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Annual Statement 2023-2024

May 2024

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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

Zodiak Pavilion exhibition

Project Safe Refuge was invited to exhibit our work at the Zodiak Architecture Pavilion in Warsaw, Poland. The exhibition focused around the outcomes of our participatory workshops, survey results and showcased our initial design of the transitional housing unit.

Panels were placed in front of the pavilion building and remained there for a few weeks, becoming a part of the Night of the Museums event.



Participatory workshops - 2nd round

Our team aims to support Ukrainian citizens in facing the challenge of the reconstruction of their country in peacetime.

The Zodiak Pavilion exhibition was the starting point for the second round of participatory workshops. We organised a series of meetings related to cities reconstruction and participatory urban planning; discussions and workshops for Ukrainians living in Poland. Their aim was to foster discussions about city reconstruction, not from architects' and professionals' point of view but from a public, user perspective.

We organised four workshops, each focusing on a specific topic. They were: Children and Cities, Conversations on Cities, Urban Planning, Landscape.



Project for the 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.

The centre had 4 main needs:

1. More elaborate and organised storage space, allowing for an efficient distribution and collection of goods - we will address it by creating new shelving and rack systems, making their work easier and swifter.

2. Children's corner - we need to ensure that children visiting the centre are hosted in a safe and friendly area dedicated to them. The design of their space consists of a playing carpet, drawing table, book and toy shelves and sitting space to read aloud.

3. Accessibility - as the entrance to the building is elevated, we will build a ramp to allow for the refugees with limited mobility to enter the premises easily.

4. Outdoor seating - some days, there are dozens of people seeking help in front of the entrance, so the outside waiting area should be enriched by a few more benches.

We designed elements to be easily assembled, disassembled and transportable. The designed elements were going to be made from recycled or recyclable materials. The products dedicated to the children area should be non-toxic, safe and easy to clean.

Unfortunately the build itself didn't go through. A week before it was due to begin VNL unexpectedly learned they had to leave their premises. We are hoping to resume working with that amazing foundation once they find a new spot but we are unable to say how long it is going to take. The crowdfunding has been deactivated. All the money we raised were saved and we are hoping to use it for a build in the VNL's new premises. However, if this is not possible, as per the crowdfunding description, funds will be directed towards our other project, Transitional Housing Unit.



Transitional Housing Unit

Transitional Housing Unit is our main project and has been in the works for the past two 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 have made significant progress on the production and implementation of the pilot unit. Our team finalised and adapted the final design, based on the analysis of a prototype we built last year. We changed the construction method from 'section slice' to 'panelling system' and sought out a manufacturing company who could assist us with the production of the first unit. We partnered with a Polish company, Wood Core House, specialising in wood and panelling construction, who offered to assist us.

At the same time we held discussions with a city of Trostyanets, in Ukraine, that expressed interest in implementing the pilot building. They have a need for temporary housing, as they currently host 1600 refugees in poorly maintained student halls. We had a meeting with the mayor of Trostyanets who informed us the city has an available plot that can accommodate around 10 units. The site will be ready to receive the units in July 2024. This will include foundation preparation, connecting to the grid and setting up the plumbing infrastructure.

Community of Trostyanets will be involved in the building process. Ahead of the production by Wood Core House, a number of buildings from the city will come to Poland for an installation workshop to familiarise themselves with the company's technology. They will be able to then return to Ukraine, assemble the units and pass on the knowledge to other community members.

The pilot unit will be built at the beginning of August 2024 and will act as a proof of concept.

Lecture - Extreme Technology

In May 2024 representatives of our team gave a lecture at TU Delft's Extreme Technology studio. It was attended by around 30 students and their tutor. The talk focused on the Transitional Housing project and described the steps we took from the idea stage to the production, the current situation.

We described our design process, emphasising the inputs from the participatory workshops. Part of the presentation was dedicated to challenges and opportunities that come from running a foundation. We tried to give the most comprehensive image of the project possible.

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 2024 (in euro)

		2023	2024
INCOME			
	Crowdfunding	204.72	1114.2
	Marchus Trust	3770	0
	Paul de Ruiter Architects	9500	0
	Robeco	0	3000
		13474.72	4114.2
EXPENSES			
	Website costs	0	147.6
	Material costs	0	960.87
TOTAL		13474.72	3005.73

Other information

Board 2023-2024

Voorzitter - Kasia Antoszyk
Secretaris - Julia Gospodinova
Peningmeester - Emma Govan

General information

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