

FOUNDATION
Limelight

Policy Plan

Limelight Foundation

2021-2024

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1. Introduction

In March 2021, John Caspers launched Limelight Foundation, a philanthropic initiative to support a strong and free ecosystem for independent quality information in the digital age.

This policy plan lays out how Limelight Foundation aims to achieve its objectives in the period 2021-2024. The following paragraphs discuss: the vision, mission and strategy of Limelight Foundation, the priority areas of the foundation and its way of working (Paragraph 2); the set-up of the organization (Paragraph 3); the governance of the foundation (Paragraph 4) and the financial framework (Paragraph 5).

2. How we make a difference

This paragraph describes who we are, the priority areas that we focus on, and Limelight Foundation's way of working.

a. Who we are

Vision

We believe in independent quality information as a force for good. A force that is crucial to inform citizens and engage them in democratic processes. A force that pushes for transparency and accountability in society.

Mission

Limelight Foundation strives to create a strong and free information ecosystem in the digital age.

Strategy

We fund and support journalism and civil society organizations that are committed to the production of independent quality information, the development of facilitating technologies and to the sustaining of a wider enabling environment for quality information to flourish.

Core Values

Our way of working is defined by the following core values:

- *Independence.* Limelight Foundation is independent and not driven by certain issues. We support organizations that are independent of vested (political, corporate or other private) interests.
- *Openness.* We value openness and transparency in society and in the partners we work with. We also strive to be as open and transparent as possible ourselves.
- *Collaboration.* We work together with others where possible to make a positive change - with partner organizations, experts in the field, other funders and stakeholders.
- *Modesty.* We value the capabilities and expertise of the organizations and people we work with. We listen and learn to make sure our interventions fit the needs of the field best.
- *Pragmatism.* We value a practical approach to pursue our ideals.

b. Priority areas

We help journalism and civil society organizations face the challenges of digitization and leverage the opportunities of digital technology. We support organizations that are active in the following priority areas:

- the production and distribution of independent quality information;
- the development of supporting technologies;
- providing digital safety and security to journalism and civil society organizations;
- opening up public information as open data;
- increasing digital media literacy among citizens;
- countering disinformation online;
- defending democratic rights & principles in a digital context.

c. How we work

Independence is key

Limelight Foundation is an independent philanthropic organization. We are not issue driven. We support journalism and civil society organizations that are independent of vested (political, corporate or other private) interests.

ANBI

We are a non-profit foundation and have been marked as a Public Benefit Organization (ANBI) by the Belastingdienst (Dutch tax authority).

Annual budget

Limelight Foundation intends to make available an annual budget of € 4,5-6 mio to support projects and organizations in line with its objectives.

Geographic focus

The home base of Limelight Foundation is The Netherlands, but our field of action is international. In the first few years, Limelight Foundation will focus mainly on The Netherlands and Europe.

Financial instruments employed

We mainly provide donations. We are open to exploring the use of other financial instruments (such as investments and loans), if suitable and needed.

Type of support

We provide different types and sizes of funding, depending on what is needed.

This includes support to:

- cover organizational costs;
- help organizations build specific capacities;
- conduct specific projects.

We prefer *multi-annual support* to provide organizations with a sense of continuity and stability. However, support for a shorter period of time is also possible.

Next to financial support, we provide '*non-monetary assistance*': we act as a sparring partner, provide advice on technological matters, and connect partners to our wider network when needed.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Before we start a partnership, together with our partners, we come to a shared understanding of objectives to be reached and development priorities. During partnerships, we carefully monitor and evaluate to help organizations reach their goals.

How to apply

We proactively look for funding opportunities that are in line with our mission, priority areas and values. This means that we invite organizations to submit a funding application. Limelight Foundation does not accept unsolicited funding requests.

Our application process consists of two stages: first, we invite organizations to submit a concept note. The concept note is reviewed internally and with help of external experts, if needed. If the outcome of this review is positive, organizations are invited to submit a full application, in which elements of the concept note are addressed in greater detail. The application is reviewed internally and with help of external experts. If the outcome of this assessment is positive, the board of the foundation can decide to grant the requested support.

3. Organization

The daily management of Limelight Foundation is in the hands of the director, Merel Borger. The director is responsible for operations, finance and programming. The director also prepares and proposes policy, strategic initiatives and donations to the board.

Currently, the foundation has one employee, the director. Over the course of the next year(s), Limelight Foundation will evaluate whether additional staff is needed to effectively and efficiently fulfill its mission.

4. Governance

a. Board

The foundation is governed by a board consisting of founder John Caspers (chair) and Hannah de Jong (secretary), and Sjef Peeraer (Treasurer; per August 2021). The board reviews and approves budget, strategy and progress according to the mission and strategic priorities of the foundation. The board also selects, supports and assesses the executive director.

b. Advisory board

We are in the process of composing an advisory board to ensure the effectiveness of its interventions. The Advisory Board consists of skilled and experienced individuals who advise on strategy and on donations and investments.

5. Financial framework

a. Raising and managing funds

We aim to spend an amount of € 4,5 - 6 mio per year on supporting projects and organizations that are in line with our objectives. This budget is made available annually by John Caspers and the Hartwig Foundation upon the board's approval of the annual plan and budget.

b. Assets

The funds to support current and future projects and organizations are periodically made available by John Caspers and the Hartwig Foundation. We will not hold more capital than is reasonably necessary for the continuity of the work in the pursuit of our objectives.

c. Remuneration policy

Members of the board, excluding the founder, will receive an expense allowance or a reasonable fee for preparing and attending board meetings. Members of the Advisory Board can receive reasonable financial compensation for services delivered. Director and (future) staff receive financial compensation that is in line with the standards in the sector.

6. Basic data Limelight Foundation

- Statutory name: Stichting Limelight Foundation
- PO address: Prinsengracht 449-A, 1016 HN Amsterdam.
- Contact details: enquiries@limelight.foundation
- Fiscal number (RSIN number): 862424410
- Number Chamber of Commerce (KvK number): 82336350
- Bank account details: NL79 FVLB 0699 0415 11
- Composition of the Board: John Caspers (chair), Hannah de Jong (secretary), Sjef Peeraer (treasurer).
- Composition of the Advisory : we are currently looking for members.