Boston Scientific Foundation Europe

IMPACT REPORT 2025

Terre des hommes' digital health strategy in Guinea is improving maternal and newborn health and strengthening support for survivors of gender-based violence, with awareness activities reaching more than 61,000 people.

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Front cover: Terre des hommes' 'She Decides' Electronic Maternity Consultation Register is strengthening maternal care in Guinea and has supported over 30,000 women across 15 communities.

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Turning innovation into impact

Dear Friends and Supporters,

This year has been one of continued progress and evolution for BSFE, as we see digital innovation play an increasingly tangible role in advancing health equity and improving health outcomes in underserved communities.

We are particularly encouraged by the growing maturity of the initiatives we support. Across our work, non-profit partners are moving from early-stage ideas to scalable, real-world solutions. 2025 also marked important milestones, including the continued expansion of long-standing projects in Africa.

We are also evolving as a foundation, responding to the changing world around us and the evolving needs of the communities we serve. As advocates for digital health innovation, we are increasingly embracing the same tools ourselves, exploring how digital solutions and AI can strengthen our processes. As our experience grows, so too does our ability to help non-profits strengthen their ideas, build meaningful partnerships and turn promising initiatives into lasting change.

In this Impact Report, we are proud to share examples of this work in action, drawing on the progress and impact reported by our non-profit partners, whom we thank for their continued collaboration.

Warmest regards

Simonetta Balbi

President, Boston Scientific Foundation Europe

Our vision

Boston Scientific Foundation Europe is a catalyst for digital innovation in health, by empowering non-profits to advance health equity, and create lasting impact for patients and healthcare communities.

Groundswell's Health Resource Hub covers multiple health conditions and supports people experiencing homelessness to understand their rights in accessing healthcare in the UK.

The Fragile Xchange project will provide families and clinicians worldwide with trusted educational resources on Fragile X syndrome, helping improve access to information, support and future research opportunities.

8 new grants

Great ideas can change lives. With the right support, they can augment their reach and create lasting impact.
BSFE backs innovative digital solutions to improve health and well-being.

MediMaatjes
Begeleiding bij medische afspraken

TREMORI
INSIEME PER LA CURA DEI TREMORI

FONDATION Francine LECA
SOUS ÉGIDE DE LA FONDATION CARITAS FRANCE

FRAGILE X INTERNATIONAL

Terre des hommes
Helping children worldwide. tdh.ch

EPFL EssentialTech Centre

AFIBROM

EFNA
EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF NEUROLOGICAL ASSOCIATIONS

IMPACT 2025

Ongoing projects addressing unmet health challenges

3
building capacity in **Africa**

12
educating and **empowering patients**

12
breaking barriers to patient access

5
giving a voice to children with complex health challenges

What does digital health innovation mean to BSFE?

We asked **Andrea Scotti,** director, Boston Scientific and digital health advisor to BSFE.

What does innovation mean for BSFE in practice?

Innovation doesn't start with technology, it starts with the patient need. The ideas that make the biggest difference use simple, adoptable digital tools to solve a real problem for people. For us, innovation is the connection between human needs and technology that can genuinely reach people.

What is BSFE looking for in digital projects?

Three elements for a lasting impact: **measurable impact for the patient, scalability and long-term sustainability.** Digital tools make it possible to clearly see how many people are being reached and what difference a solution is making.
We also consider whether a successful pilot can scale to other countries, languages or partners.
And finally, it's important that a solution is sustainable in the long-term.

Should non-profits be embracing AI?

AI is evolving fast, and non-profits should actively consider how it can enhance their projects. AI can help associations reach more people, deliver information efficiently and focus on high-quality content instead of building technology from scratch. At the same time, human oversight, data privacy and security remain essential to ensure safe and trusted use.

A final thought: is there a project that stands out for you?

Every project we approve amazes me. Each one adopts something new, and **every round brings another inspirational idea that delivers a real 'wow effect'.**

Mécénat Chirurgie Cardiaque's 3D heart visualisation solution transforms CT scans into detailed models of a child's anatomy, helping improve diagnosis and treatment planning in underserved communities.

A smarter way to support patient health literacy

Medimaatjes, The Netherlands

In the Netherlands, around 35% of people struggle with essential health literacy skills, making it more difficult to understand their healthcare professional.

MediMaatjes ("medical buddies") has created an innovative app to help remove these barriers. Volunteers support patients before, during and after appointments, helping them to ask questions, understand treatment options and make informed decisions about their health. New app features, including an AI-powered helpdesk for volunteers and improved language matching, are making the service more accessible and easier to scale.

MediMaatjes, or 'medical buddies', help patients understand, remember and take part in decisions about their health.

> ***Patients often receive a great deal of information at once, and simply having someone beside them can make a real difference. It is incredibly rewarding to know that your presence helps someone feel more confident and less alone.***
>
> ***MediMaatje volunteer***

Building trust within the healthcare system has been one of MediMaatjes' greatest achievements. Seven healthcare organisations have completed the pilot phase, with six more partnerships in development.

> ***I am less worried, now I know I don't have to remember everything the doctor is telling me. Because my MediMaatje was there with me, I have an extra set of ears.***
>
> ***Patient***

147 trained MediMaatjes

132 patients helped across 157 medical appointments

1 out of 10 social enterprises recognised by the Municipality of the Hague

100% of patients felt more confident to make informed decisions

168 volunteers enrolled in MediMaatjes Academy

Unlocking potential through assistive technology

Fondazione TOG, Italy and Lifelites, UK

Digital innovation has the greatest impact when it adapts to individual needs and works alongside the people who care for them. We are supporting two organisations using assistive technology to remove barriers to participation, communication and well-being.

At Fondazione TOG in Italy, immersive technology is integrated into personalised rehabilitation for children with complex neurological conditions, including genetic syndromes, cerebral palsy and degenerative disorders. The "Ulisse Room" combines **360-degree projections, spatial audio and motion tracking, allowing therapists to create tailored, interactive environments aligned with each child's goals.**

50 families have taken part in immersive therapy sessions. Therapists report increased motivation, attention and emotional expression, while also observing emerging motor and communication abilities. The technology does not replace traditional rehabilitation; it enhances it, helping reveal abilities that may otherwise remain hidden.

When our son enters the Ulisse Room, we see something emerge that is not always easy to observe in everyday life: the desire to explore, to choose, to be surprised. Ulisse is not just a room: it is a window open to new possibilities.

Parent

Lifelites, UK, is helping children living with cancer rediscover opportunities for play, learning and connection during long periods of treatment.

Through a partnership with The Joshua Tree centre for families affected by childhood cancer, Lifelites provides specialist assistive and sensory technology that complements family-centred care. The bespoke package includes interactive sensory systems, gaming and virtual reality, communication tools and portable devices.

Benefitting over 490 children each year, the technology helps them reconnect with childhood and create moments of joy with their families.

The joy that the equipment brings to children is really magical. We are now providing many children with the opportunity to connect, share, make memories and be happy through assistive technology.

Danielle Percival, The Joshua Tree

The world is full of creativity, but it needs to be useful. That's what matters.

An interview with Orso Chetochine, director, Mécénat Chirurgie Cardiaque and BSFE board member

Over three decades, Mécénat Chirurgie Cardiaque has brought nearly 6,000 children born with heart defects to France for life-saving surgery.

To expand its reach, the organisation created Formation 5/5, a mobile-first training programme designed to help frontline doctors in remote and underserved parts of Africa diagnose heart defects in children. The five-minute learning modules are delivered directly to their phones, enabling doctors to access specialist training locally.

"The one thing we absolutely must not do is take something physical and simply convert it into a digital format," Orso says. "We had to rethink everything from a blank page."

Every decision was guided by one question: Would this help a doctor diagnose the child sitting in front of them? Videos were optimised to run on older smartphones and slower internet connections.

Just as importantly, they resisted the temptation to work from Europe.

"Don't go it alone, work with local teams, because what you think here is not necessarily the reality there." Orso was advised. "In Europe, we might ask whether a child plays with blocks. But in remote parts of Africa, there are no blocks, so we need to find an equivalent."

That philosophy shaped everything. Local clinicians reviewed and adapted the content to reflect the realities of healthcare in their own countries. The resulting training proved a great success. Spread through peer recommendation, the programme now spans 53 countries.

One example of its impact came in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where conflict makes humanitarian missions almost impossible. A 5/5 graduate correctly identified Tetralogy of Fallot, a serious congenital heart defect, in a girl initially diagnosed with pneumonia, leading to life-saving surgery in France.

For Orso, the lesson extends far beyond this single success.

"Digital reduces inequalities. It goes beyond wars, beyond epidemics, beyond storms. Digital makes it possible to maintain access."

That same belief shapes how he evaluates new ideas as a Boston Scientific Foundation Europe board member. For him, innovation isn't about creating something new for its own sake.

It's about creating something people can actually use, projects with the potential to become game-changers, worth "giving wings" to, and capable of changing lives.

Where AI meets human-centred support

Spanish Association Against Meningitis

Meningitis remains a major global health challenge, with high mortality and long-term complications.

The Spanish Association Against Meningitis (AEM) has taken a unique approach to patient education through an innovative digital platform powered by state-of-the-art artificial intelligence, strengthening its ability to provide trusted support across Spain and Latin America.

At its core is Ana AEM, an advanced AI-powered virtual assistant that pushes the boundaries of a traditional chatbot. Built using expert-validated medical knowledge and real-world patient experiences, Ana is designed to listen, validate emotions and guide each user.

It reorganises extensive content into personalised pathways according to their profile, whether they are a meningitis survivor, a parent, a member of the general public, or a healthcare professional.

The virtual assistant helps people better understand symptoms, risk factors, vaccination, and recovery in an instant. By combining technological innovation with a deeply human approach, AEM is redefining how patient organisations can inform, support, and empower communities.

"Our goal has never been to replace human support, but to extend it, providing trusted information, while ensuring that empathy, expertise and human connection remain at the heart of our support."
Pilar Bodas, project manager

13,000
new platform users

24/7
support

1.13 seconds
average response time

96.2% success rate
in AI conversations

The non-profit organisations we support

Since 2018, we have supported 31 non-profit organisations in Europe that are using digital innovation to improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities.

Apply for funding

"We're proud to partner with an organisation that shares our values of innovation, inclusion, and health equity. Boston Scientific Foundation Europe's contribution will help us build the digital foundations we need to grow, evolve, and better serve Ireland's gluten free community.

John Molony, chairperson of the Coeliac Society of Ireland

BSFE board, team members and collaborators met in Madrid to help shape the foundation's future role in digital health innovation.

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UK – Uchenna Izundu, Robert White

BSFE and the Italian League for the Fight Against Cancer (LILT) met in Milan to discuss collaboration in cancer prevention and care.

Learn more about us

www.bostonscientific.eu/foundation

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The EssentialTech Centre, École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, received a grant to advance 'smartCervix', an AI-powered smartphone tool to improve accuracy in cervical cancer screening in Cameroon.