs aim to form a pool of donors who donate regularly (subscribe to recurring payments).

One method, which is used by Aidsfonds, but has so far been little used in Russia, is that of conducting national-level campaigns to collect donations for HIV prevention programmes. It is important to note that first of all those campaigns were successful which aimed to raise funds for needs that were well understandable for the general public - for example, to make therapy accessible for children in African countries.

NGO Dance4Life runs campaigns to attract friends and acquaintances who are fond of sports, to participate in the iconic sporting event - the New York marathon. The participation in this event is paid for a donation.

An example of structural work on fundraising strategies was shown by the Foundation Wilde Ganze. The foundation works as a resource NGO for fundraising skills on how to work with businesses and with the middle class, that is, "wherever there are people with money".

## Source № - 5 - Domestic resources of NGOs

Russian HIV-service organisations have almost no experience in social entrepreneurship and other ways of earning money with their own resources.

MAINline showed participants a business project of the drug museum "POPPI Museum" in Amsterdam. The model is fully developed in terms of calculations, market positioning and promotion. We are now looking for investors for its launches. The goal of the project is to provide reliable, realistic information on drugs. It is also planned to use the museum as a platform to promote humane drug policy.

De Regenboog Groep's project "Amsterdam Underground" is about former homeless people and drug users earning money by touring Amsterdam, telling and showing the story of Amsterdam Underground and marginalized groups in the city (drug scene, sex-services, and gay-community). The guides, also from their own experience, show what changes have taken place in society in recent decades.

Aidsfonds



<https://aidsfonds.org/>

***About the organisation:***

The Aidsfonds Foundation was established more than 30 years ago. The organisation began as a Christmas fundraising event for people affected by HIV and AIDS. This subsequently became the AIDS Relief Fund (Aidsfonds). Today, it is one of the largest organisations in the Netherlands that helps people with HIV all around the world.

***The fundraising model: Marketing approach and private donations***

- *Information campaigns*

Information campaigns on HIV/AIDS. Most successful: “Dutch Kiss” (2014), “STOP AIDS NOW!”. (2017-2020). Less successful: "300 children are infected with HIV every day". (2016), "How to Survive the Menstruation of one’s girlfriend" (2015).

When planning information campaigns, it is important to remember that they should include personal stories with simple messages. To achieve its mission - an AIDS-free world by 2030 - Aidsfonds has developed a strategy for the period 2017-2021. In this strategy, its mission and vision are central: Aidsfonds works tirelessly to create an AIDS-free world. The slogan is "Every day, we work all over the world to end AIDS before 2030. "

- *Private donations*

The increase in the flow of funds began in the 2000s, after the organization began using the following channels for disseminating information about itself with the aim of attracting donors:

- o TV shows,
- o direct emailing (when a donation letter is sent to one’s mailbox),
- o telemarketing
- o "door-to-door" (when volunteers ring at apartments to ask for donations)

The most popular ways to attract donations in the Netherlands (2017):

- o "Door-to-door"
- o Face-to-face (when volunteers approach people on the streets, in squares, at malls and ask for donations)
- o Call for donation on TV
- o Digital channels (Internet),
- o Telemarketing.

Funds raised from private donors is money that Aidsfonds can spend where needed most

according to its mission, which is an undeniable advantage of these funds. In addition, these fundraising campaigns create a strong and recognizable image for the organisation.

***Sources of funding for the organisation in 2019:***

- o Government subsidies: 66.57%
- o Private donors: 18.10%
- o Transfers from lotteries and third parties: 9.90%
- o Inheritance: 2.81%
- o Funds: 2.59%

***Strengths and limitations of the model:***

- Strengths: As there are many donors, the donations are diversified, so there's no dependence on ne donor, like a major international foundation.
- Model limitations: A significant part of the organisation's budget is covered by state subsidies, and this, in turn, can become a problem when there's a financial and economic crisis, when assistance from both the state and private donors and businesses is decreasing.

***To what extent this model is applicable in Russia:***

In Russia, the Aidsfonds model is applicable; moreover, it is one of the best models for a non-profit organization in the field of HIV prevention. In the general view of the participants of the trip, the ideal option is as follows: 30% of the organisation's budget - private donations, 20% - money from businesses, 20% - public money, including Presidential Grants or regional subsidies, 20% - foreign donations money.

## Amsterdam Underground



<https://www.amsterdamunderground.org/en>

### ***About the organisation:***

The Amsterdam Underground project is an initiative of the network organisation De Regenboog Groep. De Regenboog Groep aims to make Amsterdam a place where everyone feels at home – also if you have psychological problems, are homeless, use drugs or have debts.

### ***The fundraising model: Social Entrepreneurship***

The project started 9 years ago, following the example set by a similar project in the city of Utrecht. Today, Amsterdam Underground is a cooperative that provides sightseeing services to non-traditional Amsterdam tourist destinations. All guides are owners of the business and earn their living from their work.

The guides themselves often had to live homeless and had to deal with the consequences of drug abuse. In these difficult circumstances, they have acquired knowledge and skills that are now used positively during walks in the city. Thanks to their own experience, the guides provide insight into the lives of people with a slightly different life path than the average inhabitant. The walks promote a better understanding of former drug users by the community and fights against the stigma they face on a daily basis. Working as a guide helps to increase self-esteem and self-confidence, and what is important as well, creates jobs.

Amsterdam Underground started its work with volunteers. At first, there were 2 volunteer guides, after 5 years there were 5-6 people. Excursions became paid and attracted tourists and students. Due to the fact that in the 80-90s, Amsterdam had a difficult situation with homeless people, street drugs and prostitution, many tourists and inhabitants want to learn more about this part of the city's history. For the project volunteers, it is a good opportunity for socialization and reintegration.

Amsterdam Underground guides have been trained by professionals in guiding skills. Initially, the tour guides-volunteers received EUR 12.5 per tour and were invited to a joint dinner once a year.

Since the tour guide volunteers have a difficult past, De Regenboog Groep conducted training sessions with psychologists to improve their self-esteem and self-respect.

### ***Sources of funding:***

Amsterdam Underground registered two years ago as a cooperative with a capital of EUR 80,000 for a period of two years. The sources of financing are the Municipality of Amsterdam, De Regenboog Groep and two business companies. Another important source of financing are clients who want to get to know Amsterdam from the other side. The excursion costs 12.5 euros per person.

### ***Strengths and limitations of the model:***

- *Strengths:*
  - o Very effective tool for socializing people with "social problems";
  - o The project shows that one should not be afraid to trust people from communities to solve their problems;
  - o The society is always interested in the "darkest" corners of history;
- *Model limitations:*
  - o The only limitation may be the lack of respect for human rights and freedoms in a particular state. Societies can only be free and strong in a free state.

### ***To what extent this model is applicable in Russia:***

To make the social entrepreneurship model in this area work in Russia, more efforts need to be made to eradicate stigma against vulnerable groups. To date, however, the situation is only getting worse, despite the years spent by civil society on getting rid of stigma.

# Dance4Life



<https://dance4life.com/>

## ***About the organisation:***

The main goal of Dance4Life is to empower young people. Dance4Life gives them the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to protect their health and make safer sexual choices.

The mission of Dance4Life is to invest in young people and amplify their rights and opportunities. Dance4Life believes that real change always begins on the inside, when each person discovers their inner strength and potential. This is what can truly change the rules of the game.

## ***The fundraising model:***

Dance4Life is focusing its fundraising efforts on its new 'Journey4Life' Empowerment Model, a sexual and reproductive health program for young people between 10-24 years old, based on the UN Sexual Education Guide.

Main fundraising models (in addition to institutional fundraising):

- Gala events
- Medium Donor Network
- Corporate Partnerships
- Peer—to—Peer

**Gala events** Until recently, these had been held every year for wealthy people who are in favour of protecting sexual and reproductive health and human rights (SRHR).

***The essence of the model:*** the organization of an event, with refreshments and entertainment, tickets for which are sold at a very high price; also, during the event there is additional fundraising and sale of auction lots.

***Strengths:*** extensive PR, drawing attention to the event and the organization's mission; media representatives are invited, and press releases are sent. This makes it possible to attract funds that the organization can spend on its needs and its missions, and there is no requirement to provide a report on how the money is spent.

***Lessons and limitations:*** this is a less profitable way to raise funds than others, since it requires serious investment of financial and human resources. Profitability is low, about 1.5 euros per euro invested. Since 2020, Dance4Life decided to abandon this type of fundraising, given its low profitability and the need to pay employees for six months to prepare it.

***To what extent this model is applicable in Russia:***

This model is possible when the organization's mission, as well as the NGO itself, are sufficiently promoted, and have the support of famous people and the resources necessary for implementation. It's important to attract rich guests by inviting famous people and celebrities, and providing an interesting evening program, delicious food, etc.

**Medium Donor Network**

Dance4Life supports a medium donor network called Friends4Life. Currently the network consists of approximately 70 people who provide financial and other types of support for Dance4Life. The annual fee is 2,500 euros. In addition, network members help establish contacts and connections with the right people, as well as providing material support.

***The essence of the model:*** middle-class people, supportive of Dance4Life's mission, are encouraged to participate in events of the network. Dance4Life sends them newsletters, organises for them to go on trips to countries where Dance4Life works (at the expense of the host party) in order for them to see youth projects in action, and organizes media appearances for them (on radio and TV, social media, etc.).

***Strengths:*** this model allows organizations to receive not only financial support that can be used on needs for which it is often difficult to get money from institutional donors (including employee salaries), but also qualified advice from specialists in different fields, while establishing useful contacts with new supporters. Many 'Friends' provide material support by searching for non-financial resources, such as communications, PR, etc. Supporters can be attracted using a personal approach; for example, you can ask if a potential supporter has children, and if they are teenagers, you can raise the topic of sexual and reproductive health and tell them about how Dance4Life addresses this problem. In order to find supporters, you need to become a member of business networks, go to events attended by business representatives, tell stories of the people you helped, engage them emotionally, and tell them about what specifically helped people.

***Lessons and limitations:*** This fundraising method requires constant work to maintain the network. It's important to communicate regularly with supporters ('Friends') and prepare success stories about people who received support from Dance4life. But in general, this model works very well for Dance4life, as the organization devotes a lot of attention to communications and public relations and has dedicated staff for this purpose.

***To what extent this model is applicable in Russia:***

Examples of such a model exist in the Russian Federation; the WWF has a network of medium donors, the Gold Panda Club (annual contribution - from 60 thousand rubles). Some large charities also have networks of supporters who make large donations. Charities must assess their ability to maintain such a network, assess how many supporters they can attract, who these

people are and why they will donate to your cause. Plan in advance how you will keep them, what their needs are (e.g. a desire to help, a sense of belonging to a big and important cause, good company, organization of interesting trips, etc.)

### **Corporate partnerships**

Dance4life enters into partnership with large and medium-sized companies, as well as government agencies, in order to implement projects jointly. Partnerships are graded according to the size of the partner's contribution. For example, premium partners are the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the CMA Foundation and the National Postcode Lottery. There are also key partners and ordinary partners, depending on their contribution. More information about partners can be found on the website: <https://dance4life.com/corporate-partnerships/>

***The essence of the model:*** The active involvement of businesses that share the mission and values of Dance4Life and/or are aimed at the same target group (youth), to cooperate in the implementation of Dance4Life projects. Cooperation with the National Postcode Lottery brings about 500,000 euros per year. To become a beneficiary of the lottery, Dance4Life writes a small bid every year and submits it before the prize draw. The funds raised are shared among several NGOs. Other partners also provide funds, as well as services and goods. For example, free or discounted hotel rooms for accommodation of event participants, airline tickets, branded clothing and souvenirs, condoms, IT-services and much more.

***Strengths:*** This model doesn't require very large investments, allows for long-term relationships to be established, and makes it possible to receive goods and services for free or at great discount. It promotes the image of NGOs.

***Lessons and limitations:*** It is necessary to study potential partners well, to find common interests, to offer cooperation on a mutually beneficial basis, such as a service in exchange for promotion. It's important to communicate regularly with partners, invite them to events, and inform them about activities and achievements. Where possible, assist in reaching the target group.

#### ***To what extent this model is applicable in Russia:***

Many Russian NGOs have similar experience, but, unfortunately, corporate partnerships are often underestimated by NGOs working in our field. It is very important to recognize the potential of this model.

### **Peer-to-Peer**

Dance4life uses the New York City Marathon as a means of raising additional funds from individual donors. The organization offers the opportunity to run in the marathon under the Dance4Life brand, for a fee.

***The essence of the model:*** attracting friends, acquaintances and friends of these acquaintances who are interested in sports to participate in the New York City Marathon, for money.

***Strengths:*** good PR, fundraising is not too difficult, readily-available funds which do not require a report to be made for the donor.

***Lessons and limitations:*** There is a need for a significant sporting event, an arrangement with the organizers, and organizational arrangements.

***To what extent this model is applicable in Russia:***

It's worth noting the experience of the organization Downside Up, which organized sporting events (such as a bike ride), and participants donated funds to the organization's programs. However this organization already had enough supporters, so organizing an event and raising funds for them was not a problem. Perhaps at the beginning it is worth holding a free sporting event, and when it gains popularity, organizing a collection of donations. The capacity of the organization should be taken into account, and the experience of other organizations should be studied first.

***Dance4life's KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISING:***

- If you want to influence someone, first understand them, and understand their world.
- A fundraiser who collects stories, knows them well, and can tell them with impact, can easily influence potential supporters and benefactors. Collect 15–20 stories, write them down, and use them.
- Go to corporate events and tell stories to people. 90% will fail, but amongst the remaining 10% you might hit the mark and find someone it resonates with. Try it many times. Individual donors – this is a very expensive programme and doesn't pay off until 5 years after you start. Weigh up your capabilities and resources.

MAINLINE

**MAINline**

PIONEERS IN HARM REDUCTION



<https://mainline.nl>

***About the organization:***

MAINline's mission is to improve the health and legal status of people who use drugs. For 25 years, Mainline has been disseminating medical information, conducting training, publishing a magazine about drug users' lifestyles, and working with partner organizations abroad, all within the context of reducing harm from drug use.

***The fundraising model: Poppi Drug Museum***

This model is a social enterprise, the aim of which is to inform and disseminate honest information about drugs.

In the future, through the work of the museum, the organization wants to reach the general population in order to discuss the topic of humane drug policy.

The museum will employ people who use drugs. In this way, they will address the social problems of employment of vulnerable groups. One of the aims of the museum is to strike a balance between cultural activity, entertainment and information, and generating a profit. When the museum starts, it is expected to attract a large number of tourists.

The museum will include four main activities:

- Interactive stands, including virtual reality (VR), which will display what a person experiences when using drugs.
- Debates.
- Movies.
- Art: artistic objects, photo exhibitions, information on the history of drugs, art exhibitions. The point of all this is to show the external pressure people suffer, which makes them use drugs to escape reality.

***Sources of funding:***

At the moment, MAINline is negotiating with various investors, but since the topic of drugs is very sensitive, communication needs to be adapted accordingly. MAINline has drawn up a business plan that is used when communicating with investors. Once open, the museum is expected to be funded by ticket sales.

### ***Strengths and limitations of the model:***

- *Strengths:* Socially relevant, will attract a lot of interest, will make it possible to help people who use drugs without restrictions.
- *Limitations of the model:* It is difficult to predict whether the museum will generate sufficient profit for it to be able to maintain itself.

### ***To what extent this model is applicable in Russia:***

In Russia, opening a drug museum would not be possible, since repressive drug policy would never permit anything resembling the Poppy Museum to exist. But the idea can be adapted; it could perhaps attract investment if modern art was used. For example, the Andrei Rylkov Foundation (Moscow) held a photo exhibition called “Life through the eyes of drug users”. This could be valuable if, for example, demonstrating the way that drug users suffer from withdrawal symptoms in police stations could promote access to drug dependency treatment. There was the idea of making a 3D adventure game, which are now very popular in Russia. These kinds of games can bring significant profits.

### **Interesting Facts**

- The cost of starting the museum is 150,000 euros.
- Once open, the museum is expected to attract up to 10,000 visitors a year.
- By 2024, this is expected to rise to 160,000 visitors a year.
- It's expected to begin creating a profit in a few years.
- Through the sale of tickets, the museum will be carrying out the mission of attracting the general population to pay for harm reduction services.

Wilde Ganzen



<https://www.wildeganzen.nl/>

***About the organization:***

The Wild Geese Foundation is a Dutch NGO founded in 1957 to reduce poverty and inequality through community-based initiatives. The foundation supports community-based organizations worldwide and their Dutch partners. The main focus of the organization's work is using co-operative fundraising to create a better future; they believe that communities should have control over their own development.

The Wild Geese Foundation puts to use their 60 years of experience in international development to promote responsible charity. The foundation supports social reformers who take action to combat inequality. It implements its programs through the provision of grants, as well as in-depth technical assistance, expert knowledge and networking.

***Fundraising model: Local fundraising***

The Wild Geese Foundation concentrates its fundraising efforts on civilians, working with private organizations and the middle class, since people who have money can be found everywhere and studies show they're willing to donate it. The main thing is to correctly formulate the fundraising approach, to make priorities clear. Which things are always necessary? Goods, money, and volunteer time. During a meeting, a masterclass was held on how to formulate a fundraising request, ways of finding the needs reflected in the requests and network analysis.

A participant of the masterclass was able to employ the information received to use personal contacts to create a hotline and helpline for sex workers. This demonstrates the opportunities available by searching and putting to use previously unused channels in unusual places. The master class participants were also able to see how, by resolving fundraising issues at the local level, it's possible to make vulnerable groups aware of your work and involve local donors at different levels.

***Sources of funding:***

For local fundraising it's important to pay attention to the people around you, because, as mentioned earlier, people with money are everywhere. It is also important to consider small and large organizations. To do this, make a list with all the organizations and people that, in your opinion, would be especially interesting for your work.

***Strengths and limitations of the model:***

- *Strengths:* A general analysis of the recent situation has shown that the way poverty looks in countries is changing: civil society is shrinking, foreign funding is decreasing, major donors are changing strategies, more rules are appearing, suspicion of foreign funds is growing, but at the same time, the size of the middle class is growing too.

***To what extent this model is applicable in Russia:***

The idea is definitely applicable, and the working group had several ideas on how to use this experience: translating the online materials of the Wild Geese Foundation into Russian, conducting master classes for organizations, using ideas within individual organizations.

# Amsterdam Dinner Foundation



<https://www.amsterdamdinerfoundation.nl/>

## ***About the organization:***

The Amsterdam Dinner Foundation is an organization that has set itself the goal of actively contributing towards creating a world without AIDS. A world without AIDS is a world in which groups in society around the world can lead healthier lifestyles. In other words: a world without AIDS will be closer to becoming a reality when people have access to good health care and medicines. This is only possible when there is demand (people should be able to receive / pay for medicines) and supply (medical centres / medicines).

## ***Fundraising model: Gala-Dinner***

Based on this vision, the mission of the Amsterdam Dinner Foundation is to actively engage the Dutch business community and the royal family in creating a world without AIDS. In addition to the business community, the Amsterdam Dinner Foundation is aimed at business and wealthy people who, in terms of business and / or historical past, are able to provide material support to the Amsterdam Dinner Foundation. The Amsterdam Diner Foundation does this by organizing a series of events throughout the year.

The Amsterdam Diner Foundation is a platform for business and wealthy people to support HIV / AIDS initiatives. AIDS is both a global and a national problem. The condition is gaining increasing interest in corporate social responsibility policies. The fight against AIDS is gaining increasing economic importance and is especially relevant for companies with branches or connections in developing countries. Finally, AIDS affects mainly young people in the productive years of their lives. This is a target group whose health and well-being are of great importance to business.

The Amsterdam Diner Foundation holds the Amsterdam Dinner every year, with the participation of more than 1,000 guests and 300 volunteers.

## ***Sources of funding:***

Sources of financing – sales of tables at the event. One table costs 7500 euros. In total, dinner is served to 100 tables, and it's held as an all-inclusive event, catering for 10 people per table. During just one gala dinner, it's possible to collect about 500,000 euros (after deducting the expenses incurred).

During this dinner various events are held, for example a lottery, donations to the project, and auctions.

***Strengths and limitations of the model:***

- *Strengths:* Dinner participants can get to know each other and make new useful connections. Guests make donations during dinner. As a rule, the event is impressive and attracts interest.
- *Limitations:* It's important to keep participants interested in the topic of HIV / AIDS.

***To what extent this model is applicable in Russia:***

It could be possible to use this model in Russia, since a large number of wealthy people, capable of making donations, live in the country. However, it's still difficult to say to what extent the topic of combating HIV infection in Russia would attract potential donors.