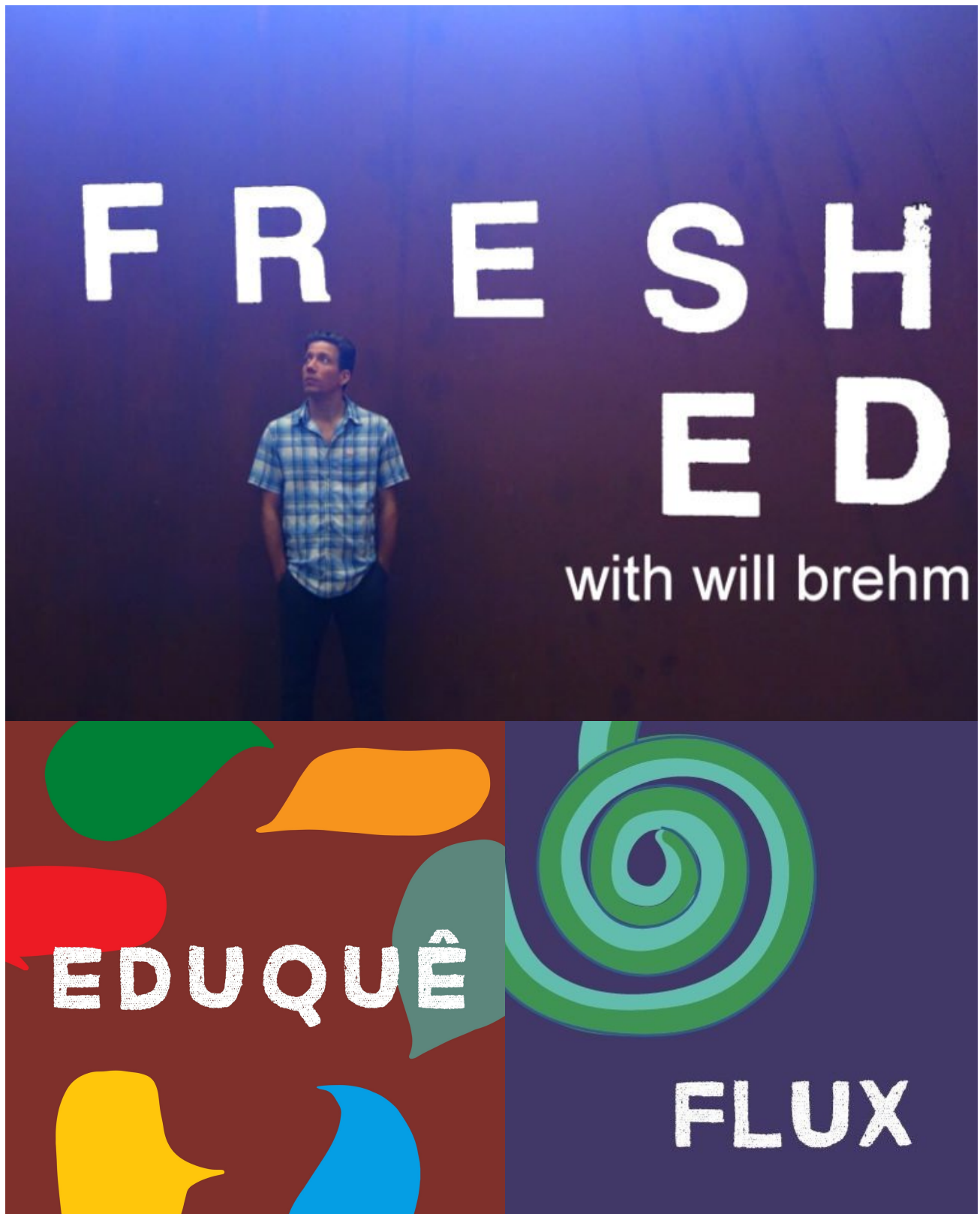


# FreshEd

## Annual Report 2021



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# Creator's Message

2021 was not easy. The pandemic raged. Inflation grew. Schools were shut. Wildfires, floods, and heatwaves occurred all too regularly. In the context of these poly crises, FreshEd provided me a welcome site of refuge. The conversations I had with 46 guests across 37 episodes opened my mind to new ideas and insights in educational research all while sitting in my small London flat.

FreshEd reached far beyond the confines of my home. People in nearly 180 countries listened to FreshEd over 115,000 times. Some 50 universities used FreshEd content in their courses. As we enter the third year of the pandemic, FreshEd continues to be a valuable online learning resource.



This year FreshEd was also able to create new directions and forms of knowledge production. By producing 12 episodes of Eduquê, our Portuguese-language podcast created in partnership with the Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education, FreshEd took a major step in challenging the dominance of the English-language in academic podcasting. We hope to create more podcasts in other languages in the future.

FreshEd has long wanted to push the boundaries of academic podcasting. This year we aired three FreshEd Flux episodes, which were created by graduate students. These narrative based podcasts follow no format or guide. They weave together academic methodologies with audio production techniques. It is, in my opinion, the perfect blend of creativity and rigor. The conclusion of the first round of Flux is just the beginning; we successfully recruited four new fellows in 2021 who are actively working on their episodes, which will air in late 2022.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of the FreshEd team, most of whom I've never met in person. They compiled resources for each episode, curated recommended lists, transcribed episodes, and managed social media accounts. They continued to post FreshEd content on the largest podcast platform in China, and even developed our first newsletter. Some team members left FreshEd for bigger and better things (thanks, Hang, Lushik and IJ!) and new members joined (welcome, José!). We even had interns support our work in the summer months. We built new partnerships and strengthened old ones. We diversified our fundraising, ensuring we can remain independent.

It's been a tough year but an exciting one. FreshEd continues to grow all thanks to our listeners. Without you, we'd just be more noise on the internet. Thank you for the support in 2021 and I look forward to new adventures in 2022!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Will Brehm'.

Will Brehm

# Who We Are

FreshEd, Inc. is a US 501(c)(3) organization that provides free educational content and resources online and disseminates educational and scientific research and ideas to the public.



FreshEd produces three podcasts that take ideas in educational research, which may initially seem impenetrable, and seeks to make them more accessible, unraveling their complexity through conversations with expert academics in the field.



We are supported by four institutional donors - Open Society Foundations (OSF), NORRAG, UCL Institute of Education, and The Sachdev Family Fund. We received donations from 41 individuals in 2021.



We are a team of 22 podcast crazy individuals who live across the globe and primarily work on FreshEd part-time. We are guided by a dedicated board of 6 people.

## Why FreshEd Matters

FreshEd offers all content free of charge and never uses user data for profit; it is an organization that actively works to mobilize and disseminate diverse knowledges worldwide; and it has initiatives that alter the exploitative power relations commonly found in academia.



# 2021 Activities & Highlights

In 2021, 52 episodes were aired across three shows, FreshEd with Will Brehm, Flux and Eduquê all of which reached a global audience. This included 37 episodes of FreshEd with Will Brehm, 3 episodes of Flux, and 12 episodes of Eduquê. FreshEd is more than a series of podcasts. It is an organization working with others to connect podcasting and education. Team members taught translation in China and conducted workshops for teachers.



# FreshEd with Will Brehm

The flagship content of FreshEd is called FreshEd with Will Brehm, which is an interview-style podcast that showcases cutting-edge research in the field of education, broadly defined. It is used in dozens of university courses around the world. The podcast receives 10,000 listens per month across 179 countries. It started in October 2015 and airs roughly 40 episodes each year. The listenership can be broken into three main groups: students, professors/teachers/researchers, and development practitioners (such as, people working for NGOs, the World Bank or the U.N.).



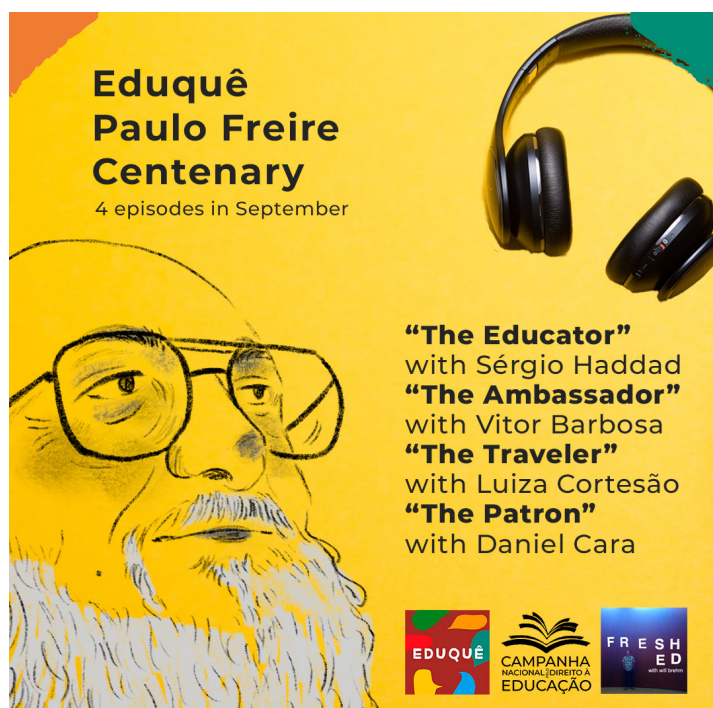
FreshEd with Will Brehm disrupts the common practice of placing research outputs behind paywalls. Through freely available interviews, the podcast circulates ideas that would otherwise be inaccessible to many. In particular, those listeners living in the Global South who attend universities that cannot afford the prohibitive costs of journal subscriptions. Through informal conversations, episodes also make complex ideas easily understood. For this reason, many students studying in the Global North rely on FreshEd to complement their reading lists. Many professors (at Berkeley, Edinburgh, Harvard, Hawaii, Hong Kong, Humboldt, Sydney, UPenn, and many others) recognize this too, assigning episodes on their syllabi.

Many FreshEd with Will Brehm episodes are currently transcribed and then translated into six languages: Mandarin, French, Arabic, Portuguese, Farsi, and Vietnamese. This process not only increases accessibility but also disseminates knowledge across a geography often overlooked by the Western academe. FreshEd plans to publish some of the translated transcripts as open-access volumes in the future. Our biggest footprint outside of the Global North is in mainland China, where we have business accounts setup on the leading podcast (Ximalaya) and social media (WeChat) platforms; this enables us to bring independent ideas to the Chinese market. In 2020, FreshEd set up a program that teaches high school students Mandarin to English translation using FreshEd with Will Brehm episodes exclusively.



# Eduquê

FreshEd's knowledge dissemination strategy goes beyond an English language podcast that is translated into other languages. FreshEd actively reverses this dissemination direction by recognizing the diversity of knowledge traditions worldwide. FreshEd is actively creating non-English podcasts that are then translated back into English. For instance, Eduquê is a Portuguese-language podcast created in collaboration with FreshEd, the University of Porto, and the Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education. The goal of Eduquê is to showcase new Portuguese research on education, broadly defined. The episodes are transcribed and then translated into English. The podcast launched in April 2021. The monthly podcast aired twelve episodes (teasers included) with a total of 1685 listens on SoundCloud. To celebrate Paulo Freire Centennial, Eduquê aired a series of four episodes, with interviews with educators specializing in the life and work of one of the greatest thinkers on education in Brazil and the world.



# Flux

Over the course of the 2020-2021 Flux Fellowship, the Flux team (Johannah Fahey, Brett Lashau and Will Brehm) mentored and provided their expertise to four fellows over a nine month period (from late November 2020 until late August 2021). The fellowship is geared towards producing a podcast episode for the air. But a large part of the fellowship is the mentoring process, not the final product. Three of the four fellows completed their final episodes.



In the first months, Jo worked closely with each fellow conducting one-on-one meetings at least twice a month to develop a written script from their initial ideas and transform their academic research into a soundscape where sonic elements were anchored by their informed analysis and poetic scripting. The scripts went through up to ten iterations (with detailed feedback provided on each) before the fellows moved into the production phase of their episodes. In this phase, the audio was the text and Brett's expertise came to the fore. He coached each fellow through the technical requirements (for example, instructing them on what microphones and audio editing software to use) as well as teaching them about ambient sound and soundscapes. Jo simultaneously provided guidance on developing the affective dimensions, characters, narrative structure and story arcs. Meanwhile, Will worked behind the scenes chasing licensing for music, checking copyright requirements and undertaking administrative duties. When each audio cut of the episode was submitted, Jo, Will and Brett listened and provided detailed feedback on each until the air date of the final episode. Will subsequently interviewed each fellow about their experiences and these interviews were also broadcast.

In late 2021 we launched our second round of Flux. Four new fellows were selected from over 35 applications.



Yanan Yu



Aizuddin Mohamed Anuar



Michael Rumbelow



Soja Subhagar

# Flux Fellows 2020–2021



**Yardain Amron** is a freelance journalist and master's student in Geography at the University of British Columbia. In his Flux episode titled '*Education is Not a Silver Bullet*', he takes us to disparate places—from universities in India and Puerto Rico to Occupy Wall Street—and makes a connection between them by embedding stories within stories.

**Daniela Hernandez Silva** is an Erasmus Mundus Master Student. In her Flux episode titled '*Defying The Odds in Rural Columbia*', she uses magical realism to create a composite character called Jose, who gives voice to the hundreds of people Daniela spoke with during her five-years of ethnographic fieldwork.

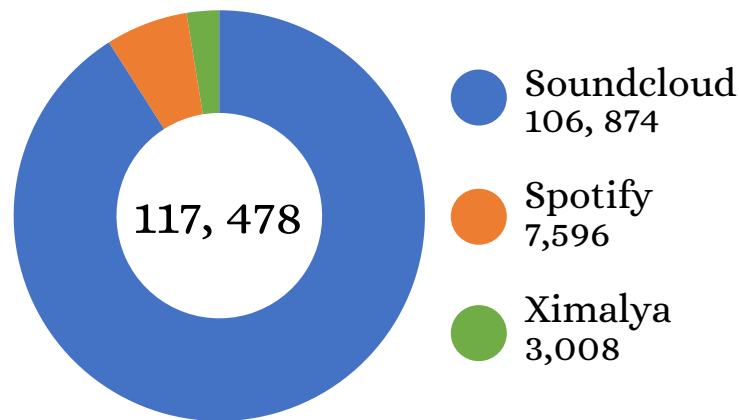


**Mari Casellato**, is a graduate of Teachers College, Columbia University. In her Flux episode titled '*A Political Act: Youth Voices and Environmental Education in Brazil*', she takes us on a journey through time, revealing the potential of youth participation in environmental education in Brazil (and beyond).

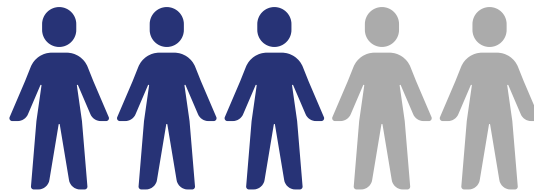
**Essam Elkorghli** is from Tripoli, Libya. He is a doctoral student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign focusing on Libya's education system post-2011 uprising and how it is changing due to globalization factors. His research is shaped by critical theory and political sociology of education.



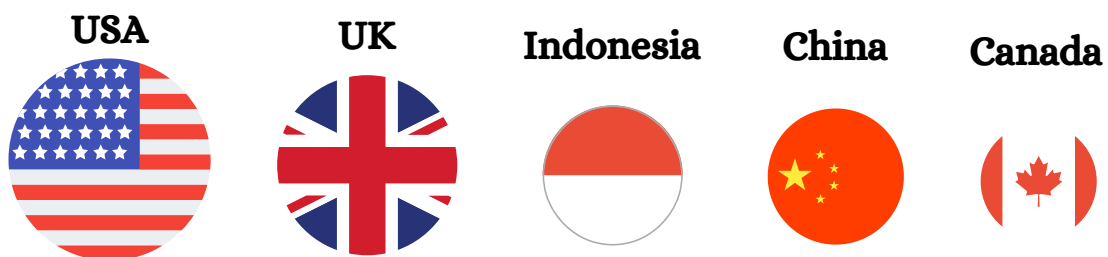
# Audience Insights



We had a total of **117,478** listens overall



**3 out of every 5** of our listens came from outside the USA



Listens came from 179 countries. The top five included the USA, the UK, Indonesia, China, and Canada.



57 Universities across the world linked with FreshEd in 2021



# Top 5 Episodes of 2021



António Nóvoa  
*UNESCO'S Futures of Education Report*

1



Girindre Beehary  
*Learning from the Failure to Improve  
Literacy Worldwide*

2



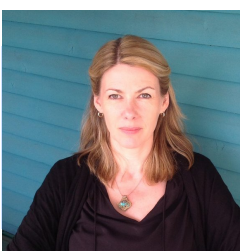
Jonathan London  
*Why is Vietnam an Education Superstar?*

3



Daniela Hernandez Silva  
*Defying the Odds in Rural Colombia?*

4



Maren Elfert  
*UNESCO, the World Bank, and Education  
Development*

5

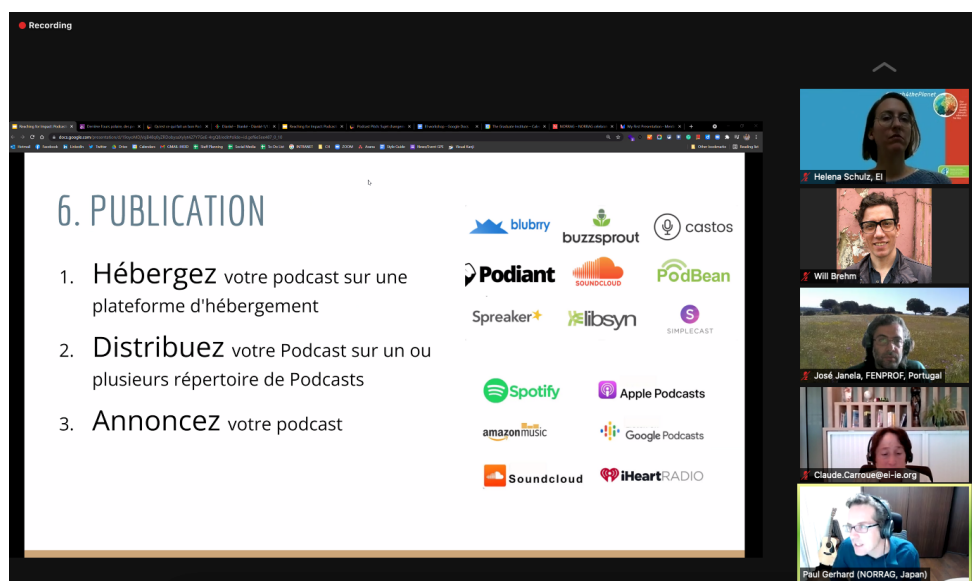


# Beyond Podcasting

FreshEd is more than a podcast. Team members actively support the teaching and learning of podcasting around the world

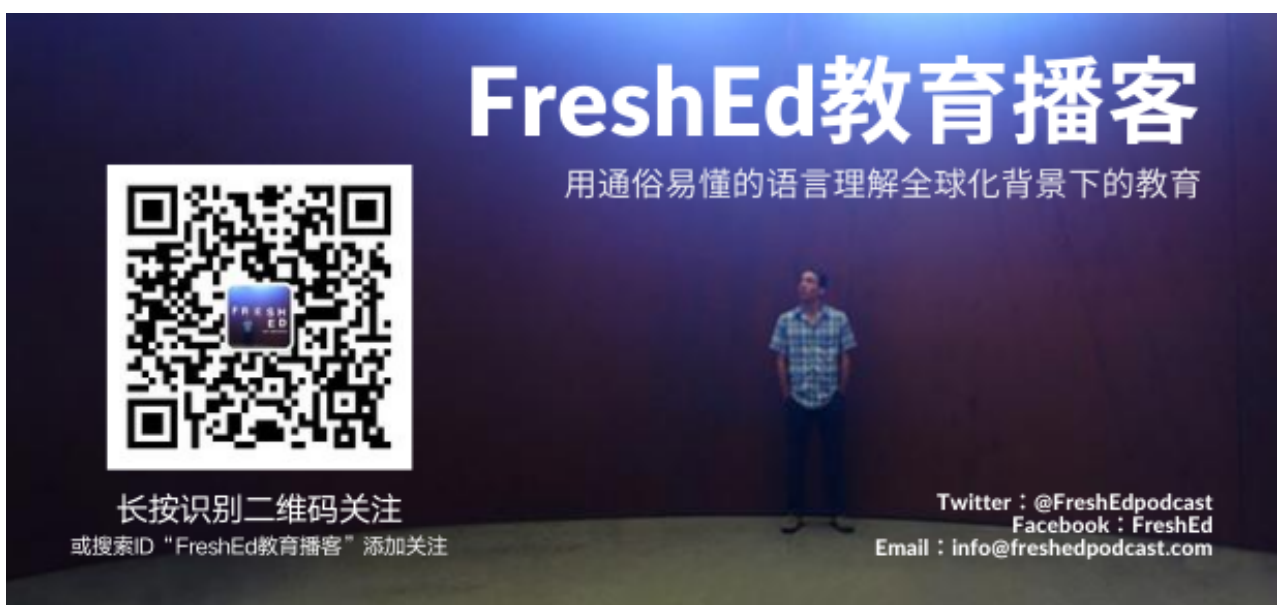
## Education International Workshop

In September 2021, FreshEd in collaboration with NORRAG designed and conducted the workshop “Reaching for Impact: Podcasting Tools and Climate Change”. It was promoted by Education International as part of their Teach for the Planet Training Series: Together We Change the Future. The virtual training session aimed to empower unions in their work to fight climate change by the usage of podcasting tools. It was delivered in English (by Mariana Casellato), French (by Paul Gerhard), and Spanish (by Daniela Hernandez-Silva), and reached a diverse audience of teacher unions from all around the globe.

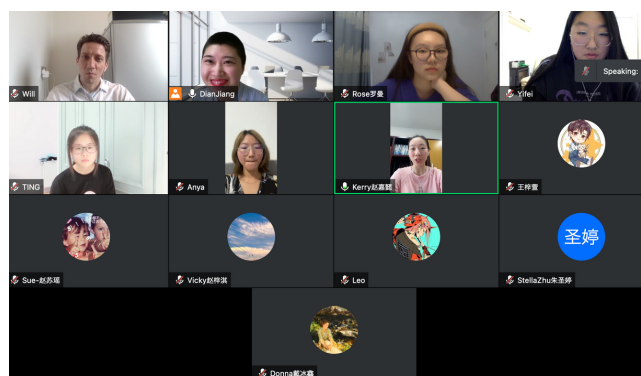


# xChina

xChina is a FreshEd initiative that aims to disseminate content in mainland China. This initiative is needed because most podcast platforms – SoundCloud, Spotify, etc. – are blocked in China. As such, FreshEd is registered on Ximalaya, the biggest podcast platform in China. On top of Ximalaya, FreshEd has a social media account on WeChat. Most of the FreshEd shows are posted on Ximalaya and a dedicated xChina team translates introductions into Mandarin.

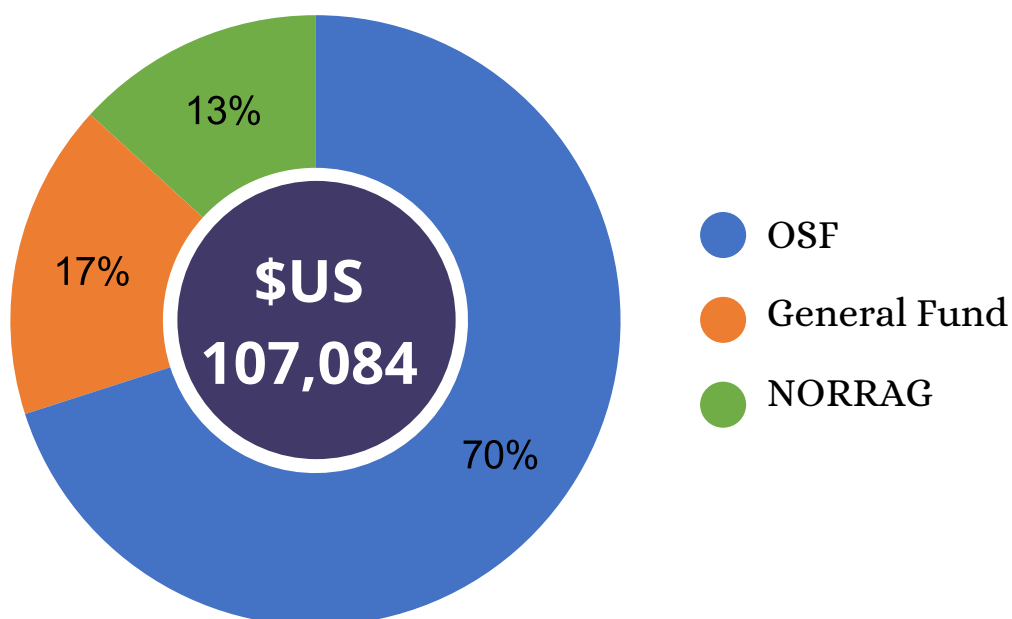


Beyond the podcast, xChina runs a translation course for high school students. In March 2021, the first course came to an end. Managed by Dian Jiang, the xChina translation course enrolled four students who met weekly to translate episodes. Students not only translated episodes, but discussed the content and meaning, often reading additional resources to gain a better understanding of the content.

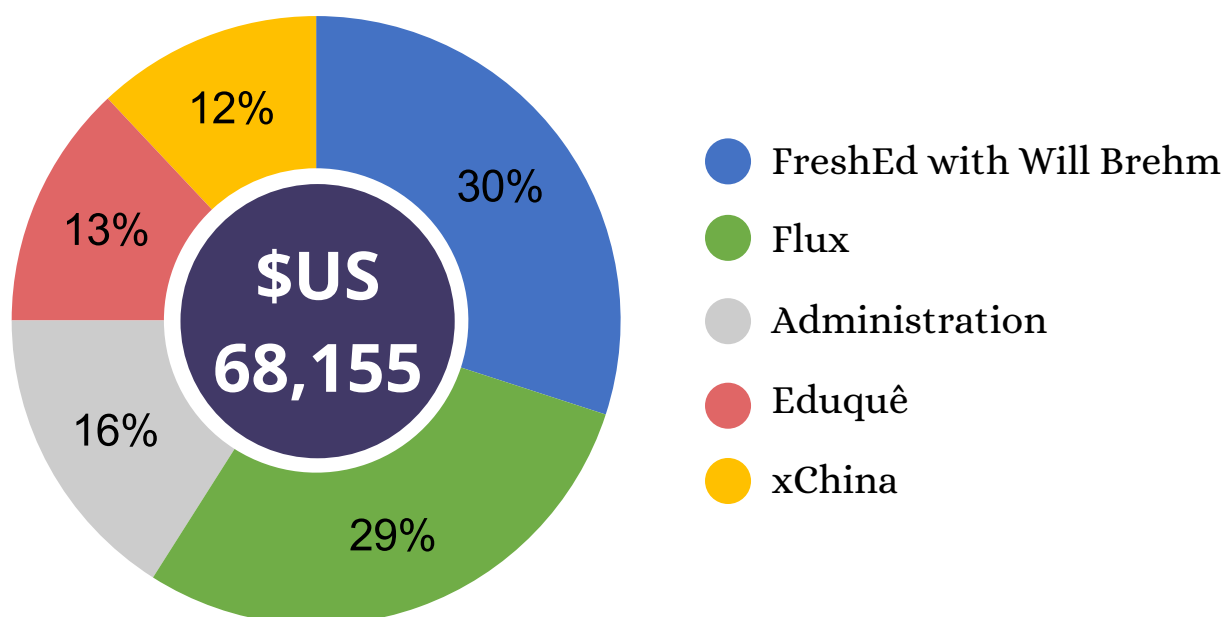


# Our Budget

In 2021, we raised a total of \$US 107,084. Our biggest institutional donors were Open Society Foundation (OSF) and NORRAG. The General Fund is comprised of contributions from The Sachdev Family Fund, UCL Institute of Education and 41 individual donors.



In 2021, we spent \$US68,155. Our expenditure breakup per activity-



# Looking Ahead

FreshEd has big plans for 2022. We aim to promote and spotlight the work of PhD students around the world. We also plan to start a Spanish-language podcast. We will also release a new type of episode that explores the biographies of various guests. Stay tuned for more ideas for your ears!



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