

The Guardian - 11 February 2018

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[George Soros](#) has moved to defy his critics over his £400,000 donation to the pro-EU campaign group Best for Britain by pledging an additional £100,000 to support efforts to fight Brexit.

The billionaire investor's Open Society Foundation (OSF) is set to match [a crowdfunding campaign](#) set up in the wake of attacks on Soros, which has already raised more than £50,000 since his support was revealed on Wednesday last week.

Soros, who has given much of his personal wealth to OSF, said his money was directly linked to the campaign against him in the rightwing press, where a Daily Telegraph article accused him of a secret plot to stop [Brexit](#) and described him as "a rich gambler ... accused of meddling in nation's affairs".

"I am happy to take the fight to those who have tried to use a smear campaign, not arguments, to prop up their failing case," Soros told the Guardian.

A former refugee from communist Hungary who made \$1bn (£720m) as a currency speculator betting against sterling on Black Wednesday, Soros has said leaving the EU would be a tragic mistake that would weaken Britain's influence.

[Best for Britain's](#) chief executive, Eloise Todd, said the extra funds were a rebuff to those who said his funding for the campaign was anti-democratic.

"We live in a democracy, and the right to freedom of speech is precious. Elements of the rightwing press don't seem to agree," Todd said. "The UK's future with the EU is not a done deal, there is still a vote to come and people across the country deserve to know the truth about the options on the table, one of which is staying and leading in the EU.



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“George Soros and his foundation is kindly offering to help match-fund to give Best for Britain more support so we can make sure this message gets out, the biggest decision on Brexit is yet to come.”

More than 1,300 people have donated to Best for Britain’s GoFundMe page since Wednesday, when Soros’s donation was first publicised in a Telegraph article co-authored by Theresa May’s former chief of staff, [Nick Timothy](#).

Soros’s contribution was also criticised in the Daily Mail, which called it “tainted money”. Some have said the language used in attacks on Soros echoes the antisemitic campaign against him made by nationalist groups and governments in eastern European countries such as Hungary and Russia, where OSF has supported civil society groups.

Soros’s foundation has given cash to a variety of anti-Brexit groups, including £182,000 for the [European Movement UK](#) and £35,000 to [Scientists for EU](#). OSF said it had also given the Conservative thinktank [Bright Blue](#) £86,000 to campaign for the protection of rights currently enshrined in European law.

The additional £100,000 for Best for Britain will bring OSF’s total funding for pro-Europe campaigns and organisations to more than £800,000. OSF’s president, Patrick Gaspard, said the funds were for “British groups striving to ensure that this crucial debate is not shut down” and that no cash had gone to parliamentarians.

Best for Britain, which advocates remaining in the EU rather than fighting for a soft Brexit, received the £400,000 donation after the June election, having previously crowdfunded a similar amount to launch a tactical voting campaign to support pro-European politicians from a variety of parties.

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The campaign is chaired by Mark Malloch Brown, a former UK government minister and deputy UN secretary general. It was co-founded by Gina Miller, who took the UK government to court over the triggering of the article 50 process to leave the EU. Miller has since said she is no longer part of the organisation, which she has accused of being undemocratic.

Soros wrote an article for the Mail on Sunday in which he voiced dismay at the “toxic attacks” on him and his foundation over the past week. The 87-year-old said it was crucial to attempt to change people’s minds about leaving the EU.

A mere reversal of the 52-48 majority for Brexit would not be enough to settle the issue, he said. “The majority for staying would have to be significantly larger to convince Europe that Britain’s attitude towards [Europe](#) has fundamentally changed and its decision deserves to be taken seriously.”