

Annual Report 2022

FRESHED



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Creator's Message

This year, FreshEd aired its 300th episode. It was a milestone seven years in the making and testament to the dedicated team that has allowed FreshEd to thrive. 2022 was, overall, a year unlike any we've experienced. Our podcasts received over 200,000 listens, up 60 percent from the previous year. More people are listening to FreshEd today than ever before. We count over 100 universities using our content in their courses and we are actively making connections with various institutions to promote our work.



FreshEd's impact after seven years and hundreds of episodes is immeasurable. Sometimes I hear stories directly from listeners who send me an email, speak to me after class, or I meet at some in-person event. One listener told me she cried listening to a Flux episode; another said he decided to study education because of the podcast. It's humbling to speak with listeners of the podcast to hear how it has positively impacted them.

This year we launched a new Spanish-speaking podcast, *Aula Divergente*, hosted by Daniela Hernandez and Carlos Navia. The podcast is series based, meaning it focuses on a single topic across multiple episodes. Within each episode, listeners hear multiple voices carefully tied together through narration. The first series was on the constitutional reform in Chile. The next series, which will air in 2023, will focus on the Venezuelan migrant crisis across Latin America.

We also launched the podcast, *The Thinking Ear*. Although we haven't released an episode yet, *The Thinking Ear* is an audio periodical focused on education broadly defined. We like to think of it as an academic journal not in text but in audio. Episodes will be independently-created by researchers who want to push the boundaries of academic publishing through the medium of podcasting. It's Flux without the mentorship. We are working closely with one scholar who will hopefully have the first episode ready to air in 2023.

Our flagship show, *FreshEd with Will Brehm*, continues to grow. We aired 36 episodes and started to experiment with formats beyond the standard interview.

Creator's Message

Three episodes contained a mash-up of voices about certain academic themes – writing, reading, and research. We call these The FreshEd Questionnaire, a not-so-subtle play on the Proust Questionnaire published by Vogue magazine. We also aired an episode originally played on the Swedish podcast Bakom Bokhyllan, which featured me in conversation about science communication. It was an excellent collaboration we are keen to further explore with other podcasts.

As the top episodes of the year suggest, Season 2 of *Flux* was a resounding success. Four fellows developed narrative-based podcasts about cutting edge issues in education, from decolonization and inclusive education to development and child's play. These episodes take a huge amount of work to put together, from script writing to sound design. Recording sounds around London was one of my favourite experiences during the year. I believe *Flux* pushes the boundaries of both podcasting and research. It sits at the nexus of research, art, and entertainment. At the invitation of Miguel Filipe Silva and Rui da Silva, I had the privilege to talk about *Flux* and the value of academic podcasting at the University of Porto. In my mind, *Flux* is the future of academic podcasting, so we are excited to work on Season 3 in 2023.

FreshEd remains committed to the ethos of Open Science. All our content remains ad-free and open access. We've transcribed every episode in 2022 to allow the widest access to our content. Such an ethos, however, comes at a cost. FreshEd may be free to listen to, but it is not free to produce. This year we've turned down advertisements and sponsored-content because we do not want to embrace anything that may take away from the listener-experience and jeopardize your trust in us. This has been possible because of listener donations as well as contributions by large organizations such as the Open Society Foundations, NORRAG, the Institute of Education, and the Sachdev Family Fund. Our biggest donor for the past three years has been the Open Society Foundations, but unfortunately, it will no longer be funding FreshEd in the future. This has left a large hole in our future budget, which we plan on filling in 2023. By way of conclusion to this opening letter, I would like to call on every listener of FreshEd to contribute what you can to allow FreshEd to continue to produce important content in the field of education. If you work for an organization that gives donations, please consider supporting FreshEd.

Thanks to our listeners and dedicated team for another amazing year!

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 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 our dedicated listeners in 2022. We are currently looking for new funders to enable FreshEd to keep growing.



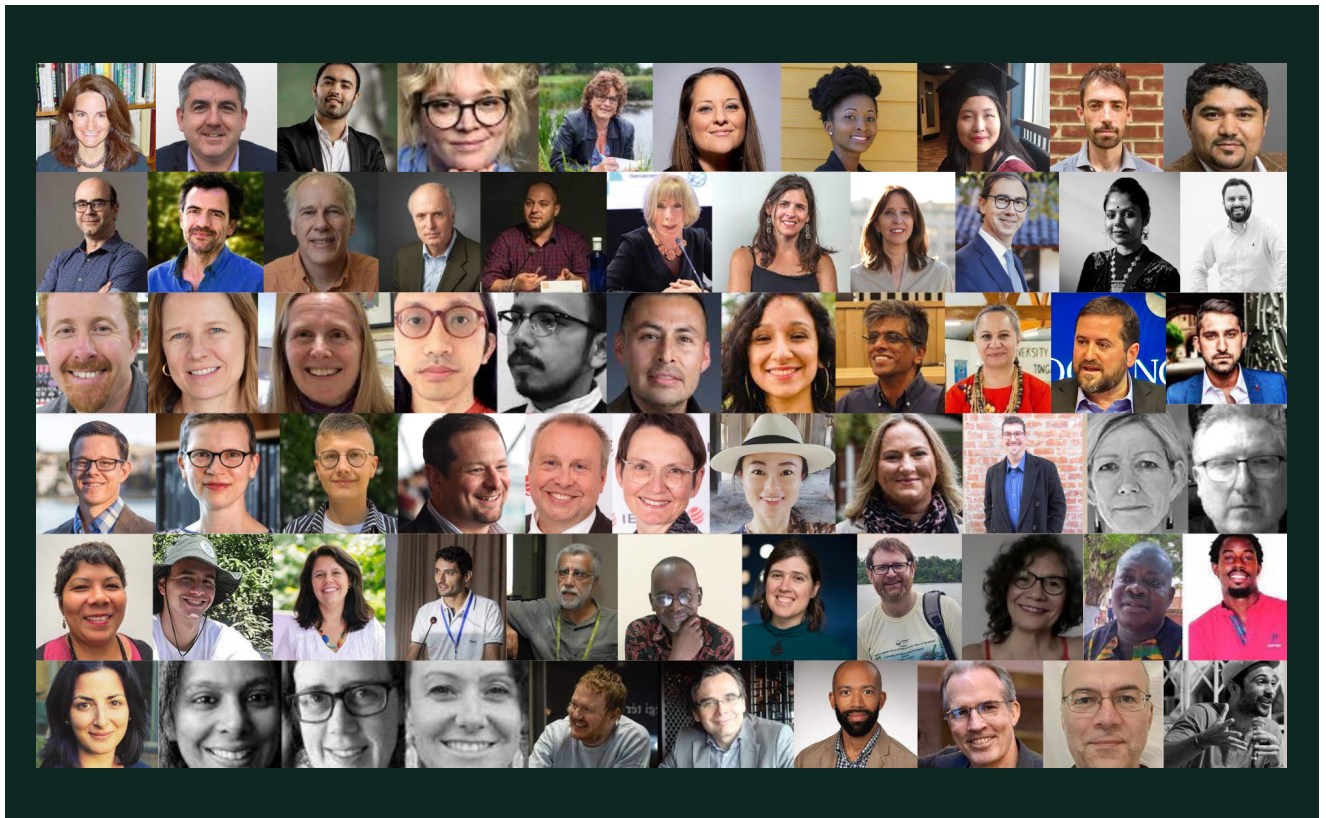
We are a team of 24 podcast-crazy individuals who live across the globe and work on FreshEd part-time. We are guided by a dedicated board of 6 people.

Why FreshEd Matters

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

2022 Activities & Highlights

In 2022, 63 episodes were aired across four shows, *FreshEd with Will Brehm*, *Flux*, *Eduquê* and *Aula Divergente*, all of which reached a global audience. This included 36 episodes of *FreshEd with Will Brehm*, 4 episodes of *Flux*, 11 episodes of *Eduquê* and 12 episodes of *Aula Divergente*. In addition, we released 12 recommended lists. FreshEd is more than a series of podcasts. It is an organization working with others to connect podcasting and education around the world.



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 100s of university courses around the world. The podcast receives over 17,000 listens per month from listeners in over 180 countries. This year 36 episodes were aired. The listenership can be broken into three main groups: students, professors, (including teachers and 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 use 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.

"As a master's student in education and international development, I find this podcast an essential tool for learning, questioning, exploring, re-examining, and developing. Featuring veteran scholars such as David Harvey and Stephen Ball, whose work I have wrestled with and referenced repeatedly in the past, whilst also introducing leading fresh voices in educational research."

– Idris John Bakki via Apple Podcasts

In 2022, *FreshEd with Will Brehm* experimented with its traditional format. Three episodes compiled the voices of past guests who were asked the same questions about reading, writing, and research. These mash-up episodes, called The FreshEd Questionnaire, provide valuable insight into some of the main activities of academics. They are intended to demystify the writing process, showing how even some of the most renowned scholars struggle with their practice. The show also aired episodes of other podcasts. This was most notably done with the Swedish podcast, Bakom Bokhyllan, which interviewed Will for one of its episodes on science communication.

Flux

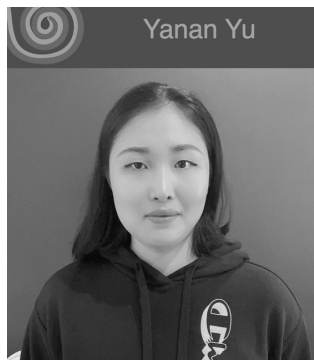
Over the course of the 2022, the *Flux* team (Johannah Fahey, Brett Lashau and Will Brehm) mentored and provided their expertise to four fellows during Season 2 of *Flux*. *Flux* is geared towards helping graduate students produce a podcast episode for the air. But a large part of *Flux* is the mentoring process, not the final product.

The process starts with intensive script development. Jo works closely with each fellow conducting one-on-one meetings to develop a written script from their initial ideas and transform their academic research into a soundscape where sonic elements can be anchored by their informed analysis and poetic scripting. The scripts go through up to ten iterations (with detailed feedback provided on each) before the fellows move into the production phase of their episodes.



In the production phase, the audio is the text and Brett's expertise comes to the fore. He coaches 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 provides guidance on developing the affective dimensions, characters, narrative structure and story arcs. Meanwhile, Will works behind the scenes chasing licensing for music, checking copyright requirements, undertaking administrative duties, and even recording soundscapes in London (see image). When each audio cut of the episode is submitted, Jo, Will and Brett listen and provide detailed feedback on each until the air date of the final episode. Will subsequently interviews fellows about their experiences and these interviews are also broadcast. Season 2 of *Flux* was a resounding success. In late 2022 we launched the application for Season 3 of *Flux*.

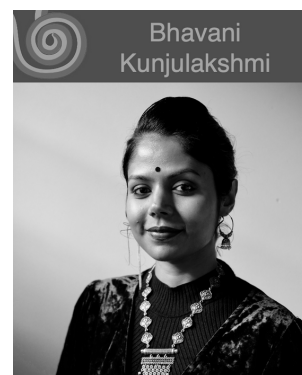
Flux Fellows 2021–2022



Yanan Yu

Yanan is a visually impaired scholar and accomplished pianist from China, who recently earned a Master's degree in Disability Studies from University of Bristol. She's interned for the BBC and is currently applying to PhD programs. Her *Flux* episode, "Am I Able?" sought to challenge the assumptions that people sometimes make about people with disabilities and took listeners on a journey that traverses the world from Huaihua in China to London in the UK.

Bhavani is a queer immigrant writer activist who studied at University College London and lives in Berlin, Germany. In her episode titled "Can You Hear the Subaltern Speak?", she uses her hometown, Kerala, as a point of reference to explain how the West ignores and overlooks the truths of marginalized communities.



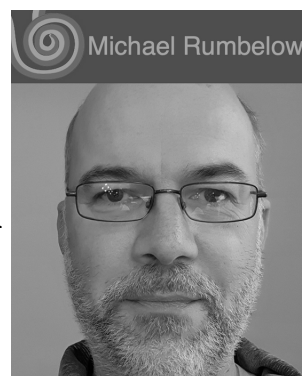
Bhavani
Kunjulakshmi



Aizuddin
Mohamed Anuar

Aizuddin is a lecturer in education at Keele University. He recently earned his Ph.D. from University of Oxford. His *Flux* episode, "River of Development/Melawan Lupa," told the story of development in Malaysia through the personal memory of three generations: his grandfather, mother and himself.

Michael is a doctoral fellow at University of Bristol studying Mathematics Education. Before that, he worked as a producer of Online Educational content for the BBC. In his episode, "Playing with Blocks - the Square Root of Tree", he used a sonic journey to explore the power and possibilities of block play. He's currently turning the episode into an audio walking tour in London.



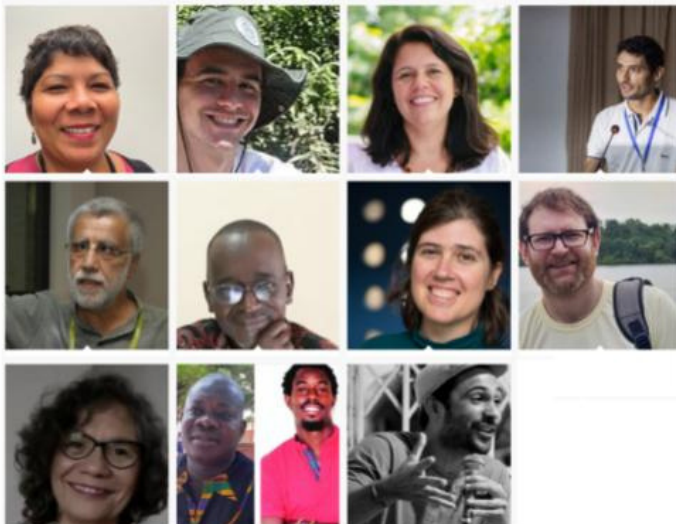
Michael Rumbelow

Eduquê

Eduquê is a monthly podcast in Portuguese hosted by Rui da Silva and Andressa Pellanda. The goal of *Eduquê* is to showcase new Portuguese-language research on education, broadly defined.

The episodes are transcribed and translated into English. It is produced in partnership with the Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education.

In 2022, *Eduquê* aired the second season with 11 episodes with a total of 2,040 listeners, a 14% increase from the previous year. The show explored a wide range of topics, including environmental education, the right to education, LGBTQIA+ rights, the pedagogy of the crossroads, and religion and education in Guinea-Bissau. The *Eduquê* team was privileged to interview a diverse group of guests, including educators, activists, and researchers from Brazil, Guinea-Bissau, the UK, and Portugal with Rui da Silva hosting 7 shows alone, Andressa Pellanda hosting 1 show alone, and both hosting 3 together.



In March 2022 the *Eduquê* Podcast joined Twitter with the aim of sharing its content wider and reaching a broader audience. The account is managed by Susanne Wehrs. In addition, *Eduquê* started an outreach effort to create partnerships with the goal of amplifying its university listener base. The team emailed a total of 220 professors from 19 universities in Brazil through which 2 proposals for new episodes were initiated. In 2023, *Eduquê* aims to increase its audience base and to continue to delve into critical conversations about education.

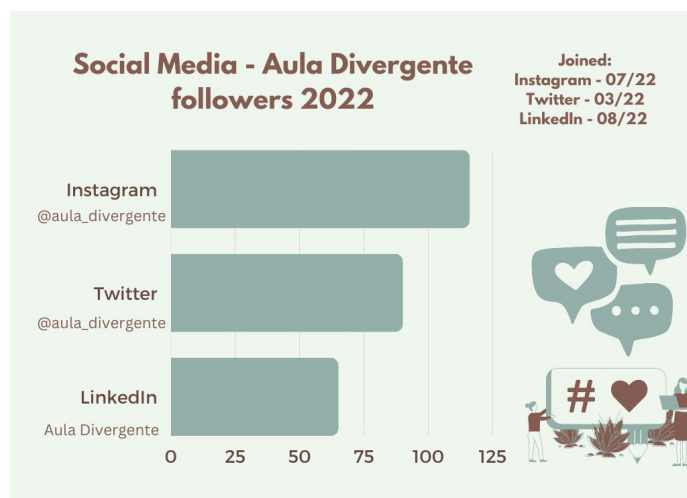
Aula Divergente

Aula Divergente is a biweekly podcast in Spanish hosted by Daniela Hernández and Carlos Navia that follows a mini-series format and exposes relevant educational issues in Latin America and the Caribbean, serving as a meeting place for diverse voices from academia, politics, and civil society.

In July 2022 the first mini-series, called “Chile en Movimientos”, was launched and included the perspective of 12 representatives of Chilean politics and academia. It consisted of four chapters, followed by the release of the 12 interviews used for the construction of the mini-series. Its main objective was to make a historical-political account of the right to education in Chile from the dictatorship during the 80’s to this day, with special emphasis on the constitutional reform that was rejected in the September 2022 plebiscite.



In September 2022 a Listeners Board was created as part of a strategy to engage listeners and include them in general decision-making processes about the show. It consisted of a group of listeners that voluntarily decided to be part of the theme selection for the second mini-series and that attended a Zoom meeting held in October. It is expected to continue strengthening the relationship and alliances with the Listeners Board in 2023.



In 2022, *Aula Divergente* joined social media platforms, including Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn. These accounts have been managed by Nicole Tapia and have become a fundamental means for reaching listeners and sharing relevant content related with the mini-series.

The Thinking Ear

The Thinking Ear is an audio periodical focused on education broadly defined. The show is aired on FreshEd's platform, ensuring episodes reach thousands of listeners across the globe. Episodes are independently-created by researchers who want to push the boundaries of academic publishing through the medium of podcasting.

There are three ways to contribute to *The Thinking Ear*:

- 1. Submit:** Researchers who have already produced a podcast on any topic in education can submit a brief overview for review.
- 2. Pitch:** Researchers who have an idea for an episode can pitch *The Thinking Ear* team. *The Thinking Ear* will commission select pitches for independent production.
- 3. Partner:** Researchers working on a grant can partner with *The Thinking Ear*. Partnership opportunities are an excellent way to incorporate alternative knowledge dissemination strategies into grant applications.

Why it matters?

The Thinking Ear is the first independent audio journal in education. This matters because sonic productions expand understandings of education not only to a public audience but also in ways beyond the traditional academic medium of text. Research is no longer confined to niche journal articles or shared in half-empty conference rooms. Podcasts encourage people to think both analytically and creatively about research and increases public impact.

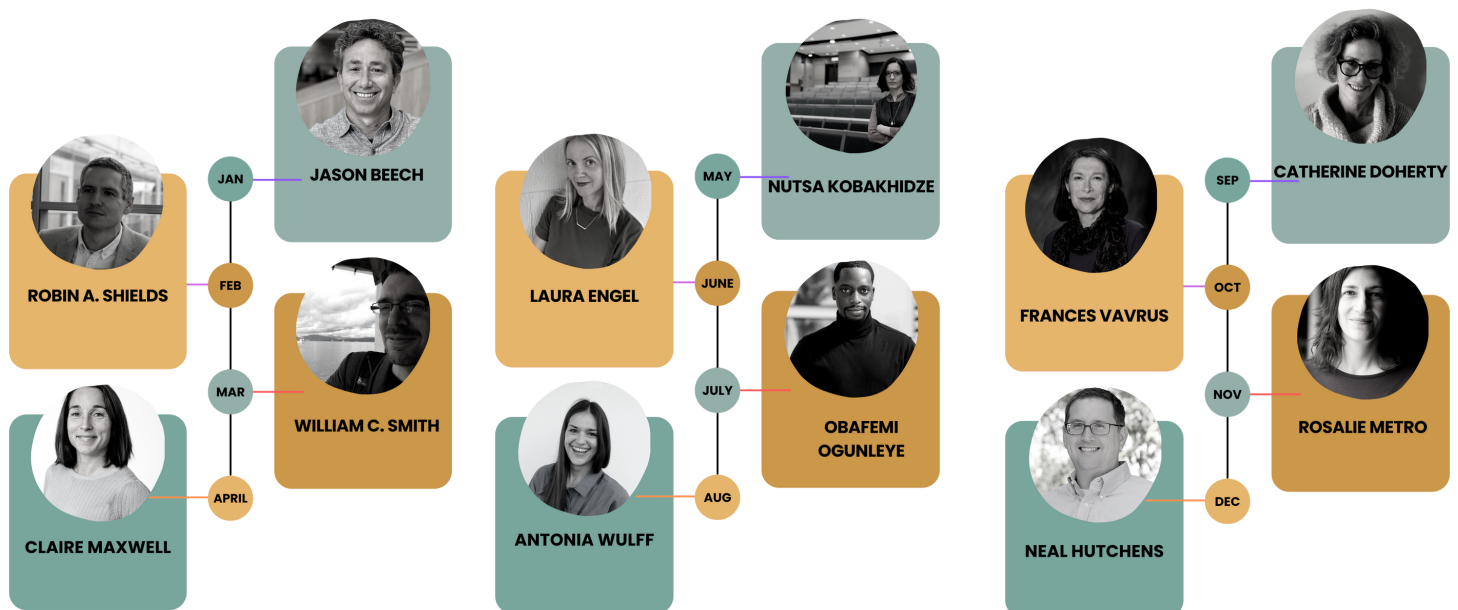
The Thinking Ear also matters because it pushes the meaning of podcasting. Cross-sector and interdisciplinary research in education can expand the podcast medium. Podcasting as a medium is open to experimentation, providing researchers with the creative space to combine academic insights and artistic sensibilities with audio production.



Recommended List

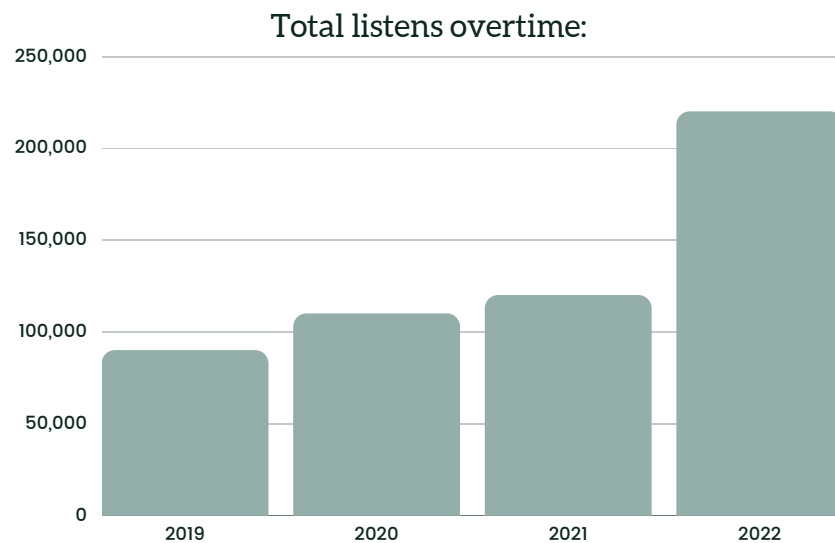
The Recommended List feature is a hand-picked collection by special guests to help our audience sift through our ever-growing archive. FreshEd team member Fatih Aktas edits this feature, and guests are invited monthly to share their favourite three to five episodes. As part of the contribution, guests write a short commentary about why they chose these shows. The goal of the Recommended List is to connect dissimilar episodes under a common theme. Doing so allows listeners of FreshEd to listen across episodes and critically explore topics from multiple perspectives.

In 2022, 12 Recommended Lists were written by special guests, including academics and researchers from various institutions. In 2023, we aim to continue publishing monthly Lists and invite guests from diverse backgrounds to share their favourite episodes.



Audience Insights

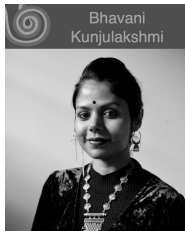
In 2022, our listenership increased by 60% with 217,285 listens. The top countries where our listens were based included: the USA, UK, Hong Kong, Canada, Australia, Germany, South Sudan, Japan, Norway, and France.



Over 100 universities across the world used FreshEd in 2022.



Top 5 Episodes of 2022



Bhavani Kunjulakshmi
Can You Hear the Subaltern Speak?

1



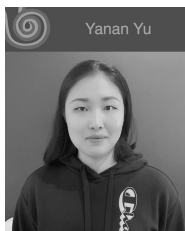
Greg Skutches
Carnival of Learning

2



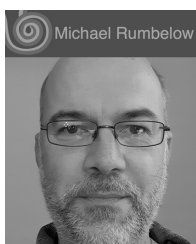
Aizuddin Mohamed Anuar
River of Development/Melawan Lupa

3



Yanan Yu
Am I Able?

4



Michael Rumbelow
Playing with Blocks: The Square Root of Tree

5

FreshEd Impact

Over the years, FreshEd has become integral to the teaching and learning of leading universities across the world, and a research resource for academics, including graduate students. *FreshEd with Will Brehm*, *Eduquê* and *Aula Divergente* have broadened and enabled critical conversations in education in three languages, English, Portuguese, and Spanish. In addition, *Flux*, our graduate fellowship, continues to revolutionize and diversify educational research methods. Importantly, FreshEd is dedicated to remaining paywall free and exploring ways to make educational accessible.

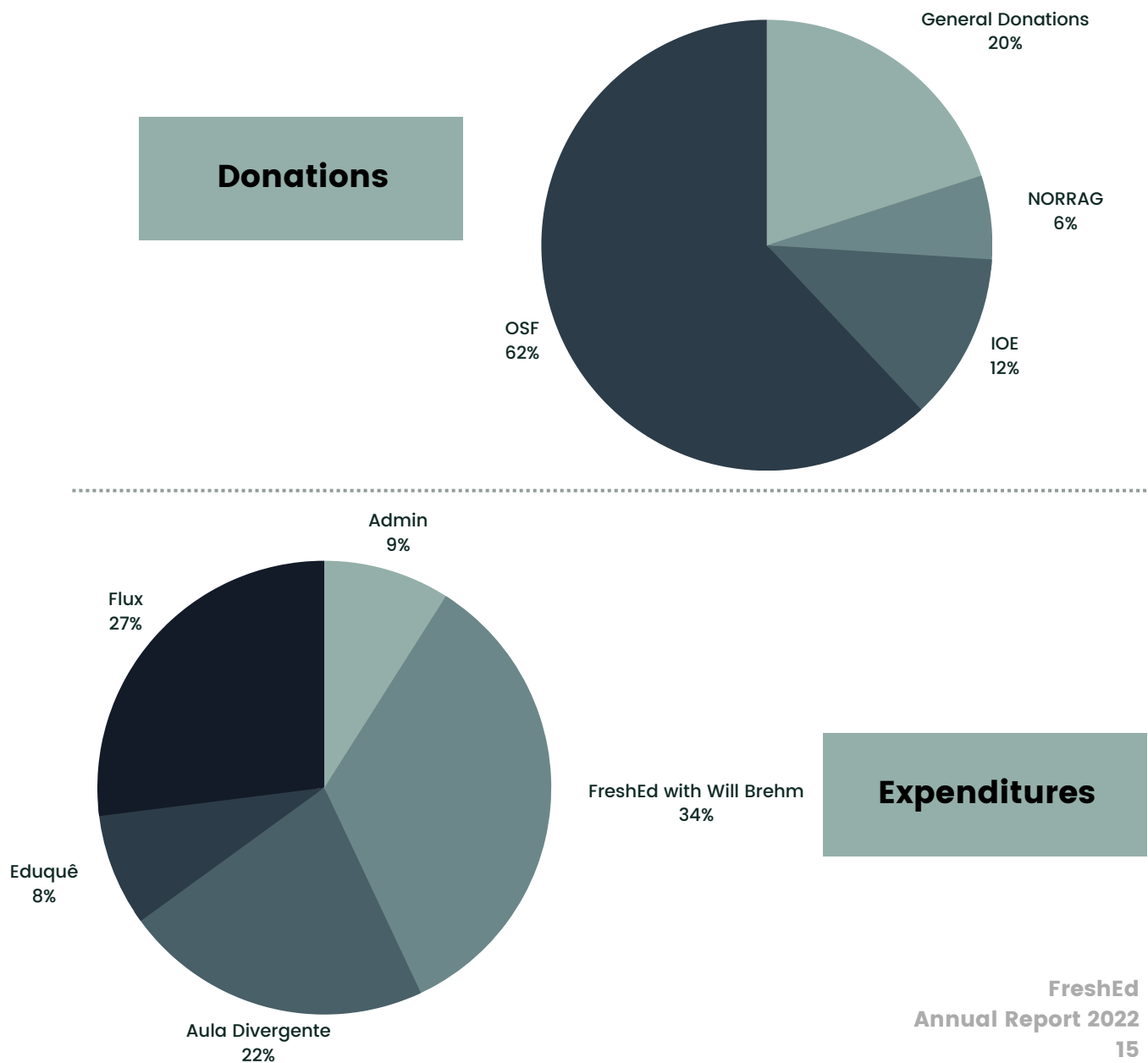
Below are some testimonials from listeners:



Our Budget

In 2022, we raised a total of \$121,242.93. Our biggest institutional donors were Open Society Foundations (OSF), the UCL Institute of Education, and NORRAG. The General Fund is comprised of contributions from The Sachdev Family Fund and individual donors. We spent a total of \$101,455.36.

The chart below highlights a detailed breakdown of our donations and expenditure:



Our Future Plans

Moving ahead, FreshEd has big plans for 2023. We plan to diversify our funders to enable us to keep our podcasts paywall and advertisement free. In addition, we plan to fully launch *The Thinking Ear* - we encourage everyone to apply! *Aula Divergente* will launch a second series, with a special focus on the refugee crisis across Latin America, especially those people leaving Venezuela. Across our podcasts, we will continue to showcase the top research while also making additional compilation shows based on the FreshEd Questionnaire.



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