



## REPORT

### 5th International SoH Forum ONLINE 3 - 5 June, 2021



### Towards a Loving World Leadership and Governance for Well-Being

## Towards a Loving World

### Leadership & Governance for Well-Being

This was the theme for the 5<sup>th</sup> Spirit of Humanity Forum, and for the first time entirely online.

Up to 3,000 participants worldwide watched the live broadcast from the beautiful Harpa Concert Hall in Reykjavik, Iceland with contributions from Switzerland, Brazil, USA, UK, Lebanon, India and South Africa.



In her opening address, the **Prime Minister of Iceland, Katrín Jakobsdóttir** spoke of the Wellbeing economy Countries of which Iceland is a founding member: *"It is my steadfast view that the wellbeing economy and its wide-ranging values, where people's needs are made central, should be our guiding light to a more equal and sustainable future ...I wish you a good conference"*.



In his welcome, as host of the Forum, the **Mayor of Reykjavik Dagur B. Eggertsson** reminded us that, *"It is the 5<sup>th</sup> time that Reykjavik has hosted the Spirit of Humanity Forum since it was launched and I am extremely proud, as Mayor of the City, to be their host, because the City of Reykjavik has officially put its heart on peace and human rights issues, and we see it as the core of our local and international policies and programmes"*.

**It was a breakthrough** for the SoH Forum in many ways. Being entirely online for the first time was a steep learning curve! The challenge was to keep the spiritual dimension, feeling, and energy in the livestream and from the feedback we received it seems it was successful. Thanks to all who participated! The sea and birds flying by the studio at Harpa, provided a fitting backdrop for the

greatest contribution of all, which was the sincerity and depth with which the presenters shared. We felt a sense of closeness to all and our presence together served to truly uplift our spirits and offer wisdom in a world filled with seemingly unsurmountable challenges.

Over three days, we considered the possibility of LOVE in Leadership and Governance, our visions of global well-being, and the connection between spirituality and global systems. We heard inspiring new narratives from the areas of politics, media, environment, religion, spirituality, education, and science.



Particularly profound was the contribution of young people. In the dialogue between the **icelandic minister for Social Affairs and high school and university students**, it was recognised that it has never been more important to listen to the voices of young people. When asked what wisdom he would like to share with other ministers or other governments about education and children and teenagers, the Minister said, *"Don't be afraid to let children and young people join you at the table ... on an equal basis ...because you will not lose power, you will govern better"*.

It was very inspiring to hear leaders and young people talk about how love and spirituality are the basis of changing the world. It gives hope and reminds us that there are so many around the globe who realize that the power of love is the greatest power for transformation.



For the first time too, the Forum programme was co-created with our regional teams and partners. As we put our trust in each other, outcomes in the forum itself and in the wider world become increasingly effective. We have new supporting partners and more wishing to come on board with the Forum's work.



Most of those who created the programme did so on voluntary basis with their heart and soul. Co-operation and love made the Forum possible. It was moving to experience that when responsibility is shared there is a deepening of our pure motivation and engagement. The Forum is an instrument and so we let it fly!

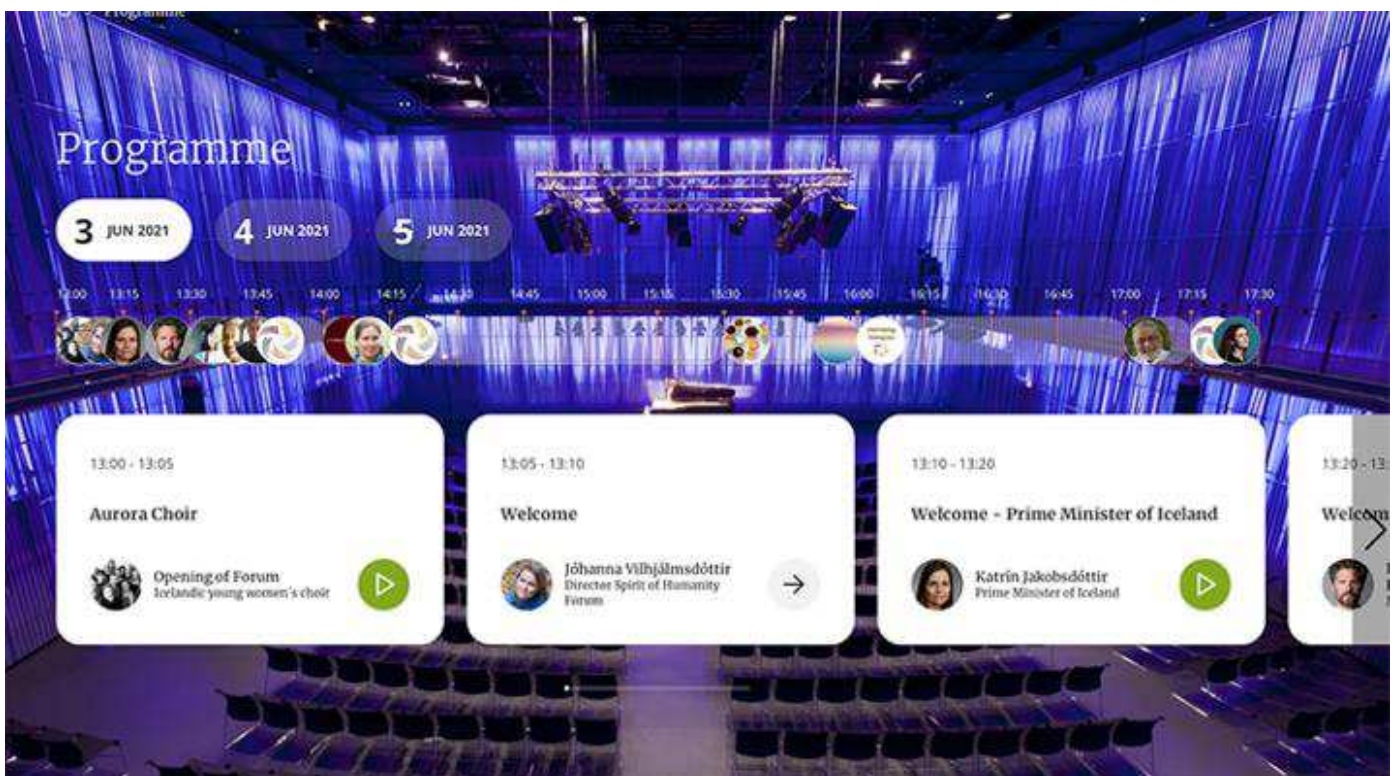
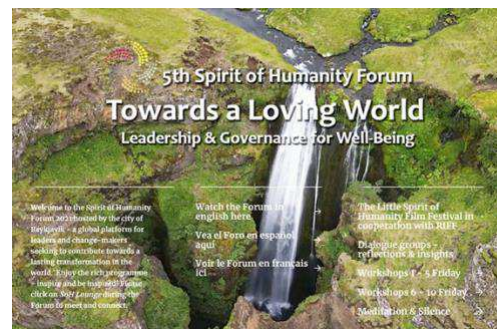
## The virtual venue

After the Forum the virtual venue was opened up to the public, for anyone who wanted to visit and explore the recordings of all the rich inspiring material which was kept here.

## The Little SoH Film Festival



A Little Spirit of Humanity Film Festival was organised in collaboration with Reykjavik International Film Festival. It is a beautiful collection of documentaries showing concrete examples of love in action. We can all be the change we are dreaming of and inspire change in the world. Everything starts from inside. Do not wait for others to create a positive change, simply begin where you are standing. Others will see you and follow your example.





*"We rarely use the words happiness and love in politics... but why are we in politics? What do we want to achieve in politics if not love and happiness."*

**Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, fr. Foreign Minister of Iceland**

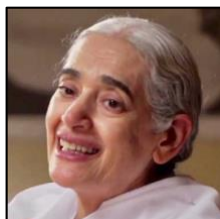


*"How does love support our differences? Building trust through open listening. I do need to be authentic to what I believe, but also be able to listen deeply to*

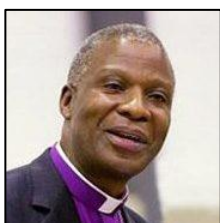
*where others are coming from. It is critical (when our views are challenged) to be able to step back and listen and not fall into reaction. To be able to meet as human beings, to develop a sense of appreciation for the other person and then build on that."*

**Peggy Dulany, Founder and Chair, Synergos**

*"Spirituality says that everything begins inside, and then it begins to manifest outside...Learning to love myself is not a sign of ego, but a sign of spiritual development. And when I can begin to love myself, I can start loving others unconditionally also."*



**Sister Jayanti, Additional Administrative Head & European Director, Brahma Kumaris**



*"Indeed, the world needs to hear about well-being and how we can participate, through our love, to create that well-being."*

**The Most Revd Dr Thabo C. Makgoba, the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town**



*"We must be aware when we do our work and carry out the responsibilities that it is very important to take care of ourselves.*

*You may nourish your soul, but if you do not look after your body it will create a problem. Lack of well-being will have an impact on others. Looking after the self is fundamental."*

**Gabriela Michetti, Former Vice President of Argentina, President, Ser Consultancy**

*"I was very impressed with what Gabriela was saying. I think it is a big issue... When working with high ambition and wanting to provide quality, one can end up working a lot and get people to work a lot. I think it is a big discussion."*



**Madeleine von Holzen, Chief editor, 'Le Temps'; Editorial director, 'Heidi.news'**

*"A scientific way of thinking can help me understand how the world is made up and what has happened in life, but it cannot tell me how I ought to relate with my fellows."*



**John, Lord Alderdice, House of Lords, UK**



*"We want to come up with the stories of how the coming together inspired by our faiths, different faiths and serve together through our different faiths, what does that look like? How simple can that be, and how powerful? How necessary and needed it is."*

**Dr Azza Karam, Secretary-General, Religions for Peace**



*"We are not fully aware of what we are not doing. We are not fully aware of the consequences of not playing our part. When this awareness comes, then the world will change."*



**Daaji Kamlesh Patel, Founder, Heartfulness**

*"We have to be curious. It opens our hearts to others. Anger doesn't allow us to be curious. Curiosity helps us establish a common language rather than an attitude where we don't want to know."*

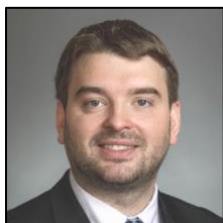


**Yves Daccord, Executive Chairman Edgeland's Institute @ Harvard, former CEO of the International Red Cross**



*"Living together as one and spreading and sharing love, and knowing that...the world is on fire, but we still have time, and I have a lot of hope. And I want to call you all to do that, to leave no one behind, to spread love and dreams and do our best so we can prevail."*

**Myrian Castello, Co-Founder, Dream Factory and Right to Dream Movement**



**Ásmundur Einar Daðason, Minister of Social Affairs and Children, Iceland**

*"When you involve young people, you don't lose power, you will make things better."*



*"Well-being all comes from the mind and the heart. When a person has a calm mind they live peacefully... To be kindhearted, not give with the expectation to get something back, not being sentimental, but even just a sincere smile can draw a smile on your face... To be kind, good and peaceful. ."*

**Karam Jaber, Secondary School student, Lebanon**

*"A fundamental part of what we do is based around empathy...the first step is really just listening, listening to other people and be prepared to be changed by those experiences."*



**Amin Khosravi, Urbanist, Co-founder urbz Geneva**

*"When I established 'Crear Vale la Pena' I realized that we were trying to make room to work on vulnerability, a vulnerability we tend to see in the less favoured social classes, but which is a kind of vulnerability that is also present in our societies at large."*



**Ines Sanguinetti, Co-founder and President, Fundación Crear Vale la Pena**



*"Moving towards a loving world requires each of us to embody love, peace and compassion. This can be encouraged by leaders who embody these values and lead by example, creating effective action and building a kinder world. Leadership and governance can be beautiful things, inspiring all to live fully and create a socially and environmentally just world."*

**Ella Gregory, High School Graduate, UK**

*"We need to learn to love - to expand love into developing energies we have within us which we can draw from and share with each other... we have to unite and relate to each other to develop our humanity in much fuller ways."*



**Prof Ursula King, Professor of Theology and Religious Studies**

*"Our world needs love more than anything else. Love that is transcendent, love that is inclusive, love that is accompanied by forgiveness, love that is unconditional."*



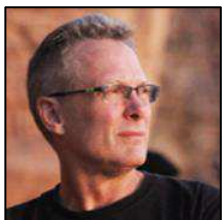
**Mohammed Mohammed, Senior Programme Officer, the Fetzer Institute**



*"I empathize with leaders who often experience substantial pressures and dependencies in their daily responsibilities and hope that the Forum can*

*strengthen all participants in their capacity to live and lead in accordance with their aspirations."*

**Dr Thomas Bruhn, Research Group Leader, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)**



*"Almost all love is local. Reach out to others, bring well-being to our neighbours, our communities."*

**Dr Kelly James Clark, Professor of Philosophy at Ibn Haldun University, Istanbul**



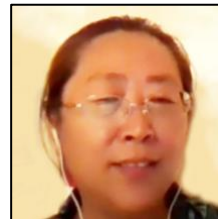
*"Other people can't change the systems for you - you need to participate - we all have personal responsibility because we are all part of the systems."*

**Martin Frick, Deputy to the Special Envoy for the UN Food Systems Summit 2021**



*"It is important to find the balance of listening to the public and listening to the experts."*

**Óttarr Proppé, fr Minister of Health, Iceland; musician, actor and bookseller**



*If everyone cultivates themselves, we can change the systems from a spiritual level - when you nurture the invisible you can change the visible."*

**Zhang Lanying, Executive Deputy Dean of the Institute of Rural Reconstruction of China, Southwest University, Chongqing**



*"Our rhythms are so fast and demanding. They are disconnected with the rhythm of nature."*

**Nicole Schwab, Co-Director, Nature-based Solutions, World Economic Forum**



*"I strongly believe that well-being starts inside. And we must change on the inside to change the outside."*

**Ragnheiður Gröndal, Singer and Composer**



*"Music creates a bridge for people to move out of thinking and into Presence. In my experience, the more powerful communication and connection with the essence of*

*each person happen through the live improvisation. I suppose this is because an improvisation is music created in the present moment."*

**Ranara Alhoundova, Pianist and composer**



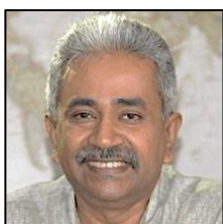
*"The paramount purpose of leadership and governance is to secure the well being of all life. The time has come for the power of love to replace the love of power."*

**Dr Rama Mani, Founder of Theatre of Transformation Academy, Co-founder Home for Humanity**



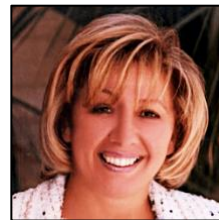
*"The Earth does not need to be saved. She just needs to be loved."*

**Jean-François Clervoy, CNES and ESA astronaut**



*"Inner transformation is fundamentally important to leaders, like us, who are dedicated to creating transformation in our societies. If we are to overcome the unprecedented challenges we face in the world today, we must share and care for each other ... let us create outer peace by creating peace within ourselves."*

**Dr Vinya Ariyaratne, President of Sarvodaya, the largest Community Development organisation in Sri Lanka**



*"We need to go beyond the academic understanding of leadership - leadership is about giving, generosity, love and about sharing a part of yourself."*

**H.E. Haifa Najjar, Senator in the Jordanian Parliament, Superintendent of Ahliya and Mutran International Schools**



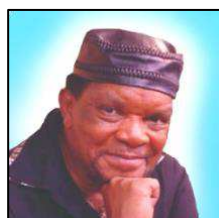
*"Leadership is self-knowledge. A true leader leads with humility, love and selflessness... we need to revive the spirit of co-operation. In Africa, we say that a rich man in a village is a poor man, but when he shares his wealth with everybody, he is a wealthy man, he does not need to build high walls to protect himself out of fear"*

**Father Dr Anselm Adodo, Founder of Pax Herbals, initiator of Pan-African Action Research Network for African Indigenous Knowledge in Nigeria**



*"It is now the time to be the best version of who we can be. We already know it, but we have to re-learn what it means to love and express it."*

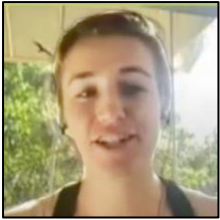
**Thais Corral, Founder of Sinal do Vale**



*"Love one another, touch someone's hand, head or shoulder and just tell him that you love him."*

**Pops Mohamed is a South African multi-instrumentalist, jazz musician and producer**





*"We need to put humanity at the core of leadership - we can have all the technical solutions in the world, but if we don't have the personal evolution in the centre of*

*our leadership we cannot go forward... love must be in the centre."*

**Katie Weintraub, Partnerships co-ordinator,  
Sinal do Vale**



*"Love can be cultivated through inner work, and it will always come back to you. People around you will respond. If you make your kindness visible, that builds trust.*

*Building trust leads to love and compassion, and listening is a very important way to build trust."*

**Prof Kristín Vala Ragnarsdóttir, Professor of  
Sustainability Science University of Iceland**



*"The only thing you have power over is yourself. So, if you dislike something, like greed, judgement or prejudice in the world, then it is your responsibility to adopt*

*something different. To adopt the values you would like to see more of in the world."*

**Karen Björk Eypórsdóttir, Programme Director of  
Sustainability, City of Reykjavík**



*"If we take love seriously ... our whole being is transformed, and our attention is centred on our ways in which we relate lovingly to each other, to the earth and to the cosmos."*

**Prof David Cadman, Quaker Writer, Professor of  
Practice at the University of Wales Trinity St. David**



*"Love is the pulse of the cosmos and the pulse of our own deepest nature. We are all connected to each other, to the earth and the cosmos through our participation in a miraculous way of life."*

**Anne Baring, Jungian Analyst, Historian and Author**

*Being a social neuroscientist and psychologist also working cross-disciplinary together with economists, educators, politicians, and health-care providers, I am repeatedly*

*astonished by the fact that in all these large-scale systems we have created, LOVE is somehow a taboo. We do not do research and do not like to speak about it publicly neither. However, it is the basis for humanity."*

**Prof Tania Singer, scientific head of the Max Planck  
Social Neuroscience Research Group**



*"Let us explore, share and co-create practices that enable us to develop as creative, autonomous, emotionally and spiritually mature people, to become leaders that embrace in the joy of caring."*

**Dr Miriam Subirana, Meditation teacher, Author and  
Professor at Ramon Llull-Blanquerna University**

*"To contribute to a transformed world requires we all commit to nurturing loving environments, compassionate cultures and leadership, and cultivating an experienced sense of our interconnection with all."*

**Michael West CBE is Senior Fellow at The King's  
Fund, London, and Professor at Lancaster University**





*"Now more than ever, we need to learn to create a loving world, a world in harmony, where well-being for all is our goal, and we seek to heal ourselves and our world in the process."*



**Richard Dunne, Founder and Director of Education at The Harmony Project**



*"As we emerge from the Global pandemic, this is a crucial time for leaders to embrace the importance of what it means to have the courage to soften and to face the changes we need to make in order to build a more humane and compassionate world for ourselves, for colleagues and for our communities. It is a time to listen and live from within the beauty of our own hearts."*

**Hester O Connor, Clinical Psychologist, Heartfulness Meditation Trainer**



*"The ability to lead, love, and help others, starts within each of us. Just as we should put on our own oxygen mask before helping others, a good leader needs the skills, time, and space to look after themselves and plan for a better world and future."*

**Judith Nelson, Physiotherapist, Journalist and Heartfulness Meditation Trainer**



*"We spend a major part of our time in some organisation, which serves consciously or unconsciously as an influencing context. The more constructive, appreciation, connectedness and love we experience in our work, the more we will spread it in our lives, families and networks."*

**Cornelis (Cees) J. Hoogendijk, Co-creator of Learning Organizations - OrgPanoptics & AI Academy**



*"Loving the world must begin with loving all life forms fearlessly."*

**Four Arrows, aka Dr Don Trent Jacobs, college professor, writer, and activist for Native American rights.**



*"Love, compassion and humanist consideration - caring for others - from local community leaders all the way up to the leadership of nations is a key element in moving towards a Loving World. We all have to take responsibility and work together to change our world."*

**Kelly Burks, explorer, poet, writer, photographer, designer, consultant, young offender counsellor and film-maker**



*"The Covid pandemic has given many of us time to go within and begin the journey of self-love and self-reflection, which enables us to live more consciously and be more loving towards others and Earth."*

**Vanitha Chandrasegaram, Pioneer Dramatherapist in Malaysia**



*"I fully agree that we need more well-being and that love is the force for fixing it."*

**Alan Gegenchatz, Owner and founder, Outobox AG Ltd**



*"In a time in which societies are shaken and threatened by global challenges such as climate change, the COVID pandemic, increasing populism, strong, global*

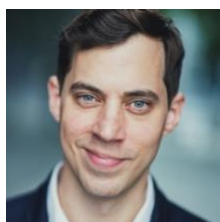
*communities are extremely important. For this, we need to create a culture of love and compassion and show genuine leadership towards it."*

**Carolin Fraude, works for the transdisciplinary research group 'A Mindset for the Anthropocene', IASS Potsdam**

*"The common theme that unites us all today is an understanding that the world cannot continue on its present course. What is needed is bold, enlightened, and selfless leadership with the courage to forge a new path in both the social and political spheres. But the great obstacle today is the painful erosion of trust in leadership and governance."*



**Martin Doblmeier, Founder and President of Journey Films**



Through my film work over the years, I have tried to tell inspiring stories of people who have made difference, and who have had a lasting transformation in the world."

**Eric Bednarski, film director, writer, and producer**



*"As directors of the Love Them First, a documentary featuring a Minneapolis principal fighting for students in*

*the city's longest-standing 'failing' school, we strongly felt the title of the film should reflect the force behind the school's triumphant turnaround. It all starts with love. Principal Mauri Friestleben once told us, "If you are in this work, you are in it to change the world." The story has now stretched from Minnesota, across the United States, and around the world to countries like Iceland, farther than we could ever measure as each child is transformed by a school that loved them, just as they are."*

**Lindsay Seavert & Ben Garvin, Directors 'Love them first'**

## Fridays for Silence

FRIDAYS for SILENCE



Building a subtle network of pure thoughts

Friday at 11.00am Iceland = GMT

Our weekly practice of connecting in silence has continued without break since the start of the pandemic, and silent reflections played an important role in the Forum as usual.

Welcome to stay connected with the Spirit of Humanity Community by joining us in **a simple spiritual practice** to empower yourself and help shift human consciousness towards core human values: **Every Friday for 15 minutes**

## Love quest

within the language of your soul  
tell me the term for love

or, if there is no word  
what is its colour  
texture  
taste?

how does it smell?

and does it come with sound  
or is it silent?

how does it make you feel?

is it a moving being?

does it belong to you  
can it be shared?

and where are its origins  
where was it born  
or was it present all along?

who would you be without it  
would you exist at all?

too many questions  
you are right  
and yet, I have a final one for you

which other field  
is truly worth exploring?

come  
let us travel  
all the way

till we become  
the answer  
to this quest

*Prof Alexander Scheiffer  
Home for Humanity  
6 VI 2021*





## Special thanks to the volunteers

The work of the Spirit of Humanity Forum could not be possible without the immense help from different parts of the world. We are so grateful for the spirit of collaboration we experienced, everyone really giving their best.

Media team from Heartfulness:

**Hélène Camilleri, Sylvie Berti-Rossi, Madeleine Olive, Rachel Nelson.**

Translators from the Brahma Kumaris:

**Matilde Prieto, Rosana Rosano, Adriana Butureira, Enrique Moreau, Solange Harcourt, Patricia Mayer, Valeriane Bernard, Isabelle Gautier, Christian Rubin, Marie Edery.**

Workshop administration:

**Barbro Esbjörnsdotter**

## Partners

**Brahma Kumaris, Lótushús Iceland**  
[lotushus.is](http://lotushus.is)

**City of Reykjavík**  
[reykjavik.is/en](http://reykjavik.is/en)

**Education 4 Peace**  
[education4peace.org](http://education4peace.org)

**Fetzer Institute**  
[fetzer.org](http://fetzer.org)

**Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace**  
[ghfp.org](http://ghfp.org)

**Heartfulness**  
[Heartfulness.org](http://Heartfulness.org)

**HOFÐI Reykjavík Peace Centre**  
[fridarsetur.is/en](http://fridarsetur.is/en)

## Supporting organisations

### 5<sup>th</sup> International SoH Forum

**Flourish Project**  
[www.flourishproject.net](http://www.flourishproject.net)

**Initiatives of Change**  
[www.iofc.org](http://www.iofc.org)

**Home for Humanity**  
[www.homeforhumanity.earth](http://www.homeforhumanity.earth)

**Lunt Foundation**  
[www.luntfoundation.org](http://www.luntfoundation.org)

**Synergos**  
[www.synergo.org](http://www.synergo.org)