



FLOWERS · BEES · HONEY · PEOPLE
Bybi

BYBI 2025
15 YEARS OLD



[H-0407]



"Bannekorbe" – Traditional beehives before 1850. People would whisper their secrets to the bees in return for luck and protection. Bybi is reviving this tradition in collaboration with artists and researchers.

They say it takes a village to raise a child. Our baby Bybi turned 15 in 2025 – and many of you who are reading this can be proud of your part in what this creature has become. Congratulations to all of us!

We are so grateful in Bybi, not just for the time we spend with bees, flowers, people and honey – but also because we have the opportunity to think about how we spend this time. Degrowth, regeneration and care for human and non-human communities are urgent themes for all of us – But what does that actually look like?

We started 2025 asking ourselves how ‘honeymoney’ could operate as a ‘currency of care’. We insisted on the rules: that honey should be shared with the ones you care for. That all who taste should plant a flower to thank the bees. Together with our partners and through a range of events, we have discovered how this simple practice creates connections between people and across communities of people, plants and animals.

One of the most exciting developments has been to experience how the honey can be activated to create communities of support around different kinds of urban wildlife.

A highlight was a project we made with our local recycling station. Inspired by an old Nordic tradition, we worked with local artists to create an iconic figure that also functions as a home for insects. As local people helped to build it, we offered them honey as a thanks. The attached responsibility was that they should help the figure and its insect community to thrive.

The approach has brought us in contact with researchers from several universities and pointed us towards the theme we want to develop for 2026.

We will build collective monuments to urban wildlife – birds, amphibians and insects – using the honey as a currency to celebrate support co-existence in urban landscapes.

This approach re-imagines a path to regeneration and a post-growth economy, where ‘food production’ becomes cultivation of cultural heritage, where the collective process of making the honey is also the reproduction of conditions that allow humans and other species to thrive in the cities.

This is a bold claim, and needs ongoing research to document and share its effect. This is why we will be working with social scientists to support new rituals of community care, but just as importantly, with ecologists to make a difference to biological diversity. A third dimension will be partnerships with technology – to explore new ways of sensing and communicating with the living world.

It is an iterative process – how do we involve our partners, what kinds of communication do we need, does it matter to the private businesses we work with?

Meanwhile, Bybi has organised 94 events, talks, tours and performances. 4,5 tons of honey have been gathered and shared in Copenhagen and we have enjoyed the company of 43 staff and volunteers from 19 countries.

None of this would be possible without you. So thank you, for your commitment, curiosity and support. We are looking forward to new adventures with you in 2026.

Happy New Year from Oliver, Aref, Charlotte, Anne Louise and the whole Bybi team!

MAKING COMMUNITIES WITH BEES

In their new book, anthropologists Melissa Leach and James Fairhead propose that humans, plants and animals create shared cultures together in a language of taste, smell, movement and vibration. Together, we make 'Naturekind'.

If we take this argument seriously, then honey is a cultural artifact shared by 'naturekind' in our city. How can we describe this community? Is it thriving? What care does it need from us? Or from you?

In our report, we don't address targets hit or missed. Instead, we reflect on the questions of how we are together and what new questions have arisen during the year. We are constantly 'making-with', weaving a tapestry of connections that cannot be captured numbers alone.

Please help us to answer the questions in our report. If you have suggestions or ideas write to us at bzzz@bybi.dk or share your thoughts @bybi.dk on Social Media.



"First – Thank you for being part of BUSTER film festival 2025! It was, as always, wonderful to have you involved. It was lovely to see all the families that gathered around your workshop. Some sat a long time in deep concentration while they coloured honey bags. It was heartwarming to see the children walk around with the bags decorated with the names of the people they will share the honey with. It was beautiful and it buzzed with love on the site. Thank you for contributing to this atmosphere!"

- BUSTER film festival 2025



ARE THE BEES AND BEEKEEPERS HAPPIER?

We have bees at 25 different spots around Copenhagen, on rooftops, gardens and other secret nooks. Every year, we move them out, and then back again to places where they can be safe and warm for the winter. Managing the operation of keeping them happy is circus performance that no one sees: Beekeeper Aref is spinning the plates; adapting to sudden shifts in weather, guiding the bees' successes and mourning when they become sick or struggle.

Aref himself has been suffering from kidney stones, so we have been supporting him with volunteers and interns from around the world – Eva, Madeline, Ezra, Topper, Illiana and Anna who have been the muscle behind this year's performance.

It has been a cool and windy summer, which has resulted in light coloured honey. The bees themselves have been healthy – going in to winter they have had few parasites. We all cross our fingers and hope for a winter without too many confusing temperature swings. It always takes patience, but when the pollen comes with the first flowers of spring in April, the bees explode into enthusiastic fecundity!

In pre-industrial times, bees were considered a part of human community. People would talk to them and tell them their secrets. In 2026 we'd like to revive this tradition. How can we record, archive and share care for the bees as a more collective responsibility?





Aref, Illyana and Anna meet the bees on Copenhagen City Hall



WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED FROM THE BEES? HOW HAVE WE SHARED IT?

“Bees are teachers” said a Finnish beekeeper at one of our events. He’d been a UN peacekeeper in the middle east, working in conflict-ridden zones and using bees to connect with local people. At Bybi we see bees as teachers too – a part of the ‘invitation’ is getting to know them as we encounter them around the city. We do this in different ways – working with artists, theatres and researchers as well as businesses, schools and social projects.

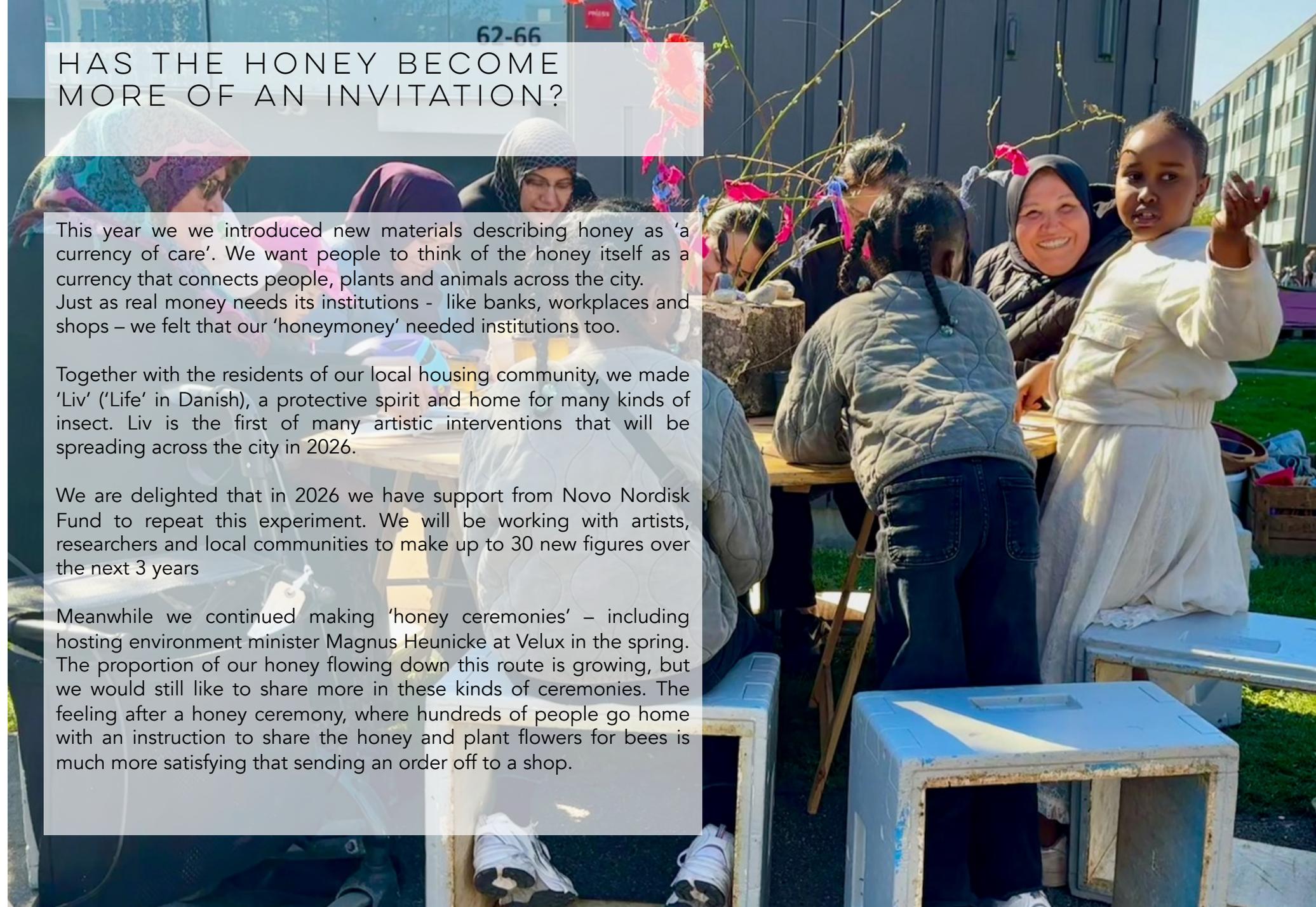
In 2025 we conducted 93 events, tours, installations talks, film-screenings and workshops. Some were small and intimate with 10-15 participants. In others we had over 500 people involved. We distributed 30.000 packets of wildflower seeds as well thousands of organic flower bulbs.

In 2026 we have several new projects on the horizon: ‘Story maps’ have been used to map and memorialize indigenous culture in places like Canada and Australia. We will be working with the IT University and Vild Nok København to use the technique to share stories of how we live together with bees in different city landscapes. What stories could you tell about your relationship to bees?



At our honey ceremonies participants thank the bees by planting flowers and share the honey. Environment Minister Magnus Heunicke joined an event at Velux in the spring.





HAS THE HONEY BECOME MORE OF AN INVITATION?

This year we we introduced new materials describing honey as 'a currency of care'. We want people to think of the honey itself as a currency that connects people, plants and animals across the city. Just as real money needs its institutions - like banks, workplaces and shops - we felt that our 'honeymoney' needed institutions too.

Together with the residents of our local housing community, we made 'Liv' ('Life' in Danish), a protective spirit and home for many kinds of insect. Liv is the first of many artistic interventions that will be spreading across the city in 2026.

We are delighted that in 2026 we have support from Novo Nordisk Fund to repeat this experiment. We will be working with artists, researchers and local communities to make up to 30 new figures over the next 3 years

Meanwhile we continued making 'honey ceremonies' - including hosting environment minister Magnus Heunicke at Velux in the spring. The proportion of our honey flowing down this route is growing, but we would still like to share more in these kinds of ceremonies. The feeling after a honey ceremony, where hundreds of people go home with an instruction to share the honey and plant flowers for bees is much more satisfying than sending an order off to a shop.



Local neighbours transformed 'Liv' into a habitat for insects. Each hole was dedicated to a voice in the community.

HAVE OUR PARTNERSHIPS BECOME MORE REGENERATIVE?

In 2025 1 Hotel joined the community and invited us to make honey ceremonies and talks as part of their opening events in the summer. These partnerships support us to look after the bees and share the honey in the best way possible. But our partnerships go way beyond this. They also support connections with local social projects, schools, researchers and communities. We do our best to cultivate and communicate these connections, but sometimes priorities change and people change jobs or retire. We encourage all our partners to reach out with ideas and questions.

In 2025 we began looking at new kinds of communication. We introduced new brochures, emphasising 'the currency of care' the honey represents. In 2026 we want to do more to connect our partners to local social communities through artworks and community events. If you have ideas for how to use our relationship to benefit people and nature in your community – please do reach out!

F.C. KØBENHAVN

Kære Partner,

og dine
nytår.
der os
ore
nyo år

F.C. København

A CURRENCY OF CARE

This honey was gathered by bees at the Botanical Gardens in Copenhagen. We call it a 'currency of care'.

Bybi

Bybi means 'city bee' in Danish. We work with artists, researchers, social projects and businesses all over Copenhagen.

www.bybi.dk

Instructions:

1. Share the honey with someone you care for.
2. Plant a flower to thank the bees. There are many kinds of bee. They like different things.

Read more about our sustainable actions

A CURRENCY OF CARE

This honey is gathered from flowers in the Velux estate, Hørsholm. We call it a 'currency of care'.

VELUX

Bybi

Bybi means 'city bee' in Danish. We work with artists, researchers, social projects and businesses all over Copenhagen.

www.bybi.dk

Instructions:

1. Share the honey with someone you care for.
2. Plant a flower to thank the bees. There are many kinds of bee. They like different things.

Share your thoughts and questions at buzz@bybi.dk Learn about events hosted by Bybi here

A CURRENCY OF CARE

This honey was gathered in the parks and gardens of Copenhagen. We call it a 'currency of care'.

Bybi

Bybi means 'city bee' in Danish. We work with artists, researchers, social projects and businesses all over Copenhagen.

www.bybi.dk

Instructions:

1. Share the honey with someone you care for.
2. Plant a flower to thank the bees. There are many kinds of bee. They like different things.

DEDICATED TO

Share your thoughts and questions at buzz@bybi.dk Learn about events hosted by Bybi here

F.C. KØBENHAVN

EN OMSORGSVALUTA

Denne honning er samlet af bier der bor på taget af Parken. Vi kalder det for 'en omsorgsvaluta'.

Bybi

Vi arbejder med kunstnere, forskere, sociale projekter og virksomheder på kryds og tværs af København.

www.bybi.dk

Instruktioner:

1. Del honningen med en du holder af.
2. Plant en blomst som tak til bierne. Der findes mange slags bier i Danmark

A CURRENCY OF CARE

This honey was gathered in the parks and gardens of Copenhagen. We call it a 'currency of care'.

Bybi

Bybi means 'city bee' in Danish. We work with artists, researchers, social projects and businesses all over Copenhagen.

www.bybi.dk

Instructions:

1. Share the honey with someone you care for.
2. Plant a flower to thank the bees. There are many kinds of bee. They like different things.

Charlottehaven

Read more about our sustainable actions

What might the 'currency of care' look like?

HAVE WE IMPROVED THE FINANCIAL STABILITY OF THE ORGANIZATION?

In 2025 we had no grant funding and will end the year with a similar small profit of 300.000 kr as last year. This will be used to support our social and environmental work.

In 2025 we also explored an idea that 'degrowth' requires a new kind of ecological literacy – an emphasis on the lost practices and rituals that celebrate our connection with the living world. We are thrilled that this idea has been supported by Novo Nordisk Fund. The grant will cover about 15% of our revenue in 2026 and finance a shift into new kinds of more regenerative partnerships.

We have also worked with the municipality on new projects in our community at Sundholm. We will be working to build habitats for Swifts and the flowers and insects that sustain them.

These projects will mean new opportunities for bringing in extra help. How can we maintain our independence and flexibility when our team is growing and we are reporting to external funders in new ways?



Bees don't just share honey – but also wax. In November we held a candle making 'crafternoon' workshop.

HAVE WE IMPROVED THE DIVERSITY AND ENGAGEMENT OF OUR SOCIAL COMMUNITY? HAVE WE USED IT BETTER?

Bybi would not exist without the engagement of our friends and volunteers. As well as our team of long-term Tuesday volunteers, we have enjoyed the company of longer internships (Niklas from Germany, Madeline from the USA, Anna from Canada) and regular visits from the community of old volunteers, students and researchers. Some days we are 8-10 people harvesting together. Sometimes we leave sticky with honey and enjoy an ice cream before going home.

In 2025 we were 43 people from 19 countries. We hold regular events and community meals. We have collaborated with other organisations, sharing our space with other associations, entrepreneurs and artists. You can find out more about our social events on Bybi's Facebook page.

We have also attempted to improve our communication and invite more people to join. We are getting less and less traction from facebook and email newsletters. In 2026 we will be working with researchers at the IT university on creating new platforms that can engage human communities in real life activities.



Team Bybi on a July day in 2025

DOES THE WAY WE TALK INFLUENCE THE FUTURE WE CREATE?

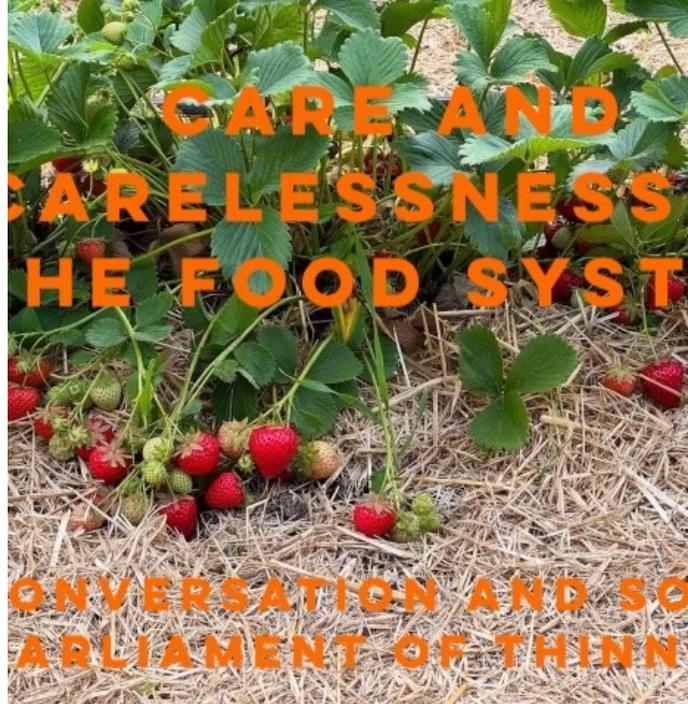
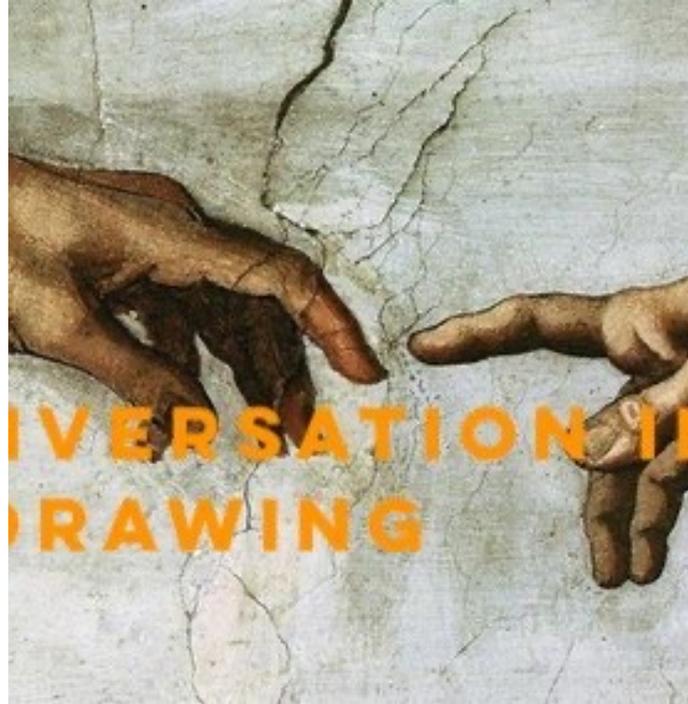
Exploring language is an important part of our practice. Just as 19th century industrialists created new communities through production and management, we think that the path to a post-growth society goes through the way we talk. We don't make 'products', we don't work with 'consumers'. We share 'invitations' and those we meet are co-creators of our community.

This approach requires new ways of speaking, new perspectives, and even re-learning ways to use our hands and bodies that connect us with our material surroundings.

We have continued our 'conversation and soup' series, meeting to share conversational practices from different cultures. We conducted a series on 'food systems' to explore new ways of thinking about food.

We also started a new series of 'crafternoons', monthly meetings in Bybi where we revived and shared different crafts – from knitting to candlemaking.

As an organisation, we have an ambition to nourish this practices and share them with other organisations. Perhaps you would like to join?



INTERNATIONAL AND RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

It has been rewarding in 2025 to engage with new international partners and research projects. Our approach and our partnerships are picking up attention. At Bybi, we hosted delegations from India, Brazil, Japan, Finland, Estonia, Lithuania and France. We have established research partnerships with IT university, Copenhagen University, Roskilde University, and with the University of Glasgow. We have also supported student projects from the Media high school and three universities.

Next year, we are looking to publish more academic research, especially regarding degrowth business models and work with more museums, cultural organisations and international media.



Oliver Maxwell sharing the Bybi approach at a workshop in Estonia, July 2025

HONEY GATHERED IN 2025

Partner organisation	Bee colonies	TOTAL 2025 (kg)
3F	4	203,8
Boeringer Ingelheim	2	76
Copenhagen Botanical Garden	6	399,6
Danish Institute for Study Abroad (DIS)	3	174,5
Fagbevægelsens Hovedorganisation (FH)	2	113,5
Frederiksberg Centre	2	98,5
Frederiksberg Kommune	3	104,3
FX team	2	62
Kongelund Forest	4	91,3
Københavns Rådhus	2	105
L'Oreal	6	182,7
Lederne	5	53,6
Niels Bohr Insitut	8	302,3
Parken	2	120,3
PensionDanmark	2	58
Radiometer	4	229,1
Rockfon	4	169
Stack Infrastructuure	2	55,5
Sundholm	3	68,5
Valby Parkstein	5	79,5
Valby Robin	5	183,5
Velux	4	141,1
Ørsted	4	169
Blend and other partners		744,8
TOTAL	84	3985,4

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!





Beeswax candles made at our 'Crafternoon' workshop.
Bees do not just bring sweetness – but also light!

www.bybi.dk
Sundholmsvej 34
Copenhagen 2300 S
Tlel: 41275544 Bzzz@bybi.dk