



A Decade of Making a Difference— And We’re Just Getting Started

Register now for the Human Rights and Humanitarian Forum on May 7

Dear Friend,

Last month, we marked the first milestone of our 10th anniversary year. On March 10, 2015, the world caught its first glimpse of what Aurora would become at a [small gathering in New York](#). As we prepare to return to New York for the [Aurora Prize Ceremony](#) this fall, it's a natural moment to take stock. With your support, Aurora has amplified the voices and impact of exceptional humanitarians around the world, supporting their life-saving work. Under the leadership of [Aurora 10th Anniversary Co-Chairs](#) Dame Louise Richardson, Alice Greenwald, Dr. Eric Esraillian, and Noubar Afeyan, we will celebrate their courage and impact with a series of landmark events, bringing together changemakers, supporters, and [Aurora Luminaries](#) to mark this extraordinary journey.

We've come a long way, and we've still got a long way to go. As we reflect on what we've achieved together, we are constantly reminded of the urgent challenges facing humanitarians and human rights defenders globally. A beloved member of the Aurora community, 2017 Aurora Prize Laureate [Dr. Tom Catena](#) works 18-hour days as a surgeon in Sudan's Nuba Mountains, where hundreds of thousands of civilians have fled conflict, atrocities, and famine caused by Sudan's civil war. Dr. Catena's unwavering commitment to saving lives in the face of unimaginable adversity is the very essence of Aurora's vision.

In that same spirit, 2024 Aurora Prize Laureate [Dr. Denis Mukwege](#) has selected [the latest recipients of the Prize's participatory grants](#), ensuring that other local humanitarians on the front lines receive direct funding for their life-saving work. A Nobel Peace Prize winning surgeon and human rights activist from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dr. Mukwege exemplifies Aurora's core belief: those who risk everything to help others must not stand alone.

Meanwhile, significant cuts in U.S. funding for life-saving humanitarian assistance underscore the importance of independent initiatives like Aurora. We remain steadfast in our commitment to providing direct, meaningful support to grassroots humanitarians, ensuring that resources reach those who best understand how to make the greatest impact in their communities. But we cannot do this without you.

By standing with Aurora, you sustain life-saving aid for those on the front lines of the world's most pressing crises. Even—and especially—in these challenging times, we can all embody Aurora's founding principle of Gratitude in Action. Become part of the movement for change today.

**Join the Pledge to
Awaken Humanity**

As we begin the next decade of Aurora's mission, I invite you to join us on this journey. In just a few weeks, many of the world's most inspiring humanitarians will gather in Los Angeles on May 7 for the [Human Rights and Humanitarian Forum](#) to exchange ideas, forge new collaborations, and advance real-world solutions. These [humanitarians](#) embody Aurora's three core values—courage, commitment, and impact—and will be challenged to think boldly and forge the connections necessary to collectively drive more sustainable, scalable funding to locally led humanitarian response. Registration is now open—[secure your spot](#).

In an increasingly turbulent world, harnessing the power of our shared humanity to support the most vulnerable is more urgent than ever. I am grateful to have you with us.



With appreciation,

Armine Afeyan

CEO, Aurora Humanitarian Initiative

Mark Your Calendars

In 2025, we will celebrate our 10th anniversary with a series of landmark events, bringing together changemakers, supporters, and [Aurora Luminaries](#) to honor a decade of global impact. Highlights include the Human Rights and Humanitarian Forum in Los Angeles on May 7, the announcement of the 2025 Aurora Humanitarians in New York in September, and the Aurora Prize Ceremony on Ellis Island on November 6, when we will announce the 2025 Laureate. Registration is now open for the Forum.



Secure Your Spot

Take advantage of early bird registration by April 9

Co-Chairs Announced for Aurora's 10th Anniversary Events

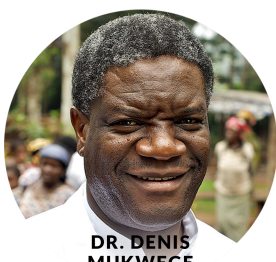
The Aurora Humanitarian Initiative is proud to announce [the distinguished Co-Chairs](#) for its 10th-anniversary events in 2025: Noubar Afeyan, Dr. Eric Esraillian, Alice Greenwald, and Dame Louise Richardson.



With the leadership of the esteemed Co-Chairs, the 2025 events will serve as a powerful platform to elevate and expand Aurora's global humanitarian efforts as it embarks on its second decade, building on this momentum to reach even more communities in need.

2024 Aurora Prize Laureate Dr. Denis Mukwege Uplifts Grassroots Humanitarians

Dr. Denis Mukwege, the 2024 Aurora Prize Laureate, has selected the recipients of participatory grants to support grassroots humanitarians. A renowned surgeon and human rights activist from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Dr. Mukwege continues the Aurora tradition of empowering those risking their lives to help others. At a time of uncertainty for global humanitarian funding, Aurora provides direct financial support to individuals and organizations making a life-saving impact. [Learn more](#) about the grantees and their vital work.



"The Aurora Prize grant model amplifies our collective mission—not only to support those survivors who have endured unimaginable hardship but to invest in lasting solutions that prevent atrocities, strengthen communities, and foster resilience."

UWC Mahindra College Wins the 2024–2025 Young Aurora Competition

On March 26, 2025, UWC Mahindra College (India) was named the winner of the 2024–2025 Young Aurora competition after an [inspiring online presentation](#). Their initiative, The Chulha Project, addresses the serious health risks caused by traditional mud cookstoves ('chulhas') in rural households. Launched in 2017 by the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative in partnership with UWC International, Teach for All, and the African Leadership Academy, the Young Aurora program empowers students to tackle pressing humanitarian challenges in their communities. The other [finalists](#), UWC Adriatic (Italy) and UWC Dilijan (Armenia), also impressed the judges with their innovative projects, demonstrating the global commitment of young changemakers to creating meaningful impact.



Colin Thomas-Jensen Joins Aurora as Director of Communications, Advocacy, and Impact

[Thomas-Jensen](#) will lead efforts to support the initiative's growing network of local humanitarians, including advocating for more effective, sustainable funding for individuals and local organizations that offer assistance and protection in communities with the greatest need. He joins Aurora from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), where he was the National Security Advisor to the USAID Administrator.



Honor Those Who Inspire Change

Do you know a humanitarian whose courage and commitment are changing lives? Nominate them for the 2025 Aurora Prize and give them the global recognition they deserve. This is your chance to stand alongside your hero and celebrate their impact at this year's Aurora Prize Ceremony at Ellis Island. You can submit your nomination by May 8, 2025.