



## Oasis Foundation Chair's Message 2023



This is an abbreviated version of the full Chair's Message, delivered at the AGM on 30 March 2023.

"2022 has been a very full and busy year, with some initiatives continuing, one or two coming to a close, and a number of new projects agreed by the Trustees for starting in 2023. The Trustees have ensured that the support given has continued to align with 'Towards 2025', the 5 year strategy that we reviewed and developed two years ago.

Our AGM was held on 30 March and our Annual Report was launched at the Oasis Practitioner Community gathering in September. At that meeting I said I felt there could be an opportunity for the Foundation to feel more connected and tangible with the initiatives being developed by Oasis and hey presto, only a couple of months later, Nick brought a proposal from the Directors that could do just that. They asked the Foundation to agree a new Bursary Scheme to support social change and social justice organisations in the Third Sector, particularly for organisations serving marginalised groups who have limited resources. The Scheme launched in July 2023.

As always, we are immensely grateful for the inspiring contributions of our Project Director, Chris Taylor, the expertise and commitment of our Trustees, and the pro-bono support we receive from Oasis Human Relations and its Associates.

Chris has overseen some significant projects during 2022, so I want to specially highlight the following:

- The oikos Rites of Passage prototype initiative is just one outcome of the long-standing partnership between Chris and oikos international, the global organisation run by students who are deeply committed to a fairer, more environmentally responsible world. In April, Chris and another facilitator spent 4 days with 15 of the oikos team (paid and volunteers) to work with young people at a point in their lives where they are ready to consider what their adult life might be for. As Chris says, it was a life-changing learning experience for many. The cost of holding the event was shared between a donation from the foundation and oikos. In subsequent follow-up meetings in December oikos is now considering when and how this process could be integrated into oikos' offering alongside their established Leadership programme.

- Chris has also facilitated and contributed towards the Prefigurative Social Action Inquiry. The Inquiry team held their second annual residential in November, with our social action narrator, Laurie Spafford attending via Zoom. The Foundation will continue to support them to meet in 2023, inviting others who also wish to be engaged with this radical and challenging inquiry.
- Following Oasis research and the papers written by Chris about navigating societal and environmental collapse which was made available online, four sessions of 'courageous conversations' were held by the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative with global business and academic leaders in 2022 year, facilitated by Chris and Lana Jelenjev, a freelance facilitator. These have been well received and another four are planned for over the coming year with additional funding provided by GRLI and an advisory group/sounding board to represent the voices from the Global South and staying edgy and courageous.
- Thanks also go to our trustee, Rick Trask, who has invested a significant amount of time pro-bono to help Migrant Action to shape a framework for the purpose, legitimacy and nature of Migrant Action's services. This aims to support the organisation in extending and re-imagining its vision for the future. It is extremely rewarding for us to support Migrant Action through such a vital part of its growth and to be engaged in work that is so aligned with the Foundation's purpose and priorities.
- During 2022 we were introduced to climate campaigner Jo Musker-Sherwood, who wanted to set up an organisation or network to support people working in the environmental sector that are under pressure and risk of burnout because of the nature of the work done. We agreed to fund an executive coach to work one to one with Jo and also to facilitate the group that was advising Jo on shaping the new organisation – Sustainability Wellbeing Environmental Network (SWEN). This phase, supported by Sonia, was very successful, so the trustees agreed to offer a one-off grant to enable Jo to contract directly with Sonia as an independent consultant for the provision of her work with SWEN."

**Mary Godfrey**