SCHOOL AID MTÜ Curriculum Vitae

David Austen de Montaigne

Founder & Chair (School Aid MTÜ)

Founder of School Aid; provides the founding vision, strategy, funding relationships and international network, and chairs the Management Board and holds executive leadership of the charity; declares interests and recuses on related-party matters.

British national, based in France · Energy & project-development leader, 50+ years · Founder of School Aid MTÜ

School Aid role — Founder & Chair

- Provide the founding vision, strategy and international network; open doors to funders, partners and authorities.
- Chair the Management Board and hold executive leadership of the charity; safeguard the mission and the charity/for-profit firewall.
- Declare interests and recuse on any related-party matter involving Biomass Asia Inc or Digital Climate Finance OÜ (see note).

Profile

David Austen de Montaigne is the founder of School Aid MTÜ and a British energy, project-finance and development leader with more than five decades of international experience. Hired at eighteen by KCA in Libya — which sponsored his B.Sc. Petroleum Engineering at Benghazi — he was headhunted by Schlumberger in 1975 and served as Chief Engineer and head of engineering of Dowell Schlumberger's Big Orange offshore stimulation fleet in Brazil, running major fracturing programmes, before becoming Director of North Sea Operations at twenty-nine — by far the youngest director in the Schlumberger Group. He then founded Demon Cementing, Stimulation & Completion Services in Aberdeen — building the ADNOC offshore stimulation vessel — and used it to lead a leveraged buyout of Dolphin Fluids, one of the North Sea's leading offshore oilfield-services companies. Between 1990 and 1992, through Kredit-Finanz A.G. (Liechtenstein), he directed pioneering project finance supporting Albania, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Macedonia through their transition from centrally planned to market economies, working with their national institutions on funding. He went on to build solar and biomass ventures across Asia — advising Chinese provinces under the US Department of Energy's "Methane to Markets" initiative — and founded School Aid MTÜ to deliver school equipment, solar-plus-IT infrastructure and replacement schooling to children affected by disaster and poverty — beginning with schools struck by the devastating 2023 Morocco earthquake and now scaling to the Philippines and Venezuela.

Professional experience

Period	Organisation	Role & contribution
2024–present	School Aid MTÜ (Estonia)	Founder & Chair of the Board. Established the Estonian non-profit delivering education to children hit by disaster and poverty — Morocco, and now the Philippines and Venezuela; leads strategy, governance, field delivery and representation.
Dec 2025–present	Biomass Asia Inc	Founder & Executive Chairman — biochar, durable carbon-removal and circular-biomass platform development across Asia and Europe. (For-profit — see note.)

Period	Organisation	Role & contribution
2024–present	Digital Climate Finance OÜ (Estonia)	Management board member & shareholder — Estonian climate-finance / digital structuring vehicle. (Related party — see note.)
2008–present	Global Green Power PLC Corporation	Founder & sponsor-level lead of the Philippine biomass platform (parent of Green Power Panay Philippines Inc.). Led full development of four 35 MW biomass power plants across Panay, Northern and Central Luzon and Mindanao — all permits and licences, land conversion to industrial, environmental compliance certification and EPC contracting, prime grid- and road-connected sites, and 25-year feedstock supply contracts, with socio-economic programmes in each zone.
1994–2008	de Montaigne Group of Companies (several SPVs)	Founder & Chairman. A group of special-purpose vehicles taking the business into renewable energy — SolarGen (1995, thin-film solar to Asia), 40+ Chinese biomass-to-energy plants and two 49.5 MW wind farms, advising five Chinese provinces under the US DoE “Methane to Markets” and UK Climate Change Projects Office.
1992–1994	Kredit-Finanz A.G. (Liechtenstein)	Director, Project Finance — Asia-Pacific. Structured government-to-government (G2G) funding and infrastructure finance across the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan and Australia.
1990–1992	Kredit-Finanz A.G. (Liechtenstein)	Director, Project Finance. Supported Albania, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Macedonia through their transition to market economies — pioneering frontier-market infrastructure and institutional funding as the Baltic republics regained sovereignty.
1988–1990	Dolphin Fluids (Aberdeen)	Acquired through the leveraged buyout below and run as Chairman. One of Aberdeen’s leading offshore oilfield-services companies, running the largest independent oilfield laboratory in the North Sea (second only to Shell’s own) — a serious R&D facility with mass spectrometry and advanced instrumentation, designing bespoke chemical and mechanical applications. Built and operated the complete cement supply chain and offshore logistics for Total — exclusive supplier of Origny (France) cement to all of Total’s North Sea platforms, delivered by dedicated supply vessels — and was Shell’s exclusive supplier for specialised reservoir treatments, with further chemical-treatment contracts across BP, Esso, Britoil, Occidental and Amerada Hess.
1986–1988	Demon Cementing, Stimulation & Completion Services (Aberdeen)	Founder & Chairman. First company — designed and built a purpose-built offshore acid-frac stimulation vessel for Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), built deck-up and fully equipped (multimillion-dollar). Structured and executed a leveraged buyout (LBO) of Dolphin Fluids through this company, evidencing hands-on financial structuring and leverage.
1975–1986	Schlumberger / Dowell Schlumberger	Chief Engineer & head of engineering of the Big Orange stimulation fleet (Brazil — offshore fracturing; Amazon-basin support). In Saudi Arabia, secured land from the government and built the group’s largest onshore operations base from scratch — Operations Supervisor, then Manager — before transferring as Director of North Sea Operations at 29, by far the youngest director in the Schlumberger Group.

Period	Organisation	Role & contribution
1972–1975	KCA (Libya)	Hired at eighteen, direct from school, as directional driller / management trainee; KCA-sponsored B.Sc. Petroleum Engineering (University of Libya, Benghazi).

Qualifications & professional training

- B.Sc. Petroleum Engineering — University of Libya, Benghazi campus (KCA-sponsored), 1972–1975.
- Dowell Schlumberger technical training, Saint-Étienne, France — well completion and well control.
- Schlumberger Cambridge (UK) — hydraulics, fracturing, drill-stem testing, reservoir evaluation and offshore fracture stimulation.
- Management, finance and project-development training to senior service-engineer level — Schlumberger / Dowell Schlumberger international centres (France, UK, USA, Middle East), 1975–1986.
- Guest lecturer to 75+ international oil companies, universities and government agencies.

Key expertise for School Aid

- Founder-level leadership, governance and board chairmanship.
- Project origination, structuring and investor packaging.
- Frontier-market and transition-economy project finance (institutional and government engagement).
- Cross-border corporate structuring (Estonian and Philippine entities; SPVs).
- Government and stakeholder engagement in complex, emerging markets.
- Renewable-energy, biomass and carbon-finance development.

School Aid — mission & focus

David founded School Aid MTÜ to deliver school equipment, solar-plus-IT infrastructure and rapid replacement schooling to children affected by poverty, malnutrition and disaster. The charity's first response reached schools struck by the devastating 2023 earthquake in Morocco; its forward programme scales delivery across Morocco, the Philippines and Venezuela, pairing education with renewable-energy provision and rigorous safeguarding. School Aid is the philanthropic focus of David's work, held firmly apart from his commercial ventures.

Transition-era finance — Eastern Europe & the Baltics

Between 1990 and 1992, through Kredit-Finanz A.G. (Liechtenstein), David directed pioneering project-finance engagements across Albania, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Macedonia during their transition from command economies to open markets — working with national institutions on funding and infrastructure at a time that preceded the EBRD (founded 1991) and the mainstream development-finance institutions. This frontier-market, transition-economy experience underpins School Aid's cross-border, multi-country delivery model.

Languages

English (fluent) · French (working) · Portuguese (working) · Spanish (basic) · Arabic (basic).

> **Conflict-of-interest note.** David is Founder & Executive Chairman of Biomass Asia Inc and a board member and shareholder of Digital Climate Finance OÜ — both for-profit entities connected to him. As Chair of School Aid he upholds the charity/for-profit firewall: he declares these interests and recuses from any related-party decision, and charitable funds are never applied for a for-profit purpose. All related-party dealings are documented, arm's-length and disclosed.