



GRASS ROOTS AND  
SOLIDARITY INITIATIVES  
2012-2013

## **Pro Bono 2012-2013**

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# GIDE'S PLEDGE



*"As lawyers, we have a commitment and a moral duty to undertake pro bono work in that we have the ability to assist people in significant and sustainable ways".*

**Baudouin de Moucheron, Senior Partner**

The concept of Pro Bono action is an integral part of the legal profession, with values of conscience, independence, integrity and humanity at its very core. It is our attachment to these humanistic values that led to the creation of Gide's Pro Bono programme in 2011.

Gide's Pro Bono Policy is based on three driving themes:

- Access to law and justice
- Access to education
- Solidarity with those most in need

## THE ORGANISATION

To guide this initiative, Gide set up the Pro Bono Commission made up of volunteer partners. The Commission defines and co-ordinates the firm's **skills sponsorship** policy. Additionally, all Gide partners agreed to the creation of an endowment fund, Gide Pro Bono, which receives financial resources from all partners and which is used in the firm's **financial sponsorship** policy.

Through its co-ordinated, comprehensive efforts, sustained financially by the commitment of its partners, Gide wishes to support advances in the three fields forming the basis of its Pro Bono policy, which are central to the challenges faced today by society.

## THE PROJECTS

The Pro Bono Commission and the Gide Pro Bono endowment fund chose to support ten charities working on various projects, such as rehabilitating a school, landscaping a garden for the disabled, and supporting girls' rights in various countries.

Gide wishes to make its Pro Bono actions a driving project that will involve all members who wish to contribute on a voluntary basis, each according to their skills, whether legal or otherwise.

## THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

Gide's international reach naturally leads to a wider Pro Bono commitment and expands the scope of our activities, in particular in the countries in which we are present. For instance, Gide Pro Bono partnered Plan France in a project to combat mother and child malnutrition in Vietnam.

With this first year of Pro Bono actions now at a close, the firm and its partners confirm their willingness to keep investing in Pro Bono, to continue its partnerships with charities, and to be actively involved in general interest projects, be they in France or further afield.

## THE REWARD

In October 2013, our Pro Bono Action for 2012 received the Special Jury Award at the Pro Bono Awards ceremony organised by the Paris Bar's solidarity fund (*Barreau de Paris Solidarité*).



## A COORDINATED ACTION

In 2011, Gide partners created the Pro Bono Commission comprising eight volunteer partners in addition to the Managing and Senior Partners. The Commission meets regularly throughout the year to develop and organise the firm's skills sponsorship programme. It also sits on the Gide Pro Bono endowment fund board, which defines and implements a financial sponsorship policy that supports the firm's skills sponsorship policy.



Photo credit: Mikaël Lafontan

## GIDE'S PRO BONO ENDOWMENT FUND

In December 2011, in order to financially support certain causes, Gide's partners set up the Gide Pro Bono endowment fund, thereby demonstrating the willingness of all partners to contribute to this important initiative.

Gide Pro Bono received €250,000 from all partners in 2012, which was renewed in 2013.

The fund supports projects relevant to one of three driving themes of the firm's Pro Bono policy, namely access to law and justice, access to education and solidarity with those most in need.

## SKILLS SPONSORSHIP

At Gide, we believe that Pro Bono actions should not be limited to simply contributing financially to selected projects, but should be a collective commitment, with all staff members being able to take part in volunteer work. The partners have agreed to a system enabling all firm members, lawyers or otherwise, to dedicate up to forty hours per year of their office time to working on supported pro bono projects.

We trust that our organisation in-house will help develop a Pro Bono policy that is comprehensive and effective, in line with individual aspirations. All firm members who wish to get involved in the selected projects may do so and may, of course, continue any pro bono work they already carried out on a personal level.

Endowment fund

€250,000 per year

Skills sponsorship

1,000 people  
> 30,000 hours per year

## ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Gide has always sought excellence and aims to recruit the best in order to meet client needs. Well aware of the disparities and difficulties in accessing certain studies, our first commitment is to helping underprivileged youths in their education, thanks to charities Proximité, Frateli and Apprentis d’Auteuil.

### PROXIMITÉ

Proximité offers the chance to youths from problem areas in the Paris northern and western suburbs to be individually tutored by volunteers drawn from the working population. Sessions are usually held at the charity, close to the home of the sponsored child.

Gide Pro Bono was won over by this young charity, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2012, and provides funding for its development. Since announcing our support, three firm members have committed to sponsoring pupils.



We also make meeting rooms available, where members of the charity, mentors and sponsored youths can find ideal working conditions.

*"These last few months, I have been working with a high school student every week, by giving her advice on a potential career path and supporting her in her studies. Apart from tutoring, which takes up a large part of our time together, I also try to give meaning to the subjects she studies and encourage her to discover a world she knows little about culturally, economically and socially.*

*Assistance in choosing a future career is another key point of the sponsorship programme, which may take the form of career discovery workshops at the mentor's place of work.*

*I introduced the law profession to three highly motivated high school pupils on Gide premises, and was also able to show them the very real working environment of a lawyer (offices, workstations, files etc.)."*

**Aurore Tagliana, associate at the Paris office**

*"In the neighbourhoods in which we operate, young people need support in their education, their career choices and their approaches to job seeking. Regular contact with active workers is a great way to give them confidence and help them plan for the future. Thanks to Gide, 10 young people can be sponsored for one year, including three by lawyers of the firm at the moment, and perhaps others in the coming months. For the charity, it is a great opportunity to be able to develop our contacts with lawyers and legal experts, and thus open new doors to help young people make informed career choices."*

**Isaline Rohmer, Proximité director**

## FRATELI

Frateli connects scholarship students in higher education having received high honours or highest honours in their baccalaureate with young professionals who have between two and ten years of professional experience. The mentoring lasts until the student becomes professionally active. The charity is unique in that it matches the professional career of the mentors with the professional aspirations of the students.

Since the beginning of our partnership, ten Gide lawyers and employees have joined Frateli as mentors, and one student from the charity, whose mentor is a Gide associate, was taken on as an intern for several weeks. Additionally, Gide Pro Bono also offers financial support to the charity.



In January 2013, we hosted a meeting on the legal profession for Frateli students. Judges, legal officers, lawyers and bailiffs, all mentors, came to present their work to fifteen students interested in a career in law.

*"Frateli is about sharing academic and professional experience with a mentee; it is about opening a window on the world of work, its customs and specific codes. I started by showing my mentee about life at Gide, the offices, the documentation and the support services. We see each other regularly and exchange ideas on studies. I offer advice on career guidance, internships and how to best present a CV. I want him to feel comfortable in a world he did not know before, but that will soon be his own once he has completed his studies."*

**Thomas Fleinert-Jensen**, associate at the Paris office

## APPRENTIS D'AUTEUIL

Apprentis d'Auteuil offers personalised support to the young people in their care. They work every day to rebuild their confidence by providing them with educational markers and helping them make a fresh start. In addition, the charity supports the families, advising parents on building or rebuilding bonds with their children.

Gide Pro Bono supports Apprentis d'Auteuil and finances the project «Family Portraits». During one year at the Orly care institution at various events (Christmas parties, festivals, etc.), a photographer followed children, siblings, families and professionals to create a web documentary on daily life at the institution. To promote the project in-house, Gide organised an exhibition of photographs taken as part of the adventure.





## ACCESS TO LAW AND JUSTICE

We could not organise our Pro Bono programme without focusing on our primary responsibility, i.e. law and justice. Law is pervasive in society and it is unthinkable that some of our citizens are not aware of or do not have access to it. Pro Bono is a historically important element in our firm. Our lawyers have always taken it upon themselves to assist the needy during court appearances, or by offering free consultations at the Court of Justice. As part of our new programme, we wanted to promote access to law and justice by supporting InitiaDROIT, AADH and the Bus du Droit.

### InitiaDROIT

InitiaDROIT sends volunteer lawyers to schools to illustrate the civic education programme through case studies that students can identify with, and help them understand the usefulness of the rule of law. We support this charity.

With the recent signing of an agreement with the Agency for Teaching French Abroad, the charity wishes to extend its operations to French institutions outside our borders, particularly in countries of the European Union and China. Our international offices will be called upon for assistance to this end.

### ALLIANCE DES AVOCATS POUR LES DROITS DE L'HOMME

Established in May 2009, the Alliance des Avocats pour les Droits de l'Homme (Alliance of Lawyers for Human Rights) is an association of law firms that co-ordinates the provision of free and confidential legal services to charities, NGOs and institutions dedicated to human and children's rights.

It now includes 14 law firms, 39 associations and has handled over 130 cases.

The firm has been involved with the AADH for several years. We have set up an internal organisation so that volunteer lawyers can meet AADH's requests, which may be as diverse as a comparative study of French and Swedish case-law in 2012 concerning child prostitution, or a billboard advertising campaign's compliance with the articles of association of COFRADE (Conseil Français des Associations pour les Droits de l'Enfant - French Council of Associations for Children's Rights).

## BUS DU DROIT

This operation, initiated by the Paris Bar's Solidarity fund aims to provide free, confidential and anonymous legal assistance, in partnership with the NGO Droits d'Urgence and the City of Paris. The service is organised in a bus, which parks at five points around the outskirts of Paris.

Alongside the Paris Bar, Gide promotes the Bus du Droit and actively participates in its work.

*"The Bus means anyone can come and ask a legal question, ask for advice, discuss a problem or issue they are facing. Most often, these people do not know where to turn to. The Bus is a simple and easily accessible way of receiving advice, an answer to their question, or to point them to the appropriate legal or administrative service. Whether labour law, immigration law or family law, the topics are as varied as the participants, who do not hesitate to come to the Bus as often as they need to. I have been helping on the Bus for many years now. I have seen first-hand that it carries out important work for the increasing number of people it receives every week."*

**Delphine Liault**, associate at the Paris office



## SOLIDARITY WITH THOSE MOST IN NEED

Given the current economic downturn and resulting growing inequalities, we wished to fund solidarity initiatives for those most in need. Ever since the firm was set up, one of the founding elements of our business culture has been to support those most in need. To this end, we have decided to partner Perce-Neige and ATD Fourth World.

### PERCE-NEIGE

This charity, created by French actor Lino Ventura, was set up in 1966 and has always worked to make happiness a reality for the mentally disabled.

Gide Pro Bono wished to finance the landscaping of a plot of land so that the 44 residents at the Mareil-sur-Mauldre home could enjoy a gardening activity. This garden comprises an allotment, a hen-house, raised gardening boxes for wheelchair-bound residents, a composter, a water butt, a small orchard, and more.

The Gide Pro Bono representatives visited the Sèvres home in September 2012, and were able to see first-hand the work carried out by the charity in its historic location.

*"I address my heartfelt thanks to Gide Pro Bono for supporting us in 2012. I am delighted to be able to continue the work that was begun by my grandfather over 45 years ago to assist the mentally disabled, but without the support of partners, we could not take all our projects to fruition. Your donation was allocated to our Mareil-sur-Mauldre home, which will now be able to landscape its plot to create a garden, a hen-house, a small orchard, invest in raised gardening boxes suited to wheelchair-bound residents, etc. This project was a request from residents and had been on standby for over two years due to lack of adequate funding. The gardening activity idea came from both the residents and the care-givers, and is a leisure as well as a therapeutic activity. It will help improve the confidence of residents, foster well-being, help relaxation, develop and maintain physical shape, improve and maintain memory skills and concentration through work..."*

**Christophe Lasserre-Ventura, Chairman of Perce-Neige**



## ATD FOURTH WORLD

The Peoples' Universities are an essential part of ATD Fourth World's action. They are based on the idea that commanding speech and self-confidence are key to public speaking, thereby helping those most in need to climb out of poverty and exclusion.

Gide Pro Bono offers financial support to ATD Fourth World's Peoples' Universities.

*"The plenary session of the Peoples' Universities organised by the Paris region's Fourth World branch was based on the topic of self-confidence, which is essential to those concerned. Dozens of men and women, drawn from local groups, spoke or acted out a short play or voiced their thoughts, all put together during preparatory meetings. For these people who are excluded, who are out of work, who more often than not have no home and whose children may even have been taken away from them, public speaking is a major effort. All participants have suffered a great many setbacks, and the act of public speaking is a success in itself. This is the core objective of ATD - Fourth World: to give each person back their dignity."*

**Guillaume Goulard**, partner, Peoples' University participant

## OTHER INITIATIVES:

### LIBRARIES WITHOUT BORDERS

Launched in 2007, LWB is today the main NGO supporting libraries in French-speaking countries. The key objective of LWB is combating the structural causes for underdevelopment, in particular through improving education and lifelong training, broadcasting information and knowledge, reducing the digital divide and promoting local cultural heritage.

Since 2008, Gide has donated every year to LWB 30 boxes of books and legal journals to be distributed in developing countries. We encourage other law firms to do the same.

We also support LWB in its Digital Library project, so that books and journals can be accessed and transported on USB keys or on external hard drives. We intercede with other organisations to finance the operation, ensure part of the technical monitoring of the operation (alongside the LNLI Laboratory of Paris 1 University) and set up meetings with legal publishers to add digital content to this library.

### LES RESTOS DU CŒUR

Set up by French comedian Coluche in 1985, Les Restos du Coeur aim to support and offer volunteer assistance to those most in need, in particular by providing access to free meals and by acting in favour of their social and economic integration, as well as by combating all forms of poverty.

Every new year, the firm reminds employees that they can return their non-used lunch vouchers of the previous year so that they can be distributed to Les Restos du Coeur.

## INTERNATIONAL ACTION

Over the years, Gide has celebrated its French origins and yet also developed an international culture. Our utmost wish is that all members of the firm, whether in France or wherever we have an office, be an integral part of our Pro Bono policy and that they may get involved if they so desire. We therefore choose to support Plan France, Apprentis d’Auteuil and InitiaDROIT abroad.

### PLAN FRANCE

This charity, founded in 1993, acts for children in developing countries. Its fields of intervention include accessing education and training, and satisfying their basic needs.

Gide Pro Bono has been offering its support to a project led by Plan France in Vietnam since October 2010. The project centres on combating causes of child malnutrition and on improving the nutritional status of mothers, with the aim of cutting the mortality rate of under-fives by 5% in the project’s areas of implementation.

The programme directly affects 11,000 women aged 18 to 34, including 7,000 pregnant women and their husbands. Approximately 6,000 toddlers under two years of age and 400 members of medical staff, as well as members of the Union of Women and Nursery School Teachers, also benefit from the programme. Additionally, our offices in London, Paris and Vietnam offer their legal expertise in their respective countries, as part of the Gide Pro Bono skills sponsorship programme.

*“When we first met, the head of Plan Vietnam spoke about the projects and programmes his charity puts in place to support underprivileged children in Vietnam, in particular those from minority ethnic groups in the country’s mountainous regions. I was very impressed by the commitment and devotion of Plan to promote children’s rights and ensure better living conditions. I am delighted to be able to offer my legal expertise, and am glad to know that, through my involvement, I am helping the charity reach its objectives.”*

**Huyen Tram Nguyen**, associate at the Hanoi office



## APPRENTIS D'AUTEUIL

Gide Pro Bono supports two international solidarity worksites put in place by Les Apprentis d'Auteuil:

- **In Romania**, les Apprentis d'Auteuil brings together young French and Romanians around outdoor sports and the construction of dedicated infrastructure.
- **In Morocco**, Les Apprentis d'Auteuil sends young French charges to repair a rural school alongside young Moroccans.

The members of our offices in these two countries can contribute to these two projects.

## InitiaDROIT

InitiaDROIT wishes to develop its activity in French schools abroad.

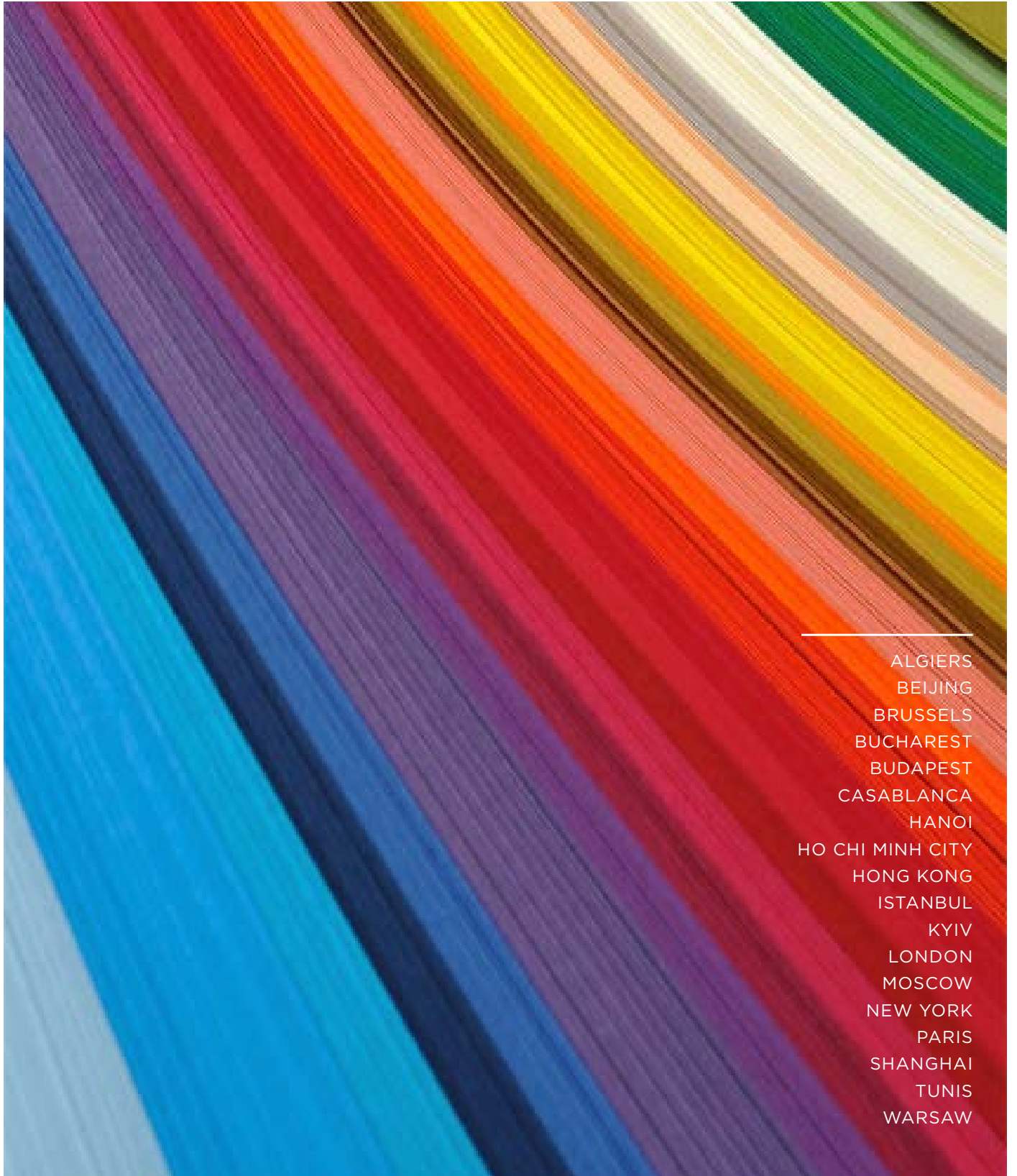
Gide currently works with the charity in China and Poland, more particularly the Beijing and Warsaw French Lycées, to organise the volunteer contribution of our lawyers during citizenship education classes.

This initiative can develop in other Chinese cities and other countries, and we will call upon our international offices to support this programme.



# GIDE

PRO BONO



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- ALGIERS
  - BEIJING
  - BRUSSELS
  - BUCHAREST
  - BUDAPEST
  - CASABLANCA
  - HANOI
  - HO CHI MINH CITY
  - HONG KONG
  - ISTANBUL
  - KYIV
  - LONDON
  - MOSCOW
  - NEW YORK
  - PARIS
  - SHANGHAI
  - TUNIS
  - WARSAW