

International Bremen Peace Award **2017**  
of the *schwelle* Foundation  
Crossing Thresholds - Breaking Vicious Circles

Shortlist for the  
Award of the Donors



*schwelle* Foundation  
Contributions to Peace

# International Bremen Peace Award 2017 of the *schwelle* Foundation

Crossing Thresholds - Breaking Vicious Circles



We received 64 applications for the International Bremen Peace Award 2017 from all the different continents. They are fascinating examples of peace, justice and integrity of creation which give courage to others.

The *schwelle* Foundation's board of trustees has compiled a shortlist from the applications we received for initiatives and organisations. You, as donors, are to choose this year's award winner from this list.

Anyone who donated at least 30 € (we are happy to accept more) from 1st June 2016 until 1st June 2017 to the *schwelle* Foundation, may participate in the choice of the recipient this prize.

1. Choose one of the organisations presented to receive the peace award.
2. Send us an email or a postcard by 15th June 2017 with the number AND the name of your favorite organisation.

**Important:** Make sure you include your name and address so that we can assign your vote to your donation

email: [stiftung@dieschwelle.de](mailto:stiftung@dieschwelle.de)  
mail: *schwelle* Foundation, Wachmannstraße 79,  
28209 Bremen, Germany

The organisation which receives the most votes will be the winner of International Bremen Peace Award in the category 'Encouraging Initiatives'. In the event of a draw, the winner will be decided by random selection. The winner will be announced on July 2017.

If you have not yet made a donation, then you are more than welcome to do so by the 1st June 2017. You can also encourage friends to join in. Our donation account is: DE45 2903 0400 0000 0942 93

The award winners for the categories The Unknown Peace worker and Public Engagement will be decided on by the *schwelle* Foundation's board of trustees.

## Shortlist Award of the Donors for 'Encouraging Initiatives'

- 1 Eirene**  
Peacework on Many Fronts  
Germany
- 2 Superar**  
Music as a Path to Reconciliation  
Srebrenica, Bosnia-Herzegovina
- 3 Freunde ohne Grenzen**  
On the Path to Hope and Peace  
Peru
- 4 EcoPeace**  
Peace Through Water  
Israel, Jordan, Palestine
- 5 ONAD**  
Unwavering Commitment to Peace  
South-Sudan
- 6 Jugend Rettet**  
The Young People Have an Answer  
Europe
- 7 Addiopizzo**  
Solidarity Against the Mafia  
Italy



# Proposal **1** Eirene Peacework on Many Fronts Germany

*„Be the change you wish to see in the world.“*

*These words spoken by Mahatma Ghandi sum up Eirene’s core belief. For the past 60 years, the organisation has been passionately campaigning in a non-violent way for peace and justice throughout the world.*

In 1957, the initiative began with just a few volunteers and has, over the years, developed into an organisation with over 50 full-time employees and roughly 100 volunteers on three continents. Eirene is named after the Greek word for peace as is used in the New Testament. Every year, the organisation sends around 90 volunteers and 30 professional peace workers to more than a dozen countries in Europe, Africa, North America, South America and Middle America. Specialists also support local partner organisations in Africa and Latin America in an effort to contribute towards a lasting way of living together in peace.

## A wide range of commitment in Germany and throughout the world

The organisation was founded in accordance with the Christian peace ethic and, in the course of its 60 year history, has been committed to finding peaceful solutions in many areas of conflict: Whether it was the war in Algeria, the debate about the deployment of nuclear weapons in Germany, the conflicts in the region of the Great Lakes in Africa which have been repeatedly es-

calating for years, or with regard to global questions such as the fair distribution of resources and climate change.

The activities have a very similar diversity. The organisation has repeatedly expanded, and is still expanding, its capacity for non-violent conflict resolution. In Bolivia, Eirene and local partner organisations cooperated in founding a network to protect children and youths and to help them live a life free from sexual violence. In Niger, Eirene successfully worked with Koran schools and, together with Muslim partners, has developed an Islamic argumentation aid to support peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

## An organisation which gets involved

Eirene’s political activities and campaigns repeatedly lead to her involvement in social debates, such as drawing attention to the problem of the arms trade. In the 80’s, Eirene’s fellow campaigners protested with sit-ins in front of the nuclear weapons bases; in 2016 the organisation creatively and subversively infiltrated the AfD’s election campaign in Rhineland-Palatinate.

Values such as solidarity and critical self-reflection conveyed by Eirene to others are also of central importance within her own walls. For this reason, Eirene pays all employees the same base rate of pay irrespective of their position. She also began early to reflect on her own way of dealing with partner organisations. This attitude helps to keep the organisation on the move, flexible and thus able to explore new fields of activity.



[www.eirene.org](http://www.eirene.org)

*Proposed by Vincenzo Petracca*

# Proposal **2** Superar Music as a Path to Reconciliation Srebrenica, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Music connects people. The same is true in a place the name of which stands for the greatest war crime in Europe since the Second World War. Two decades after the massacre of Srebrenica, Bosnian and Serbian children attend a music school together.

Initially, the initiators of the project had to work hard to convince the parents and the local communities. A music school in Srebrenica? In a place where more than 8000 people were brutally killed during the Balkan War? Two decades after the massacre, many inhabitants of Srebrenica still bear deep emotional wounds. And there, of all places, a music school now supports the reconciliation process between Bosnians and Serbs, helping them develop a sense of togetherness.



## Team spirit and individual support

In addition to singing in a choir, Superar also offers lessons for clarinet, guitar, accordion, piano, flute and drums, as well as dancing and language classes. The open and friendly atmosphere gives the children a place to develop a sense of community. At the same time, they are able to work on their individual talents. The music school wants to contribute to the process of reconciliation in this town and its 13 000 inhabitants whilst developing an excellent ensembles for choir, dance and musical instruments.

In this way, the children learn songs, dances, vocabulary and how to play instruments. At the same time, they learn things which are far more important: self-confidence, respect for people from other cultures, a sense of community, discipline and responsibility.

[www.superar.eu](http://www.superar.eu)

Proposed by  
'Bauern helfen Bauern'

## A concert in front of the Pope

Despite all of the initial scepticism, the Music School Superar has developed into a centre for hope - in the middle of a town which more than any other stands for the cruelty of the Balkan War. The young musicians already performed in front of Pope Francis, and thanks to Austrian documentary 'Kinders', many viewers were able to take a look inside this very special music school.

Superar was founded in 2012, meanwhile, the music school offers 350 Bosnian and Serbian children music lessons for free - and the number is still rising. Most of them come from families which would otherwise be unable to afford such musical education.



# 3 Freunde ohne Grenzen

## Proposal On the Path to Hope and Peace

Peru

*They call themselves ‚Freunde ohne Grenzen‘ (Friends Without Borders): together German and Peruvian volunteers organise projects to bring hope to the poor districts on the outskirts of Lima.*

On the southern edge of Lima, a city of millions, one can see how the city is increasingly growing further and further into the desert. New settlements of huts, the so-called ‚young villages‘ made of cardboard, wood, plastic and corrugated sheets of iron, grow overnight. Solid buildings and pipes for water, sewage and electricity follow years later.

For several years now, a small group of committed German and Peruvian volunteers has been organising a wide range of activities for the children and young people there: workshops, sport, music and language courses all help the young people to develop their talents, develop confidence in their own abilities and discover new perspectives.

### Taking responsibility and passing on knowledge

The organisation ‚Freunde ohne Grenzen‘ is behind these activities. It not only supports German volunteers in Peru but also young Peruvians who wish to do voluntary service in Germany. In addition to these ongoing activities, the organisation has been able to realize two large projects over the past two

years: the ‚School of Responsibility‘ and the Project ‚Art for Peace‘. Due to the fact that a superordinate infrastructure is missing in the outskirts of Lima, the well-being of the people living there depends largely on their ability to help themselves. This is the starting point for the ‚School of Responsibility‘. The project is directed at young people who want to contribute to the positive development of their environment. They are trained in leadership and social competence and are thus able to pass on their knowledge to others in their region.

### An artistic path to a culture of remembrance

The project ‚Art for Peace‘, however, starts with training teacher trainers in order to have a particularly lasting and far-reaching effect. Several modules are designed to enable a group of teacher trainers to integrate elements of peace education into their daily work with future art teachers. The project was organised in the Ayacucho region in the south of Peru, one of the poorest in the country. Between 1980 and 2000, it was the centre of a civil war between revolutionaries and state military forces during which almost 70,000 people were killed. To date, the society there has not properly come to terms with this bloody chapter in its history: the crime rate is one of the highest in the country. Therefore, the project ‚Art for Peace‘ offers the participants the opportunity to discover artistic ways to establish peaceful conflict resolution and a culture of remembrance.

[www.freundeohnegrenzen.org](http://www.freundeohnegrenzen.org)

*Proposed by  
Barbara Buddemeier*



# Proposal **4** EcoPeace Peace Through Water Israel, Jordan, Palestine

*They want to protect the most important commodity they possess: the water of the River Jordan and they do everything in their power to make sure it is fairly distributed. Living together in peace and securing transboundary environmental protection are the main aims of EcoPeace, an organisation from Jordan, Israel and Palestine. The mutual administration of the water supply enables the organisation to sensitize the neighbouring communities living on the banks of the Jordan to their mutual dependency and, in doing so, supports the social development within the area.*

EcoPeace has developed a transnational strategy which does not merely envisage a shared management of water resources, clean drinking water and waste water treatment. It employs cooperative methods of resolution between different border regions in Israel, Palestine and Jordan to protect the ecological balance of the Jordan, and is thus able to contribute to a peaceful way of living together for the people in this politically sensitive area.

## Environmental protection thanks to good neighbours

The work carried out by EcoPeace finds expression in a variety of projects – for example, in the campaign ‚Water Cannot Wait‘, which the organisation launched in 2012 in order to draw the attention of the public and political leaders to the lack of fresh water and sanitary solutions in Palestine. The main aim of the project is to develop a water agreement between Israelis and Palestinians, which should fulfil the needs of both countries and necessitates a two-state solution.

The project ‚Good Water Neighbours‘, initiated by EcoPeace, encourages local leaders and the inhabitants of eleven border regions to campaign for cooperative solutions to water and sewage problems. Furthermore, young water officials have the chance to get to know one another and learn from each other.

EcoPeace’s repertoire also includes projects regarding ecotourism, ecological community parks, a hand book for environmental trainers as well as a religious community

project, which campaigns for a cooperative resource management in the Jordan area and is supported by Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities. In cooperation with European organisations, EcoPeace has published the first holistic master plan for the Jordan Valley and its inhabitants. Thanks to their decades of experience, the staff of EcoPeace are able to advise other countries in finding solutions to transboundary water problems.

## The key to success

The success of EcoPeace can be attributed to the development of common aims and visions through the offices in Amman, Bethlehem and Tel Aviv. A sense of cultural tactfulness enables staff members to create a deeper understanding among the neighbouring countries living on the banks of the Jordan for their mutual dependency and the needs of the people. They create trust and the willingness to cooperate, and in doing so, make an important contribution to peace.

[www.ecopeaceme.org](http://www.ecopeaceme.org)

Proposed by the  
Jacob Soetendorp Institute for Human Values



# 5 ONAD

## Unwavering Commitment to Peace

### South Sudan

# Proposal

*„Conflicts are unavoidable. But violence is a conscious decision.“ Moses Monday John, founder of the organisation ONAD, is convinced that this is true. For this reason, he and his team campaign with unwavering resolution for peace in war-torn South Sudan.*

The civil war in South Sudan has been going on for more than three years now. According to reports issued by the UN Refugee Aid Organization, 1.6 million people have already fled the country, away from war, hunger and persecution. In the light of the ongoing power struggles and conflicts with their neighbour the Sudan, many see the situation in South Sudan as hopeless.



And yet, the organisation ONAD (Organization for Nonviolence and Development) refuses to give up hope and continues to campaign for both a non-violent solution to the conflict and a peaceful cooperation between North and South Sudan. The team from ONAD organises workshops and training sessions in which they teach about human rights, democracy, participation and non-violence. For ONAD, interreligious dialogue between Christians and Muslims is a main area of concern.

### Believing in the power of change

One of the team members is a former rebel combatant. In documentaries and workshops, she encourages others to believe in the power of change. ‚I was accustomed to spreading violence‘, she said. ‚But I know

that people can change because I myself have changed‘.

In public discourse, ONAD also repeatedly opposes both further military armament and a greater military presence. For this, the team requires a great deal of courage as the war has increasingly escalated over the course of time. The hostile parties in the country often see no alternative but to pay back violence with more violence.

### Strengthening civil power rather than military presence

However, many members of the population are worn down and marked by war. They have a great desire for peace. Therefore, ONAD publically campaigns for a cease-fire and for corridors to be opened for humanitarian emergency aid. In the process, the team is neither afraid to stand up to those in power nor to hostile groups in an effort to urge them to put an end to the violence. ONAD is convinced that only civil power can secure peace, not the military and weapons.

ONAD (previously SONAD) was founded in 1994 in the north of Sudan and is one of the few civil society organisations founded by the South Sudanese. The founders came primarily from the South Sudanese independent student movement and were initially able to become involved as an underground movement supported by the church. After the country was divided in 2011, its main field of activity moved to South Sudan. Today, ONAD stands vicariously for a civil society which finally wants peace in their country.

[www.onadev.org](http://www.onadev.org)  
Proposed by Jürgen Menzel

# Proposal **6** Jugend Rettet The Young People Have an Answer Europe

*Young people put their ship IUVENTA to sea to save refugees from drowning in the Mediterranean – a sign of humanity and a protest against the ignorance of the European Union. The German organisation ‚Jugend Rettet‘ (Young People Save Lives) combines humanitarian aid with political messages.*

They do not want to stand by idle and watch how people drown at sea in their desperate attempt to escape from war and poverty. Therefore, the founders of ‚Jugend Rettet‘ collected donations, and in May 2016, they were able to buy a ship which they then refurbished themselves. Since July 2016, they have been patrolling the waters between Libya and Italy with their ship IUVENTA. Two doctors are also part of their team of eleven. When the young people approach a boat in distress, they administer first aid and provide the refugees with initial medical care. In the seven missions carried out in 2016, they saved over 6500 lives.



## Overcoming powerlessness

After completing their rescue missions, which usually take six months, ‚Young People Save Lives‘ also becomes involved politically. They make demands for state-funded rescue missions and the decriminalisation of flight and those who have to flee their countries. They see themselves as a discussion platform to give young people a voice: against indifference and political powerlessness – and for stability and humanity. The politically and religiously independent

organisation, which runs itself, has built up a core team of 10 voluntary members in Berlin.



## Scattering messages

‚Jugend Rettet‘ is an organisation which invites active participation. Young people are given the opportunity to become involved with events taking place in society and are encouraged to contribute their own ideas in favour of people who are fleeing. For this reason, it has established a network of ambassadors operating throughout Europe.

Seventy-seven ambassadors collect donations in fifty-nine cities: they organise concerts, poetry slams, films, public discussions or charity events. In his way, they are able to draw attention to their work and their convictions. They work in close cooperation with partner schools, universities, artists, and youth organisations. Together, they discuss European asylum policy and search for practical solutions. They always have a clear goal in mind: people who are fleeing their homes deserve dignity and respect.

[www.jugendrettet.org](http://www.jugendrettet.org)

*Proposed by  
Anette Klasing*

# Proposal **7** Addiopizzo Solidarity Against the Mafia Italy

*The mafia has been internationally active in such lucrative areas of business as drug dealing for a long time now. Demanding protection money from a businessman seems almost archaic in comparison. And yet, the payment of the ,pizzo' (protection money) is still common practice on Sicily today. However, a change in society's acceptance of this phenomenon is in full swing.*

At the beginning of the nineties, two public prosecutors were shot dead: they were carrying out investigations against the mafia. Sicilian society went into a state of shock. No one wanted to speak about the mafia, and for that very reason, racketeering could continue and was normal and ,socially accepted'.

Since 2004, Addiopizzo has encouraged Sicilian society to stand up against the influence of the mafia. They should stand strong for a cultural revolution against violence, fear and dishonesty, and thus contribute towards an honest and peaceful society joined in solidarity. The slogan of the movement, ,A whole nation which pays protection money is a nation without dignity', has served as a wake-up call for Sicily since it was first introduced. It is an appeal to finally break the silence.

## Critical consumption against the ,pizzo'

Since then Addiopizzo has provided an umbrella for companies who no longer want to be the victims of extortion but wish to conduct their business legally and with dignity. As members of Addiopizzo, the owners are obliged to report their extortionists. Their shops are easy to recognise on account of the campaign's sign which reads ,I buy where no one is forced to pay'. In this way, consumers have the opportunity to become members of this community of solidarity and can be critical of what they consume. This is a clear statement: everyone is affected, and the behaviour of each individual can contribute to a change in society.

To date, more than 1000 companies in Sicily have joined this campaign. And social acceptance regarding the payment of protection money has significantly decreased.

## Educational work

Education is the organisation's second most essential pillar. Volunteers visit about 45 schools per year in and around Palermo to sensitize children and young people towards the methods of the mafia. They communicate a model of non-violence and mutual respect as a counterpoint against the ,values' of the mafia. Addiopizzo actually lobbies for the introduction of ,Lawfulness' as a school subject.

Events carried out by Addiopizzo, for example in areas with a particularly high rate of (youth) unemployment, raise awareness of the connection between poverty, social discrimination and the influence of the mafia, which has its roots in just such problems. Meanwhile, Addiopizzo has branches in other regions of the country where the mafia is active.

In Germany, restaurant owners in Berlin, inspired by the Italian model, have joined forces and have founded the organisation ,Mafia? No, thank you!'

[www.addiopizzo.org](http://www.addiopizzo.org)

Proposed by  
Christiane Mache



**schwelle Foundation**  
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