



GPBN Statement to Fight the COVID-19 Pandemic

*"In the name of Pro Bono, let us unite to
fight the COVID-19 Pandemic and Co-build a better tomorrow for all"*

The sudden emergence of COVID-19 brought an unprecedented reality to our world in ways we were not prepared. It has affected every aspect of our lives from human health to our economy. At this difficult time, governments, enterprises and social organizations around the world are compelled to be courageous and spare no efforts to respond tenaciously, showing the unity and courage of human society.

Just like in any disaster, volunteers are critical. Their existence brings warmth and light in the darkest moments. In this pandemic, volunteers from all over the world have mobilized to provide immediate relief and response support to those on the frontlines and in their own communities. Volunteers are undoubtedly safeguarding society with their own lives and love.

Similarly, pro bono activities and skills-based volunteering are needed now more than ever, in all sectors, and at every level. Such practices are key to make skills, expertise and resources freely available to the greatest number of people, non-profits, governments, and more generally to the common good, at a time when innovative solutions are required. Comparably, pro bono intermediaries like members of the GPBN are a crucial link in the chain of responses, precisely because we facilitate cross-sector and community partnership to the benefit of nonprofits and volunteers who are on the ground during crises.

As the champions and practitioners of pro bono, it is our responsibility to take action. We, as members of the Global Pro Bono Network (GPBN), commit to the basic principles and fundamental values adopted by many global humanitarian organizations, and specifically the below:

- **Equal respect: No discrimination or hatred due to differences in race, religion, culture, politics, economy, or social circumstances. Respect the value, equality, diversity and privacy of all people.**
- **Humanitarianism: safeguarding human lives and dignity; caring for vulnerable groups affected by the pandemic threat, especially the elderly, the weak, the sick, women and children.**



- **Friendly collaboration: strengthening civil society cooperation in the global community and unite as one to fight against the epidemic.**
- **Facilitating volunteering and pro bono: enabling services with voluntary, public welfare, and pro bono nature.**
- **Professionalism with social responsibility: join the fight against the pandemic and serve society with professional spirit.**

We, as GPBN members, embrace actions towards :

- **deepened mutual trust and confidence by collaborating individually and collectively in forms of “self-help, mutual help and help others”;**
- **strengthened social resilience by staying united and cooperative; and**
- **reduced direct harm and impact caused by the pandemic on life, family, gender, the most vulnerable groups, SMEs and non-profit organizations.**

We, as GPBN members, will target our actions around but not limited to:

- **leveraging pro bono services to strengthen the organizations and initiatives which are acting to contain the pandemic and providing relief and rehabilitation to those affected, especially through online services;**
- **more generally, developing pro bono services to support non-profits which are playing a crucial role in society, such as the ones committed toward the achievement of SDGs, to ensure they will get key skills to sustain on the long run, while probably being severely impacted by the crisis on the short term; and**
- **collecting pro bono practices from GPBN members and other organizations through knowledge platforms, online forums, panel discussions, newsletters, etc., to learn from one another.**

On all these principles, priorities and actions, we as GPBN members encourage other organizations and individuals who are willing to develop pro bono at their level, whether locally, nationally or internationally, to follow our lead and join this initiative.

In continuation of this process, the Global Pro Bono Summit organized this year in Paris in October will be a concrete opportunity for all of us to meet up, discuss and reinforce this growing international movement. Many other opportunities, projects, events and partnerships will hopefully follow in the months and years to come.



With sharing information and practice among GPBN members and other pro bono organizations, with deepening collaboration with our existing and forthcoming partners, and with engaging more professionals to join pro bono cause, we will be able to build trust and co-create credibility of all those who are capable and committed to spare no effort to protect life, our planet, and build a stronger, more resilient global community for tomorrow.

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About Global Pro Bono Network

We support civic engagement that brings positive social impacts to communities globally. Our members are pro bono service providers, or “pro bono intermediaries”, who link together individuals volunteering their services with social sector organizations otherwise not able to access them.

Network members range from start-ups to mature organizations, all working to promote, provide and expand pro bono in their regions. This brings together a diversity of organizations which can then accelerate the sharing of best practices and lessons learned. Realizing that pro bono makes new connections between communities, we foster inter-cultural exchange and develop new models for civic engagement globally.

The Network was started in 2013 by its founding partners, **BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt** and **Taproot Foundation**, who convened pro bono intermediaries for the first annual Global Pro Bono Summit and supported the network and its global and regional summits ever since. It is organized under the guidance of the Global Council, consisting of selected members of the network, whose role it is to coordinate the Network’s activities and projects.

Our mission is to promote knowledge sharing, mutual support and collaboration throughout the Network, acting as a catalyst for social impact through the capacity building of intermediary member organizations, and this in turn works towards social sector organizations further increasing their own capacity. Intermediaries aim to make pro bono more consistent and effective over the longer term, offering their supportive services to both providers and recipients during all stages of the engagements.

About Pro Bono

“*Pro bono publico*” is a Latin phrase meaning “for the common good”. Pro bono, or skill-based volunteering refers to the voluntary engagement of people who share their skills for free or nearly free with individuals or organizations who cannot access these skills, or who pursue a social goal.

People can choose to support a non-profit organization or a person in need for example on their own free time, but some companies also offer their employees to participate in pro bono activities during their working time.

Visit www.globalprobono.org/about
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