

# BONDING TOGETHER IN SOLIDARITY

Solvay Solidarity Fund  
Impact progress report JANUARY 2022



Progress beyond





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# Governance & principles



**Ilham Kadri**  
Solvay CEO  
& SSF Committee Member

The Solvay Solidarity Fund is truly one of our greatest assets and it continues to change lives. We remain focused on the first intention of the fund - to help people cope through difficulty during the Covid -19 pandemic - but the scope has broadened to include safeguarding education, supporting people through natural disasters (such as the devastating floods that swept through our communities in 2021), and other forms of exceptional hardship.

I am so inspired by these stories of solidarity over the past year. From funding hospitals in India that were hit hard by the second wave, to ensuring guar farmers have supplies they need to fight Covid, to providing STEM scholarships for students in underrepresented communities, the **SSF has made such a positive impact for so many families.**

Going forward, **my dream is to safeguard the beauty of the SSF and continue to share our culture of solidarity where it makes a difference.** Thank you from the bottom of my heart to all the shareholders, board members, employees and everyone who contributed: you are truly living Solvay's Purpose!



**Stefan Schaefer**  
Managing Director of the King  
Baudouin Foundation

When Solvay asked us to manage the Solvay Solidarity Fund, which would do so much to help people in need, we did not hesitate to make it happen.

As the representative of the Foundation in the steering committee **I am happy to take part in the strategy and ensure that the donations are spent following its objectives and in line with the public interest.**



**Peter Piot**  
Honorary President

Covid had profound impacts on children: schools have closed; some children have become orphans; and some have gone into poverty. That's why I'm proud that the Solvay Solidarity Fund has been able to **provide financial support to ensure children can continue their education.** Because if you have a gap in your education it negatively impacts your life and society as a whole.

## Management Committee's role

The Management Committee is composed of four unremunerated members, with equal representation from the KBF, Solvay, an independent third party and an honorary member. It orients actions and **validates the allocation of donations every 2 to 3 weeks.** Upon the Committee's decision, the King Baudouin Foundation **informs applicants** accordingly within **30 days** and proceeds with **payment within 45 days**, if granted.



*"Deciding who can be granted support can be difficult, we talk about human lives and some cases are heartbreaking. We have defined a set of criteria to objectify our decision-making process."*

**Christian Jourquin**, SSF Chairman

## Solvay Solidary Fund

ADMINISTERED BY

KING BAUDOIN FOUNDATION (KBF)

DAILY MANAGED BY

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

OVERSEEN BY

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

# Principles

The SSF provides funding for Solvay to live its Purpose. Originally set up to help employees cope with hardship due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the fund now also addresses other kinds of hardship such as the aftermath of the floods in Belgium, Germany and China in 2021.

Every situation varies from country to country: federal social benefits and medical coverage are not the same globally for all Solvay employees. That's why the SSF provides:

**Days off**, granted to employees who need to support ailing or distressed relatives, young children or dependents for whom schools, daycares and specialized centers are closed or unavailable. Applicants also receive solidarity days off to compensate for having fully used their holiday quota, they wouldn't have been able to take the necessary time off to cover family needs or rest otherwise.



**Financial assistance**, granted to employees facing accumulated or proportionally significant income losses in their household, to those no longer able to pay for basic needs, to others facing burdensome medical bills, as well as to some families whose children lost their own jobs and rely on their parents. In addition, substantial assistance is put in place to guarantee the educational path of their children if they have started higher or professional studies.

### Help is provided to

- Solvay employees
- Employees' families
- Communities close to Solvay



**Jean-Marie Solvay**  
President of SOLVAC

The family shareholders see the company and its people as part of the Solvay family. If something happens to members of your family you react, so there was never any question that we would fully support an effort to help employees who were enduring hardship due to Covid-19. **This spirit comes all the way down from Ernest Solvay, who felt close to his family and employees and believed in providing the right conditions to make a better life.**

Family shareholders and Solvac are the largest contributors to the fund: many donated 30% of their dividends, which made a significant impact on many lives. We were able to show what we believe in and underline that financial shareholder value is not the only thing that counts. This is an investment in culture, reputation and the future of the company that will help us retain and attract talent, create long-term value and emerge stronger.



**Tanguy du Monceau**  
Next Gen Shareholder

When the Covid-19 pandemic hit, members of **Next Gen** (Solvac shareholders under 45) **wanted to help.**

**We raised €100K** in a couple of weeks, which was donated to Solvay Solidarity Fund and used for many valuable relief efforts across Belgium. For me and a lot of other Next Gen members, **Solvay has always had very strong ESG credentials and more specifically a positive social impact**, and the SSF is a way of showing that this is very much in our DNA. It was the right thing to do.



# Evaluation Committee

## The role

The Evaluation Committee is made up of Solvay Human Resources representatives from different countries and continents. They meet on a regular basis to evaluate the applications submitted and give initial guidance before they are sent to the Management Committee, which makes the final decisions.



**Géraldine Ceusters**

Occupational psychologist, Solvay Belgium

*"When I joined the SSF evaluation committee, it reinforced why I love my job: as a psychologist, I need to be able to help people. During 2021, we had many collective requests to help Solvay's communities. It was wonderful to see shareholders, top management and group employees helping those around them and we got many messages of thanks. In July, just as we thought we were getting a handle on the financial*

*effects of the crisis, we faced another disaster: the floods. Fortunately, the Fund already planned to provide for natural disasters. Everything happened very fast: first we contacted employees located in the affected regions, we then offered immediate psychological support and financial support. It's incredible to see this solidarity: Solvay One takes on its full meaning!"*



**Dalia Ibrahim**

Human Resource Deputy, Solvay US

*"I have seen first hand the incredible impact of the SSF and believe it is one of our most valuable assets. We have a behind-the-scenes process to evaluate each application, which includes understanding the current operating changes in the site (for any local schedule or compensation impacts that have directly impacted the employees); understanding the wider environment (if there have been mandated lockdowns,*

*natural disasters, etc); and a review of the applicant's personal situation (proof of expenses, payments, etc). This is necessary to ensure the integrity of the fund and that it is able to continue supporting those in need - but I want to stress that those who are eligible and apply to the fund in good faith with a legitimate case of hardship will be seriously considered. It has been amazing to see how much the fund has helped."*

# Collective support

## Hospitals



In April 2021, **India** was hit hard by a second wave, leaving the healthcare system under stress. Solvay's plants in Panoli and Vadodara had hospitals in the

vicinity that had seen rising caseloads, but didn't have enough **hospital beds, oxygen generators and ventilators to accommodate all the patients**. The SSF provided funding to the hospitals to buy these supplies. "It was a great opportunity to build relationships," said Himanshu Gondaliya, Panoli's site manager. "**They were very grateful to Solvay for this much needed support.**"



In **Italy**, another country greatly affected by the pandemic, the SSF donated funds to the Municipality of Rosignano (where Solvay has operated 109 years) to **buy a new**

**ambulance to transport Covid-19 patients**. It also provided donations to Alessandria Hospital's **new vaccination center**. Some of that funding will go to the hospital's new and innovative project: **Digital Narrative Medicine Platform**, which will provide customized and co-constructed diagnostic, therapeutic and rehabilitation treatments.



In **Thailand**, **200 collapsible beds and 4 oxygen respiratory aid** devices were purchased by the Rayong Provincial Hospital, thanks to the SSF. At least 2,400 patients have used them throughout the pandemic.



Finally in **France**, SSF provided the department and rescue service of Meurthe et Moselle with **essential medical and paramedical**

**equipment** needed to manage vaccination centers. It will be used for other emergency relief missions once the health crisis has passed.

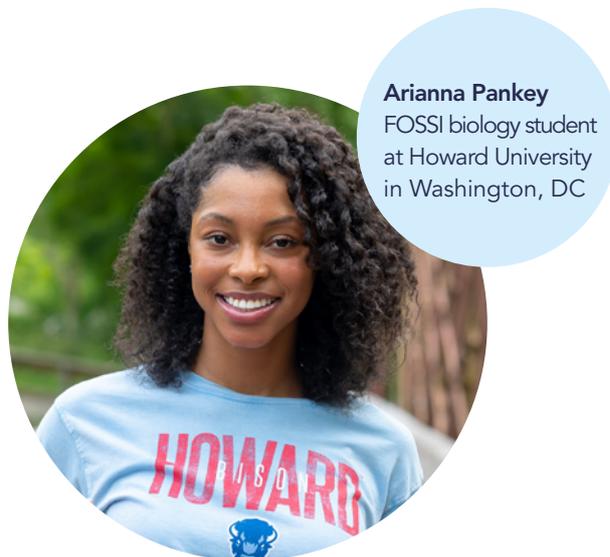


## GUAR

Indian guar farmers, who are considered to be part of Solvay's extended workforce, were suffering from lower revenues due to severe restrictions of movement, reduced guar yields due to poor monsoon conditions, and a lack of sanitary protective equipment.

An SFF donation paid for guar seeds, masks, sanitizers, gloves and soaps, as well as the construction of more rainwater storage wetlands to collect and store scarce water supplies for the farmers involved in our Sustainable Guar Initiative.

Thanks to SSF, Solvay is also partnering with BanQu to launch a transactional platform based on blockchain for the guar supply chain. This will ensure full traceability and transparency, boost equality and revenues for local farmers, and reduce face-to-face interactions during the Covid-19 pandemic. Since October, Solvay's guar transactions have been recorded on the platform. This ensures full transparency for 2,000 farmers on the prices and volumes of guar and will enable direct payment in the near future. The platform also records all the **Sustainable Guar Initiative program actions, such as: training on good sustainable farming practices, school attendance for children, and the programs dedicated to the empowerment of women farmers.**



**Arianna Pankey**  
FOSSI biology student  
at Howard University  
in Washington, DC

## Gerando Falcões

During the pandemic, many families in Brazilian communities close to Solvay did not have enough to eat. The SSF provided a donation to the **Brazilian NGO Gerando Falcões to provide 1,000 food baskets to families in the communities of Paraisópolis, Heliópolis** (the two largest favelas of São Paulo), and in Santo André city (Brazil). It was part of a campaign led by the NGO against hunger, which has been worsened by the coronavirus pandemic. “It is very important that we can help, as far as we can, people who continue to face difficulties during the Covid-19 pandemic. I am very proud of the participation of hundreds of our employees around the world in this effort to help others”, said Daniela Manique, President of the Solvay Group in Latin America.

Ellen Pimentel of Gerando Falcões noted that Solvay “has made an essential contribution to ensuring that more than 1,5 million people have the right to food security in the midst of a pandemic that has killed hundreds of thousands of people and devastated families across the country. We need this support to fight and break the cycles of poverty in Brazil.”

## FOSSI

The SSF played a critical role in the launch of the **The Future of STEM Scholars Initiative (FOSSI), by donating funding to six talented students from communities that are underrepresented in the chemical industry.** The students all come from areas close to Solvay sites. FOSSI opens doors to students who normally wouldn’t consider engineering or related-STEM majors, giving them the tools, guidance and mentoring that will help lead them to successful careers in the industry. Many of them would not be able to attend college without our support and many endured significant hardship due to the pandemic.

Among them is **Arianna Pankey**, who is studying biology at Howard University in Washington, DC. Like many of FOSSI students, Arianna was attracted to STEM and FOSSI through her personal life experiences. Her mother’s diagnosis of multiple sclerosis inspired her to pursue biology and a career in research that will lead to the alleviation of the pain and suffering that her mother has endured, in addition to countless other families who have been impacted by various medical conditions. She says that the fear and sense of powerlessness she felt as a child when her mother was diagnosed has been replaced by an insatiable passion to be the best student she can be.

# Collective support

## Floods

While the SFF was originally focused on helping families facing hardship due to Covid-19, it was there when Solvay communities were hit hard by the devastating floods in Belgium, Germany and China in the summer of 2021. The SFF donated over €2 million to flood relief efforts in these countries.

The funding that went to the **Belgian Red Cross** helped 40,000 people with emergency services, clean-up efforts and providing food and other resources to those in need. It also helped firefighters in the area surrounding Solvay's Walcourt plant buy equipment for clean-up operations. As safeguarding education is a key priority, the Fund helped a dozen schools in Walloon Brabant and Liege replace furniture, repair damage, and ensure that students suffered as little disruption to their education as possible.

In **Germany**, the funding was given to **Lebenshilfehaus**, a home for young people with disabilities, where 12 inhabitants tragically lost their lives in the floods.

In **China** funds went to the **China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (CFPA)** to support the emergency aid effort and post-flood reconstruction.



## Belgium

As Solvay's headquarters are in Belgium, it was important to consider many causes within the country for funding. Overall, **the SFF provided €112,500 to social and wellbeing projects in Belgium**, which ultimately came from a donation made possible by the fundraising efforts of the members from the Next Gen of Solvac (founding family shareholders under 45). In addition to providing aid for Solvay employees, the funding supported research, health and social organizations involved in the fight against Covid-19.

Thanks to the SSF, ten children in the **Class Contact program**, who were suffering from long-term illness, were provided with the resources to **follow lessons from the hospital or their homes**; older adults suffering from Alzheimer's disease were given the resources that allowed them to remove their masks after **receiving the Covid vaccine** so they could have social and human contact for their wellbeing; students suffering from homelessness were able to **buy essential computers and school supplies**; social activities were organized for young people to improve mental and physical well being; and a wellbeing center, which usually provides aid for cancer patients was able to expand their work to Covid workers.



The SFF donated over €2 million to flood relief efforts

# Individual support



**Evandro Paula**  
Site HR Partner, Solvay Brazil

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*"Since the Fund has started, in Brazil we saw a large increase in requests due to the multiplication of cases of contamination and hospitalizations by Covid-19.*

*I had the opportunity to be involved in some critical situations where the Fund support was crucial to maintain and ensure the livelihood of many families and I received many moving testimonies. In addition, the Fund's contribution to some communities in Brazil further reinforces Solvay's concern for social issues. This makes me very proud."*



**Sandeep Patkar**  
HR manager, Solvay India

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*"The SSF is an example of an employer going way beyond what is expected. One of our employees was diagnosed with Guillain-Barre syndrome after his Covid vaccination and was in critical condition.*

*The SSF paid his medical bills and he is on his way to full recovery. It is also common in India to have older parents and grandparents living together, and the SFF helped fund treatment for these family members. The fund is saving lives."*

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*"I am so grateful, I can't believe that this kind of humanity is still existing these days, Solvay cares indeed."*

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*"I'm so deeply thankful for your support ! It will help me to rebuild my home after the catastrophic floods."*

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*"Our sincerity and thankfulness to each of you and the Solvay Solidarity for this most gracious gift. We accept in honor of my dearest father. He would be most pleased and grateful for this contribution."*

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Solvay employees

## HOW TO APPLY?



## HOW TO DONATE?



**CONTACT** [solidarity.fund@solvay.com](mailto:solidarity.fund@solvay.com)

**WEBSITE** [corporate-citizenship.solvay.com/solvay-solidarity-fund](http://corporate-citizenship.solvay.com/solvay-solidarity-fund)



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