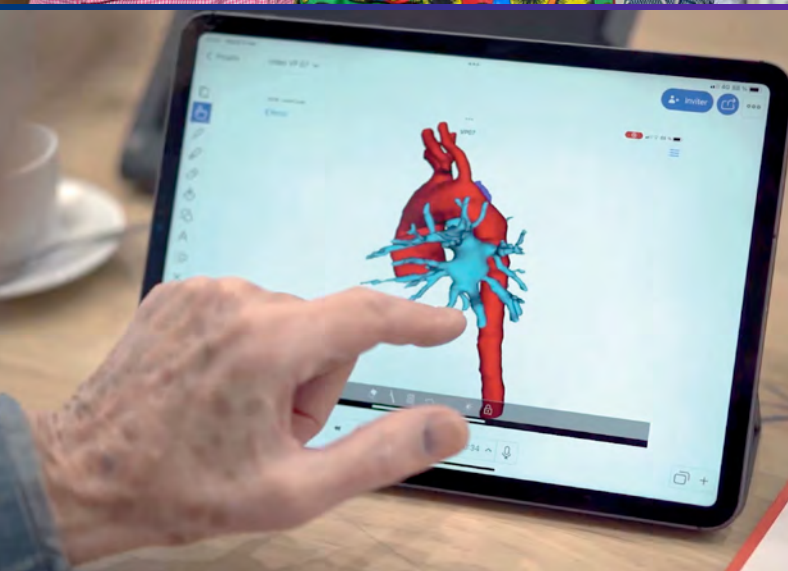


2023

# ANNUAL REPORT



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[www.BostonScientific.EU/Foundation](http://www.BostonScientific.EU/Foundation)

**Boston Scientific Foundation Europe**

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78960 Voisins-Le-Bretonneux, France

# WELCOME FROM OUR PRESIDENT

## Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on 2023, I am filled with pride and optimism for the strides we have made at Boston Scientific Foundation Europe. Reaching our five-year milestone was particularly significant as it demonstrated our ability to mobilise our organisation despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Emerging from this phase, we are more motivated and aware of the greater needs we must address.

In my first year as president, I have come to understand the profound importance of staying close to the associations we partner with. Creating value means being meaningful and relevant to each non-profit organisation that we support.

Celebrating  
**Five.**

“Creating value means being meaningful and relevant to each non-profit organisation that we support.”

Our focus on digital health stems from the vast opportunities it presents in healthcare. Digital solutions allow us to expand our reach and significantly increase our impact. Some projects stand out in this regard.

For example, we are aiding a French hospital, the Centre pédiatrique des Côtes, that cares for



seriously disabled children, many of whom cannot speak. Our grant funds special tablets that enable these children to communicate and express themselves for the first time. During a very moving visit, I met a little girl using this technology to communicate with her eyes – a poignant reminder of the profound impact we can have.

All our projects embody the values of our foundation, to be caring, and to elevate meaningful innovation, an ethos that guides us as we support our partners in maximising the benefits of digital solutions. This collective effort involves our Board, Ambassadors, and reviewers working together seamlessly to achieve our goals.

Looking ahead, our primary goal remains to change the lives of patients. This mission will always be our compass, and in the long term, we have ambitious plans to act as a catalyst among non-profit associations and to expand into geographic areas where we are not yet active. There is much to build, and our mission will keep us energised!

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our mission.

Warm regards,

*Simonetta Balbi*

Simonetta Balbi, President, BSFE



# OUR PEOPLE



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### PRESIDENT

Simonetta Balbi

### VICE PRESIDENT

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Jan Szemjonck

### TREASURER

Yannick Vogel

### SECRETARY

Chiara Capobianco

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Isabelle Wilbois  
Monika Benson | *Dystonia Europe*  
Elena Moya | *Spanish Association against Meningitis*  
Orso Chetochine | *Mécénat Chirurgie Cardiaque*

## COUNTRY AMBASSADORS

### FRANCE

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Raphaële Caty

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Alejandro Castillo Alsina

### ITALY

Alessandra Gelera &  
Ilaria Giabbani

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### NETHERLANDS

Hazel den Hoed

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Nikolaos Papazekos

### POLAND

Alena Yakimovich

### CZECH REPUBLIC

Ivana Beranová

## REVIEW COMMITTEE

- Isabelle Wilbois
- Magdalena Świonder-Chlebowczyk
- Alessandra Gelera

“Being part of Boston Scientific Foundation Europe is an amazing personal experience. Evaluating projects and guiding associations to maximise the impact of their initiatives generates a great sense of helping others with a small action. I truly appreciate participating in efforts that directly impact patients’ well-being beyond our daily business.”

**José Ignacio Peña Alba, BSFE ambassador for Spain**

# ABOUT US

Boston Scientific Foundation Europe (BSFE) helps improve health and well-being by supporting innovative digital health solutions.

By funding initiatives from European non-profit organisations, BSFE aims to have an immediate and lasting impact for the physical and mental health of individuals and communities.



## MISSION

Boston Scientific Foundation Europe helps communities improve their health and well-being by supporting innovative digital health solutions.



# 2023 IMPACT



In 2023, we awarded

## NEW GRANTS

and donated to two humanitarian relief efforts.

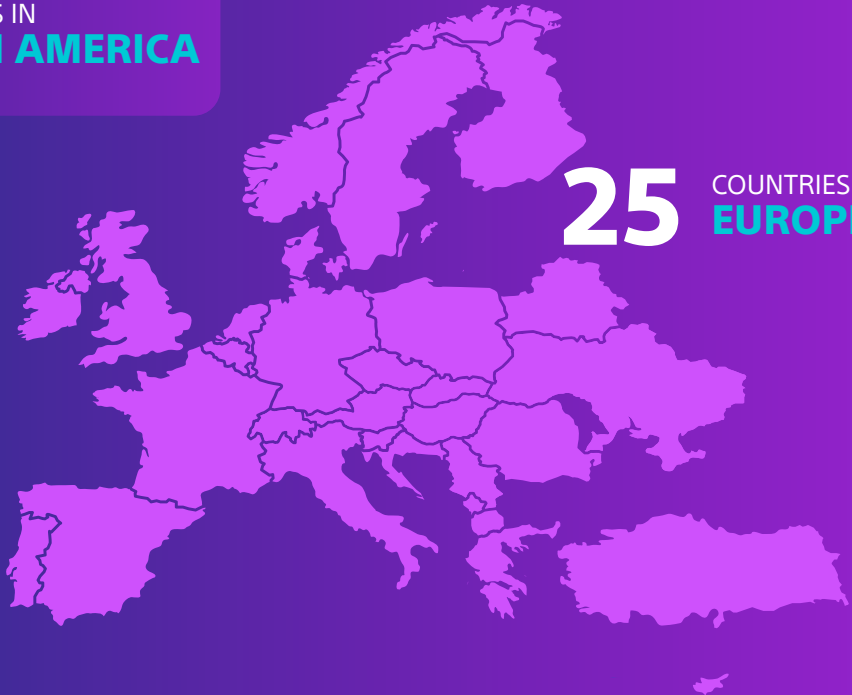


# EUROPEAN FOCUS WITH A GLOBAL REACH



**4** COUNTRIES IN  
**NORTH AMERICA**

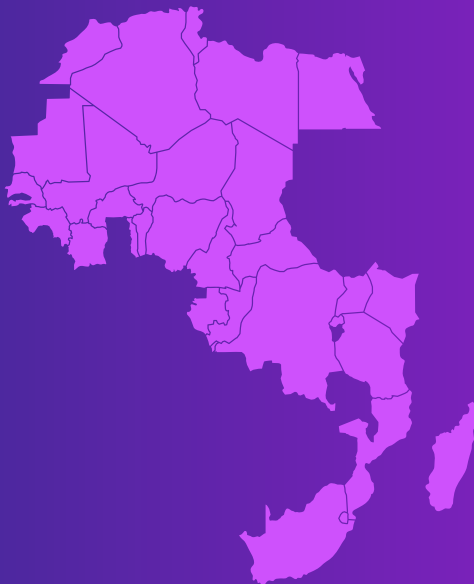
Since being established in 2018, we have supported **26** digital health projects helping people in countries all over the world.



**25** COUNTRIES IN  
**EUROPE**



**7** COUNTRIES IN  
**SOUTH AMERICA**



**31** COUNTRIES IN  
**AFRICA**

**3** COUNTRIES IN  
**OCEANIA**

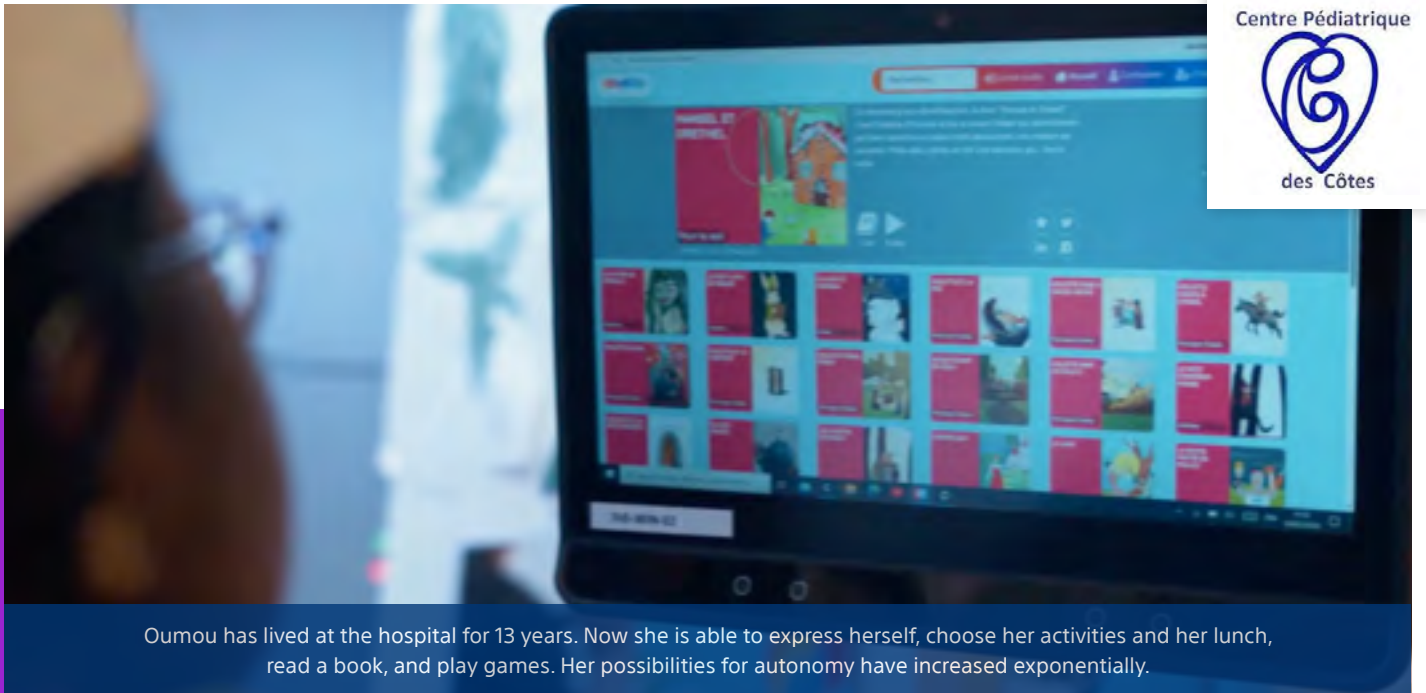


**8** COUNTRIES IN  
**ASIA**



## OUR STORIES

# ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY GIVES A VOICE TO NON-VERBAL CHILDREN



Centre Pédiatrique



des Côtes

Oumou has lived at the hospital for 13 years. Now she is able to express herself, choose her activities and her lunch, read a book, and play games. Her possibilities for autonomy have increased exponentially.

## Breakthrough eye-recognition software has been developed for children with disabilities at the Centre pédiatrique des Côtes rehabilitation hospital in France.

The children, who until now, have been locked in silence, are able to use the augmented communication tool to express themselves for the first time.

With the simple movement of their eyes, children can focus on specific points on the screen to select words, food, activities, and convey their feelings.

This gift of communication means the children can interact with their loved ones and

caregivers. Beyond the functional improvements for their day-to-day lives, the software is a gateway to education and social interaction. It fosters self-confidence and promotes the development of cognitive and social skills. For many children, it's their first taste of autonomy, providing a sense of control over their environment and interactions.

This technology is a bridge to understanding, connection and growth and promises to unlock new possibilities for individuals with communications barriers.



BSFE ambassadors trying first-hand the augmented reality software



## OUR STORIES

# DIGITAL REVOLUTION FOR THE HEALTH OF MOTHERS AND BABIES IN GUINEA



Doctor in Guinea consults a new mother using the “She Decides” Electronic Maternity Consultation Register

**Guinea faces critical challenges in maternal and newborn mortality. With the development of the “She Decides” Electronic Maternity Consultation Register, Terre des Hommes (Lausanne, Switzerland) has introduced a major innovation that is driving change for the quality of maternal care at every stage, from prenatal to postnatal, including labour and delivery monitoring, post-abortion care, and family planning.**

The digitisation of healthcare protocols provides health workers access to the information and guidance they need to deliver the most appropriate advice, with the digital medical history of the patient, clinical examination and decision support tools.

The “She Decides” initiative goes beyond a tablet-based consultation; it represents the technology behind a broader initiative to promote women’s sexual and reproductive rights while combating gender-based violence. The successful pilot in 15 communities has produced remarkable outcomes, showcasing the potential to address these critical challenges for a greater number of women across Guinea.



## 15

COMMUNITIES

## 18,526

CONSULTATIONS

## 106

HEALTH WORKERS  
TRAINED

## 24,057

GENERAL PUBLIC  
EDUCATED

“ I would like to express my deep gratitude to you for the quality of our exchanges over the last two years. Our two foundations have helped to restore LIFE, HOPE and DIGNITY to hundreds of mothers and children in Guinea, and that’s priceless. ”

**Pascal Pettit, Terre des hommes**

## OUR STORIES

# TAKING PERSONALISED CARE HOME



Roger Funhagen, Teacher, Svedala, Sweden is one of more than 550 cervical dystonia patients to benefit from an individualised physiotherapy programme.

**550**  
PATIENTS

**115**  
EXERCISES

**6**  
LANGUAGES

**Dystonia physio is a first-of-its-kind platform specialised for neck or cervical dystonia which is characterised by involuntary muscle contractions that cause abnormal and often painful movements of the neck and head.**

Given the complexity of muscles in the neck and the variability of dystonia from patient to patient, exercise programmes need to be tailored for every individual. With Dystonia Physio, physiotherapists can select from 115 3D modelled and/or animated exercises and customise training programmes for their patients.

Dystonia can impact every part of life, making physiotherapy an essential part of care to improve outcomes and support patient well-being.

With omni-device access, patients are empowered to do their exercises wherever they may be.

The collaboration between the University Hospital of Skåne, Malmö and Dystonia Europe successfully launched in Sweden in 2021 with international roll-out in 2022. Due to the project’s success, BSFE has approved additional funding for a third phase of development which will see further enhancements and expansion of the resource, including a “Physio-finder” tool and extension into 12 languages.

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

“The Physio Hub helps me at home with doing my exercises. It gets like a daily routine. It helps me to have a more normal life, and be more happy.”

**Roger Funhagen, Teacher, Svedala, Sweden.**





## OUR STORIES

# BRIDGING CONTINENTS FOR CHILDHOOD HEART CARE



140 3D models have been made for children in African countries since 2022.

**Operate the world's children with heart disease. This is the main mission of Mécénat Chirurgie Cardiaque, because cardiac surgery is imperative to save children with serious heart disease who are unable to undergo surgery in their own country.**

Always innovating, the pioneering French organisation initiated "smart projects" in 2022 whereby they would use technological innovation to offer better care to the poorest children with heart disease.

3D modelling transforms scans of children with rare and complex heart diseases into precise 3D representations. With a child's CT scan from their home country, cardiologists in France can collaborate with doctors in underprivileged African countries to achieve an accurate

heart disease diagnosis and improve care.

140 3D models have been made for children in African countries since 2022 to support diagnosis and post-operative monitoring. 75 children have benefitted from surgical intervention in France on the basis of a precise diagnosis.



Professor Francine Leca, Founder of Mécénat Chirurgie Cardiaque

# 200

HOURS OF TRAINING

# 180

TRAINED DOCTORS

# 140

3D MODELS

# 75

CHILDREN GIVEN LIFE-SAVING SURGERY

“

In cardiac surgery, the most important thing is the right indication. Are we going to operate? And when we have decided to operate, what exactly are we going to do?

We have been doing these reconstructions for nine months now that help us in an absolutely considerable way, for diagnosis, for prognosis and for teaching. ”

**Professor Francine Leca, Founder of Mécénat Chirurgie Cardiaque**

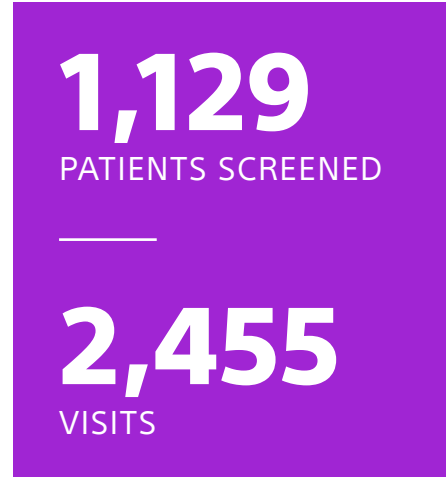


## OUR STORIES

# DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION FOR CANCER SCREENING



BSFE president, Simonetta Balbi (middle), on a visit with the team at LILT Milano Monza Brianza who operate the mobile truck providing free cancer screening services to the streets of Milan and its surroundings.



“ Being able to support this initiative that reduces the time to diagnosis is very meaningful for our foundation. It has been very rewarding for me personally, as well as for the team here in Milan, to see the development of the relationship with LILT. It has been a pleasure to see the mobile truck in action and enjoy visits with the team. ”

**Alessandra Gelera, BSFE ambassador for Italy**

**Lombardy is the region in Italy with the highest number of cancer patients. Exacerbated by delayed diagnoses during the covid-19 pandemic, the Italian League for the Fight against Tumors (LILT) embraced the responsibility to improve early diagnosis services.**

With the BSFE grant for digital innovation, LILT has been able to digitally transform the “LILT Mobile Truck”, which offers free mobile screening for under-served people in many marginalised areas of the Milan and Lombardy region.

The new medical software has empowered digital clinical reporting, giving LILT

the opportunity to offer the population screening options for several more types of cancer, optimising resources (data security; data traceability and statistics) and improving quality of service.

During the 2023 tours, 1,129 people from Lombardy were screened with many benefitting from multiple appointments, resulting in a total of 2,455 visits.



## OUR STORIES

# BRINGING MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES TO PEER SUPPORT WORKERS



**One in two people will experience a mental health problem in their lifetime. The Global Alliance of Mental Illness Advocacy Networks-Europe (GAMIAN) is the voice of patients in mental health and has a drive to improve quality of life.**

With increasing demand for support for people with mental health conditions, their new digital platform brings much needed resources and facilitates experience sharing for peer support workers that will improve access to care for individuals in need of mental health support.

For years, patient networks within GAMIAN-Europe have conducted peer support training on a national level. Recognising the need for cross-border connection, GAMIAN-Europe is uniting these groups to share best practices and facilitate knowledge exchange.

The new [Peer Support European hub](#) provides a virtual resource centre of best-practice peer support activities, approaches, methods and training programmes and essentially builds a community among peer support workers and stakeholders to help them to deliver the best care.

“ We are pleased that since expanding the BSFE focus to include mental health, we have now partnered with two pan-European organisations addressing critical needs of patient access and resource provision in this area, GAMIAN-Europe and more recently Soleterre. ”

**Simonetta Balbi, BSFE president**





# HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

We are aligned with Boston Scientific's commitment to transforming lives and take a shared responsibility to help the global community in times of humanitarian crises and emergencies.

In 2023, BSFE donated to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to support relief efforts following natural disasters in Türkiye and Syria, Morocco and Libya.





# DIGITAL INNOVATION GRANTEES

We are proud to have supported the non-profit organisations in Europe that are using digital innovation to improve the physical and mental health and well-being of individuals and communities.



“ We are pleased to have collaborated with BSFE, which, guided by the best interests of the patient, enabled us to transform our idea of a digital platform from vision to reality. BSFE funding has enabled us to develop Dystonia Physio and launch in multiple languages to help dystonia patients across Europe. ”

**Johanna Blom, Physiotherapist, Skåne University Hospital, Sweden, Creator Dystonia Physio Hub**

“ In 2020, Bátor Tábor Hungary created online programmes to help seriously ill children. This was an amazing achievement in helping alleviate the isolation and bonding between families. Boston Scientific Foundation Europe helped us in creating a fully new microsite, in creating virtual sessions on a weekly basis, and we are extremely grateful that they were really flexible in those uncertain and very changing times. Otherwise, we couldn't have had the possibility to realise these programmes, so we are very thankful for that. ”

**Zsófia Vérten, Bátor Tábor Hungary**

**APPLY**  
for funding



# Boston Scientific Foundation Europe

## LEARN MORE ABOUT US



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