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Annual Statement 2024-2025

May 2025

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Introduction

About

Project Safe Refuge is a non-profit foundation, which brings together a team of young international change-makers. As a voluntary initiative PSR was formed in March 2022 in response to current humanitarian crises. PSR became a foundation in October 2023 in Delft, Netherlands.

The members are primarily architects and designers with a diverse background, united by the belief that architecture can make a valuable positive impact for the people and the planet. PSR collaborates with engineers, architects, NGOs, like-minded initiatives and communities.

Mission

We design with the people, for the people.

Project Safe Refuge strives to support refugees as well as externally & internally displaced populations, by providing architectural and design services. Putting the communities we serve in the centre of our work, we aim to create safe, dignified, culturally sensitive, sustainable and comfortable spaces, that they can call their own. Our goal is to make all research and knowledge gathered throughout our experience freely available to like-minded changemakers.

Goals

Knowledge exchange - Learning from others and sharing our own experience. Together we can make a difference.

With the people for the people - Using participatory design approach to give people a voice in the creation of their own spaces

Sustainable architecture - Implementing environmental, social and economic requirements into each design

Financial policy

Stichting Project Safe Refuge generates its income through donations (crowdfunding, corporate, private) and sponsorships. Funds in its entirety are spent to realise the objectives of the foundation. This includes - purchase of materials and tools needed to complete projects, payment of external staff needed for design and construction, transport, administrative costs and any other costs related to projects' completion.

2023-2024 Summary

Transitional Housing Unit

The Transitional Housing Unit is our main project and has been in the works for the past three years. It is a design for a sustainable, environmentally and financially, easily movable, culturally sensitive temporary housing for displaced people in Ukraine.

This year we completed our unit build. As of May this year a local family is moving in the building and putting their finishing touches on the interiors.



Over the past 12 months we organised a live meeting with our partner at the time, Wood Core House in Poland, and the head of the building crew from Ukraine. During this meeting we inspected the manufactured materials, discussed the building process and steps and oversaw the loading and transportation of the structure for the first unit. Throughout the build we remained in close contact with the building crew coordinator to ensure the process went smoothly. Due to the war activities and frequent army enlistments the building process took much longer than initially assumed. We planned on the build being completed in September or October 2024 but finally completed it in May.

As this first unit is wrapping up, we are setting out a plan for a scale up of the project. Three months ago we found a new partner, Japanese company Veneer House, that offered their support in developing a faster, easier and more efficient construction method. We are at the beginning of our collaboration but are already setting out on delivering 10 more shelters, in the Veneer House technology, to Trostyanets in Ukraine. Our work and plan have been approved by the mayor of Trostyanets and we are in the process of acquiring funding.

Refugee Centre renovation for Volunteers with No Limits

The aim of the project was to support a fellow Dutch NGO in a revitalisation of their volunteer centre. Volunteers with No Limits (VNL) help Ukrainians in the Netherlands through distribution of goods and community support, as well as through collection and shipment of humanitarian aid directly to Ukraine.

This project was initially supposed to run last year. However, as the VNL lost their premises shortly before the start of our work, we had to push the date for almost a year. The scope of the project had to be updated too to match the needs of the VNL's new location. This year's plan included making of:

1. Zones - as VNL's work focuses on collecting and distributing donations, their space lacked a bit of organisation. We were asked to create zones for children, men and women's clothing, house items and play items.
2. Children's corner - often times children accompany adults visiting the centre and browsing for needed items. The centre in its original form didn't have a designated space for children to play. They asked us to create a moveable play corner that will be easily taken in and out of the main centre's room. We decided to make wooden storage boxes on wheels which would allow the staff to store part of the toys, thus gaining space, and kids to safely play with and on the boxes in the designated area. Together with the VNL staff we partially painted the boxes, each with a bespoke design, to make them more child friendly and left part of it bare so the children could contribute to the painting and designing in the future. We also provided a comfortable, colorful rug that frames the play corner.



3. Changing room - even though the centre's main role is distribution of clothing donation, it didn't have a changing room where people could try on their new items. Using reclaimed materials we built a simple changing room. Thanks to its light structure it's easily moveable in case of the need for some space rearrangement.



4. Staff's corner - the original position for the staff's space was tucked away from the immediate sign of the visitors, with little natural light. We moved it to a spot directly in front of the entrance, in between two large windows. We also used cork boards to create a self-made mural for notices, posters and documents.

The entire build took two days and was mainly completed with reclaimed, recycled or donated materials. These didn't include nails, screws, hooks and cork boards.

PARTYCYPUJEMY exhibition - feature

We were invited to contribute to the PARTYCYPUJEMY exhibition at the Architecture Pavilion in Zodiak, Poland. The exhibition focused on the active involvement of city residents in creating and building sustainable communities.

Our contribution had a form of a short video introducing our foundation, work and experience in participatory design.

More information about the exhibition can be found at <https://pawilonzodiak.pl/en/wystawy/partycypujemy-youth-exhibition/> .

PSR Merch Shop

To diversify our income streams this year we launched a merchandise shop. It features a variety of products with the PSR logo - t-shirts, jumpers, mugs and tote bags. With each purchase our foundation receives a 5 euro donation.

Whilst looking for an appropriate platform we aimed to find one that aligns with our mission and sustainability goals. Ultimately we picked a platform that decentralised the production and distribution of the products. Each item is produced at and delivered from a warehouse closest to the buyer.

Community Centre competition - India

Our team participated in a competition for a Women's Community Centre in Kodidoddi. Unfortunately, our proposal wasn't picked as the winner but it gave us an opportunity to practice our design skills in a new environment and country.



The main concept was inspired by a strong element that shapes the site chosen in Kodidoddi: the neem tree. We saw it as a central point, a reference to our buildings' location. The site was organized around a central tree, with a clear separation between core and additional elements, arranged on a rectangular grid to allow easy construction and replication. The sanitation block was placed to the north for public access during outdoor gatherings. The Anganwadi classroom, feeding room, kitchen, and office formed a cluster of additional spaces, separated from the core building by a corridor. The core included a multipurpose room for classes and events, along with a private room for individual support. The centre stood on an elevated base, surrounded by green areas, a playground, and a kitchen garden, with benches and fruit trees providing shaded communal space.

The design responded to local climate conditions. A central corridor enhanced natural ventilation and offered views across the site, while the sloped roof accommodated solar panels. A public water area included a bore well and tank. The modular layout supported easy replication, using locally sourced materials such as Kadapa stone, compressed earth blocks, and concrete mixed with local rock. The structure rested on concrete pillars and beams, with aluminium and marble window frames and Matti wood doors, combining practicality with regional identity.

Lecture - Extreme Technology

In May 2025 representatives of our team gave a lecture at TU Delft's Extreme Technology studio. The studio focuses on teaching students skills of designing in extreme conditions and environments - extreme climatically, politically or otherwise.

Our lecture centred around the role and characteristics of participatory design and community engagement with vulnerable communities. We gave information on the migration context and future predictions and explained that is participatory design and how it influences the wellbeing and mental health of displaced people. The majority of the talk focused on our experience and the use of participation in our projects.

Future vision

In the upcoming year we are hoping to scale up the Transitional Housing Project. To make this happen, we are diversifying our partner network and income streams, to gain funding for production of new units. The city of Trostyanets is interested in partnering with us to potentially apply for larger grants and is very keen on bringing in more modules to house those in need.

One of the examples of implementing a new income stream is the creation of a merchandise shop. There we want to sell items showcasing our foundation. Proceeds from the shops will go towards operation and projects' costs.

We are also looking into spreading the scope of our work and looking for projects in different geographical locations and communities that could use design and architectural support.

Financial report

Income and expenses statement June 2024 - May 2025 (in euro)

	2024 - 2025		2024 - 2025
INCOME		EXPENSES	
Crowdfunding	516.29	administration	407.84
UK Giving Foundation	1529.35	materials	17944.62
TU Delft	260		
TOTAL	2305.64	TOTAL	18352.46

Other information

Board 2024-2025

Voorzitter - Kasia Antoszyk
Secretaris - Julia Gospodinova
Diederik de Wit

General information

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