



# Supporting Armenia's bright tomorrow

IDeA is a multifaceted not-for-profit charitable foundation incorporated in Armenia. Our purpose is to run and support long-term economic, social and cultural programmes to strengthen and bring prosperity to Armenia and the Armenian identity across the globe, as well as to support other social impact initiatives around the world.



1

Set a higher standard for achievement and potential in an impactful, measurable way.

2

Create an open platform of engagement for local partners, international stakeholders, and the government.

3

Reinforce other projects and impact multiple sectors simultaneously.

4

Scale and create a chain reaction of impact over time.

5

Use a blend of profit and charity investment to ensure long-term self-sustainability.

6

Exemplify international best practices of design and management.

***Our six guiding principles have  
profoundly shaped our engagement  
with partners on work in which we  
place great pride and commitment.***



# Initiatives IDeA supports

What follows offers some insight on the types of initiative supported by IDeA in 2021



## 2021

FROM  
**SURVIVAL**  
TO **REVIVAL**

2020 was difficult for all, not least Armenia. After seven long months of the COVID-19 pandemic, September 2020 saw large-scale armed conflict erupt in and around Nagorno-Karabakh. A fragile ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan ended the six-week war. But not before 90,000 people had been displaced into Armenia in refugee-like conditions. Over a third of Artsakh's population was uprooted by the time the Armenian winter took hold. Whilst around 53,000 people had returned to Artsakh by late June 2021, many did so to find homes reduced to rubble, infrastructure destroyed and farmland rendered inaccessible by exclusion or munitions.

Humanitarian crisis, mass displacement and fragility became key pre-occupations for numerous IDeA partners in 2021. All recognised the need to resolve post-war issues, like security, stability, basic needs and displacement, if Nagorno-Karabakh is not to remain a region of tensions to the detriment of Armenia, Azerbaijan and the South Caucasus as a whole.

Much of IDeA's 2021 support was thus channelled towards humanitarian ends.



# AURORA

## HUMANITARIAN INITIATIVE

**The Aurora Humanitarian Initiative** was founded in 2015 on behalf of survivors of the Armenian Genocide and in gratitude to their saviours. A vision of its founders, Vartan Gregorian, Noubar Afeyan and Ruben Vardanyan, its work is driven by thousands of supporters and partners, including IDeA, which contributes across all of Aurora's major programmes.

Aurora seeks to address on-the-ground humanitarian challenges around the world with a focus on helping the most destitute. In doing so, it aims to transform Armenian historical experience into a global humanitarian movement of gratitude in action. Here, countless people around the world who have received aid in time of crisis are supported to express their gratitude by likewise offering aid to others in need.

Aurora Humanitarian Initiative has won international renown for its keystone program, the Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity. This global award recognises those who risk their lives, health and freedom to save the lives, health or freedom of others. Each year, one remarkable such humanitarian is awarded sizable funds and a unique chance to continue the cycle of giving by using that sum to support organizations that have inspired their humanitarian action.

### IN MEMORIUM: VARTAN GREGORIAN (April 8, 1934 – April 15, 2021)

*Aurora Co-Founder and member of the Aurora Prize Selection Committee, Vartan Gregorian was an outstanding Armenian-American humanitarian renowned for his inner strength and limitless reserve of compassion. An academic, educator, historian and mentor, Vartan had a passionate and inspiring commitment to preserving the power of our common humanity. His extraordinary life and work made a huge difference to many people across the globe. As such, his sad passing in 2021 was a cause for mourning worldwide.*

*Aurora paid tribute to this inspiring mentor and collaborator. It awarded \$70,000 to the 150,000 volume-library of the Mekhitarist Congregation of San Lazzaro in memory of Vartan Gregorian – a man who viewed libraries as temples of humanity's accumulated knowledge. Vartan Gregorian's astonishing legacy will continue to be commemorated.*







Fartuun Adan and  
Ilwad Elman

## Making “gratitude in action” literal

In 2020, the fifth Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity had been awarded in an online ceremony to **Fartuun Adan and Ilwad Elman**, a mother and daughter team leading the Elman Peace and Human Rights Centre in Somalia. 2021 gave these esteemed humanitarians a chance to collect their award in person. It also saw the beginning of a new cycle of humanitarian action through the work of the three organisations nominated by Fartuun and Ilwad for a share of the **\$1 million award**.

In Somalia, **Love Does** launched programmes to develop an all-girl leadership academy in Dhusamareeb, construct two schools in Dhusamareeb and Mogadishu, offer holistic support to abandoned babies and women with unwanted pregnancies in Mogadishu, and support survivors of sexual and gender-based violence Kismaayo. This work was expected to benefit over 500 infants, children, women and parents, as well as touching the lives of more than 3,000 families in Somalia's three largest cities. Meanwhile, its DRC operations saw Love Does begin to embark on the establishment of a nursery and primary school in Goma, North Kivu, using financing from the award. Staffed by local teachers and administrators, these facilities are expected to benefit almost 1,600 people in their vicinity. Love Does has elected to use Aurora's name in the title for its leadership academy and middle school in Somalia, as well as its DRC schools.

In DRC, **Panzi Foundation** financed over a fifth of its project work providing socio-economic alternatives to mining for children and survivors of sexual violence in artisanal mining communities. This work has involved renovating schools, offering small grants, organising solidarity savings and loan groups, and providing vocational training and human rights sensitisation, to the benefit of an estimated 4,000 people in South Kivu province.

In India, **Prajwala** contributed its share of the Aurora award to its work creating a normalised environment for social reintegration, and providing holistic healing and victim witness assistance for 215 child victims of sex trafficking and sex crime in Hyderabad.

*People become people  
through other people*

## Another cycle of giving begins

In April, at an event in the Matenadaran in Yerevan, Aurora revealed the names of five new humanitarians shortlisted for the 2021 Awakening Humanity Prize. Nominated by civil society organisations worldwide, these individuals are chosen by the Aurora Prize Selection Committee for their courage, commitment and impact. One such nominee then goes forward to become an Aurora Prize Laureate, overseeing the distribution of another sizable award in 2022.

# 2021 AURORA HUMANITARIANS



**Grégoire  
Ahongbonon**

Benin/Côte d'Ivoire

Mental health  
activist

**Ruby Alba  
Castaño**

Colombia

Land rights advocate  
and human rights  
defender

**Paul  
Farmer**

1959-2022, USA

Physician and  
healthcare  
activist

**Julienne  
Lusenge**

D.R. Congo

Journalist and  
human rights  
defender

**Ashwaq  
Moharram**

Yemen

Physician and  
humanitarian

***“Being heroic means to be persistent in trying to create a more peaceful world, however difficult or dangerous that might prove to be. If we want to see a better future, we must be persistent in our kindness, persistent in our compassion, persistent in our gratitude to those who help others.”***

***Benjamin Ferencz, Aurora Prize Selection  
Committee Honorary Co-Chair***

Their status as Aurora Humanitarians gave these individuals an international platform through which to raise awareness of their missions and the work of their respective organisations. Their stories – told as part of Aurora's annual “Conversation with the 2021 Aurora Humanitarians” Dialogue – are humbling. They inspire hope, courage and compassion in a way that readers of this annual report are encouraged to experience for themselves.





Julienne Lusenge

In October 2021, the sixth annual Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity was awarded to **Julienne Lusenge**, co-founder of Women's Solidarity for Inclusive Peace and Development (SOFEPADI) and Fund for Congolese Women (FFC). Julienne and her organisations have fearlessly brought to justice over 800 perpetrators of violence, and provided holistic medical care, including legal, psychological and socio-economic reintegration support, to over 7,500 survivors of sexual violence in eastern DRC.

This year, Julienne received a \$1,000,000 prize grant, nominating three organisations that support grassroots women's initiatives, empower survivors of gender-based violence and reintegrate internally displaced persons, as beneficiaries.

In light of the acute humanitarian situation triggered by the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war, Julienne also generously contributed 25% of the 2021 Aurora Prize award fund to entities addressing urgent humanitarian issues in Artsakh. This contribution was subsequently matched by Aurora Co-Founders to raise the total sum offered to \$500,000.

Between April and November 2021, Aurora received a further 633 nominations for the 2022 Aurora Prize, spanning 62 countries including Armenia, Brazil, Czech Republic, Georgia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, the USA and Ukraine.

## AURORA PRIZE CEREMONY IN VENICE: "REVIVING TOGETHER"

Between 8 and 10 October 2021, Aurora held its annual Aurora Prize Ceremony, entitled "Reviving together" on San Lazzaro Island in Venice, Italy. Home to the monastery of the Mekhitarists, an Armenian Catholic congregation, since 1717, Venice is of great historical significance to Armenians and one of the world's most prominent centres of Armenian culture. The history of the successful development and integration of Armenian communities into the region centuries before echoes the complex and compound identity defining the modern Armenian people and their global impact.

The selection of this venue marks the first time the Aurora Prize Ceremony has taken place in Europe. It was motivated by the extensive connection between this universally important cultural site and the spirit of Aurora, with its deeply embedded respect for the human life.

## Building a global network of humanity

Aurora's flagship Awakening Humanity initiative acts as a platform for numerous other activities to which IDeA has been proud to contribute. These activities are broadly aimed at strengthening global humanitarian thought and action across the globe. They include the following:

Regular **Aurora Dialogues** allow international humanitarians, academics, business and civil society leaders to seek solutions for the most pressing humanitarian challenges. In addition to Aurora's annual "Conversation with Aurora Humanitarians", 2021 saw Aurora convene dialogues capable of mobilising ideas and networks on two core humanitarian themes for the year: health security (the humanitarian impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic) and the crisis in Artsakh. These talks brought together local and international stakeholders. This helped to optimise the reach and thus impact of both, through the development of actionable ideas and solutions capable of delivering positive change.



*"Being here, with these extraordinary humanitarians whose spirit motivates them to save others, underscores all the ways in which we can help others not only survive, but revive, which is the theme of our gathering this weekend, and eventually, thrive."*

*Noubar Afeyan,  
Aurora Co-Founder*





**The Aurora Community** brings together selfless individuals doing vital work on the local level, providing them with a much-needed support system. Launched in December 2020, this project remains in its early stages, but work began in 2021 to find ways of building connections between like-minded people and offer the kind of support they are looking for.



**Aurora Grants** honour the memory of Armenian Genocide survivors' saviours by supporting educational and humanitarian projects and preserving Armenian heritage. In addition to the award of numerous individual scholarships for underserved communities or disciplines, 2021 saw Aurora grants contribute \$10,000 to Armenia's repository of ancient manuscripts, the Matenadaran. The grant aims to help create a Digital Matenadaran, increasing the repository's accessibility by facilitating the presentation of its main exhibition hall online.





**The annual Young Aurora prize** likewise saw the award of \$4,000 – increased to \$5,000 by a generous supplement from impact investor and social entrepreneur, Veronika Zonabend – to Eswatini-based Waterford Kamhlaba UWCSA. The group's winning project, "Seeds of Hope", seeks to empower young people at the Malindza refugee camp by creating a youth hub that serves as an online education centre and social space.

***"We put so much work into this project. This gives us the hope that we can be changemakers and that our voices can be heard."***

***Prince, Waterford Kamhlaba  
UWCSA team member***







## Aurora for Artsakh

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The violent conflict in and around Artsakh in late 2020 was met with profound shock and sorrow by Armenians, and their friends and partners worldwide. Having learned the lessons of our shared humanity through our history and personal experience, many Armenians sought to assist urgent humanitarian relief efforts. IDeA channelled its own support through Aurora Humanitarian Initiative and the Hayastan All Armenian Fund.

Aurora's direct assistance to Artsakh had started with 5 projects in November 2020 and an appeal for further proposals. Thus began the Aurora for Artsakh programme for those affected by the 2020 Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) war.

Early humanitarian support for Artsakh was initially implemented through Aurora's #AraratChallenge movement – a global crowdfunding initiative addressing humanitarian needs in underserved communities. By February, Aurora had directed over \$470,000 in aid towards 47 different projects for Artsakh, and was actively working to expand the programme's portfolio.



At this stage, it was clear that more strategic solutions were required to secure the sustainability of interventions and ensure long term impact. This would entail restoring infrastructure, supporting small enterprise and boosting the economy. By March, Aurora had already begun to shift gears accordingly. It expanded the scope of its support from immediate humanitarian needs to long-term social benefit with 32 urgent humanitarian aid projects (provision of blankets, food, ambulances, heaters), 11 infrastructural restoration initiatives (water, electricity and hospital restoration) and 14 social development programmes, including education and job provision. By late April 2021, IDeA was among those able to help Aurora boost that provision to \$1.7 million in support of 75 projects.

In June 2021, a new round of Aurora support was announced for 9 projects that were the direct product of the “Partnership for Artsakh” *Aurora Dialogue* held in Dilijan only the month before. Spanning objectives such as empowerment, social reintegration, healthcare and education, these projects included the founding of a bakery, beekeeping, drama and martial arts training.

## **AURORA DIALOGUES: “PARTNERSHIP FOR ARTSAKH”**

**In May 2021, Aurora mobilised its humanitarian network to host dozens of highly prominent and experienced public officials, academics and civil society professionals for the first “Partnership for Artsakh” Aurora Dialogue in UWC Dilijan College. An event calibrated for action, the Dilijan dialogue facilitated the identification and analysis of primary needs in Artsakh. It included exchanges on best practices, as well as the establishment of partnerships and plans during workshops on healthcare, education, culture, social issues and economic development.**

**This dialogue continued in September with participants reconvening in Stepanakert to present the results of the earlier workshops and canvass new proposals for interventions. Tangible results from May’s discussion were already in evidence. Projects supporting sewing and carpet weaving had begun, as had the training of 75 community social workers further to a resilience concept paper approved by the Artsakh Government.**

**Overall, the Aurora dialogues established and strengthened ties between stakeholders, facilitating better coordination and launching joint programmes of work.**





# 2,600,000

## Number of Aurora Humanitarian Initiative beneficiaries worldwide by end 2021

IDeA supported Aurora in further cementing its commitment to assisting the people of Artsakh by establishing an office in Stepanakert in August. This office was intended to both enhance Aurora's humanitarian coordination efforts and act as a space for local partners to share their implementation experiences. The complex and collaborative nature of humanitarian efforts in Artsakh meant that by the year's end, Aurora was implementing 80 projects with 55 local and international partners, having already helped some 130,000 people in Artsakh.

On the eve of 2022, Aurora secured a further \$25,000 to ensure food security for displaced persons in the region through the proceeds of a highly successful and well attended Christmas Charity Market in Yerevan – a joint venture with UN Armenia and in partnership with the Tovmasyan Charity Foundation.

***“To implement all of this, we had to combine the projects and raise funds. Aurora gave us a platform, an opportunity to unite, discuss and make joint decisions on the directions we must prioritise.”***

***Ara Babloyan, Scientific Director, Arabkir Joint Medical Center-Institute of Child and Adolescent Health***



Meet Aurora Humanitarian Initiative.  
Visit: [www.auroraprize.com](http://www.auroraprize.com)





**2021****STILL  
STRIVING  
TO THRIVE**

As stalled economies diverted resources to address immediate needs into 2021, the global pandemic's impact on sustainable development financing became increasingly apparent. Whilst IDeA too found its priorities squeezed, it nevertheless sought to continue supporting more far-sighted endeavours capable of generating big-picture impacts, as best it could.

From innovation to health and education, IDeA sought to keep its vision of a more prosperous Armenia firmly within its sights.



# Helping to drive Armenian innovation

**Foundation for Armenian  
Science and Technology**

**FAST** DISCOVERING  
THE FUTURE

The Foundation for Armenian Science and Technology (FAST) is an exciting and ambitious innovation platform designed to usher in Armenia's scientific and technological rebirth. Originally conceived of within the framework of Armenia 2020, FAST has been operational since 2017. It aims to drive Armenian science, technology and innovation towards transforming the country into a top 10 global innovator, and a top 5 Data Science and Artificial Intelligence innovator, by 2041.



Central to FAST's work is a belief in collaborative endeavour and a firm conviction in the tremendous talent and capacity of Armenians in the scientific and entrepreneurial realms both within and beyond the country's borders. Stimulating and channelling this, and the country's other potentials, is FAST's mission.

Whilst ambitious, FAST is highly strategic and data driven. It uses a systems approach to its programming by conceptualising Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) as an ecosystem founded on the three pillars of education, research and commercialisation. It is these pillars that the platform targets through its project development in creating educational opportunities in science and enterprise, connecting scientific and financial networks, and facilitating the conduct of pioneering research. In doing so, an integrated ecosystem for Armenian STI advancement begins to emerge.

FAST's approach of nurturing cross-institutional and cross-sectoral synergies capable of multiplying impact aligns entirely with IDeA's own guiding principles. As such, IDeA is a strong supporter of FAST across a number of streams.



***“Education and knowledge acquisition have been foundational elements of Armenian identity and culture for centuries. As today’s Armenian Republic emerges from its past, there is a growing, historic thirst to acquire knowledge, in particular about science and technology, and to apply it to become a productive and competitive nation. After 20 years of working on development projects in and for Armenia, we founded FAST, to strengthen the country’s innovation ecosystem and to connect it to global networks, in particular through Diaspora Armenians working in the relevant fields. In a short time, through its scholarship grants, training programmes, startup incubation and acceleration initiatives, and several other efforts, FAST has emerged as an important catalyst for progress.”***

***Noubar Afeyan, FAST Co-Founder, Founder and CEO of Flagship Pioneering, and Co-founder and Chariman of Moderna Inc.,***

## Taking stock of past, present and future

FAST was not immune to the disruption brought by the global pandemic in 2020. Fundraising and project implementation was more challenging, given restrictions on finance and movement. 2021 continued to wrestle with these difficulties, but was also increasingly characterised by revival, as well as reflection.

In 2021, our partners at FAST took stock, as part of their three-year implementation review. After vigorous planning and preparation, 2018 had seen the launch of initiatives designed to sow the seeds of innovation in Armenia through both stimulation and connectivity. By 2021, programmes like FAST's ADVANCE Research grants, and its Science and Technology Angels Network (STAN) had begun the early stages of maturation. Spin off projects and initiatives had begun to develop. Observations and lessons were assimilated into new and repackaged programmes.

### GENERATION AI

FAST stepped into 2021 with a clear conviction: AI advancement will profoundly impact Armenia's economy. It must therefore be a core trajectory for intervention. FAST resolved to grow Armenia's human capital in AI and data science, starting young.

2021 saw FAST begin helping to reshape Armenia's approach to building education to align it with future societal needs by building a pipeline for AI researchers and innovators from high school. The earliest stages of the conceptualisation for Generation AI began. The establishment of an AI pipeline was recognised as being a full-package activity that assumes the engagement of public and private actors, as well as foreign and diaspora expertise. It thus requires implementation in consortium with other educational organizations, including both high schools and universities.

Having begun to sow the seeds for this project in 2021 and driven its conceptualisation into 2022, FAST anticipates piloting it across 10 high schools throughout Armenia in 2023. It will be delivered in the form of two programmes – a basic and an advanced programme. Whilst the basic programme will deepen maths and computer science knowledge, the advanced scheme will introduce students to advanced maths and computer science, and basic machine learning and deep learning. It will also offer practical and soft skills development opportunities.





## ADVANCE Research Grants

IDEA has tried to maintain continuity in supporting FAST over 2021. This has included support for its ADVANCE Research Grants for the Armenian scientific community. Designed in 2020, the scheme aims to bring top scientific expertise to Armenia by connecting international Principal Investigators (PIs) with local researchers and students. New research teams of two to seven researchers are formed under the direct supervision of international PIs, who define the research project and lead the teams' work. Teams receive comprehensive long-term institutional and financial support in the form of grants and training, and work on producing papers published in international peer review journals.

**ADVANCE grants** began with two projects in the fields of biotechnology and machine learning, formed under the leadership of prominent Principal Investigators Garabed Antranikian (Hamburg University of Technology, Germany) and Arnak Dalalyan (ENSAE Paris, France). In 2021, preparatory work began to scale this programme further – work that was to be continued, together with fundraising, into 2022.

## Advancing Armenia's dynamic future in biotech

The circular economy is central to efforts to both manage harmful waste impacts and conserve resources. Armenia's industrial waste management remains underdeveloped. Here, cheese, wine and beer producers alone generate well over 10 million tons of organic waste annually. Despite this waste being composed of numerous high-value organic compounds with potential applications in materials, packaging, food, feed, and energy generation, to date, it has more often simply been released into the environment, sometimes as fertiliser.



In September 2020, a Biotechnology project team under the leadership of Principal Investigator, Prof. Garabed Antranikian was formed within the framework of FAST's ADVANCE grants. The team is composed of seven senior and junior researchers from different departments at Yerevan State University and the Scientific and Production Center "Armbiotechnology" of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia. Their work touches on aspects of enzyme technology, microbiology, and process engineering to develop sustainable and environmentally friendly processes for whey, wine, and beer-producing companies. The project will provide various microorganisms and enzymes to be deposited in a culture collection and applied as a tool in related industries. In doing so, it will aim to advance scientific methods in analytics, genetics and biochemistry.

In connecting Armenian researchers, industrialists and academics with international laboratories and conferences, this project helps to establish an international network of bioeconomics, in which Armenia can assert its relevance.

## **B-ON BIOTECH PROTOTYPING LAB**

At the start of 2021, Armenia's Life Sciences sector had the potential to allow for notable startup generation. With existing human capital and accessible startup venture funding available in Armenia, the major obstacle to innovation remained the availability of accessible and centralised wet lab facilities. In 2021, FAST began work on developing its concept for the B-On Biotech prototyping lab – a first step in responding to this shortfall.

The B-On laboratory will offer biotech innovators the chance to transform their ideas into impact by providing a co-working space for rigorous laboratory research. The lab aims to build a biotech community of startups, students, researchers, international domain experts, and investors, who can help B-On community startups with strategic advice, networking, and access to early-stage funding.

2021 saw FAST advance the procurement phase of this project, seeking collaborators, donors, and government support. Physical lab space located in the Armenian National Agrarian University was secured and renovated in collaboration with both the University and the Armenian government. Over forty kinds of specialised biotech equipment were acquired and installed with the aid of donors.



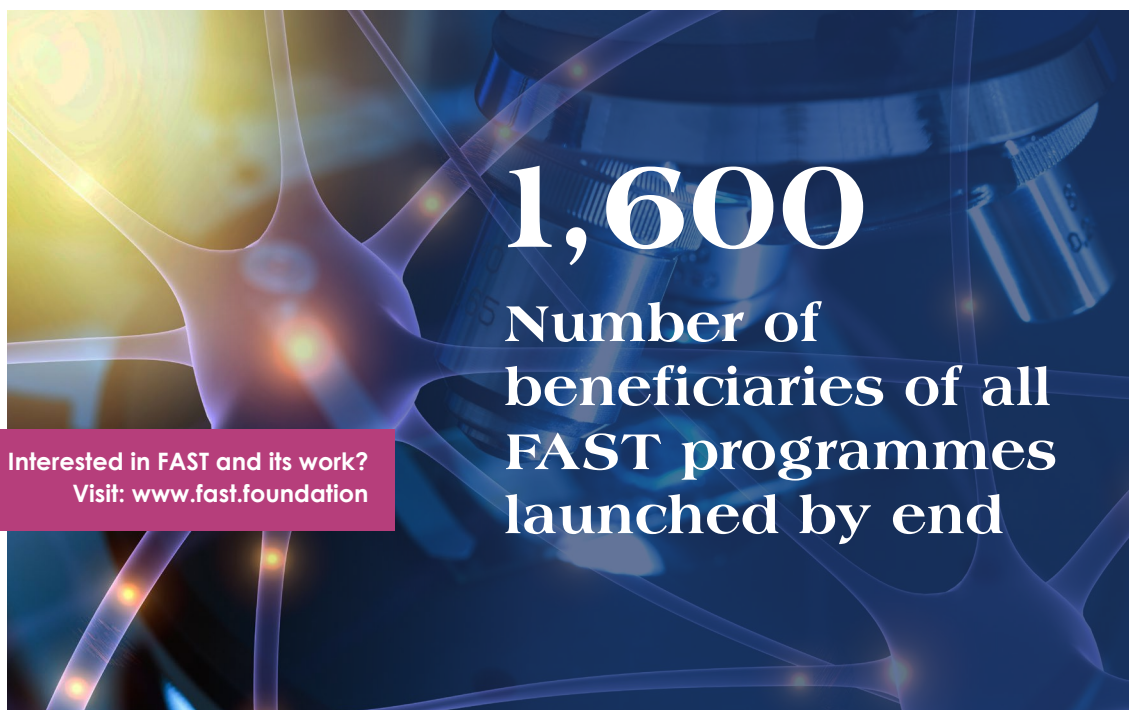


In 2021, the project team reported on the early stages of its progress. This first research phase had been focused primarily on whey and wine industry waste, and sought to develop methods to transform such waste into accessible substrate for microorganisms and enzymes.

The team also conducted a number of workshops designed to equip students and researchers with knowledge of modern techniques in microbiology, biodiversity and enzymology, as well as introducing them to lab experimentation and group work. To date, these workshops have benefitted over 60 people including students, researchers and industry representatives.

***“Keeping the perfect balance between theory and practice, this workshop provided knowledge not only about science, but also about the R&D industry. The professional skills of lecturers are on the highest level...”***

***Marina Timotina, PhD student at Russian-Armenian University***



Interested in FAST and its work?  
Visit: [www.fast.foundation](http://www.fast.foundation)

**1,600**  
**Number of**  
**beneficiaries of all**  
**FAST programmes**  
**launched by end**

# Transforming Armenian healthcare



IDEA supports the Armenia 2041 development agenda to strengthen Armenia and the global Armenian nation. That agenda – now being taken forward collectively through The Future Armenian Initiative – was informed by a McKinsey & Co analysis of the current macro-economic conditions in Armenia and beyond. The analysis highlighted healthcare as one of five priority sectors for development intervention.

## Health Network for Armenia (HENAR) Foundation

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The HENAR Foundation was established in late 2021 as a platform to contribute to the sustainable development of healthcare provision in Armenia through the transformation of the healthcare ecosystem. HENAR seeks to unite representatives operating in this space by promoting transformative initiatives and supporting programmes executed through public-private partnership.



## Breathing life into a solution

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted our dependence on the availability of healthcare, its effective administration and our ability to develop and deploy vaccines at speed. The importance of investment in healthcare was firmly underlined – a realisation driven home further by the additional strain put by the Artsakh war on Armenia's own healthcare services.

Understanding both the significance and urgency of the need for reform, the summer of 2021 saw IDeA work with colleagues, partners and local stakeholders to conceptualise and establish an entity capable of facilitating an efficient and resilient healthcare transformation. HENAR Foundation opened its doors at the end of 2021 following many months of strategic planning, mission and vision building, and early networking, to which IDeA, with others, contributed its time and resources.

## CONTRIBUTING TO ARMENIA'S PRIMARY CARE TRANSFORMATION

Primary healthcare forms the foundation for Armenia's healthcare system. However, early research for HENAR identified this core sector as being in urgent need of reform: around 22% of premature deaths in Armenia relate to non-communicable disease, and 89% of public healthcare spending is paid out-of-pocket, with over 16% of households spending 10% of their income on health. Primary healthcare services are significantly underused due to bypassing by patients, and where they are used, there is over-referral to specialised care.

Having highlighted this sector as one in need of intervention, HENAR has since offered project management support to the Primary Care Strengthening Task Force. Chaired by the Armenian Ministry of Health, this task force has used 14 strategic and operational leavers from the WHO assessment framework for national health systems to identify 127 major gaps in Armenia's primary healthcare provision. Over one strategic session and three workshops involving over 20 healthcare professionals, 2022 has seen the Primary Care Task Force (composed of 10 experts), codesign 192 recommendations for addressing these gaps. Sixty-nine of these have since been prioritised by government and included in its mid-term action plan for 2022 to 2026.

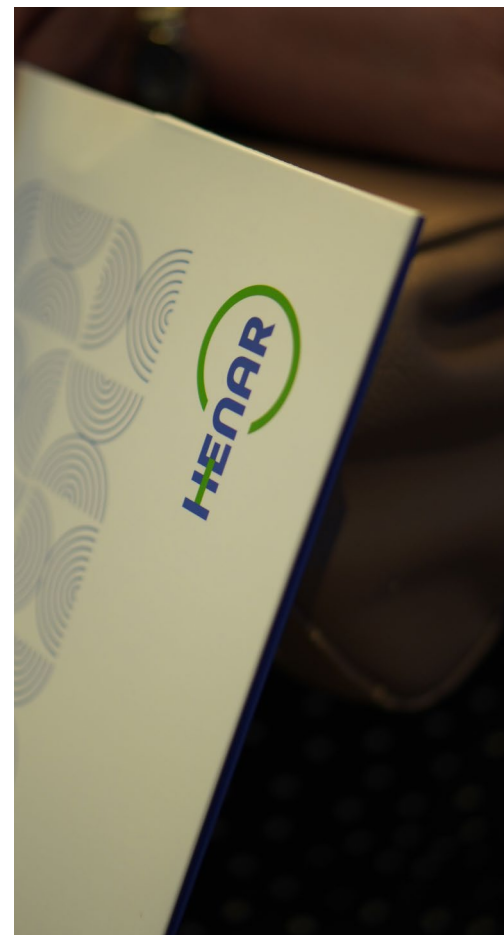


In developing the concept for HENAR it was recognised that the core task of the Foundation in the medium term would be working with the system itself, rather than its beneficiaries. This entailed engagement with policy makers and the development of a network of partners capable of combining knowledge and skills both within and beyond Armenia.

HENAR's priority areas for intervention were identified as encompassing primary healthcare and health security, as well as talent development and digital transformation. A short-term focus on assessing needs and gaps, and developing project pipelines in these areas, would be required.

The impact of this early work on orienting HENAR has been evident into 2022. The Foundation has established formal and effective working relations with the Armenian Ministry of Health and the National Institute for Health, becoming a trusted partner in transforming primary healthcare.

HENAR's approach supports and complements IDeA's own guiding principles in a variety of respects. In particular, its canvassing of best practices in comparative systems through diaspora experts, its benchmarking of case studies and its cooperation with the WHO, exemplify its drive to raise standards, embody best practices and create an open platform for local, international and government stakeholders.



Want to find out more  
about HENAR Foundation?  
Visit: [www.henar.am](http://www.henar.am)





# Advancing education in Armenia

Armenians make Armenia. Investment in education is thus a direct investment in the country's future. Interventions enhancing the availability and quality of education in Armenia cut across virtually all IDeA-supported programming in 2021.

IDeA is a firm advocate of educational excellence. It is thus a proud proponent of UWC Dilijan College and its work. In 2021, IDeA deepened its support for educational excellence in backing the establishment of a new center for high-quality executive education in Armenia: the "Matena" International School of Leadership and Professional Development.



## Matena International School of Leadership and Professional Development

Launched in December 2021, Matena International School seeks to become a leading center of professional education both for Armenia and the region. In doing so, it intends to create a ripple effect through the gradual reform of professional standards across the board.

In 2021, a clear role had become apparent for an organisation capable of delivering high quality executive education to meet the novel and complex challenges currently facing professionals in Armenia's public and private spheres. Executive education was underdeveloped in Armenia, with most professionals simply seeking professional development training abroad. This status quo risked limiting Armenia's reform and development potential in both the public and private spheres, stifling the dissemination of best practices in Armenian professional life.

With the formation of a partnership between Matena founders (IDeA Charitable Foundation and Professor Ruben Hayrapetyan), the concept for “Matena” International School of Leadership and Professional Development emerged. Collaborating with a wide network of partners both in Armenia and abroad, IDeA contributed time and resources to Matena’s establishment. It thus helped to kick-off a highly intensive early process of team, academic and advisory board building, as well as branding and development.

Having thus facilitated early-stage networking with top professionals within Armenia and the Armenian diaspora, Matena progressed its mission much faster than expected. A highly experienced expert based was rapidly acquired drawing on prominent business and public administration leaders at home and abroad, who could thus offer a hybrid view on best practices nationally and internationally. IDeA’s endorsement of Matena with government authorities also facilitated greater trust in the seriousness and quality assurance offered by the initiative.

***“Participation in Matena programmes will contribute not only to the development of individual leadership abilities, but also to the transformation of organisations and communities.”***

***Tigran Mnatsakanyan,  
Matena Academic Director***







An early MoU with SKOLKOVO School of Management began the highly productive cocreation of initial programmes. It has since been rapidly followed by further partnerships with other top international business and management schools, including Stockholm School for Economics (Sweden), IMD Business school (Switzerland), ESMT Berlin (Germany), HEC Montreal (Canada) and IE Business School (Spain).

Whilst IDeA provided initial financing for Matena, wider appreciation of the value of its mission quickly saw further large donations made by major donors. Being fee-based, Matena has already become self-sustaining in terms of finance – its target from the outset. However, it also seeks to ensure that cost does not act as a barrier to Armenian managerial or leadership talent. As such, it has begun to develop plans to offer scholarships to facilitate wider access.

## MATENA HITS THE GROUND RUNNING

Shortly after opening its doors, Matena launched its first two executive education programmes for the business and public administration sectors. Both programmes were announced at an event in the Matenadaran – a symbolic choice of venue given the origin of the school's name from the word մատենան ("matena" - book) as an embodiment of the Armenian peoples' historical affinity for education.

These programmes are exceptional in their content and components. They ultimately aim to leave participants prepared to lead necessary changes in their organisations and communities through projects developed during the programme. The first cohort for this training was comprised of high-level representation, thus highlighting Matena's local relevance.



***“I think the programme was transformational for most of the participants and exceeded expectations.”***

***Tatevik Janoyan, Head of HR and Board Member, Evocabank***

***“This was a hands-on, thought-provoking programme that inspired me and made me feel much more influential with many actionable takeaways I could apply immediately.”***

***Grigori Martirosyan,  
Senior Manager, Adobe***



Find out more about Matena and its courses.  
Visit: [www.matena.am](http://www.matena.am)







## UWC Dilijan College



IDeA is a proud supporter of UWC Dilijan College. Opened in 2014, UWC Dilijan College is Armenia's first international boarding school, offering students aged 16 to 19 the International Baccalaureate programme. The college is one of 18 campuses worldwide comprising the United World Colleges movement, which aims "to make education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future".

IDeA counts UWC Dilijan College as part of a trusted network of partners able to mobilise in support of common causes. This was illustrated in 2021 by the College's hosting of the first Aurora "Partnership for Artsakh" Dialogue. The College is fully independent and thus not in need of material assistance from IDeA, though our Foundation continues to support its development through liaison with our network of partners and associates.



***"We have a lot of work to do to deliver results and will do everything to make it a success. I am confident that our cooperation with Samsung opens a new page in our capacity to contribute to the development of Armenia."***

***Gabriel Abad Fernandez, Head of  
UWC Dilijan College***



One of the College's most recent significant initiatives has focused on developing the talents and skills of Armenian children through the opening, with the support of Samsung Electronics, of a Samsung Innovation Campus at UWC Dilijan in early 2022. This facility is equipped with state-of-the-art technology. It offers 25 computer stations, smart boards, and other devices needed to deliver online and in-person training to enhance young peoples' digital literacy, learning abilities, creativity and imagination. The campus is thus geared towards stimulating young peoples' future interest in pursuing mobile programming. From here, it will offer a merit-based programme intended to run over three years, to the benefit of 100 Armenian children annually. UWC Dilijan has worked closely with the Dilijan Community Centre to offer entry level training to 20 local students to ensure that at least 10 such participants will come from the Dilijan community.

***“I would not be here if UWC was not here... It is not all about the curriculum but the people you meet... One key takeaway is that UWC is collaborative, everyone is supposed to be a leader but all are also leaders together. Thank you to UWC for inspiring us...”***

***Jeppie Strands, 2018 UWC Dilijan Alumnus and 2021 Alumni in Action Awardee***







## BRINGING THE WORLD TO ARMENIA, AND ARMENIA TO THE WORLD

UWC Dilijan has 220 students from more than 80 countries and 40 academic staff from 15 countries. This diverse international community works towards a more peaceful, equitable and sustainable world through a rigorous life-enhancing education grounded in high academic standards and strong intercultural understanding.

UWC Dilijan offers Armenia access to a global network of leading educational hubs. Thus, by late 2021, a total of 160 Armenian students had gained access to world-class education in other UWC-affiliated institutions, expanding their awareness of the world, and developing new knowledge and skills to offer as Armenian citizens.

In addition, having spent two of the most formative years of their lives in Armenia, bright students from other countries often also become invested locally, seeking to use their talents and learning to give back. In 2021, Danish graduate, Jeppe Strands, won UWC Dilijan College's Alumni in Action Award. His journey illustrates UWC Dilijan's mission in advancing Armenian development through world-class education. Having graduated in 2018, Jeppe chose to prolong his stay in Armenia and establish an NGO mobilizing volunteers to work with children in Tsaghkunk village. In doing so, he seeks to bridge knowledge gaps and strengthen global youth connections through collaborative projects and as a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Shapers Community.



See UWC Dilijan College for yourself.  
Visit: [www.uwcdilijan.org](http://www.uwcdilijan.org)

# 2021

## BECAUSE OF WHO WE ARE

The ability of Armenians to survive, strive and ultimately thrive is inherent to who we are. Pride in our heritage and culture should be celebrated through our development efforts. This means creating opportunities for touristic development through the preservation of our history and heritage, and its opening to the world. It also means developing inclusive urban spaces that respect both the past and present lives that occupy them, as well as ensuring that they can likewise be enjoyed by generations to come.

Tourism, urban planning and cultural heritage go hand in hand. In 2021, IDeA supported initiatives operating in all three sectors, whilst encouraging the development of an ecological mindset among the young people destined to steward Armenia's future.



# Building spaces for mind, body and spirit



## Tourism and Urbanism Foundation



The Tourism and Urbanism Foundation (TUF) is a platform that helps to develop the urban environment and infrastructure in cities and villages throughout Armenia. In doing so, it seeks to create sustainable initiatives with long-term socio-economic impacts for Armenia, whilst also working to preserve the Armenian identity.

TUF has a proven track record of developing and implementing a diverse range of projects and programmes on a variety of scales and across the breadth of the country. In 2021, IDeA supported initiatives designed and implemented by TUF focused on Dilijan and Gyumri.



### Dilijan Development Program

The Dilijan Development programme aims to create a comfortable and positive urban environment for the residents and guests of Dilijan. Within the framework of this program, TUF seeks to improve quality of life and socio-cultural education locally through the creation of opportunities for involvement in local initiatives and activities.





## BOLOROV

In 2021, TUF launched “BOLOROV” – a social platform uniting those seeking positive changes in Armenia by opening up initiatives offering such changes to contributions from those who wish to support them. The platform’s launch has been centred on the construction of a new church for Dilijan. Anticipated to compliment the Dilijan city development project, the construction of Dilijan Church aims to revive the town’s spiritual centre in support of local religious life – a cause around which BOLOROV seeks to unite a local, national and international community of interest.

***“Day by day, stone by stone we witness our holy church take shape. Every single day brings us closer to the completion of the construction works. We look forward to the moment when the bells of the new church ring over Dilijan, heralding the new holy sit, and the revival of the spiritual life of Dilijan.”***

***Bishop Bagrat Galstanyan,  
Primate of the Tavush Diocese***







BOLOROV engages both the local population of Dilijan, and anyone else around the globe with an interest in Armenian religion, architecture or cultural life, through the construction of Dilijan Church. It offers everyone a chance to contribute financially, with those contributors exceeding \$100 having their names etched on a Dilijan Church Support Stone. There are 8,000 stones available for this purpose.

Ultimately, the Church's construction aims to help nurture Dilijan's growth as a cultural, educational, health and tourism centre for the Tavush region.

## KEEPING ARMENIAN FAITH ALIVE: A NEW CHURCH FOR DILIJAN

IDeA places great store in the role of religion in shaping the Armenian identity and survival of its peoples. As such, it is proud to humbly support religious institutions that keep this faith alive. In 2021, this included is the governing body of the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, and its Office of Conceptual Affairs of the Armenian Church.

One of the largest such projects supported by IDeA in 2021, however, was the construction of the New Church of Dilijan. Historically home to five churches, each destroyed by a variety of events over time, Dilijan has been left without a spiritual centre for nearly a century. As such, its religious community has been left to operate services out of the Old Dilijan Hotel complex. This compelling situation saw work on the development of a new church for 300 worshippers in Dilijan centre begin some years ago. Physical construction of the 375sqm church commenced in 2019 and has continued into 2021. In addition to helping local people to observe their religious rites, the church aims to revive the spiritual and cultural heritage of Armenia, improving urban infrastructure and increasing quality of life. In 2021, this project sought to enhance the engagement of both Armenian nationals and the Armenian Diaspora in the construction of the church – a task ultimately achieved through BOLOROV.



## KotoPes veterinary station



KotoPes is a veterinary station for sterilizing and neutering stray dogs in Dilijan. Established in 2021 in partnership with "To Live" Foundation, KotoPes is part of a project aimed at raising funds to manage stray animal populations in urban communities humanely. Stray dogs pose public safety risks, and thus development problems, in towns and cities across Armenia. This is especially so in Dilijan, which has not had a veterinary clinic until recently.

The KotoPes veterinary station is equipped with the tools and facilities needed to manage the stray dog population and is guided by a professional veterinarian from Yerevan. To date, 50 stray dogs have been sterilised or neutered and tagged. Benefitting both the local community of Dilijan and the animals themselves, this project also has an educational underpinning in seeking to sensitise people to the need to address the phenomenon of stray animals humanely and without violence, thus encouraging a culture of care for stray animals.







## Gyumri Development Program

The city of Gyumri is a strategic gateway and focal point for the development of tourism in Northern Armenia. Together with Dilijan, it is one of five strategic locations within TUF's larger vision for tourism and urban development in Armenia.

The regeneration of Gyumri Friendship Park is one of the key projects of TUF's Gyumri Development Program. It is also a pilot for the use of a private-public partnership model and socio-economic development in Gyumri. Whilst work on this project began as early as 2015, late 2020 saw the fruits of this labour become increasingly tangible, with 2021 marking the beginning of the construction phase for the project.



***“This partnership model of Government-Foundation-Community will create a wonderful environment in Gyumri which will become another serious point of attraction for local and international guests, and a good reason to visit Gyumri.”***

***Vahan Qerobyan, Minister of Economy of Armenia***





## GYUMRI FRIENDSHIP PARK: SAME PARK, NEW LIFE

Gyumri Friendship Park, located in one of the city's central districts, was originally established in the 1960s but fell into ruin after a devastating earthquake in 1988. Park restoration has sought to ensure the preservation of the Park's historical and natural features, whilst simultaneously creating new spaces for the city's contemporary inhabitants.

The renovated park will not only become a new public venue symbolising friendship and rebirth for the people and guests of Gyumri, but will also embody an expression of gratitude to those countries that supported the city's rehabilitation after the 1988 earthquake. The park will host a year-round events calendar, as well as an educational programme aimed at enabling learners to master new professions and skills.

The park's focus on friendship and rebirth has also been driven deeper into its design by breaking new ground in ensuring its accessibility. It will host a large sports venue, events stage, gardening school and other amusements designed to ensure that people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds can find something of interest. It will also be the first park in Armenia to be entirely user-friendly for persons with disabilities, including a children's playground with features adjusted for use by children of any and all abilities. Moreover, the Park's sustainability model seeks to facilitate small local businesses to benefit from the park in exchange for a percentage contribution to operational costs, adjusted to the small business's capacity. By its third operational year, the Park is intended to become self-sufficient.





Following an open architectural competition to design several recreational aspects of the park in 2020, that year closed with a final design concept. This offered a green light for the project's private-public partnership stakeholders to begin work on implementing the project whilst continuing to raise capital throughout 2021.

***“We’re looking forward to the opening of the park. We’re sure that it is going to play a very important role in the lives of the city’s residents.”***

***Karine, 54-year-old Gyumri resident***

The Gyumri Friendship Park is ground-breaking in a number of respects. Not only is it highly collaborative on multiple levels, but it is creating a new standard for how to plan, execute and implement sustainable models for the creation of greenspace in urban areas. In doing so, it has partnered with a variety of institutions, including, the World Bank, UNDP, the Asian Development Bank, the EU delegation in Armenia, and the Armenian government, amongst others.

Crucially, the project's greatest success of 2021 has been its ability to secure local community ownership of the project, with each local stakeholder finding a role in creating the park. From small children and their parents to young sculptors, painters, street artists and sports men and women: each has made an indelible imprint on the park's creation following rigorous community outreach through workshops, meetings and park tours. This highly collaborative approach to project development has helped Gyumri Friendship Park come to embody a space that will be both highly inclusive and more sustainable in the long-term.

Following many months of infrastructural planning, contracting and regulatory work, park construction began in October 2021. The infrastructural elements of the park are expected to be finished by 2023, when the park's various different features will then be put in place.



For more on the Tourism and Urbanism Foundation and its projects, including the Gyumri Development Program, visit: [www.tuf.foundation](http://www.tuf.foundation)





## Climate Uturn



Most young people in Armenia have little understanding of the major environmental problems that the world is currently facing. Moreover, Armenia's education system is not designed to offer them the practical skills to develop and implement projects capable of addressing such issues by fomenting change themselves.

Climate Uturn is an ecological programme designed to empower young people aged 15 to 20 to make their local communities more sustainable through project-based learning. Projects are focused on improving the management of land, water and waste, including through the transmission of resilience case studies and ecological solutions implemented across the globe. In doing so, the programme aims to motivate and empower participants to protect their local environments, guiding them through the development and implementation of their own projects, including by scaling impacts through help with fundraising, sourcing experts and managing media. In this way, Climate Uturn aims to support its students' projects to become self-sustaining.



By 2021, Climate Uturn was being implemented in schools across 8 towns in Armenia, with plans instigated for expansion to Artsakh. In 2021, the programme engaged 105 participants across Armenia in 10 sustainability projects addressing real environmental concerns in local communities. Projects have included the renovation of an abandoned greenhouse for conversion into a permaculture teaching centre in Noyemberyan, the production of Armenia's first home-made vermi-composter for the indoor conversion of organic waste into nutrient-rich compost, and a wild bee protection awareness-raising campaign, including the manufacture of bee hotels designed to support native bee populations in communities throughout Armenia.

To date, Climate Uturn's awareness raising efforts have achieved 350,000 views of educational videos on Armenia's environment and 20,000 views of content about Armenian environmental entrepreneurs.

## BUILDING PROJECT RESILIENCE INTO SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE

Resilience thinking transcends Climate Uturn's approach to environmental programming to address the sustainability of the projects themselves. As a result, projects are developed to foster strong synergies and ties with other potentially supporting entities, including relevant businesses and non-profits, as well as with each other. Such cooperation facilitates both resource and knowledge sharing, thus leading to higher project efficiency and helping to maximise impacts. For example, the development of a Permaculture Teaching Centre in Noyemberyan saw efforts to coordinate and form mutually beneficial relationships with Smart Farms Spitak, Farmer to Farmer Armenia, and the Armenian National Agrarian University, as well as with Climate Uturn's Armenian home-made vermi-composter project. Moreover, as the projects Climate Uturn oversees become more established and profitable, a portion of the profits from these projects will be used to expand the programme's outreach to more schools, communities and eventually, more countries.



Get to know Climate Uturn. Find it on Facebook or  
visit: [www.climateuturn.am](http://www.climateuturn.am)

# Looking ahead to 2022



Throughout 2021, IDeA has maintained its resolve in supporting and germinating projects designed to advance prosperity for the global Armenian nation and beyond, whilst still responding to the exigencies of world events.

In embarking on 2022, IDeA will maintain this strategic and determined focus. In doing so, we are excited to see how our partners' work continues to evolve and coalesce to generate impacts on multiple scales and in multiple geographies.

## Turning the next page

We look forward to seeing Gyumri Development Project drive the final stages of its successful public-private partnership to the end of 2022. It is anticipated that 2022 will see the infrastructural elements of Gyumri Friendship Park installed and certain areas of the park prepared for public use.

We likewise look forward to seeing the progress of the construction of Dilijan Church. In complement to that project, IDeA eagerly anticipates TUF's exciting new Armenian Master initiative – a scheme designed to recognise, celebrate and popularise traditional trades that form part of Armenia's rich craft heritage. Such an initiative offers an opportunity to drive home the value of Armenia's cultural heritage and, crucially, those that keep it alive through their work on projects like Dilijan Church.



With the close of 2021, a new cycle of implementation for Aurora prize awardees begins. Thanks to Aurora Prize winner, Julianne Lusenge, 2022 is thus anticipated to see the further advancement of work supporting women, survivors of gender-based violence and IDPs in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as 14 new projects addressing the acute needs of the people of Artsakh. With 633 nominations spanning 62 countries, selecting the winner of the 2022 Aurora Prize is likely to prove challenging.

## Continuing new beginnings

IDeA will be sure to continue to rally for the newest of its implementation partners in 2022.

As HENAR cements its formal and effective working relations with the Armenian Ministry of Health and the National Institute for Health, IDeA expects to see it continue to evolve into a trusted partner in transforming primary healthcare. This is anticipated to encompass the development of initiatives to advance its priority fields, including interventions to enhance rehabilitation provision and develop a digital health portal.

Having overseen the launch and rapid development of Matena International School for Leadership and Professional Development, IDeA looks forward to the commencement of its first joint programmes in collaboration with other top international business schools. It is particularly excited to see the outcome of plans for the School to launch a Centre for Digital Transformation to share the best world experience of digital transformation within Armenia and beyond. Certainly, such an initiative would highlight Matena as being at the forefront of global business and management trends, further aiding its ascent as a regional centre of excellence.

### And much more...

**IDeA looks forward to all this, and much more.**

**We wish once again to express our profound and sincere gratitude and admiration for the invaluable partners, colleagues and supporters that make our impact possible. May 2022 sustain the same cautious optimism with which 2021 closes. And may we each play our part.**



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