BITS OF FREEDOM

Annual Report 2019
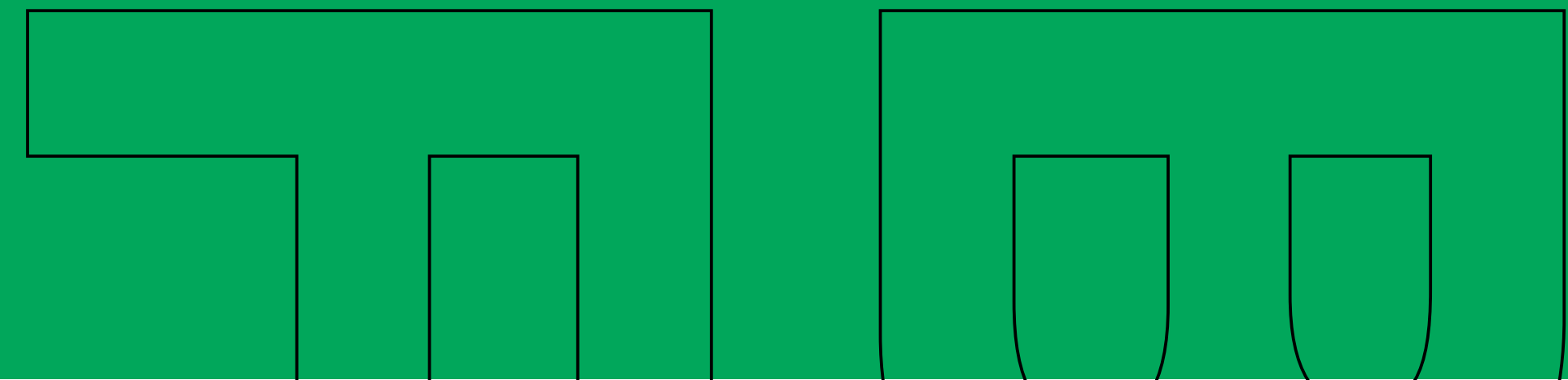
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PREFACE

The public debate surrounding the role of technology in our society is becoming more and more mature. After years of near continuous data scandals, 2019 was marked by a growing and increasingly vocalised dissatisfaction in large parts of western Europe and North America with the biggest technology companies. "Break up big tech" became one of the spearheads of Elizabeth Warren's presidential campaign in the United States, and here in the Netherlands the House of Representatives set up a temporary committee "Digital future" tasked with understanding the "desired and undesirable developments related to digitization".

In 2019, we once again contributed to this critical trend. We proved that Facebook lied to the House of Representatives about the measures it supposedly took to prevent election manipulation, we filed an enforcement request against the real-time bidding practice of Google and the IAB (a sector organisation for digital marketing), and we published "Fix the system, not the symptoms", an analysis of the unhealthy dominance of the tech giants. Of course, 2019 also saw the successful launch of Freedom Internet, a new, independent provider with freedom and civil rights in its DNA, which confirmed that people are eager for alternatives.

There was also a high-quality debate about the government's use of data and technology. Attention to the Intelligence and Security Services Act remained considerable, the case against the Systemic Risk Assessment (SyRI) program was discussed extensively, and investigative journalist Huib Modderkolk's wonderful "Het is oorlog maar niemand die het ziet" (There is a war going on, but no one can see it), about the secret services and cyberwarfare, became a bestseller.

The corona crisis has already turned 2020 into a very different year than expected. The constitutional state and the rule of law are under even more pressure than usual. Hard-won freedoms and rights are being curtailed, the power of government is increasing, and that of citizens is decreasing. This is all the more apparent now our movements are restricted, when we no longer have control over the sharing of our medical data, and when our whereabouts are continuously monitored. This puts the precarious balance of power between government and citizens to the test. Too much, perhaps. After all, a government with too much power cannot be controlled by its citizens or by the courts.

Team

Board

Thanks in part to our size, we are flexible and can move quickly, which is indispensable when it comes to addressing new developments in the context of the coronavirus. History shows that in times of crisis, people sometimes take hasty decisions with far-reaching negative consequences for our rights and freedoms, even long after the crisis is over. Bits of Freedom, therefore, is more necessary than ever.

This annual report focuses on the most important events of 2019. These are the activities we are most proud of and which have had the most impact. With the support of our donors, volunteers, friends and followers, we look forward to making 2020 another year with many highlights.

Bits of Freedom, June 2020

Evelyn Austin

Rejo Zenger

Inge Wannet

Karim Khamis

Esther Crabbendam

Lotte Houwing

Jason van der Leeuw

Nadia Benaissa

Bér Engels

Lonneke van der Velden (*chair*)

Judith Blijden (*secretary*)

Wiens van Asselt (*penningmeester*)

Marjolein Lanzing

Janine Huizenga

OUR HIGHLIGHTS OF 2019

We launched a European coalition around our data rights tool

We have about nine years' experience running a website that allows people to request insight into their data from companies and institutions. We updated this tool in 2018. My Data Done Right, our new data rights tool, has been designed to be easily deployed across Europe; translation and localization are built into the code.

In 2019, we set up a European coalition of civil rights organisations that will help residents in their countries to exercise their data rights. We organised a meeting in Vienna to onboard these organisations, and look forward to launching the website in at least ten European countries by the end of 2020. Finally, we were appreciative of the website being nominated for the ISOC Innovation Award at the beginning of the year.

We helped thousands of people delete their data from neighbourhood app Nextdoor

Nextdoor claims to be a secure app neighbours can use to share information. A report by the consumer TV programme Radar, however, found that users were not properly protected: non-neighbours can easily access sensitive data, and the company also uses this data to personalize advertisements. We were asked to appear on the programme, and gave tips on how to combat the problem. In response to the broadcast, more than 3,000 people used My Data Done Right to request that Nextdoor delete their data.

We drew attention to the unhealthy dominance of large technology platforms

We published our analysis of problems in the online information ecosystem, and introduced a new framework that started to gain real traction within civil society in the second half of 2019. We called this "fix the system, not the symptoms".

In the Netherlands, we made news by proving that Facebook had lied to the House of Representatives about its measures against unwanted political advertisements. We

were invited to the House, and to various ministries, to talk about the shortcomings of self-regulation and the need for long-term solutions. In addition, we took the first steps towards a broad coalition against abuse of power by the large tech platforms.

Furthermore, our work on article 13 of the new European Copyright Directive continued. We first took action against article 13 (later article 17), that is meant to encourage online platforms to use upload filters to identify and block possible copyright violations, in 2017. Opposition to the article peaked in 2019, when, together with a European coalition, we mobilized more than 150,000 people across Europe. In the Netherlands, we convinced a majority of MEPs to vote against the upload filter, and subsequently against the entire directive. Unfortunately, this was not enough to stop the proposal.

We scrutinized the police's digital practices

We submitted several Freedom of Information Act requests to the police in 2019. We are trying to get an idea of what software they have at their disposal, and what private-public collaborations exist. For example, we asked about the use of civic participation apps, the facial recognition program CATCH, and the supposedly smart doorbell Ring.

We found that the police do not have an adequate policy regarding the use of social media, and in one case we had to formally contest one of their decisions. This was because they failed to disclose all documents relating to compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Police Data Act (WPG) for their thirty-six most important apps. It's problematic that the police don't comply with these laws, as the police gain their legitimacy from the rules that they are regulated by.

Finally, we provided constructive feedback on the Criminal Procedure Innovation Act, which will create conditions for the police to experiment with new digital means.

Our concerns about the dragnet surveillance act remained high on the agenda

The proposed amendments to the Intelligence and Security Services Act were presented in 2019. Unfortunately, the changes proposed were mainly cosmetic. Although there is limited political willingness to work on this dossier, we saw opportunities to improve some of the safeguards in the act, wrote amendments, and brought them to the attention of various parties. We expect the bill to be led through the House of Representatives and the Senate in 2020.

In the meantime, we continue to see our main concerns about the act reflected in public debate, discussions in the House of Representatives, and the work of the supervisory authorities. Although the bulk interception capabilities have and will not be stricken from the law, we are proud of the way in which we have managed to turn this complex issue into a public matter. This is the first mainstream discussion in the Netherlands about how far the government is allowed to intrude on citizens' privacy. In addition, it has become much more acceptable to criticise the secret services, a culture change that will make our work a little easier in the years to come.

We advised elected representatives in The Hague and Brussels

We regularly travelled to The Hague and Brussels this year. In The Hague, we spoke to a number of ministries about the European Commission's forthcoming proposals to revise the e-Commerce Directive, the future resilience of competition law in the context of the major online platforms, regulation of online content, and developments in the field of copyright. We contributed to a roundtable discussion in the House of Representatives on the data society and democracy, and gave evidence to a knowledge-sharing meeting of the House's temporary "Digital future" committee. In addition, we gave extensive feedback to the proposal of the Dutch liberal party D66 to regulate government exploitation of unknown vulnerabilities, and submitted a response to the online consultation for the Criminal Procedure Innovation Act.

In Brussels, we spoke with the Dutch permanent representation to the European Union, with the European Commission, and with the staff of various Dutch MEPs. We also attended the Content Moderation And Removal at Scale conference in the European Parliament, and contributed to the Civil Society Summit organised by the European data protection supervisor. We also brought a piece of Brussels to the Netherlands: Claire Fernandez, the new director of European Digital Rights (EDRi), was a guest at a

networking meeting at our office to tell our volunteers and other stakeholders about her organisation's work in Europe.

We celebrated our twentieth anniversary with a webshop and new merchandise.

We can't build a reliable and free internet on our own. Thousands of donors and numerous ambassadors ensure Bits of Freedom can make its voice heard online and offline. In honour of our twentieth anniversary, we spoke with some of the most inspiring people from our movement. We launched a webshop, had new merchandise designed, and organised a screening of the terrific satirical tv broadcast De Nationale Privacytest (The National Privacy Test). Of course, our anniversary was also marked by the annual Big Brother Awards.

We made regular appearances in the media

We published several opinion pieces in newspapers and magazines, and we featured on radio and TV dozens of times, including several appearances on the main evening news. We were guests of Eva Jinek's late-night talk show for the first time, and featured twice on the court show De rijdende rechter. Here's a small selection of videos, plus three podcasts and an appearance on the society page of the newspaper Het Parool:

Investigative news show Nieuwsuur, in an item on mitigating encryption

Consumer rights programme Radar, about the neighbourhood app Nextdoor

News broadcast EditieNL, about Google in schools

TV show RTL Boulevard, on the dangers of FaceApp

Court show De Rijdende Rechter, as a privacy expert

Talk show Jinek, discussing "smart" speakers

Consumer rights programme Radar, about upload filters

Finance programme RTL Z, about the invisible hand of tech platforms

Investigative news show Nieuwsuur, about censorship online

On Rotterdam's local TV station RTV Rijnmond about whether apps are invading our privacy

We were a guest in a podcast by Angstfabriek (Fear factory)

Damn Honey discussed our research into cycle tracker apps

We talked about the internet and politics on the podcast Polititia

The society page of newspaper Het Parool gave the Big Brother Awards three stars

And…

We gave an introduction at an event organized by the police magazine *Tijdschrift voor de politie (Journal for the police)* and raised critical questions about the police's practice and policy. At another event, organised by the national police force, we shared our criticism of the Sensing programme, which uses smart cameras to detect potentially suspicious activity, and of police use of technology in general. // We contributed to the visibility of women and cis-and transgender privacy activists by organizing a Wikipedia edit-a-thon on International Women's Day. // We handed over the use of the domain name freedom.nl to Freedom Internet in support of their plans to start a new, independent internet provider that values liberty and civil rights. // After the Dutch Health minister Edith Schippers won the Big Brother Awards Audience Award in 2016 for a bill that would give insurers easier access to people's medical files, the proposal was withdrawn by the cabinet this year. // We organized the Godwin Lecture, this year with Nani Jansen Reventlow talking about strategic litigation. // We submitted an enforcement request to the Dutch Data Protection Authority to take action against real-time bidding, and in particular against Google and the Internet Advertising Bureau. // We held a reception at which Jaïr Schalkwijk, of the policing reform group Control Alt Delete, told us about their work on ethnic profiling. // We organised a dinner for several digital rights organisations from the Global South together with Derechos Digitales. // We attended a meeting on the Intelligence and Security Services Act organised by the Dutch secret service, and took part in a panel. // We attended a two-day conference entitled 'Growing together: Celebrating diversity and fostering inclusion', organised by the University of Groningen. // We spoke during the Day of the Magistrate. // We had dinner with the Dutch Internet Archive community. // We worked with Lush on a campaign during The Next Web conference. // We organized two workshops on online privacy for seniors in collaboration with Seniorweb. // We took part in a round table meeting to discuss the Data Protection Authority's long-term strategy. // We organised two Big Brother Awards: the 2018 edition in January, and the 2019 one in November. // We guested on a panel following a performance by the infamous theatre group De Verleiders at the Carré theatre in Amsterdam. // We met for the first time with the members of the new Toetsingscommissie Inzet Bevoegdheden (Investigatory Powers Commission), an independent commission that reviews the authorization of powers given to the secret services.

ABOUT BITS OF FREEDOM

The statutory objective of Bits of Freedom is "to defend and promote digital civil rights in the information society, including the fundamental right to privacy and freedom of communication, and all related rights, in the broadest sense of the word."

Change of director

This year, we said goodbye to director Hans de Zwart after six years of loyal service. Under his leadership, and together with the team and volunteers, we have achieved wonderful results.

When Hans joined Bits of Freedom, the organisation was growing and was ready to broaden its remit. Hans did this successfully. In addition to existing issues, we have focused more attention on digitisation and the public space, profiling and discrimination, social inequality, and new connected technologies. Hans tackled these issues by adopting different perspectives on privacy and freedom of communication, thereby appealing to multiple audiences. As the organisation grew, he focused internally on diversity and working conditions, as befits an organisation that campaigns on civil rights. Hans always felt the organisation should never be led by one person for too long, and announced his departure when the organisation was

in a healthy state. As a result, the board had plenty of time to set up an application procedure in consultation with the team. Hans stayed on until 31 December 2019 to supervise the handover.

Hans was succeeded by Evelyn Austin, who has a strong vision, ideas about financial strategies for the future, and the qualities to lead the organization. In her work as a movement builder, she has shown herself to be a passionate driving force, and the board is confident that she can take the organization to the next level. She has a clear view of how the concept of privacy is changing amid current social trends, and how Bits of Freedom can respond to this in a proactive way. We are looking forward to seeing this take shape in the coming period.

Hans de Zwart:

"When I joined Bits of Freedom, the organization had the explicit ambition to be the most professional and effective NGO in the Netherlands. That ambition hasn't wavered, and we want to pursue it in a sustainable way. This means that the organisation must keep renewing itself, and should not become dependent on one person.

As the director of an NGO with a central role in the debate on digital rights and internet freedom, you have a privileged position. It is fantastic to be working every day on some of the most urgent issues of the moment, with the help of an extremely competent team and thousands of

volunteers and donors who also find this work important. Everyone should have the opportunity to do a job like this."

Evelyn Austin:
"I've always been interested in technology, simply because the tools we have determine what we do. Our technology reflects where we stand as a society, and at the same time it's a driver of change. Through the arts, namely as an organizer, editor and researcher, I started at Bits of Freedom in 2014 as the organisation's first movement builder. It's an enormous privilege to be able to contribute to a free and equal society. Bits of Freedom fulfils a unique and important role in the Netherlands and Europe, and we have an extremely solid team. I look forward to taking our work to an even higher level in the coming years."

The team

In 2019, the Bits of Freedom team consisted of Esther Crabbendam (campaigner), Evelyn Austin (movement builder and, from October, director) Hans de Zwart (director until October), Imre Jonk (system administrator), Inge Wannet (office manager), Karim Khamis (designer), Lotte Houwing (policy advisor), and Rejo Zenger (policy advisor). We said goodbye to policy advisor David Korteweg after three years, Barry Smit was our communications strategist until October, and Danae Tapia's Mozilla Open Web fellowship came to an end in 2019.

Zaïre Krieger and Paula Hooyman did internships with us. Zaïre wrote a wonderful report entitled "Sex workers: the canaries in the online coal mine", and Paula researched facial recognition in the public space. Her work was replicated by the national newspaper NRC and led the proprietor of a number of high-definition webcams to take their livestreams offline or lower the image quality. Freelancers Birgit van der Asch and Loeki Westerveld supported our communications, and another freelancer, Jean Jacques van Warmerdam, carried out development work on Mydatadoneright.eu and our new donor tool.

The board

The board in 2019 consisted of Lonneke van der Velden (chair), Judith Blijden (secretary), Clemens la Lau (treasurer), Hermine Masmeyer, and Marjolein Lanzing. Its members receive compensation of €500 per year, and did not receive any further expenses for their activities.

The advisory board

The advisory board consists of prominent figures with expertise in the fields of law, politics, media/communication, art, technology, and business. In 2019, it consisted of Olaf Kolkman, Amade M'charek, Anneke Jansen, Antoinette Hertsenberg, Eleni Kosta, Jaap-Henk Hoepman, Linda Duits, Lineke Feller, Maxim Februari, Mohamed el Maslouhi, Ot van Daalen, and Sarah Hagens. At the end of the year Jaap-Henk Hoepman replaced Olaf Kolkman as chair, and we said goodbye to Lineke Sneller. Members of the advisory board do not receive compensation.

More information about the employees, the board and the advisory board can be found here.

The volunteers

Much of what we do is dependent on volunteers. Once again, in 2019 hundreds of people invested their time in the fight for internet freedom, helping us with translations, web design, and campaigns, and by organizing their own events. We would like to highlight two volunteers in particular.

In the second half of the year, Silvia Deurwaarder worked in the office, helping with a number of editorial and production jobs relating to our anniversary and the Big Brother Awards. Naomi Appelman helped with the Big Brother Awards and with organizing a viewing of the satirical TV broadcast The National Privacy Test. We are very grateful to all the volunteers for their help.

If you're interested in joining their number, click here.

The international network

We are a co-founder and active member of European Digital Rights (EDRi), a network of more than 40 organisations campaigning for internet freedom. The network and European lobbying are coordinated from the EDRi office in Brussels.

More information about the network can be found at here.

Bits of Freedom as an employer

Parental leave: There is a big difference in the Netherlands between a mother's maternity leave entitlement and that of their partner. In 2019, we partially compensated for this by introducing a scheme under which partners can take a maximum of four weeks' paid leave.

Diversity and inclusiveness policy: There are several reasons for us to consider diversity and inclusiveness important, and to take a structural approach to increasing them as an organisation. We believe that a more diverse team makes us more effective, we want to be as accessible as possible, with the lowest possible barriers to participation, and we believe that this suits an organisation that occupies a moral position in the field of human rights. For these reasons, we formulated a diversity and inclusiveness policy in 2019 and will measure ourselves against it from 2020 onwards.

House rules: Our movement is growing, and constantly changing. We strive to create an environment, both online and offline, in which ideas, opinions, and experiences can be exchanged in a respectful and constructive manner. We therefore updated our house rules and appointed three confidants. We also made a visual translation of the house rules to increase their accessibility.

Holiday registration: Our basic attitude towards employees is one of trust rather than distrust. Until August, employees had to submit their PTO days to the office manager, who kept a central registration. Starting in August, everyone is responsible for registering and updating their PTO themselves.

OUR FINANCES

Our income in 2019

Bits of Freedom's income in 2019 amounted to €653,657. Forty-six percent of this came from individual donors, 32 percent from large funds, and 12 percent from business supporters. The remaining 10 percent came from project financing.

Income 2019 (x € 1,000)

	Actual 2019	Budget 2019	Actual 2018
Individual donors	297	303	296
Foundations	208	272	207
Corporate supporters	80	81	50
Other	3	0	0
Subtotal	**588**	**656**	**552**
Project based	66	50	137
Total	**654**	**706**	**690**

We received €1,093 more support from individual donors than in 2018. We gained 478 regular donors and lost 258, so the net result was a gain of 220, and we entered 2020 with 3,122 donors.

Our core expenses in 2019 were supported by the Adessium Foundation, Internet4all, the Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundations, SIDN, and the Democracy and Media Foundation. We received project funding for our "Crash Course Online Manipulation" from Adessium and SIDN Fonds. XS4ALL contributed to the Big Brother Awards, and ARTIS to the Godwin Lecture on Liberation Day.

We received support from the following companies. Supporting us with €10,000 or more: Mozilla and Freedom Internet. Supporting us with €5,000 or more: Bitonic, Bl3p, Leaseweb, and Lush. Supporting us with €2,500 or more: A2B Internet, BIT, Greenhost, IB-Vision, Mollie, m7, Startmail, Unc Inc, VoIPGRID, and Voys. Supporting us with €1,000 or more: Argeweb, Cryptography in Context, Eureka Unlimited, Hunki Enterprises, Intermax Cloudsourcing, Pcextreme, Root Legal, and VBVB ICT. Supporting us with €500 or more: Allekabels, Autoverzekering.nl, Baak Retail, Bureau Bolster, Considerati, CT&V advice, Easyswitch.nl, GeoCat, Green Mini host, Het Rooster,

iCulture, Independer, iPerity, Kentekencheck.nu, Mijndomein, NederHost, Nijweide BV, Overstappen.nl, PrivacyLab, Prijs Vergelijken, RealConnections, Saldo Management, Savvii Managed Wordpress Hosting, Sooda internetbureau B.V., Telefoon Abonnement, Tifkap Enterprises, Vimexx, VoiceCowboys VPN Diensten, VPN Gids, and Zygomatic. Supporting us in kind: Bitonic, Blendle, Byte, CipherMail, Considerati, Cyso, DMARC Analyzer, HAGENS, Jeroen Smeets, Leaseweb, Mollie, Passbolt, Rick Pastoor, Rootgamer, DeBesteVPN.nl and VPNgids.nl, Sentia, Xolphin, and XS4ALL.

Our expenses in 2019

Our expenditures in 2019 amounted to €631,627:

Spending 2019 (x € 1,000)

	Actual 2019	Budget 2019	Actual 2018
Staff	503	573	498
Housing	32	28	25
Office	4	12	7
Communication	6	6	9
Building the movement	18	14	3
General costs	25	40	25
Subtotal	**588**	**673**	**567**
Project based	44	44	64
Total	**632**	**717**	**630**

Result for 2019

Depreciation was €8,177 in 2019, and we closed the year with a positive result of €13,853.

We seek to work as efficiently as possible. The guiding principle is that no more than 20 percent of our money and time is spent on fundraising and administration. The most important fundraising activity in 2019 was the organisation of two donor drives, in June and December. In 2019, approximately 6.3 percent of our expenditures went to fundraising, and 7.5 percent to administration. This meant that 86.2 percent was spent on our core objective: defending digital civil rights and internet freedom.

In terms of asset management and financial reserves, we strive to maintain a continuity reserve of at least a quarter of our annual costs for the coming year. This is a common percentage for NGOs of our size, and is used in the event of unexpectedly high expenses or disappointing or late inflows of income. This guarantees the foundation's continuity for a number of months, and makes it possible to take responsible risks within the budget. At the end of 2019 the reserve was €341,427. This is not invested in risky financial products.

The annual financial report for 2019 has been audited by WITh Accountants and can be downloaded here.

Our budget for 2020

We expect to receive €752,214 in income in 2020.

Budgeted income 2020 (x € 1,000)

	Budgeted 2020
Individual donors	324
Funds	293
Corporate supporters	95
Miscellaneous	-
Subtotal	**712**
Specific projects	40
New projects	-
Total	**752**

We want to find 600 new regular donors who contribute an average of €65 per year. A number of foundations (Adessium, Internet4All, Ford Foundation, OSF, SIDN and the Democracy and Media Foundation) have already pledged their support for 2020, and it is our ambition to find a new fund to support us this year in the form of multi-annual financing. We think we can find about €20,000 in new corporate supporters. Our project income depends on funds granted for specific projects and events, and is expected to be around €40,000.

Budgeted spending 2020 (x € 1,000)

	Budgeted 2020
Staff	618
Housing	29
Office	11
Communication	17
Building movement	22
General costs	45
Subtotal	**742**
Specific projects	45
New projects	-
Total	**787**

We expect core expenses of €741,717 in 2020, based on eight people working four or more days a week and three part-time employees, giving a total fulltime equivalency of 8.5, and unforeseen costs. A number of specific projects and events have already been budgeted, with a total cost of €45,500; these include the Big Brother Awards, the Crash Course Online Manipulation, and the redesign of the Internet Freedom Toolbox. The actual project costs (and therefore the decision as to whether projects will be carried out) partly depend on how many project grants are awarded. This brings our total expected expenditures to €787,217.

Our financing in the coming years

It is very important for Bits of Freedom to have a sustainable financial situation and remain completely independent. Our financial planning always tries, as far as possible, to look five years ahead. We want to increase the percentage of income that we receive from individual donors, because they make our organisation more sustainable. We also want to receive about a quarter of our income from funds and foundations (structurally rather than on a project basis) and around 10 percent from companies. No corporate supporter is allowed to donate more than 10 percent of our continuity reserve.

It will be a challenge to continue in the coming years at our current size. The number of new donors is expected to grow rapidly (to 61 percent of our income in 2024) and we will invest in finding corporate supporters to make up 12 percent of our budget in that same year. But that still leaves a gap in our budget of between €10,000 and €80,000 for each of the coming years. This will have to be filled by renewing contracts with existing funds and finding new ones.

If you'd like to become a corporate supporter of Bits of Freedom, click here.

As an individual donor, your financial support for Bits of Freedom may be tax deductible. Click here for more information.

The impact of the corona crisis and our continuity reserve

Because of the composition of our revenue, we do not expect the corona crisis to have a significant negative impact in the short term. Rather, we have noticed that when the urgency of our work becomes palpable, we see an increase in the number of new donors, and this seems to be the case again this year. The funds from which we receive structural support have committed themselves to us beyond 2020, but we do expect to see a slight decline in income from our corporate donors. We are confident that this can be absorbed by relying more heavily on foundations. Our continuity reserve will remain above the 25 percent target in 2020 and 2021.

WE WILL CONTINUE TO STAND UP FOR YOUR INTERNET FREEDOM IN 2020

In the coming year, our privacy and freedom of communication will continue to be under pressure. Here is a foretaste of our plans for 2020. We will stand up for your internet freedom by:

Protecting human rights in the context of the coronavirus

The corona crisis has affected the Netherlands, and in a few months time we have already seen a whole range of measures and proposals that, in our opinion, do not sufficiently take into account our rights and freedoms. We will closely monitor policy developments, provide unsolicited advice, and help people with their increased dependence on technology.

Fighting for a free internet that empowers citizens

Access to information is a key mainstay of a strong democracy. With the internet, people have the tools to contribute to public life and exercise power in an unprecedented way, but companies like Facebook and Google prevent us from making full use of this potential. We will work on an agenda in which human rights are central, so that we can access and share information in a versatile, responsible and unfettered way.

Defending the use of encryption

We believe that the government and industry should invest in the development, availability and application of encryption. This would contribute to confidence in our constitutional state, and in society and the economy. We plan to ensure that the government sticks to its 2016 position on encryption and does not take any steps to weaken it.

Contributing to new, clear frameworks for the police

It is important that the police have clear frameworks in which to operate, and that they comply with the law. In 2020, we are focusing on new frameworks for the police's deployment of technology. We will also continue to scrutinize poor compliance with the rules for the protection of sensitive data.

Protecting the public against biometric surveillance

The public space belongs to everyone, and has an important function in our society. It is the place that, literally, connects everything and everyone, where we are confronted with other people and their ideas. Biometric surveillance technology endangers the public space, and therefore public life. We will therefore oppose its implementation.

Developing our understanding of privacy

More and more aspects of life are being made measurable, and increasingly powerful computers have the ability to mine this mountain of data. Our understanding of privacy, in which individuals and personal data are central, must grow to reflect this. We need to define a collective interest in which collective values and data are central, and sensitive aspects of life are protected against marketing and other intrusions.

Protecting people from inequality before the law caused by the government's use of data and algorithms

The great promise of big data is that complex patterns and relationships will become transparent and we will be able to make predictions about the future. We want as many people as possible to benefit from the opportunities this brings, which means limiting the risks of unequal treatment and improper influence.

Going to court

After we won the referendum on the sleepwet, or "dragnet act", allowing the large-scale, indiscriminate collection of personal data for law enforcement purposes, the government formulated a number of changes to the law, most of them cosmetic. These changes will be debated in parliament in 2020. Together with a broad coalition of civil rights organisations, lawyers, journalists, and companies, we will keep a critical eye on this discussion. Of course, this also includes carefully monitoring reports issued by the two regulators and providing them with comments. Furthermore, we are considering legal steps to stop mass surveillance in the Netherlands.

Giving people the tools to protect themselves

We want to help as many people as possible to be more aware of privacy and freedom of communication on the internet. The content and design of our successful Internet Freedom Toolbox will be updated, and we are launching a short course in online manipulation, giving insight into how online platforms intervene in our information exchange.

Our data rights tool My Data Done Right was designed to be easily translated and deployed in other countries. We want people across the continent to understand how companies handle their personal data, with the help of local organisations. By the end of 2020, at least ten national organisations in Europe will have launched the tool.

COLOPHON

Stichting Bits of Freedom (BoF) is based in Amsterdam and is registered with the Dutch Chamber of Commerce under number 34121286. The organisation consists of the board and the bureau, itself consisting of the director and the other employees. An independent advisory board assists the director with substantive strategic issues. The director is responsible for day-to-day and strategic management.

Bits of Freedom is a public welfare organisation (ANBI).

Statutes

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