



ASCENDIS ASSOCIATION



# Activity report

From Potential to Performance

**2025**

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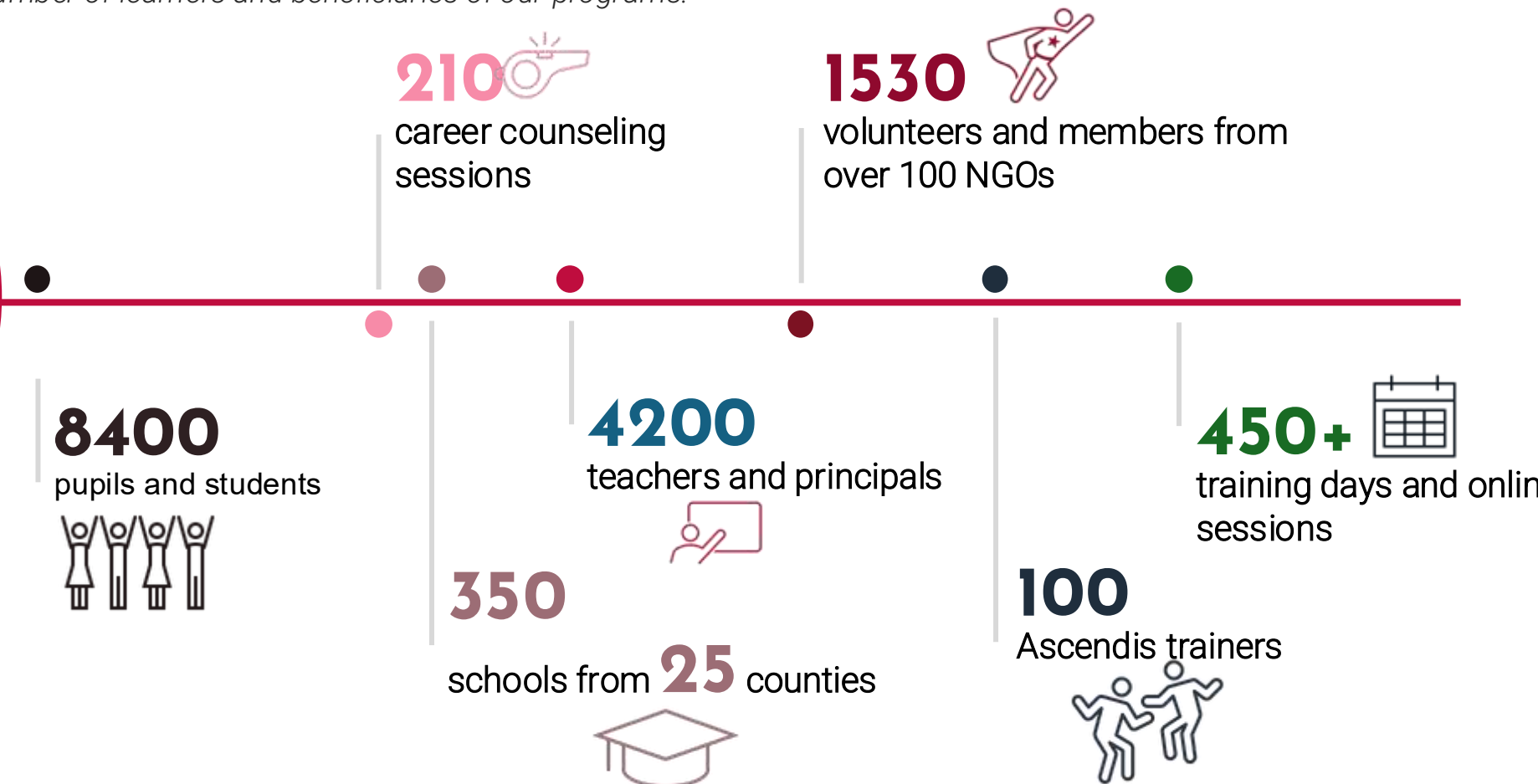
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# 1. About Ascendis Association

A summary of nine years of activity consisting of training, coaching and counseling sessions, as well as the organization of events for teams from schools and NGOs. We have measured our impact in education through the number of learners and beneficiaries of our programs.





# What we have achieved so far end of 2025

Thank you for standing by us again this year.

With your support, we continued our work in fulfilling our mission: supporting education in Romania.

Throughout the year, we collaborated with various communities around schools: students, teachers, parents, as well as NGOs and companies concerned with quality education.

In the following pages, you will find an overview of our activities this year. These results are also yours: the trainer who created new programs, the teacher who enrolled their school in our initiatives, the professional behind the desk who chose to support educational programs or scholarships.

Together, we turn potential into performance.

# 2025 in numbers



**Beneficiaries**  
600 + teachers  
3500 + students  
475 + teachers and  
parents,  
180 + corporate volunteers  
& NGO staff



**Parteners**  
**22** NGOs  
**55** schools  
**2** universities



**Human resource**  
**43** Ascendis consultants  
involved  
**100 +** sessions and  
events



**Financial support**  
**26** grant holders  
**6** NGOs



## 2. Educational Programs



## WHAT AND WHY

*"Kata in the Classroom" is an experiential exercise developed by Mike Rother (Toyota Kata, credit: [katatogrow.com](http://katatogrow.com)) for schools. By applying Kata, teachers and students can transform the educational process into an effective practice that develops:*

- Scientific thinking*
  - Collaboration and communication*
  - Growth mindset*
- ✓ *Over 1,325 learners experienced Kata, and 30 schools received kits with materials to apply the method in the classroom.*
- ✓ *We also applied the second Kata module with a group of students, using catapult shooting as an experiment through which learners worked with variables, measured the impact of strategies and compared results. This exercise became the starting point for a new module focused on creative thinking, critical thinking and problem-solving skills.*



**775 pupils**



**550 teachers**



**30 schools**

## 2.1

**KATA**  
în clasă



### What participants say

*"I believe students truly have something to learn from this experience, as it helps them see things in a practical way."*

– Teacher

*"This method came to my mind every time I wanted to give up. It helped me refocus on the goal."*

– Beginner primary school teacher, Teachers' Camp – Sibiu



# KATA in classroom for pupils and teachers





## WHAT AND WHY

Team Up is our experiential learning program for students, developing key real-life skills:

- ✓ Teamwork, role ownership and communication
- ✓ Decision-making under pressure, often with incomplete information
- ✓ Evaluating consequences and reassessing future decisions

In 2025, we ran programs such as Everest Challenge, Domino Challenge, Rome, Silverstone, Wealth of Nations and others. Each program places students in a scenario with clear rules, objectives and limited resources. Facilitators guide the process without providing solutions.

At the end, a structured analysis takes place. Young people notice the connection between data, decision and result. They learn to argue, listen, test, make mistakes and adjust their strategies. The experience is transferred from the game to real learning situations and school life.



**720 pupils and students**



**9 schools and highschools**



**4 NGOs**

## 2.1



### What participants say

#### What participants say

“I liked that we had to work as a team, even though we didn’t know each other well, and that we learned how to make decisions and achieve our goals.”

– 8th grade student

“I liked the atmosphere and the game because it challenged us to think and learn new things.”

– 8th grade student

TEAM UP



Rome – „Lazăr Edeleanu” Ploiești Highschool



Domino Challenge – Catholic Bacău College



Everest – Pedagogical High School, Zalău Student Council

# Team-Up Programs

- Everest Conquest
- Domino Challenge
- Rome
- Silverstone
- Wealth of Nations



Everest – Secondary School No. 56 Bucharest



Silverstone – „Lazăr Edeleanu” Ploiești Highschool



## WHAT AND WHY

SustainEdu is the sustainability education program, through which children::

- They understand sustainability concepts in a practical way, in workplaces where they meet and interact with professionals
- They develop their socio-emotional skills through play and collaboration
- They have free access to an extracurricular experience connected to their own community

Together with our strategic partner, ROMCIM, we developed and implemented two activity formats that will continue in 2026. Below are the activities from 2025:

- 20 students from the school in Racoș, Brașov, benefited from a free trip to a workplace where they received: OHS training, guided visit to the station, team games and communication, activity and educational materials about sustainability;
- 20 students from the Center for Children from Disadvantaged Families of "Save the Children" Timișoara, completed the above experience with a tree planting activity.

 **45 pupils and teachers**

 **8 volunteers corporate**

 **25 of planted trees**

 **1 strategic partner**

## 2.3



### What participants say

*"It was very nice! My little ones were very excited and happy! They carried out interesting activities, actively participated in games and discovered new information, but the most important moment was the planting. In a year we will go to visit our trees! The extraordinary team - especially Soso who gave them a lot of energy! Thank you and as they said, we were lucky that you chose us!"*

*Teacher companion Save the Children Timiș*

*"My favorite moment was when we built the tracks, because I learned that our mind is capable of creating useful things even from objects that seem useless."*

*Participating student, Racoș school*

# SustainEdu at ROMCIM work points





## WHAT AND WHY

- ✓ Our career counseling program starts from this challenge: very few young people have access to this service (1 counselor per 800 students), and the effects are quickly visible: wrong choices (proven by high dropout/completion rates), stress and wasted resources.
- ✓ The program consists of individual career counseling sessions offered free of charge to students over 16 years old. The discussion with the accredited counselor is based on three personal reports generated by the internationally validated Harrison Assessment psychometric instrument, which we have been working with for over 15 years.
- ✓ A special collaboration took place in Iași, during the Romanian Creative Week, where over 30 students from the National College of Iași had group sessions based on individual reports. We were thus part of the new educational pillar of the largest event dedicated to the creative industries in the EU.
- ✓ We had a local partner by our side – UPRUC, which sponsored counseling sessions for 20 high school students from Făgăraș, thus investing in the future of the young people in its community.



**155 pupils advised**



**30 students advised**



**14 highschools 8 cities**

## 2.4



### What participants say

I worked with students who were studying hard for admission to Medicine and had doubts that they didn't know how to handle after years of effort and preparation. Clarifying and exploring several specializations led to more confidence in the final decision. Another student who wanted to become a police officer started the discussion quite hesitantly, knowing that she was seen as being "too shy" even though she knew all the admission requirements. What was left with us? Her joy when she saw that her desire for the career was taken seriously. She was able to talk honestly with someone about the difficulties and obstacles she might encounter, and how to overcome them.

# Project progress

## Organizational stage

Teachers selected the beneficiary students.

Students and parents signed participation agreements.



## Preparation stage

Students participated in an introductory online session in which they were introduced to the instrument used – the Harrison Assessment - and the next steps. Students completed the online questionnaire and personal reports were generated.



## Implementation stage

Students received their personal reports and had an individual session with an accredited counselor.

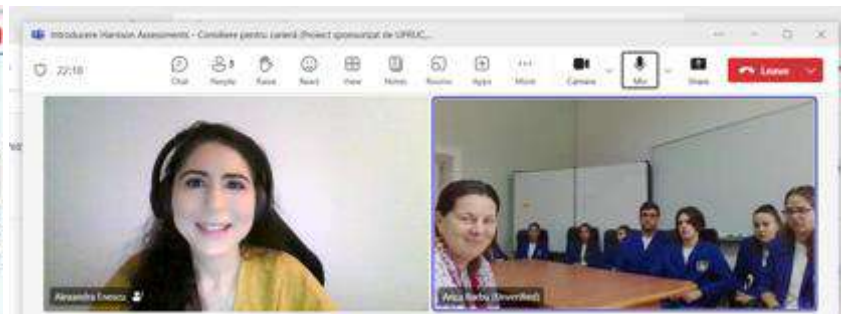
Following the discussion, concrete professional directions were generated and a new report was generated that analyzes the match between the personal profile and the student's targeted job.



## Final stage

Students received further details from the advisor, where applicable, with resources and information about universities/qualifications of interest.

Collection of feedback from teachers and students.



# Testimonials of beneficiary students

”

Thank you very much for your understanding, for the information you provided me, and for the sense of security you gave me in making my decision.



Very good job with this project! It is very well structured to help a child choose a career.

”

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. With your help, I have achieved what I truly want from my future.

”

What I liked most was the welcoming atmosphere provided by the counselor and the mutual respect that was given to me.

”

”

## WHAT AND WHY

- **GROW NGO** is a program through which we support non-profit organizations to develop their teams (we know that resources are limited) and the direction of action, adapted to their own needs. We offered various free learning sessions for the members or beneficiaries of the organizations:
- Workshop for defining values and establishing strategy – World Vision Romania, Youth Federation Brașov
- Communication and teamwork – BEST Bucharest, Save the Children, Țara Făgărașului Community Foundation
- Experiential learning – Regina Maria Foundation, learning Refactored Brașov, Kastel Hub Brașov
- Educational camps - , Sibiu Teachers' Association, APAN
- Development of career and leadership potential – Oradea Engineering Students' Association, AIESEC Cluj
- ✓ We used methods such as Kata in the classroom, LEGO® Serious Play®, business simulations (Celemi), the Harrison Assessment psychometric tool, and team exercises.



**14 beneficiary NGOs**



**470 people studying the course**



**8 cities**

## What participants say

"I really liked that we were involved in a creative, interactive way, without feeling overloaded with information. Even though it was 5 hours, it was very enjoyable. On this occasion, we also managed to get to know our mentors better than before." - voluntary Learning Refactored

"It's absolutely fascinating to see them come timid and hunched over with life and leave full of joy, with friends and life plans. It's extraordinary when you see them come back year after year with more hope and changed for the better. Events like this remind you why our work is important." - Anca, Ascendis trainer

**2.5  
GROW for  
NGOs**

GROW-NGOs



**APAN – Camp of kids with SM**



**Kastel Hub Braşov – Workshop about the local future (sustainability)**



**Learning refactored Braşov – Team and experiential learning**



**Expert Forum – Comunicațional course for teachers**



**Țara Făgăraşului Community Foundation – Conquering Everest**



**Sibiu Teachers' Association – Beginner Teachers' Camp**



**AIIESEC Cluj – Team Deevaluation**

## WHAT AND WHY

- ✓ InnoGRow is an innovation incubator where high school students, guided by mentors from different fields, identify challenges and opportunities in the community and propose solutions with real impact.
- ✓ Students from the "Mihai Eminescu" National College in Oradea worked as a team, alongside mentors, for two months on projects to be developed during workshops. They attracted partners, implemented programs, organized events and built communication platforms. In short, they applied what they had planned.
- ✓ The projects proposed by the students benefited from the expertise of specialists in local administration, business, entrepreneurship, education and the NGO environment during a final gala in which the students had the opportunity to present their programs and results.
- ✓ The themes of the projects were: the protection of stray animals, the development of a local tourism application, programs to reduce technology addiction, mental health and the drug problem in schools.



**1 Partner National College**



**25 pupils – 5 projects**



**5 mentors from the private sector and NGOs**

## What participants say

"I have been involved in similar initiatives before, always very active on social media, but this time they all somehow connected. I really wanted to invite the founders of What's New Agency as speakers at the event – I had been following them for a long time and sincerely admired them. Unfortunately, they couldn't make it, but they really liked how I approached them and how I promoted the event and just like that, from an email to a few messages, they ended up inviting me to their team, and now, it's been a month since we've been working together and everything is exactly as I dreamed. Basically, I fulfilled a dream."

"I acquired skills in communicating with sponsors and partners, without which this initiative would not have been possible. I firmly believe that this experience will be useful to me in the future, I learned how to transform an idea into a result with an impact on those around me"

2.5





### 3. We support reading



## WHAT AND WHY

- ✓ We continued our partnership with the Cărturești Foundation, through which we sponsored the endowment of six rural libraries with new book collections, adapted to the specifics of each community.  
Cernătești, in Buzău County - serves three schools  
Vrancea County:  
Răcoasa Commune - serves 300 preschoolers and schoolchildren.  
Bordești Commune - serves two schools and two kindergartens.  
Gugești Commune - serves two schools and four kindergartens.  
Tulnici Commune - four schools and three kindergartens. Commune - 500 preschoolers and students
- ✓ And this year we distributed books weekly to readers on public transport and in public spaces in Bucharest, Cluj and Brașov.
- ✓ In the lobby of our new headquarters in Charles de Gaulle, we set up a library for the employees in the building. Books can be borrowed for free and easily, at the office.
- ✓ Inspired by a book sharing activity, two young women from Brașov from our student internship program organized a book collection for a library in Iclandu Mare, Mureș. We joined the initiative and offered help in the organization and a few dozen new titles for children.

3

**We support  
reading**



**6 donated libraries**



**1 library equipped with new  
and donated books**



**1000 + books  
gifted**

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**Parteners:** **Cărturești foundation**

Students in Practice and the Magic and Color Association

# The effect of gifted books





### 3. Educational partnerships



## WHAT AND WHY

We contribute to the development of education by supporting the activities of two professionals in schools and high schools on topics of current interest:

1. Carmen Dumitrescu – journalist

She conducts media education workshops to contribute to the formation of a generation that is more attentive to information. The main objective is to develop critical thinking and the skills necessary to correctly understand information in the public/online space and protect against fake news.

2. Gergiana Țăranu – history teacher

She holds workshops for young people in which they see how history and politics are relevant topics, which influence their choices and lives.



**1 journalist and  
1 teacher**



**16 schools and  
highschools**



**600 beneficiary  
students**

# 3.1 Partnerships with specialists

## What participants say

"I wouldn't say that politics really influences everything we experience..."

"to understand how society works",

"to be more aware", "to realize that our lives are influenced by what happens at the political level".

**Prof.**   
**Georgiana Țăranu**  
Workshops on history and civic engagement




"Nicolae Grigorescu" National College in Câmpina



"Virgil Madgearu" Economic High School CT



"Ovidius" Theoretical High School in Constanta

 **Carmen Dumitrescu**  
Workshops on how to recognize and protect yourself from fake news (Journalist)





## WHAT AND WHY

Together with the Technical University of Iași and the Center of Excellence, we launched Grow2Lead, the intensive 6-month program created specifically for students determined to develop their leadership skills.

What it contains:

- Monthly workshops, practical experiences and exercises from real business;
- Emotional development, communication, public speaking, personal branding;
- Individual counseling sessions based on the Harrison Assessment;
- The opportunity to work with Ascendis experts - a leader in organizational development.

The selection of the working group has been made and the 20 student beneficiaries have already participated in the first two sessions.



**20 students**



**1 partner university**



**1 academy type program (6 months)**

## What participants say

„Very cool activities today! I am very happy to be part of this group and have the opportunity to learn so many new aspects and reading recommendations. Thank you for what you are doing!”

“The training is interactive and dynamic, no one is left out.”

# 3.2 Partnerships with academia

Parteneriate

# GROW2LEAD – program launch and first sessions



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# 3.3 Corporate partnerships

## WHAT AMD WHY

We have developed, together with corporate partners, 100% personalized educational programs for their communities. We built them based on the context, needs and objectives of each community in which companies have become partners and supporters of quality education.

Here are some examples:

1. Educational Compass – a program dedicated to the 11th graders at Lehliu High School. The sessions on topics such as communication, emotional intelligence, strategic thinking, career guidance were sponsored by BUNGE. We concluded with a dialogue between students and BUNGE team employees.
2. Scholarship programs – we created and implemented scholarship programs for ZF Roman and Module Works.
3. Programs for students:  
Team games and soft skills training for students within the Talent Academy (internal ZF ROMAN program dedicated to students)  
Business simulation and workplace visit – activity supported by Titan Machinery for students from the Polytechnic University
4. Soft skills training – together with partners from AGRII, we offered students from the “I want to be in ninth grade” program a series of workshops and educational activities that complemented their training program carried out by the World Vision Romania Foundation



**2 scholarship program  
24 beneficiaries**



**4 corporate  
partners**



**4 communities**



**250 + pupils and  
student's  
beneficiaries**

Parteneriate

# Titan Machinery – business simulation and workplace visit for students



# AGRIL, together with World Vision Romania Foundation – soft skills training sessions for students -





 **ZF ROMAN  
Talent Academy and  
meeting event with  
scholarship recipients**



**BUNGE – educational program for the high school in Lehliu (students and teachers)**



## WHAT AND WHY

In our relationship with NGOs, we also have the role of a partner in the design and implementation of joint educational programs, where each person's experience becomes complementary.

This year, together with our partners at EduAct, we completed the "Vocational Compass" program, within which we held personal development workshops at the "Blaga" and "Decebal" high schools in Bucharest.

The topics addressed were:  
Critical thinking;  
Creativity and innovation;  
Relationship;  
Personal values and self-confidence.



**2 high schools**



**300 pupils**



**11 sessions**

# 3.4 NGO Partnerships

## What participants say

"I didn't know what my classmates' plans were for the future. Maybe we could start a business together."

"It would be great to go out with my classmates. We haven't thought of ways to develop relationships until now."

"I didn't expect to play, but it was fun. I felt bad when I had to take my construction down.

I liked that it was practical and we built our own ideas."

"I liked that we had fun."

Parteneriate



## 4. We financially support NGOs



## 4. We financially support NGOs

### WHAT AND WHY

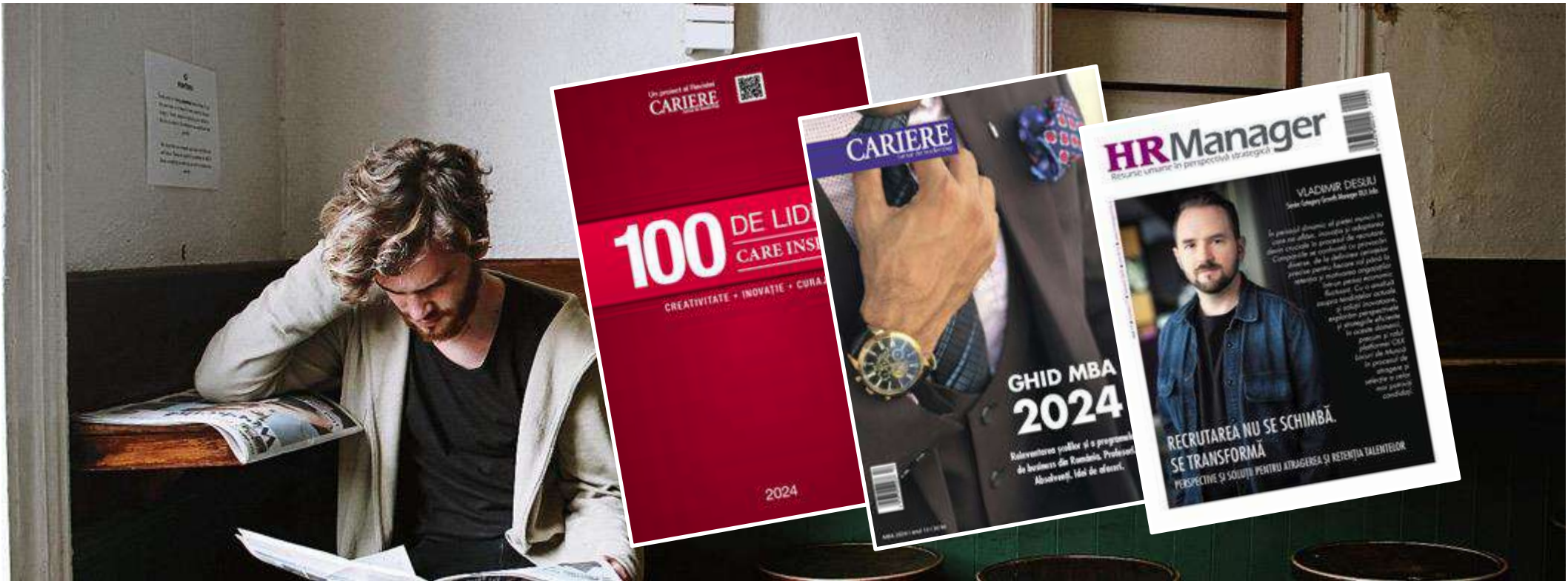
- ✓ As every year, we support organizations whose pro-education mission we resonate with. In 2025, we diversified our area of support and tried to support education from multiple perspectives.
- ✓ Therefore, in addition to sponsorships to the Cărturești Foundation and Presă pe bune (Carmen Dumitrescu), we also supported the following organizations:
  1. Conservation Carpathia Foundation - already traditional partners in the field of sustainability. We stand with them for the dream of creating a Yellowstone of Europe in the Făgăraș Mountains.
  2. Expert Forum - we support teachers and students to learn to debate on legal and civic issues.
  3. Avenor College - we support students who can benefit from quality education through private scholarships
  4. Cuibul Artiștilor - we support young actors who have managed to create a performance space and a repertoire of plays that has conquered us.
  5. Sangri-La Artistic Ground Association – we supported a unique project: the production of the play “Handball Match”, a musical about the sacrifice of high-performance athletes.
- ✓ We join our efforts to support the NGO environment with Ascendis Consulting SRL, which sponsored “Casa Bună” for the construction of a new kindergarten



**7 beneficiary organizations**



**5 fields of activity**



## 5. Media appearances and conferences

# În culisele carierii de Creative Director

de ADELINA MIHAI

Care sunt secretele din spatele unei cariere? Ce îi arde înăuntru pe oamenii  
de profesioniști și cum devin ei un succes într-un anumit domeniu?

## 5.1. Conference

### WHAT AND WHY

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- ✓ CARIERE Magazine is a premium publication dedicated to leaders and professionals in Romania, in the Ascendis portfolio since 2024.
- ✓ The Ascendis Association participated in and supported various events branded with the Cariere magazine in 2025:

CARIERE Gala 2025, CARIERE 2025, an event that brought together over 400 top managers to award excellence in leadership and we supported and offered the award for the "Education" category to the ING Bank team.

The CEO+HR Conference, the September edition, in Bucharest, was sponsored by the Ascendis Association. We thus facilitated an interesting dialogue for three HR and CEO binomials from different industries.

- ✓ In Iași, we participated in two conferences on educational topics:  
The "Growing Wings" Conference, edition 1: "School Motivation, from Connection to Discipline". organized by the community of teachers and parents from Valea Lupului. Our colleague, Ion Udrea, spoke on the topic: "From brain to behavior – the science of motivation".
- ✓ The conference "Together we inspire the future" organized by the Iași High School of Computer Science. Our colleague, Ovidiu Ghiuzan, spoke on the topic "The connected generation" providing information to parents about the impact of screens on children's development.
- ✓ In Bucharest, we responded positively to a new invitation to a conference on finance organized by and for high school students. Over 100 students ran the "Apples and Oranges" business simulation from Celemi through which they learned about the flow of money in a company and the impact of decisions in a P&L



**5 events**



**+850 participants**

# CEO+HR Conference September, Bucharest



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# Careers Gala 2025 December, Bucharest



# "Growing Wings" Conference Iași



# "Together we inspire the future" conference, Iași





# 5.2 Media appearances



## Workshop de Dezvoltarea Carierei pentru Liceeni

22-23.5 2025 Colegiul Național Iași



Elevii claselor a XI-a de la Colegiul Național Iași vor participa, gratuit, în

Creative Week Iași Article About the career counseling sessions held during the festival

Ce măsurăm bine e ce schimbăm



Wednesday, 31 December 2025 at 03:27

To: Carmen Ciuraru



Vocea lunii: Asociația Ascendis

Carmen Ciuraru coordonează programele Asociației Ascendis. De 8 ani lucrează cu elevi, profesori și echipe care vor să își dezvolte gândirea și autonomia. Se bucură când vede oameni care capătă încredere, pun întrebări și văd posibilități în viitor.



Două proiecte pot fi de interes și pentru tine:

Featured in the teacher newsletter: Aspirational Voice of the month December

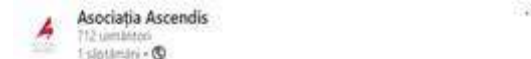


UNIVERSITATEA TEHNICĂ „GHEORGHE ASACHI” DIN IAȘI  
CENTRUL DE MANAGEMENT AL TALENTELOR CMT-TUIASI

Grow2Lead – Program de dezvoltare a abilităților de leadership pentru studenții TUIASI  
20 noiembrie, ora 16.00

Grow2Lead se bazează oficial pe TUIASI. O program intensiv și aplicat care îi antrenază abilități reale de leadership, susținut de Asociația Ascendis - parte a grupului Ascendis, lider în domeniul dezvoltării organizaționale.

Universitatea Tehnică „Gheorghe Asachi” din Iași, prin Centrul de Management al Talentelor, împreună cu Asociația Ascendis, derulează un program de dezvoltare a abilităților de leadership pentru studenții TUIASI.



ieri am avut prima întâlnire cu cei 20 de studenți selectați în proiectul GROW2LEAD by Ascendis, derulat în cadrul Universității Tehnice „Gh. Asachi” din Iași. Am primit 49 de aplicații și, în urma selecției, am ales 20 de participanți. În grup sunt studenți din licență, master și doctorat, din toate cele 11 facultăți ale universității. Întâlnirea a fost de cunoaștere. Studenții au lucrat pe teme de comunicare asertivă și feedback. În următoarele luni, participanții vor urma un program de învățare pentru dezvoltarea competențelor necesare rolurilor de conducere. #GROW2LEAD



Social Media Posts - Technical University of Iași About the GROW2LEAD program for students



## 6. Financial report

# Financial report 2025



INCOME	AMOUNT (RON)	EXPENSES	AMOUNT (RON)
Income from sponsorships	2.884.056	Project-related expenses / Human resources – service delivery	2270675
Income from 3.5% tax redirection	0	Project-related expenses	186267
Income from individual donations	0	Sponsorships and donations	575630
Income from services provided	57.079	Other operating expenses	387476
Other income	12.324		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>2.953.459</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>3.420.048</b>



## 7. Ascendis team

In schools or high schools, in NGO headquarters or hubs, in warehouses or workshops, conference rooms and online, our team is with beneficiaries in different contexts. Over 30 colleagues from all over the country delivered programs in the Ascendis Association this year and many others contributed in the area of support, fundraising, ideation, etc. We thank them all!

# Core Team



**Andrei Goșu**

**President**



**Sorin Păun**

**Vice President**



**Marius Opreș**

**Vice President**



**Carmen Ciuraru**

**Educational  
programs  
coordinator**

# Trainers



**Carmen Ciuraru**



**Naomi Chira**



**Marina Marcu**



**Ovidiu Dan**



**Bogdan Dîrjan**



**Vlad Pascu**



**Oana Trucă**



**Cristi Ciontea**



**Cristina  
Năstăsescu**



**Andreea Popa**

# Trainers

ASOCIAȚIA ASCENDIS



**Alexa Gliga**



**Cristian Șandru**



**Cătălin Lupu**



**Ștefan Ferent**



**Ciprian Ouatu**



**Vlad Basarabescu**



**Lavinia Eftimie**



**Alexandra Enescu**



**Elena Munteanu**



**Andrei Iacoboiaie**

# Trainers

ASOCIAȚIA ASCENDIS



**Sabina Sava**



**Sorin Oprea**



**Dani Felegan**



**Mădălina Sava**



**Ovidiu Ghiuzan**



**Loredana Vâlcianu**



**Cosmin Moței**



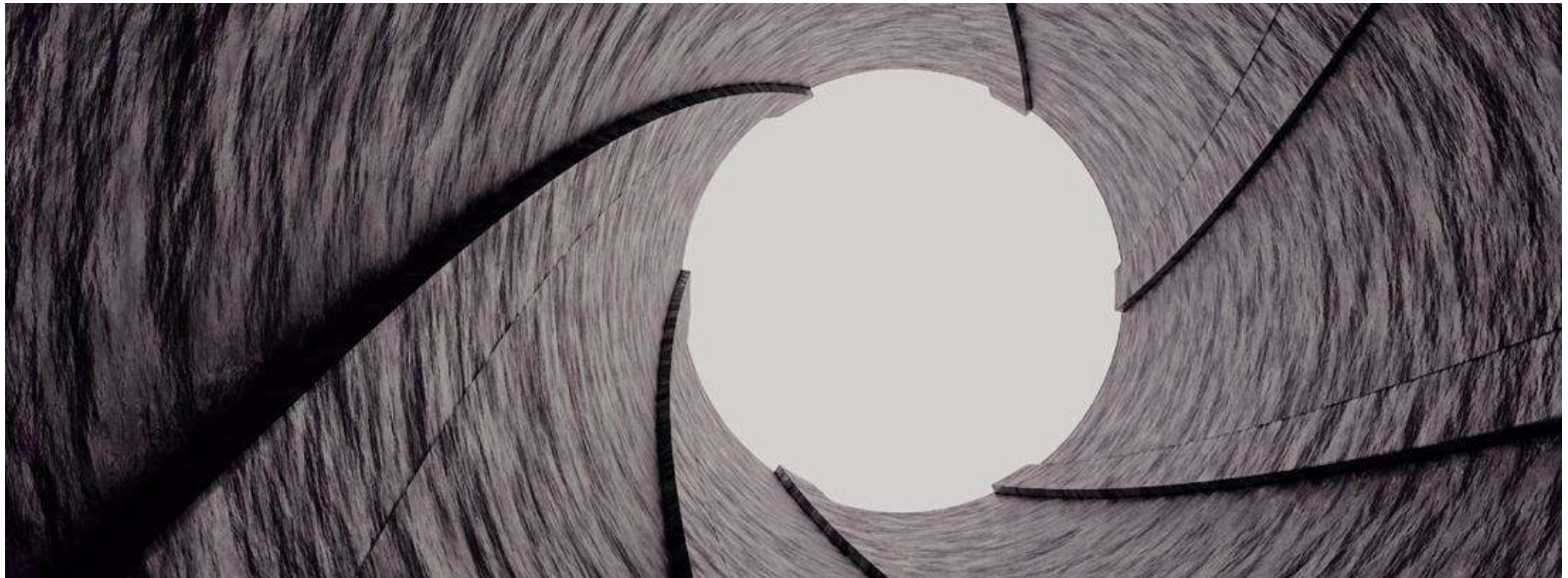
**Anca Barbu**



**Alina Șerban**



**Bogdan Costache**



## 8. Future prospects

## Our directions for 2026

In the new year, the journey continues under the motto "From potential to performance".

We are focusing our efforts on:

1. Educational programs developed for communities with local partners (companies, NGOs, schools);
2. Career counseling and development of tomorrow's leaders;
3. Move Lab - program to promote sports in middle schools;
4. Re\_form - development of a network of hubs for high school students to support their initiatives through non-formal education;
5. Future Skill Fest - festival for students with the aim of developing the skills of the future.

Along with you, we are ready to develop new programs that support education and performance, together!





## How can you support us?



- Tell others about us
- Put us in touch with a school in your community
- Through sponsorships or donations



From potential to performance,  
together.