

HIGHLIGHTS CORE TEAM MEETING



SYMBIOSIS

MEETING DATE & TIME

DECEMBER 15, 2025, 15:00-16:00

CORE TEAM ATTENDEES

GERBEN SAM (BOARD)
ULRICH NGUEPINI (BOARD)
HELEEN GEILENKIRCHEN (BOARD)
FATIMA MASTARI (BOARD, GAYLINA)
AKOS HAJDU (BOARD)
GAYLINA MAYIEKO (PROXY)

KINGSLEY ESSEMAH (AWAY)
KEVIN HOVIUS (CORE)
TANIA VAZQUEZ FACI (CORE)
ERIC NDAYISABA (AWAY)
UMME ABIHA (AWAY)
MARCIN MIETUS (AWAY)
TAMARA GREENLESE (AWAY)

Stichting Symbiosis

Internationally active under **The Symbiosis Foundation**
Patrijzenstraat 6, 2042 CM Zandvoort, The Netherlands

E: info@TheSymbiosisFoundation.org
W: www.TheSymbiosisFoundation.org

About Core Team Meetings

Core Team Meetings are statutory board meetings (Dutch: statutaire bestuursvergaderingen). The Board is expected to attend each Core Team Meeting to remain involved in key governance matters such as financial reporting, strategic decision-making, and compliance. Core Team members may submit official notices to the board in advance to request the inclusion of specific items on the meeting agenda.

To promote transparency and accountability, minutes are reviewed by the Board. Approval of the minutes can occur by majority voting in the next Core Team Meeting or by a signed approval with a minimum of 3 approving members. Summarized extracts of the minutes will be made public, demonstrating the foundation's commitment to openness and responsibility in achieving its mission. The team will convene a Core Team Meeting every 3-4 months, with at minimum once every 6 months, to review progress, make strategic decisions, and drive the foundation forward, creating a more connected and impactful future.

Agenda 15 December 2025

Location: Digital Teams Meeting

Meeting Chair: Gerben Sam

Board Secretary and note taker: Heleen Geilenkirchen

1. **Introduction**
2. **Personal Introductions Core Team**
3. **Organizational Developments**
4. **Team Developments and Successes**
5. **Core Team Decision Making**
6. **Discussion – Concept Strategy and Budget 2026**



Key Discussions

1. Introduction

- Attendees received a warm welcome to the last Core Team Meeting of 2025.
- Rephrased Mission and Vision were affirmed, and elements highlighted in the introduction of this document have been aligned.

2. Personal Introductions Core Team

- All members present already connected before; no further introductions were made.

3. Organizational Developments

- **Building the Accelerator Program:** The development of the Accelerator Program has been formally initiated. The three-month program, aimed at seed-stage start-ups with a focus on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, will consist of six sessions incorporating both self-paced components and scheduled cohort activities. High-level curriculum topics have been defined. The website has been updated to include a dedicated Symbiosis Accelerator page featuring a program flyer with detailed information and application options. Contributions from all Core Team members are welcomed to further refine and enhance the program.
- **Topics for the Annual Impact Report** have been assigned to the respective team members. A draft version will be reviewed and discussed during the first Core Team Meeting of 2026.

4. Team Developments

- **Strong international presence** is embodied by the Core Team, fostering a diverse and inclusive culture that enriches ideation and decision-making with valuable perspectives. It is inspiring to observe the team's progress under the guidance of our stable and highly motivated board.
- **Celebrations closing out 2025:** Key achievements celebrated at the end of 2025 included awards (such as Social Impact Innovator of 2025), team accomplishments (including the attainment of ANBI status), strategic collaborations (e.g., with GXZA Health), individual donations, sponsorships (such as Rabo Club Support and Google Ad Grants), growth across social-media channels, and increased visibility at events such as Impact Fest.
- **Role definitions:** Definitions for Board, Core Team, Volunteer, and Advisor roles were discussed. Feedback indicated that expectations were not always clearly defined in advance. This is partly attributed to Symbiosis still being a young organization and partly to ambitions at times outpacing the available time or capabilities of volunteers, including Board members. The Board Chair will further review this feedback in early 2026 with the aim of incorporating increased clarity into the Annual Impact Report.
- **Kevin Hovius** will reduce his availability for Symbiosis to 1–2 hours per week, with his efforts primarily focused on supporting social-media activities.
- **Tania Vazquez** will step down from the Core Team and will conclude her engagement with Symbiosis as of 2026. She extended her thanks to the team for the constructive and collaborative experience during her time with the organization.



5. Core Team Decision Making

- **Meeting Minutes:** The Meeting Minutes of the previous Core Team Meeting, held on **22 September 2025**, were formally accepted by vote.
- **Mission and Vision:** The rephrased Mission and Vision statements were accepted by vote:
 - **Vision: *Relentless Collaboration in Action, shaping a world united through positive intent and lasting impact.***
 - **Mission: *We empower changemakers and purpose-driven partners, to co-create and accelerate transformative solutions for lasting impact.***
- **Team Huddle Agenda:** The updated Team Huddle format—consisting of a short meet-and-greet followed by action-oriented working time with the option to connect with team members—was approved by vote. This format aims to reduce outstanding action items while maintaining collective alignment.
- **Accelerator Program – First Cohort:** The launch of the first cohort of the Accelerator Program in 2026, along with the Core Team’s support for the necessary preparation work, was unanimously accepted by vote.
- **Spring Event Focus:** The focus of the 2026 Spring Event was accepted by vote to be on student engagement (e.g., Oregon, Heidelberg, etc.).
- **Role Definitions:** Clarifying the role definitions for the Board, Core Team, Volunteers, and Advisors was accepted by vote, in alignment with the discussion noted earlier.

6. Discussion on Concept Strategy and Budget 2026

The concept strategy and budget for next year (2026) were reviewed, with the Board expressing a positive outlook following the discussion.

- **The strategic direction** for each Domain was documented by the respective Domain Leads through detailed one-pagers outlining up to two key projects, structured using the DMAIC framework. These projects were discussed at a high level, including the steps required to support the Accelerator.
- **The core activities for 2026** were discussed, including the Accelerator, the Spring and Fall Events, continued efforts to drive direct impact, adoption of simple & structured Ways-of-Working, and an outward-looking focus on supporting and connecting stakeholders to amplify positive impact.
- **The 2026 concept budget** was reviewed and discussed. It was noted that the investment required to initiate the Accelerator and ensure its accessibility to a broad group of mission-driven start-ups will exceed the forecasted income for 2026. The investment was approved as a strategic and mission-aligned use of funds, supported by sufficient operational reserves from donations received in 2024 and 2025.

Next Meeting: 15FEB2025 (intended to be followed by the next in)

These Meeting Minutes serve as the official record of discussions and decisions made during the Symbiosis Foundation's Core Team Meeting. This summary will be shared publicly, after board review of the minutes, reinforcing the foundation's commitment to transparency and accountability as we work toward our shared mission. These minutes will be formally approved during the next Core Team Meeting and are available on request with a valid reason.

Thank you for being a part of the Symbiosis community!