

Press Release

## **From words to action: Launch of the “Vereint für Demokratie” fund**

**Berlin, May 14, 2024: The new “Vereint für Demokratie” (“United for Democracy”) fund pools financial resources from corporations and foundations to strengthen civil society organizations. Today an independent jury decided on how the first round of funds will be allocated: 840,000 euros will be given to support non-profit organizations that are active regionally, nationwide and online. A broad alliance is now inviting further companies and donors to get involved.**

On the 75th anniversary of the German Grundgesetz (Basic Law, which serves as the German constitution), hatred and extremism are on the rise. Attacks – verbal and increasingly physical – during election campaigns are evidence of this development. However, numerous civil-society organizations and committed individuals are working every day to defend democracy and diversity – locally, across Germany, and online. They are in urgent need of financial support in order to expand their activities. At the same time, many corporations from the private sector not only want to take a stand with words, they also want to make an effective contribution to strengthening democracy.

### **Quick allocation of financial resources to effective organizations**

This is why the **Allianz Foundation** and **ProjectTogether** have established a new fund. The “Vereint für Demokratie” fund quickly and unbureaucratically collects financial resources to support organizations in civil society, helping them significantly expand their activities in the runup to the upcoming elections. **Esra Küçük**, CEO of the Allianz Foundation: “The protection of our democracy concerns us all - as shown by the nationwide large-scale demonstrations for the rule of law and social cohesion. This is why I am delighted that we are working with the business community to give support to members of civil society active on the ground. With this fund, we are providing financial backing where it is needed most, here and now.”

With today’s decision by an independent jury the first 840,000 euros have been awarded. According to estimates by the fund’s initiators, by fall the need for financing organizations in civil society will be significantly higher. All corporations, foundations, and private individuals are invited to contribute to the fund and join “Vereint für Demokratie.”

**Tanja Gönner**, Managing Director of the Federation of German Industries (BDI) and member of the jury, about the first round of funding: “Populism, extremism, and discrimination not only threaten our democracy, they also undermine the foundation of our economic success and therefore our prosperity. We are glad that so many corporations in Germany are taking a stand. The “Vereint für Demokratie” fund gives companies the chance to translate words into tangible action.”

**Jeannette Gusko** from the non-profit media organization CORRECTIV, one of the organizations receiving funding: The “Vereint für Demokratie” fund enables us to scale up proven ideas and projects faster and bigger right now. For example, we want to empower 6,000 people to become active as non-professionals with fact checks against disinformation.”

### **Signal for broad financial participation from companies**

“Zusammenland (Together-land) – Diversity makes us strong” – an initiative from major German quality media companies, is calling around 700 companies in its network to support the fund.

**Daniel Krauss**, co-founder of Flix: “As a company, we view it as our social responsibility to stand up for democracy and its institutions. As part of our corporate commitment, we can use the

“Vereint für Demokratie” fund to support initiatives that bring democracy to life, provide a positive stimulus and education.”

## “Vereint für Demokratie” – a broad alliance of civil society and business

The fund was created as part of the “Vereint für Demokratie” alliance. This includes the **Allianz Foundation**, the **Business Council for Democracy (BC4D)**, **ProjectTogether**, **Scholz & Friends**, **Charta der Vielfalt e. V.** and numerous other organizations from civil society and business. The **BC4D** network also supports employee commitment to democracy. Corporations can benefit from training and further education offers for their staff on topics relevant to democracy.

Further information on “Vereint für Demokratie”, the fund and the jury as well as images can be found at this [link](#).

## Organizations receiving direct support

- Aktionsbündnis Brandenburg
- Augen auf e.V. Oberlausitz
- Colorido e.V.
- Correctiv gGmbH
- DaMOst e.V.
- Dorfbewegung Brandenburg
- Fack e.V.
- FFF - Reclaim TikTok
- Gesellschaft für Freiheitsrechte e.V.
- Hate Aid gGmbH
- Jugendstil\*
- Junge Islam Konferenz
- Kulturbüro Sachsen e.V.
- Lernort Stadion e.V.
- Media Force
- Mehr Demokratie! e.V.
- MigraNetz Thüringen e.V.
- Omas gegen Rechts Erfurt e.V.
- Rosalinde Leipzig e.V.
- SISTERS\*
- Solidarische Vernetzung Sachsen
- Stadtlandgestalten Altenburg
- Weltoffenes Thüringen
- zedela

## Organization on waiting list to receive support as soon as additional funds are available

- Amal Berlin / Hamburg / Frankfurt
- Filmtour “Nichts mehr wie es war”
- Generation Postmigration e.V.
- Join Politics
- Plattform e.V.
- Politics for Tomorrow

- Transformakers e.V.
- Wir sind der Osten gUG

## **Jury for the fund**

- Arne Friedrich, former professional soccer player and philanthropist
- Christiane Benner, Chair of the German Metalworkers Union IG Metall
- Friedrich Kramer, Bishop of the Evangelical Church in Germany in Thüringen
- Matthias Quent, Sociologist as well as Professor and Director of the Institute for Democracy and Civil Society (IDZ) at Magdeburg-Stendal university
- Medina Yilmaz, political scientist and interpreter
- Naika Foroutan, Director of the Berlin Institute for Empirical Integration and Migration Research (BIM)
- Rainer Esser, CEO of the ZEIT Publishing Group
- Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger, former Federal Justice Minister
- Susanne Baer, former judge at the Federal Constitutional Court of Germany
- Tanja Gönner, Managing Director of the Federation of German Industries (BDI)
- Thomas Krüger, President of the Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung (bpb)

## **Initiators, participating corporations and foundations as well as partners**

- Allianz Foundation
- BBH-Gruppe
- Business Council for Democracy
- Charta der Vielfalt e. V.
- Flix
- Hellmann Worldwide Logistics
- Hans und Berthold Finkelstein Stiftung
- Kinnings Foundation
- lilazwei
- Phineo
- ProjectTogether
- Scholz & Friends
- Schöpflin Stiftung
- Social Entrepreneurship Netzwerk Deutschland
- Startup-Verband
- Verband Deutscher Unternehmerinnen
- Zusammenland – Vielfalt macht uns stark

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