

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## The BØWIE incubator launches its 2nd edition on May 16 and 17 to support innovation in the field of gender and equality

**Geneva, May 6, 2020 - On the occasion of International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT), BØWIE, the first incubator of projects in the field of gender+ in Switzerland, officially launches its 2nd edition on May 16 and 17. His goal? Support 80 projects in 8 Swiss cantons over the next three years and educate 250,000 people on gender and LGBTIQ+ themes through supported projects.**

Gender challenges are still very much present and reinforced by the COVID-19 crisis: women, on the front lines in hospitals and supermarkets, still earn 20% less than men<sup>1</sup>. At home, the risk factors for domestic violence are reinforced and leaving a dangerous environment becomes more complicated on lockdown. Difficulties accessing healthcare or housing are increasing for many members of LGBTIQ+ communities<sup>3</sup>.

But society is changing: campaigns like #metoo, protests like Prides, feminist strikes, or the emergence of inspiring initiatives enabled by social networks have highlighted these inequalities and above all have brought them creative responses. last years.

It is to support the emergence and accelerate the development of such approaches that the national organization BE YOU NETWORK has decided to launch BØWIE, the first incubator of projects in the field of gender, whose name is the acronym of 5 values that the organizers wish to convey to the bearers of the supported projects: BOLD, OPEN, WILD, INNOVATIVE and EMPOWERING.

### **From idea to impact in 6 months**

This year, due to the health situation, the kick-off will be given online with a 2-day launch event - the BØWIE Launch Event - during which the 23 selected projects refine their idea, establish a development plan for their project and receive feedback from experts in the fields of gender and entrepreneurship and present their initiative live on social networks.

This is followed by 5 months of custom coaching, providing participants with knowledge, practical tools, as well as material and human resources which will allow them to reveal the full potential of their project and optimize their impact.

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<sup>1</sup> Office Fédéral de la Statistique (OFS). 2019. *Enquête suisse sur la structure des salaires 2016*

<sup>2</sup> Centre LAVI. 2020. *FAQ Violences domestiques durant la crise du Coronavirus (Covid-19)*

<sup>3</sup> Haut Commissariat aux Droits de l'Homme (HCDH) 2020. *Covid and the Human Rights of LGBTI People*

At the end of the 6 months, a public closing event will allow the most innovative and impactful projects to be rewarded.

Any type of project is accepted within the incubator: cultural, educational, technological, sporting project, or even corporate project intended for intrapreneurs, namely those who want to “change things from the inside” of their business or organization. The only criterion is that the project carried is linked to gender themes and that its initiators have the ambition to generate a strong social impact. By 2022, through the 80 projects that will be supported, the BØWIE team aims to generate an impact on 250,000 people across the country.

The selected projects will impact issues as varied as women's financial empowerment, access to menstrual hygiene products or the social isolation of LGBTIQ + youth. So many projects more than ever necessary!

### **A community of “Gender Shapers”**

“We created BØWIE in a positive approach, in order to highlight the creative solutions brought to social inequalities still too widespread and which concern us all. With BØWIE, we aim to create an ecosystem of change agents in the field of gender (or “Gender Shapers” as we call them), in order to facilitate the sharing of skills, inspiration and support within this community and to stimulate the creation of real social innovations that can change the game, as we see in traditional entrepreneurial incubators”, explains Sandrine Cina, Co-founder of BØWIE.

In fact, we strongly encourage professionals who wish to share their expertise and support project leaders to register as Advisors.

### **About Be You Network**

BØWIE is an initiative of BE YOU NETWORK, a national organization which creates innovative actions to facilitate information and motivate the engagement of the greatest number on the themes of gender and LGBTIQ +.

Whether in the fields of training, audiovisual, technology or art, our actions have enabled more than 240,000 people to learn and take part in change, in more than 50 cities, in Switzerland and elsewhere in the world.

BØWIE is made possible thanks to the support of the Confederation (OFAS), the Mercator Foundation, JP Morgan Global Philanthropy, the Gandur Youth Foundation, the City of Geneva and the Canton of Geneva.

**For more information**

**Sandrine Cina**, Co-founder and Director of Be You Network, tel. 076 822 44 14

**Etienne Germain**, Business Developer BØWIE, tel. 079 453 01 10

Or by email: [media@beyounetwork.org](mailto:media@beyounetwork.org)

All information is available on the BØWIE website:

<https://www.bowieincubator.com/>

Find the Launch Event on FB:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/3266552543378647/>

**The list of projects is available on request.**

**Note to the media:** You are cordially invited to the pitch livestream during the BØWIE Launch Event on:

**May 17, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.**

BØWIE 2020 - Meet the projects [Live Stream Pitch Session]

Please confirm your participation by sending an email to:

[media@beyounetwork.org](mailto:media@beyounetwork.org)

Discover BØWIE 2019 in pictures:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZocUyaf59Ws>





The founders of BØWIE.  
From left to right:  
: Deborah Abate, Annie Chemla et Sandrine Cina