

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



CATALYSTS

**A more inclusive society**  
**- one relationship at a time**



# What We Do

Catalysts is a non-profit organization working to strengthen young people in positive self-development.

Catalysts works across Norway designing and implementing mentoring programs to promote the strengths and well-being of young people to support them in finding and reaching their goals

With the help of trained volunteer mentors, Catalysts programs support positive relationships and the growth of social capital for hopeful futures, increased self-esteem and a more inclusive society.



## A Word from Our Founder

What a year 2020 was! Our most memorable event of the year was the visit of the HRH Crown Prince Håkon. Literally hours before Oslo went into lockdown, our mentees, mentors and partners engaged with the Crown Prince and shared their stories of their mentoring journeys with words, song and poetry.

2020 was also a year of adjustment for Catalysts as our mentor programs were interrupted by a pandemic, and a year where building and maintaining relationships became more important than ever. Society has had to adjust, and re-adjust, and so has Catalysts.

We focused our efforts on 4 strategic projects; completing the digitalization of our program, finalizing our strategy in getting mentoring into the school system in Norway, our strength cards and the establishment of the Nordic Center for Evidence Based Mentoring.

In 2020 we wrapped up the last year of our research project with Oslo University hospital and consolidating our evidence based learning into our digital solution. Research and Mentoring 2020 was a conference we successfully implemented in 2020 in collaboration with NORCE and OUS highlighting different areas of the research report and latest trends in mentoring.

One of the key concerns we have had in 2020 and going forward, is the impact the pandemic has on our target group. Dr Jean Rhodes fears a hidden "fourth wave" of the pandemic, an epidemic of child mental health problems and educational slides, is underway, the effects of which researchers are only beginning to document. While our digital solution has potential, we will have to continue to monitor and develop new mentoring models to continue to strengthen relationships to also counter the fourth wave.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lisa Ann Goff".





# 2020 Impact Numbers

In order to see effects of our mentoring activity, Catalysts relies on research based data collection for measuring self-esteem, social capital, program fidelity and self-assessed learning in the program. In a year when many activities turned digital, we were happy to see that the new tools and strategies we've developed has increased our reach to new audiences.

### Self-Esteem and Social Capital

At the beginning and end of all programs Catalysts conducts a measure of Social Capital that covers our previous self-esteem measurement, trust in and knowledge about institutions such as school, religious communities and sports, and measures how the youth grow their network and self-efficacy. These impact numbers allow us to validate our efforts, and to see where we can improve our program delivery

### Impact Measurement During Covid-19

Covid-19 had a significant impact on how we were able to start, run and measure mentor programs in 2020. Our response rates decreased (51% response rate) and our surveys were administered digitally, instead of in person, as we prefer.

**Note**  
Our volunteer hours are based on our mentors commitment to a minimum of 36 hours throughout the program. Many give more. Not all programs were started or completed in 2020

10  
mentor  
programs

97  
mentoring  
couples

32  
digital  
events

30 445  
people  
reached

542  
volunteer  
hours

social  
capital  
increases  
through the  
program



# Impact Stories



## Julianne & Aleena

Aleena wanted to join the mentor program to get to know new people, to practice Norwegian and to become more confident in her communication skills. She and her mentor, Julianne, meet regularly to work on language. Together, they read books and stories and talked a lot.

"I really appreciate Julianne. She explains the words that I don't understand. She says she'll help me anytime, with school or other things. It's really nice to have Julianne as my mentor".

## Ali and Sandeep

Ali came to Norway as an unaccompanied minor, and now as a 17 year old, he had a lot of weight on his shoulders. He was working as much as he could to send money to his family abroad. "Ali is a person who really works towards his future, but it's not easy to have to do everything on your own at such a young age. He is a person that has really made an impression on me, and I want to be there and support him where I can. Sometimes all you really need is to talk to someone about things that are going on and how to handle them. I think the mentor program has taught me at least as much as Ali, if not more!"



## Iska & Melanie

Iska had shown interest in the mentoring program, but she didn't have a determined goal or many expectations for the program other than wanting to meet someone she could connect with and maybe get help from to find a part time job. When interviewing for a spot in the program, Iska was very present and shared insightful perspectives on situations she had been in and dynamics between people she knew. Iska is an active writer of poetry and loves writing.



Catalysts matched her with Melanie, a thoughtful, social and energetic mentor of a somewhat disorganized nature with a passion for communication. "Melanie is very open, honest and genuine, and has pushed me out of my comfort zone."

Iska and Melanie plan to continue their meetings. "Once Covid restrictions loosen, I will start applying for jobs in my area, and I'm grateful that Melanie is supporting me.", Iska says.

Together, Iska and Melanie have been working on the job application process by doing interview role plays. Melanie sends Iska material, and Iska prepares. Melanie shares: "First she didn't expect the questions I asked, but we tried again immediately after and she was so much better! It was really a huge difference." They plan on doing more interviews, next time with Melanie's husband as the interviewer to up the game. Melanie has also noticed Iska's talent for poetry.

"She's amazing, such an old soul. I think she can be the new Amanda Gorman. I told her: "let me know when you want to publish, I'm here.""

## Hasan & Andrea

We matched Hasan and Andrea strongly based on interest, but we were not surprised when they also had fun together.

Hasan had a clear idea about the mentor he wanted during our interview. "I'm interested in international politics and data security, and I wanted a mentor who could advise me on how to become a data engineer". When engineer and programmer Andrea signed up, the match was a no-brainer.- Despite Covid-19, Andrea and Hasan have been able to maintain their meetings since they started up in October. "In our sessions we are building a website, and I work on it in my spare time. Andrea is a great mentor".



# 2020 Highlights

Catalysts is a proud member of the Crown Prince Couple's Fund and in March our youth were able to share with the Crown Prince some of the experiences they've had through the mentor program.

Covid accelerated our move to e-mentoring in 2020 and as a result our mentors and mentees can both learn and interact on our digital platform. Our organization is more efficient as a result, and we've also been reminded of the irreplaceable value of meeting in person.

In November, Google Norway offered up a mini mentoring meet for Catalysts youth. Through an online session Google employees shared their knowledge about design sprints and what it is like working at one of the largest tech companies in the world.

In December we marked the completion of our three year collaboration with Oslo University Hospital and NORCE in the research project Resiliency @ Work. The end conference had practitioners, researchers and mentoring participants from 8 different countries, with Dr Jean Rhodes as a keynote speaker.

[The Strength Cards](#) that we developed with Catalysts youth have become central to every mentor program and to many of the consultancies we have done in the past year. We are always learning new ways to use our strengths to reach our goals.





# Oslo

Catalysts is eager to share the value of mentoring in new contexts, and our community in Oslo has grown as a consequence. In addition to two youth programs and celebrating the results of Powered Up for Work Oslo, a mentor program for highly skilled migrants, we piloted a collaboration with Knutepunktet at the University of Oslo for a mentor program targeting refugees with their eyes set on higher education.

The mentors in Oslo keep showing up, and in 2020 more mentors signed up than ever before. With so many valuable resources at our disposal we were able to initiate our largest cohort yet (24 matches!), to meet youth during the pandemic, to reflect on the times that we are going through, and to keep our eyes on future plans for education and work.

Catalysts has increasingly collaborated with corporate partners to provide mentoring to many of Oslo's youth. We continued our corporate collaboration with Storebrand, an organization that continues to see mentoring not only as a way to engage and support their local community, but also a way of providing leadership training to their employees and increasing employee engagement.







# Bergen

Interesting things have been happening in our department in Bergen. Till now we have had a focus on multicultural youth in high schools, they were the target group of Bergen voluntary mentor program nr 5 and our first corporate program in Bergen in collaboration with Brabank. Both of these programs were completed in 2020.

In addition to starting the voluntary mentor program nr 6 in Bergen with the same target group, we have also started up a collaboration with Fretex in Bergen, with the project "Powered Up for Work" (Styrket til Arbeid), which focuses on multicultural adults with higher education, and on providing them with a mentor who has knowledge in their field of education. This leads to a positive development and expansion of target groups in our Bergen office.



# 2021 Focus

In 2021 we will continue our focus on collaboration, systems change, quality and scaling.

Our key strategic aims are:

- To be a the leading source of knowledge on mentoring in Norway and to lead all our efforts with a strong foundation in research.
- To achieve sustainable scaling through corporate expansion and our efforts to get mentoring into schools, leveraging our expertise within mentoring, positive psychology and diversity.
- Developing and supporting the Catalysts team, through clear collaborations, a strength based focus
- Effective use of resources and competence internally and with our partners to leverage and build on our strengths and achieve.

We also strive to have fun in all that we do!







### Goal 1 No Poverty

Our goal is to reduce relative poverty in Norway by supporting multicultural youth into the labour market, by strengthening their social capital, self esteem, success at school and growing their network.



### Goal 4 Quality Education

Together with the mentors, our mentees make a plan for the future. The plan is often focused on school and career. The mentor couple identifies the mentees strengths and how the strengths are applicable.



### Goal 5 Gender Equality

Youth facing risk factors leading to school drop out have 130% greater chance of becoming a leader later in life if they have a mentor. This way we contribute to promoting girls and young women in leadership positions



### Goal 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth

Our mentees are provided with mentors from the local community, who share knowledge and experiences from their career and support their future goals.



### Goal 10 Reduced Inequalities

Our focus is on social and economic inclusion and we give people with multicultural background an opportunity to grow their network and get support to complete school or get a job.



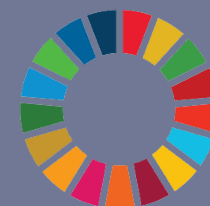
### Goal 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

We are focused on social and economic inclusion and diversity in the labour market. Youth at a risk of dropping out of school are 78% more likely to participate voluntarily in the local community at a later point in life if they are connected to a mentor.



### Goal 17 Partnerships for the Goals

What we are trying to accomplish, we cannot do alone. Luckily, people and organizations are ready, willing and able to collaborate to meet our shared goals.



# Catalysts' Social Sustainability

Sustainable Development Goals are the United Nations' blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. UNSDGs help guide and support the work of development operations addressing global challenges related to poverty, inequality, climate, environment, education, health, prosperity, peace and social justice. The target for the UNSDGs is 2030

Catalysts is aligned with seven United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Our programs help create a sustainable society. Through workshops and conversations, we strengthen young people. Adults learn life skills to better support young people in their everyday lives. Strengthening individuals in supportive relationships and working for systems change is Catalysts' way to create a more sustainable future and society.



# Our Research Based Approach

At Catalysts, our programming is based on recent research and promising practices within the field of mentoring. We do our best to engage with researchers to learn from and contribute to knowledge that will improve mentoring.

Through the [Nordic Center of Evidence Based Mentoring](#) we share relevant research for the Nordic context with our community. While Nordic mentoring isn't as well researched (yet!) as in the US, we have in 2020 seen an increase in research and positive findings for mentoring as a tool for school inclusion and migrant inclusion.

In December we wrapped up our three year long collaboration with Oslo University Hospital and NORCE, concluding the research project Resiliency @ Work (NFR#269438). Through the project we have developed a digital platform that supports program managers and participants in completing our structured mentor program, from training to completion. In addition to learning and documenting how a digital platform can and cannot make a difference in mentoring, we also developed an impact measure for social capital and a mentor learning assessment with the engaged researchers in the project.

Catalysts will continue to collaborate with researchers to develop new concepts for mentoring and to better document and share the results of how we work with and for our target demographics.

# Our Financial Report

	2020	2019
INCOME (NOK)	2 699 009	5,736,980
EXPENDITURES (NOK)	4 454 931	4,189,358

Note:  
1. Catalysts forening is a non-profit organisation with no shareholders nor dividends payout.

## Board

Chair Barbro Bakken  
Cathrine Skar  
Live Leer  
Lisa Cooper

## Thanks to our 2020 collaborators

Fretex Plus  
Knutepunktet (UIO)  
Mitt Liv  
Hersleb, OHG og Bjørnholt vgs  
Nygård skole  
Asker kommune  
OUS & NORCE

## Thank you to our funders

IMDI  
BufDir  
NAV  
Vestland fylkeskommune  
Oslo kommune  
Bergen kommune  
The Grieg Foundation  
The Crown Prince Couple's Fund and their Pro Bono Partners  
Bergesenstifelsen

And a big thank you to all our mentors!



# CATALYSTS



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