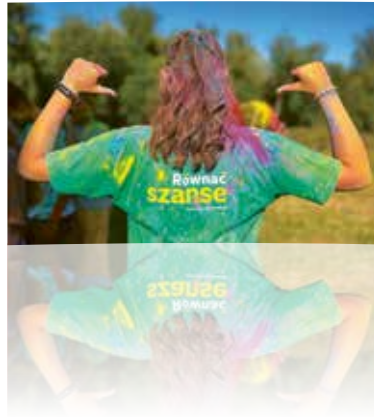




POLISH-AMERICAN
FREEDOM FOUNDATION



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

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Letter from the PAFF Leadership



Andrew Nagorski
Chairman of the Board
of Directors



Jerzy Koźmiński
President and Chief
Executive Officer

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that we present to you our Annual Report summarizing the activities of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation in its twenty-fifth year of operation. This Report will be finalized in June 2025 after the audit of the Financial Statements has been completed.

The 25th anniversary is a special moment in our history, which is why we would like to begin by noting an important event: the anniversary gala, held in Warsaw on June 6 this year.

On that occasion the Foundation received congratulations and best wishes from the President of Poland Andrzej Duda, the Speaker of the Sejm Szymon Hołownia, the Speaker of the Senate Małgorzata Kidawa-Błońska, the Vice-Speaker of the Senate Maciej Żywno, the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski, and the Head of the Prime Minister's Chancellery, Minister Jan Grabiec, along with many other individuals and institutions.

Among the distinguished guests attending the gala were Minister Wojciech Kolarski who read a letter from President Andrzej Duda; Vice-Speaker of the Sejm Włodzimierz Czarzasty; former President of Poland Aleksander Kwaśniewski; former Prime Ministers Jerzy Buzek and Marek Belka; former Vice-Prime Minister Janusz Steinhoff; Commissioner for Children's Rights Monika-Horna-Cieślak; Senators Marek Borowski and Krzysztof Kwiatkowski; Anna Radwan-Röhrenshef, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Władysław Teofil Bartoszewski, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Maria Ejchart, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Justice, and representatives of embassies of the countries that are linked to PAFF's activities, including Daniel Lawton, Chargé d'affaires of the United States of America to Poland.

Also present were members of the PAFF Board of Directors, partners of the Foundation, especially NGOs implementing PAFF programs, as well as the most active participants of PAFF's initiatives – leaders of Act Locally Centers, PAFF Local Partnerships, schools and libraries, numerous civic organizations, local activity organizers and their tutors, local media journalists, as well as a group of 130 Lane Kirkland Scholarships holders, along with many other friends of the Foundation.

During the anniversary gala, attendees were reminded that 25 years ago the founders of PAFF were motivated by two main goals: to strengthen the outcomes of Poland's post-1989 changes, and to share the country's experience of systemic transformation with other nations. For its activities within Poland, the Foundation chose to focus on communities and groups that required particular support during that period of profound change – especially in rural areas and small towns. Its programs have

concentrated on levelling the playing field in education, along with improving the general quality of education, and supporting the development of local communities, which contributes to the building of social capital.

Over the course of its twenty-five years of operation, the Foundation has initiated 40 programs, allocating \$288 million of its own funds and securing an additional \$293 million from other sources. This made it possible to award 35,000 scholarships for university studies to young people from low-income families in small localities, to introduce over 200,000 teachers to modern teaching methods, and to implement 16,000 local projects reaching hundreds of thousands of beneficiaries. Additionally, 16,000 student volunteers carried out more than 45,000 educational initiatives for 467,000 children and young people. Furthermore, 35,000 leaders and staff of non-governmental organizations, along with other local community organizers, received training aimed at enhancing their skills and competencies.

In line with its original mission, the Foundation was concurrently engaged in sharing with other countries the knowledge that Poland gained during its systemic transformation and integration with the European Union. Since 2000 we have hosted some 16,000 people from Eastern Europe as well as the South Caucasus and Central Asia in Poland, with the largest number – 9,000 – coming from Ukraine. This group included 11,000 student leaders and professionals, 3,700 participants in the “Region in Transition” program (RITA), and over 1,000 graduates of the Lane Kirkland Scholarship Program.

This anniversary offers a timely opportunity to showcase the outcomes of projects the Foundation has implemented since its earliest days.

The „English Teaching” program has delivered almost 1,300 educational projects that promote English language learning and inspire valuable community initiatives in small towns and villages.

The “Learning Schools” program has played a unique role for 25 years while offering comprehensive support to over 12,000 schools. The quality of teaching was upgraded through the introduction of research-based solutions and best international practices.

The “Act Locally” program was the first initiative to systematically offer grants for community activation in small localities. The program provided support for 15,000 civic initiatives aimed at solving local problems and stimulating development aspirations. Nearly 7 million people have been engaged in these projects, including over 260,000 volunteers. Since 2004 the Act Locally Centers’ network has grown from 15 to 78 organizations now covering 673 communities and awarding grants through open grant competitions.

The ngo.pl Portal was established in 2000 and continues to expand its range of resources. It has long served as an important part of Poland’s third-sector infrastructure, with approximately 4 million users benefiting from it last year.

The Foundation’s first international initiative was the Lane Kirkland Scholarship Program. Over a thousand of its alumni are now leaders in social, economic, and political activities in thirteen countries of the region. The „Region in Transition” program (RITA) was another of PAFF’s long-term international undertakings which was launched in 2000. Under this program Polish NGOs carried out 1,234 projects, sharing Poland’s experience in socio-economic transformation and European integration with their partners in the East.

In 2008, as a result of cooperation with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, PAFF received a grant of \$31 million to carry out the Library Development Program in Poland, part of the international “Global Libraries” undertaking. The Library Development Program transformed 4,200 Polish libraries in small towns and villages into modern centers of education, culture, and information, teeming with civic activity. Over 12,000 librarians participated in training workshops while their institutions received modern computer equipment, software, and free Internet access.

A unique institution – the School of Education of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation and the University of Warsaw – has been operating in Warsaw for almost ten years now. The School of Education runs the first full-time postgraduate program in Poland, combining intensive practical training with academic instruction; 220 participants have completed the program to date. In addition, more

than 11,000 in-service teachers have taken advantage of the School's part-time programs, workshops, and training opportunities. Today the School of Education is synonymous with high-quality teacher education; various events promoting its methods have attracted the interest of 21,000 people. Experts from the School of Education as well as the "Learning Schools" program have been instrumental in shaping Poland's education policy over many years. Their role gained special significance in the beginning of 2024, when they were invited to contribute to the changes in Polish education, including the new core curriculum.

Since the very beginning of Russia's invasion, the Foundation has been actively supporting Ukraine, working in partnership with other non-governmental organizations. PAFF carries out this task through both its national and international programs. Immediately after the outbreak of the war, it offered material and financial support for the civilian population in Ukraine, providing medical equipment, medicine, food, and transportation. It also took an active role in initiatives aimed at supporting war refugees in Poland. The Foundation promptly launched a new program – "Support for Ukraine" – targeting Polish civil society organizations involved in assisting Ukrainian refugees in Poland and civilians in Ukraine. To date, PAFF has allocated 13 million PLN to this program, which has directly benefited 97,000 refugees residing in Poland and 160,000 individuals in Ukraine. In addition, PAFF Program Managers have secured 32 million PLN from other sources to support Ukraine-related activities.

While the figures cited above help convey the scope of the Foundation's activities, they also reveal the extraordinary efforts of many individuals behind the scenes. In this anniversary year of the Foundation, we wish to express our deep gratitude to all our partners, community leaders, non-governmental organizations, and other institutions involved in PAFF programs. Above all, we extend our sincere thanks to the organizations that served as Program Managers – in every case, our shared success was made possible by teams of capable, creative, and dedicated people.

We would also like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to the Members of the Foundation's Board of Directors. We can always rely on their support, commitment, knowledge, and experience. We truly regret that not all of them lived to witness our 25th anniversary. We are missing John P. Birkelund, who served as Chairman of the Board of Directors until 2012, Zbigniew Brzeziński, Frederick M. Bohlen, Colin G. Campbell, John H. D'Arms, Robert G. Faris, Aleksander Koj and Nicholas A. Rey.

In recent months Professor Anna Fornalczyk and Joseph C. Bell stepped down from the Board of Directors. From the very beginning they were very active in PAFF's work, supporting the Board of Directors and the Foundation's team with their experience and valuable advice, which had a significant impact on the development of our organization.

At this special time we would like to express our most sincere thanks to all our outstanding co-workers and associates. None of the Foundation's achievements would have been possible without the daily commitment of the PAFF team.

We close the past 25 years with a sense of well-accomplished tasks. Throughout this period the Foundation has consistently pursued the goals set at its inception, while adapting its activities to changing circumstances: most recently, the global pandemic, the outbreak of war in Ukraine, and the ongoing digital revolution. We firmly believe that the valuable experience gained over the past quarter-century, combined with the steadfast support of our partners, will enable the Foundation to evolve and successfully continue its mission for many years to come.



Andrew Nagorski
Chairman of the Board of Directors



Jerzy Koźmiński
President and Chief Executive Officer

New York/Warsaw, June 2025

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ENGLISH TEACHING

Since 2000 this program has initiated and supported actions to promote the English language and improve its teaching standards among children and youth from small towns and villages, strengthening their educational opportunities overall. At the same time, the program fosters the professional development of English teachers working in small towns and rural areas.

Promoting the learning of English, “English Teaching” also stimulates and develops a variety of social initiatives that often surpass the initial goal, leading to a more stimulation of activity in local communities. The program is aimed mostly at English language teachers working in primary schools and kindergartens based in rural areas and small towns. In the past, many initiatives were organized at junior high schools, but those schools no longer exist. The program includes training sessions for teachers, coupled with the possibility of implementing projects with their pupils; it also provides help in preparing these actions.

Between 2000 and 2024, grant competitions addressed to small-town schools and non-governmental organizations funded 1,284 projects to organize school clubs for fans of Anglo-Saxon culture and the English language, create libraries with English literature and press, and form theatrical clubs. The program led to organizing numerous contests focused on Anglo-Saxon writers, culture, and history, as well as song festivals. Children and teenagers were invited to watch English films and take part in lessons with native speakers of English. More than 75,000 pupils and nearly 5,000 teachers participated in the projects directly, and over 200,000 parents and other representatives of local communities were engaged indirectly.

Summer language camps for children and youth are also organized, which attracted over 2,000 participants from 2006 to 2024.

“Weekends with English Teaching” are methodology training sessions for English teachers based in towns and villages with populations of up to 20,000. To date, 169 such training sessions have been arranged for a total of 7,800 participants.

20 nation-wide educational meetings – English Teaching Markets – were organized for English teachers and representatives of interested institutions, organizations, schools, and publishing houses; they attracted more than 9,000 attendees. These annual meetings help expand the cooperation network of English teachers from smaller localities; they are backed up with a social media portal and regular e-news about other educational initiatives, such as grants for projects, training, or contests. In 2024 over 300 participants took part in the jubilee XX English Teaching Market.

The Polish Association of Teachers of “English Teaching” was founded in 2015, developed from the “English Teaching Ambassadors” initiative – the most active teachers participating in the program. Its main purpose is the professional development of English teachers

FACTS AND FIGURES



1,284 projects were funded through grant competitions addressed to schools and non-governmental organizations in small localities.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$10,248,276
including \$415,727 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
englishteaching.org.pl

PROGRAM MANAGER:
The Nidzica Development Foundation “NIDA”

from small towns and villages in particular, as well as advocating social activities there.

English teachers who cooperated with the program

were provided support in terms of methodology and techniques of remote teaching. Language projects for students were mostly carried out online. ■

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The purpose of “Equal Opportunities”, initiated in 2001, is to support social initiatives addressed to rural and small-town children and youth in order to better their chances for a good start in adult life by increasing their competencies and developing their social skills, such as teamwork, winning the support necessary to accomplish established goals and planning actions to achieve them.

As part of the program non-governmental organizations, cultural centers, libraries, and informal groups apply for grants to support projects that stimulate the aspirations of children and young people, set realistic goals for themselves, help cope with emotions, develop active attitudes and openness, and especially encourage working for the benefit of their communities. The projects give young people the opportunity to participate in classes extending beyond the standard educational offer of their schools.

In 2024, the “Large Grants” and “Small Grants” competitions channeled funding to a total of 154 projects. These included initiatives to promote the social engagement of young people in the form of various campaigns in local communities (crowdfunding, cleaning and segregation of rubbish, educating on healthy eating), reclaiming public space by the young (e.g. by painting murals, or taking care of urban green spaces), broadening the scope

of educational and cultural activities for youth, e.g., by organizing outdoor urban games or staging theatrical productions.

The program also offers training for project coordinators to increase their qualifications, teach project management with a focus on engaging youth as active creators, participants, and direct implementers of a given undertaking.

The program offer is complete with the Summer School for Young Leaders, whose every edition attracts more than 20 participants of “Equal Opportunities” projects. At the Summer School young people spend a week of their holidays at workshops where they can learn how to plan and implement social actions more effectively and improve their knowledge in the field of civic education.

Over 24 years of the program, over 3,500 projects were carried out with almost 156,000 participants (indirectly:

FACTS AND FIGURES



3,500 projects have been implemented within the program and engaged **156,000 active participants** – involving nearly **575,000 people** indirectly.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$19,657,147
including \$880,612 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
rownacszanse.pl

PROGRAM MANAGER:
The Civis Polonus Foundation

575,000 people were involved). The program also contributed to the activation and integration of local communities to act for children and youth. Over the years the program evolved from an initiative focused mainly on extending knowledge and horizons of young people living in villages and small towns into the full-fledged program aimed at development of their social and emotional skills.

The year 2024 saw the fourth “Ready for the Future” campaign, which seeks to create a space where young people and adults can cooperate, as well as exchange experience and knowledge about the daunting challenges facing youth today. Above all, the campaign focuses on issues related to the mental health of young people, their peer and adult-youth relations, as well as developing skills indispensable for navigating the contemporary labor market.

In 2022–2023, Onet.pl was the media partner of the “Ready for the Future” campaign. In 2024, this role was passed on to the Goniec.pl portal. The Orange Foundation, Martyna Wojciechowska’s UNaweza Foundation and the School with Class Foundation joined the group of partner organizations. Commissioner for Children’s Rights Monika Horna-Cieślak and UNICEF Polska have extended honorary patronage over the campaign.

The “Equal Opportunities” program is the winner of the Janusz Korczak Award in the “Institutions and Organizations” category in 2023. The aim of the award, organized

by the Korczak University – Academy of Applied Sciences, is to promote Janusz Korczak’s ideas and support changes in education by rewarding institutions and people who are guided by the principle of empowering children, as well as supporting children and their families in difficult situations, and creating environments favorable to a happy childhood.

The program enables the Foundation to support the Young Explorer Clubs initiative, which is a continuation of a model project initiated as part of the program in 2002 by the Education Society of Kłodzko, now carried out by the Copernicus Science Center. The purpose of the Young Explorer Clubs is to attract children and young people to the sciences. The club format helps young people learn through experimentation using simple, easily available materials.

2024 welcomed the 13th international Young Explorer Clubs Forum, held at the Copernicus Science Center in Warsaw. The event gathered ca. 300 people from Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine, as well as Ethiopia, Israel, and Kenya. The Forum is a contact and experience-sharing platform which promotes the Clubs. Nearly 1,300 units belong to the YEC network: over 200 of them operate in Georgia and several dozen in other countries.

The Polish Children and Youth Foundation was Program Manager from 2001 to 2020. ■

PAFF AND UW SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The School of Education of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation and the University of Warsaw is a joint undertaking of these two institutions. The concept and curriculum were designed in close cooperation with Columbia University Teachers College in New York. The PAFF and UW School of Education (SE) is the only non-remote, full-time post-graduate course in Poland granting teaching certificates.

School of Education students may apply for a scholarship to help cover the costs of living and a place in a UW dormitory.

Daily in-school teaching practice is an integral part of SE teacher training. Students spend time in both academic classes and a school classroom. They observe lessons, co-teach, teach on their own, and take part in meetings of teacher boards and parent-teacher conferences. The experience gained at schools are then regularly discussed during academic classes. The School of Education takes responsibility for the quality of in-school apprenticeships by closely cooperating with a network of 40 selected schools in Warsaw and vicinity. 100 teachers

from these schools regularly participate in workshops and consultation meetings.

SE tutors provide students with one-to-one tutoring. Academic sessions are held in small groups, where major focus is placed on discussing and systematically reflecting on student progress. Tutors have experience with in-school work, are actively involved in the education sector, and offer a range of perspectives: teacher-practitioners, academics, and education supporters. The SE lecturers are drawn from various academic centers and have undergone training by leading American and European experts in teacher education.



7,000 people attended various online meetings (conferences, training sessions, workshops) in 2024 to learn about School of Education methods and tools for working with students.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED

\$9,787,264

including \$1,260,147 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
szkolaedukacji.pl

PROGRAM MANAGER:
The Foundation for Quality Education

The 9th round (covering the 2023/24 academic year) attracted 25 students who pursued one of the four education paths: Polish studies, mathematics, history and civic education, as well as biology and natural science. Another group of 26 students commenced studies in September 2024.

A new initiative – the PAFF and UW Masters of Education School – was launched in the 2024/25 academic year. This post-graduate course is addressed to 60 in-service-teachers with a proficient professional skill-set who wish to introduce innovative solutions conducive to teacher and pupil development. The course, implemented in an extra-mural and hybrid form, offers four areas of specialization: Polish language, history, civics, and mathematics, plus class management (provided to teachers of all subjects). The mathematical path is funded by the Ministry of National Education.

The PAFF and UW School of Education offers long-term support for more than 220 alumni and also provides assistance in securing a teaching job. Former students have ongoing contact with SE lecturers, regularly refining their methods and sharing teaching experiences. Education institutions that hire the alumni are welcome to benefit from the rich training offer of the School of Education.

Since 2017 the School of Education has added to its offer professional development for in-service teachers in

teaching literature and Polish, mathematics, biology, history, as well as didactic and communication competencies. The 2023/24 academic year the courses were attended by 225 people.

Ever since 2023, the program taps into the “Thinking Class” experience. This innovative teaching method was designed by a Canadian math teaching expert, Professor Peter Lijledahl of the Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada. After being trained by Prof. Lijledahl, SE mentors hold workshops to introduce this method to all lessons – not just math, but Polish, history, and biology as well. A total of about 1,500 teachers have taken part in the workshops to date.

Additionally, under the program the research is carried out to scientifically verify this method and related teaching tools used at the School of Education. Tried-and-tested practices are promoted not just at schools but also at other universities and teacher development centers. In 2024 nearly 7,000 participants attended conferences, training sessions, and webinars which showcased SE methods and tools used in work with students.

The Foundation for Quality Education, established by PAFF in 2014, is responsible for the management and development of the School of Education. ■

LEARNING SCHOOLS (LES)

Comprehensive action to improve Polish education, using the best international standards, has been carried out under this program since its launch in 2000. The quality of schools improves mostly thanks to training delivered to teachers and headmasters, in rural areas and small towns in particular.

The “LES” training offer includes long-term actions for holistic school development, year-long e-learning courses for teachers, and one-day workshops for teaching staff. “LES” also cooperates with Collegium Civitas to offer Postgraduate Courses for Education Leaders.

“LES” introduces an original quality assurance system into the daily operation of schools, which improves teaching effectiveness and supports pupils’ learning outcomes. The system is based on formative assessment and other teaching strategies focused on students. By encouraging learners and teachers to become partners in learning, the system develops learning skills, strengthens internal motivation, and gives children and youth a sense of authorship. Participation in “LES” program is beneficial for the whole school community – young people take over the responsibility for the getting knowledge process and are better prepared for adulthood; teachers develop ways to perfect their performance and learn innovative methods of working; school directors get competencies necessary to run a modern school; and schools build good relations in their school community and the local environment. The schools participating in the program improve the teachers’ work, monitor results of activities, and share best practices with each other. As a result, the “Learning Schools” program improves the effectiveness of teaching and learning,

organizing the functioning of a school as “a learning institution”, increasing the competencies and autonomy of teaching staff, and promoting cooperation between the school and its outside environment.

In the course of 24 years the program gathered some 12,000 schools, of which 1,600 participated in its core operations that aimed at introducing formative assessment and other teaching strategies. Nearly 200,000 teachers and nearly 11,000 school principals benefited from training offered by various “LES” components.

Over the last years the program offer has been extended. The changes started by the Ministry of National Education in 2017, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the war in Ukraine, which resulted in an influx of refugees to Poland made it necessary to ensure additional support for schools. To this end “LES” added an “Resilient School” initiative to its portfolio. The objective behind this new undertaking is to create a network of schools, enhance teacher skills, and improve the position of headmasters in managing the school in times of uncertainty. So far, over 10,000 people have taken part in these activities.

An important component of the program is to promote the outcomes of expert analyses and present best practices in education, pupil guidance, and school organization. From the beginning, they are actively used

FACTS AND FIGURES



***12,000 schools** have taken part in the program over 24 years. Training sessions offered as part of the “LES” program attracted **200,000 teachers**.*

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$17,094,951
including \$737,757 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
sus.ceo.org.pl

PROGRAM MANAGER:
The Center for Citizenship Education Foundation

to improve the quality of the education system, and the “LES” experts actively participate in work and consultations on new curricular and legal solutions. This activity intensified notably in 2024 on the initiative of the Polish Ministry of National Education.

The many years of “LES” experience is also used in various educational initiatives financed from EU funds. These include: “The Student Academy,” “Digital School,”

“The Learning Schools Academy for Education Leaders,” and the “School for the Innovator”. The purpose of these initiatives is to develop competencies which students will need in adult life, by promoting innovative teaching, assessment and evaluation methods among teachers and school principals, and by reshaping the organization of schoolwork. ■

PROJECTOR – STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

The purpose of the program is to equalize education opportunities of children and youth from villages and small towns. Under this program, groups of volunteer university students carry out projects that expand knowledge, skills, and personal interests of children and teenagers. The projects are carried out in free time during the school year and during summer and winter holidays.

They focus on several leading topics, including: responsible use of the Internet, ecology, as well as building and maintaining social relationships. The program encourages pupils to develop their skills by promoting positive role models and shaping university students’ sense of social responsibility and solidarity, while providing them with an attractive way to discover and follow their passions.

Since 2003 more than 45,000 educational projects have been organized across Poland in about 3,000 schools with over 16,000 student-volunteers, involving nearly 467,000 pupils. In 2024, more than 700 student-volunteers carried out almost 1,800 educational projects for

nearly 10,000 pupils at 250 primary schools. More than half had participated in “Bridge Scholarships”; for many, this program was their first experience of social activity. In 2022, nearly 100 student-volunteers became involved in about 600 educational projects for more than 3,000 Ukrainian children at 93 educational facilities.

The program offer is supplemented with ekampus.pl, a digital platform with educational materials for volunteers to use in their projects.

The program gained support from two former Prime Ministers: Professor Jerzy Buzek and Professor Marek Belka who, during the 2007 summer holidays, took on



454,000 educational projects
have been carried out since 2003
in **3,200 schools** all over Poland;
they involved **16,000 student**
volunteers and **467,000 pupils**.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$8,983,899
including \$343,426 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
www.projektor.org.pl

PROGRAM MANAGER:
The Educational Enterprise Foundation

the role of volunteers and taught classes for school pupils in several rural communes. In 2012, in cooperation with the Chancellery of President Bronisław Komorowski, the Modern Patriotism project was carried out as part of the program where Chancellery Ministers and Advisors visited schools in small localities. The project was designed to stimulate discussion about patriotism, shaping citizens' attitudes in young people, introducing them to national symbols and local traditions, as well as promoting respect and tolerance.

"PROJECTOR – Student Volunteers" closely cooperates with a group of about a dozen accomplished education experts. Among them are: Przemysław Staroń, a psychologist, lecturer, trainer, and educator, Teacher of the Year 2018, the winner of the 2020 Global Teacher Prize; Anna Konarzewska – a teacher, educator, writer and blogger; Agnieszka Jankowiak-Mail, a teacher, educational activist, writer and blogger, the winner of the

Irena Sendlerowa Award, and the Grand Press Freedom of Speech Medal, and Łukasz Szeliga – a tutor, educator and coach with experience gained in international environment. The experts prepare the lesson plans used by students and act as program ambassadors.

Since 2011 the projects carried out by volunteer students have been regularly monitored and evaluated. This is meant to both assess the direct results of the entire program and observe its long-term influence. The biggest benefits mentioned by student-volunteers include opportunities to acquire practical experience, develop communication skills, meet people, and provide an occasion for their social activity to be seen and appreciated by their alma maters. The most important benefits of taking part in the "PROJECTOR" are emphasized by schools, which mention: expanding the educational offer, increasing school attractiveness, and positive reception of the program by parents. ■

BRIDGE SCHOLARSHIPS

This undertaking was launched in 2002 to address the stark disproportion of access to higher education between young people from rural and urban areas. It was meant to help gifted youngsters from small towns and villages, former state farms (PGR) in particular, make the decision to continue their education at universities by awarding them first-year scholarships.

From the beginning "Bridge Scholarships", initiated by PAFF, was a joint undertaking of many partners. Now the scholarships are financed by the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, the Inter Cars Foundation, the Klemm Family Foundation, and by a coalition of local non-governmental organizations. The program is carried out with organizational help from the National Support Center for Agriculture (formerly the Agricultural Property Agency), and in cooperation with the Professor Bronisław Geremek Center Foundation. So far the Partners have provided nearly PLN 149 million for the program. More than 28,000 scholarships have been granted since the beginning of the program, including 19,000 for the first year of studies.

The "Diploma of Dreams" campaign, which objective is to support local non-governmental organizations in taking up similar scholarship initiatives aligned with the "Bridge Scholarships" concept, has resulted in engaging 200 NGOs in helping more than 7,000 students since 2006.

After several years "Bridge Scholarships" evolved into a complex scholarship system, offering much more than a stipend for the first year of studies. Today the scholarship holders who do well in their academic pursuits have the possibility of receiving assistance in successive

years of study. For the second year they may enter the Top Student competition; they may apply for corporate scholarships for their third and fourth years. Additionally, the program offers language scholarships, workshops preparing scholarship holders for entering the job market and challenges of the digitalized world, as well as cyclical Scientific Start conferences.

There are also summer internships in the USA organized in cooperation with the Embassy of the United States in Warsaw (the Polish-American Internship Initiative – PAII). From 2011 to 2019, 108 students completed internships in thirteen corporations, including: Boeing, Chevron North America, Citigroup, GE Hitachi Nuclear Energy, MoneyGram, Pittsburgh Glass Works LLC, Raytheon BBN Technologies, Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, Westinghouse Electric Company, and Discovery Inc. Additionally, thanks to cooperation with the Transatlantic Future Leaders Forum, 18 students completed their internships at the United States Congress.

In the past, one of the program segments offered scientific scholarships to the best performing young people from small towns and villages who studied economics at non-state universities and private business schools. Between 2001 and 2014 nearly 7,000 such scholarships were granted.

Surveys conducted among program graduates show that 98 percent believe their bridge scholarship significantly improved their financial standing during their studies. 90 percent of scholarship holders achieve good or very good academic results, 70 percent finish their studies on time, and only 5 percent discontinued their studies.

Under this program PAFF supports the Entrepreneurship Olympics, a joint initiative of the Foundation for the Promotion and Accreditation of Economic Education and the five largest Polish economic universities: the Warsaw School of Economics (SGH), and the Economic Universities in Katowice, Cracow, Poznań, and Wrocław. The aim of the initiative is to promote entrepreneurship

among high school students across Poland. The 2024 Olympics attracted almost 7,000 pupils from nearly 700 schools.

The Bridge Scholarships Program enables PAFF to support the development of scholarships and volunteer services carried out by the Good Network Foundation which runs the My Scholarship website (mojestypendium.pl) – the largest Polish website about scholarships.

“Rzeczpospolita,” “Forum Akademickie,” “Perspektywy” and the dlaStudenta.pl website provide media patronage for the program. ■

FACTS AND FIGURES



*28,000 “bridge” scholarships have been awarded since program launch, including **19,000 scholarships** for the first year of studies.*

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED

\$31,427,240

including \$1,550,133 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:

www.stypendia-pomostowe.pl

www.paii.pl

www.dobrasiec.org

PROGRAM MANAGERS:

The Educational Enterprise Foundation

The Good Network Foundation

(“My Scholarship” and “e-volunteering”)

THIRD AGE UNIVERSITIES (TAU)

The program, initiated in 2005, aims to promote educational actions that encourage older people to become more active, with particular emphasis placed on their social activity and intergenerational relations. The program is carried out mainly by supporting and promoting initiatives taken by seniors themselves, who use their potential, knowledge, experience, and time for the benefit of their own environment as well as local communities, and by supporting the Third Age Universities.

The “Seniors in Action” competition offers grants and training for people over 60 who wish to carry out social initiatives based on their own ideas, individually or in tandem with a younger person. The competition is addressed to active seniors enrolled in a Third Age University, as well as those cooperating with other organizations and institutions.

So far, 438 projects have been financed in the 15 editions of the “Seniors in Action” competition: inter-

-generational projects, projects that encourage older people to act for the benefit of their community, and projects promoting volunteer services by the seniors. The 16th edition is underway, with 19 projects being implemented.

To support Third Age Universities (TAU) the program offers training, workshops, and experience exchange during conferences for TAU representatives. In 2004–2012, the nationwide TAU meetings were held in Cracow,

Bydgoszcz, Słupsk, Płock, Warsaw, Nowy Sącz, and Katowice. Between 2011 and 2013, 14 regional TAU meetings were granted support. The program is also engaged in other events important to the TAU movement; the annual Third Age Forum, which was a part of the International Economic Forum in Krynica (now in Karpacz). National TAU Congresses are important events, to which PAFF is usually a partner.

Since 2013 representatives of Third Age Universities may participate in TAU for Local Communities workshops which encourage the formation of volunteer groups at the Universities as well as cooperation with local communities. Ten rounds of this project gathered 100 TAUs; the present, eleventh edition includes ten more.

2020 was the last year of the pilot program “Tandem. Mentoring 55+” focused on engaging older people in mentoring children and youth living in environments needing support. About a dozen mentors cooperated with their proteges to boost their self-esteem and social

competencies. The result was the publication “Tandem: How to Provide Inter-generational Mentoring,” a step-by-step compendium for institutions and organizations interested in such actions among children and teenagers (available for free on the website of the Program Manager). The partners of the pilot program were: the Elżbieta Sołtys Education Foundation and the “School with Passion” Kindergarten Complex in Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, as well as Joanna Radziwiłł’s Caring Wings Foundation in Warsaw.

Additionally, from 2005 to 2008 under the grant competition addressed directly to the Third Age Universities, 131 grants were awarded for projects improving the quality of TAU educational offers, including computer and Internet courses enabling Third Age Universities to reach a wider audience of senior citizens, as well as stimulating seniors’ involvement in activities for the benefit of their local communities, particularly through voluntary work. ■

FACTS AND FIGURES



457 intergenerational projects
stimulating seniors to act for the benefit
of their communities and promoting
their voluntary work have been
carried out under the program.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$6,836,672
including \$406.998 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
seniorzywaki.pl

PROGRAM MANAGER:
The Association of the Creative Initiatives „e”

FOSTERING RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

This is the newest undertaking of PAFF and is aimed at enhancing children’s and youth’s mental resilience. The objective of the program is to develop teachers’ and other educators’ competence to deal with young people who are depressed, have low motivation, experience loneliness and lack of self-esteem. The program is implemented in cooperation with the School with Class Foundation and the Education for Democracy Foundation.

“Fostering Resilience in Children and Youth” is based on experience gained in the implementation of other PAFF programs, in particular “The Relief Fund

for NGOs and Civic Initiatives” conducted from 2020 to 2023 as the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The effects of that undertaking have shown that the



140 schools, 400 teachers, and 30 NGOs, libraries, and culture centers from rural areas and small towns, as well as communities with limited educational opportunities were covered by first program actions in 2024.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED

\$524,836

including \$524.836 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
kursnaodpornosc.pl

PROGRAM MANAGERS:

The School with Class Foundation

The Education for Democracy Foundation

pandemic had a heavy impact on children's and young people's well-being which resulted in a sense of insecurity, depressed moods, low motivation, and difficulties in establishing relationships as well as getting involved in social activities.

The poor mental condition of Polish teenagers was confirmed by the results of the latest PISA study. Polish young people ranked far below the average in OECD countries as regards persistence, curiosity, readiness to cooperate, empathy, assertiveness, resistance to stress, and emotional control. UNICEF notes that 630,000 children in Poland need ongoing specialist support. Teachers, educators, parents and experts who participate in PAFF programs call not only for interventions but, primarily, for securing effective prevention in the form of educational programs that will enhance social skills, mental toughness, and the well-being of the youngest.

This new PAFF program offers a comprehensive approach to building children's and youth's mental resilience. Activities are addressed to teachers and implemented at schools as well as to people involved in the non-formal education that is provided by NGOs, libraries, and culture centers. Thanks to the program, people working with children and young people learn ways of building relationships within their peer groups, enhancing their self-esteem, self-assessment, or digital hygiene. They also

learn how to recognize symptoms of mood disorders in the youngest children and react in crisis situations.

The offer for schools consists of supporting teachers in developing students' social and emotional competence through building empowerment. The participants will have access to workshops, webinars and ongoing experts' assistance. That component of the program is based on the experience gained over many years in the School with Class Initiative implementation.

The offer for institutions of non-formal education covers online and on-site training sessions for people working with children and youth, as well as grants for projects implemented by the training participants to use their new skills in their everyday work.

An important component of the program is building the synergy of school and extra-school activities through establishing a network of cooperating schools, libraries and NGOs. It is also the objective of social campaigns aimed at building mental toughness of the youngest that will be carried out in local communities.

In 2024, the first program actions covered 140 schools, about 400 teachers, and 30 NGOs, libraries, and culture centers from rural areas and small towns, as well as communities with limited educational opportunities. ■

Development of Local Communities

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SUPPORT FOR NGOS

The purpose of the program is to support non-governmental organizations and community leaders in Poland, especially in small towns and villages, by providing them with information, guidance, and training. This improves the functioning of third-sector organizations and their quality of management which leads to more efficiency and effectiveness of social/civic undertakings.

The program operates along three paths.

The first, "Mutual Information Society" ("MIS@NGO") – is an information system for civil society organizations, the main component of which is the Non-governmental Organizations Portal ngo.pl – the largest Polish portal about civil society, recognized by almost 80% of NGOs in Poland. In 2023, 4.4 million users visited the portal, whose database currently contains information about 200,000 Polish NGOs. The system also has an Information Center with a free Infoline at 801-646-719 (more than 4,000 consultations annually), plus research papers and publications.

The second path, "EURO-NGO+", aims to increase NGO capacity for acquiring EU funds. This is the continuation of the 2003-2006 PAFF "EURO-NGO" program which helped Polish non-governmental organizations obtain knowledge about EU funds and raise their competencies, thus enabling them to apply for these grants with greater success. Both then and in subsequent years they received support in building partnerships, advocacy and participation in planning of EU structural funds, implementing individual programs, and monitoring distribution of funds earmarked for social initiatives. In this respect, the National Federation of Polish NGOs (OFOP) is responsible for information and advocacy.

The third path, "NGO Training", has two components. The first, "Financial Management for NGOs" (FIMANGO), consists of providing training, guidance, and publications to persons responsible for financial management in non-profit organizations, mostly those operating outside major metropolitan areas. In total, nearly 6,600 representatives of almost 4,450 organizations across Poland participated in this training in the years 2000–2024. Training sessions were provided by the Civil Society Development Foundation.

The second component, launched in 2013, is a comprehensive educational offer for NGO managers, consisting of the "PROMENGO" training program, the "Kursodrom" e-learning platform that has been used by more than 9,000 persons, and workshops in NGO management whose important part is the Fundraising Education Program addressed to people who are focused on obtaining funds for non-profit organizations. The Third Sector quarterly completes the offer. It is a scientific publication wholly dedicated to research and analysis of issues pertinent to the development of NGOs in Poland. This part is implemented by the Academy of Civic Organizations Foundation, created by PAFF.

For many years, PAFF co-organized the annual Polish meeting of rural organizations in Maróz, which was



***4 million users** visited the ngo.pl portal in 2024. Its database contains information on 200,000 Polish non-governmental organizations.*

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$17,538,213
including \$378,056 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
ngo.pl
www.eu.ngo.pl
kursodrom.pl

PROGRAM MANAGERS:
The Klon/Jawor Association
The Civil Society Development Foundation
The Academy of Civic Organizations Foundation

attended by several hundreds of representatives of organizations from various Polish regions. The present format of the initiative has been changed. It is now targeting village heads and cooperates with the Rural Development Foundation.

PAFF also supports regular “Research about the Condition of NGOs in Poland” carried out by the Klon/Jawor Association. ■

ACT LOCALLY

The purpose of this program, launched in 2000, is to support and activate local communities in rural areas and small towns through civic projects meant to encourage development and increase the quality of life, thus building social capital. The program offers support for active local communities whose members define their needs themselves and take collective action.

Grants are awarded in open grant competitions organized once a year at the local level by the network of Act Locally Centers (ALCs) which encompasses associations and foundations operating in localities with up to 50,000 people, covering areas whose size ranges from four rural communes to several counties. The ALC network is gradually growing. It began with 15 ALCs in 2004 and now includes 77 organizations in 652 communes. There are at least two Act Locally Centers in every Polish province. They cooperate with other non-governmental organizations as well as local authorities and entrepreneurs. New ALCs are appointed by the Competition Committee in an open recruitment procedure. The beneficiaries of local competitions are non-governmental organizations as well as informal citizen groups that may apply through public organizations and institutions (schools, cultural centers, libraries) in small towns and villages of less than 20,000 inhabitants.

So far more than 15,000 projects have engaged 7 million participants, involving over 260,000 volunteers.

Funded initiatives focus on culture and tradition, education, health, ecology, sports, creating new opportunities for personal development and spending free time, tourism, and improving the attractiveness of the region, as well as fighting social exclusion. Their common denominator is local activity, which enables the population to learn new skills, better organize themselves, and respond to emerging problems. Local competitions pave the way for implementing projects aligned with thematic pathways. The current edition outlined the following pathways: “Youth Acting Locally,” “Intercultural Dialog in Action” and the “Act Ecologically.” The last pathway was initiated in 2021, in cooperation with WWF Poland. The “Tell Me...” competition is organized for the managers of supported initiatives; it gives awards to the most

FACTS AND FIGURES



7 million participants, including 260,000 volunteers, have been involved in the implementation of 15,000 local projects. Local involvement has always been their common denominator.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$22,284,698
including \$1,384,982 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
dzialajlokalnie.pl

PROGRAM MANAGER:
The Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland

interesting forms of communicating and promoting the actions taken.

The quality of Act Locally Center work is improved through trainings, workshops, regional meetings, study tours, and webinars which enable the exchange of best practices, acquiring knowledge and competencies, thereby increasing cooperation within the ALC network. Act Locally Centers use their “Act Locally” experience to engage in other efforts of PAFF, such as “PAFF Local Partnerships,” where together with participants involved in different PAFF programs they execute social projects that meet the needs of their communities. “PAFF Leaders” is also a program where ALC representatives take on the role of both leaders and tutors. “Financial Management for NGOs” (FIMANGO) helps improve competencies in providing advisory on financial management to smaller, local organizations. FIMANGO operates as part of the “School of Local Advisors”.

For several years actions were also taken within the program to transfer the “Act Locally” experience to Ukraine and inspire Ukrainian non-governmental organizations

to create a network modelled after Act Locally Centers. As a result, the “Act Locally in Ukraine” action was set up and is carried out by the Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland in cooperation with the ISAR Ednannia Foundation in Ukraine.

One purpose of 2024 grants awarded in regular local competitions was dealing with the aftermath of the flood that swept across southwest Poland. The already existing “Anti-Crisis Support Fund” also provided several ALCs with support for local flood-affected NGOs.

As part of “Act Locally,” PAFF also participates in various undertakings that serve the development and promotion of social philanthropy. The Foundation supports the “Benefactor of the Year” competition and holds patronage over its “Local Partnership” category promoting the social activity of businesses which, together with Act Locally Centers, help introduce permanent changes in local communities. As part of the program, the Foundation also supports the “Charity Stars” competition organized by the Academy, which awards public figures for their charitable activities. ■

SECTOR 3.0

This program, operated since 2012, is a continuation of earlier actions implemented by PAFF to support the use of modern information and communication technologies in local development and civic activity. Its purpose is to broaden the knowledge and increase the skills of NGO activists and employees for effective ICT use in their daily work.

The program was preceded by an analysis conducted by the Shipyard Foundation, as well as consultations with Polish and international experts. Information was gathered and published about the advancement of non-governmental organizations in utilizing digital tools, including adequate knowledge and competencies of their staff.

Under the program, thematic training for NGOs was carried out showing examples of effective use of modern technologies in communication, marketing, and management. Some of the NGOs received grants to buy hardware and software as well as to carry out projects aimed at practical use of ICT in the third sector.

Local organizations have also been supported by a Mobile ICT Advisors’ Network. So far they have provided over 9,000 pieces of consultations; almost 15,000 NGO representatives from across Poland benefited from their help.

Mobile Advisors support was supplemented by a network of TechClubs. These cyclical meetings of experts, representatives of business, local governments, and academia helped share experience in applying modern technologies. They attracted more than 18,000 people.

Currently, the focus is mainly on delivering the latest knowledge that helps identify potential areas where NGOs can employ ICT. To this end, the Sector 3.0 blog showcases diverse technological solutions that aid in the digital transition of NGOs, while the elearning.sektor3-0.pl platform offers online courses. Over the last two years the program experts held numerous training sessions on AI use in NGOs operations. They were attended by representatives of almost all PAFF Program Managers.

Through the Sector 3.0 Innovation Fund the program offers funds and expert support for new ICT tools that can be used by non-profit organizations. The Fund channeled support to over 100 project teams and enabled creation of over twenty valuable applications, such as the TuDu e-volunteering portal, the “Patients for Patients” application for patients with chronic diseases, and the “Search: Induction Loop” database of locations and events where an induction loop is available for the hearing impaired to enable them to more fully participate in their social lives.

Annual international conferences, “Sector 3.0” Festivals,



9,000 people participated
in “Sector 3.0” Festivals
held in Warsaw
in the years 2012-2024.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED

\$5,495,901

including \$605,730 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
sektor3-0.pl

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Information Society Development Foundation

play an important role in the program. These events attract representatives from non-governmental organizations, business ICT experts, politicians, scientists, and foreign experts from the USA, the UK, South Korea, Israel, and India. They offer a platform to share information about modern trends in how to utilize ICTs for social/civic actions. More than 8,000 people participated in 13 rounds of the Sector 3.0 conference held in Warsaw in 2012-2022. Due to the pandemic, from 2020

to 2022 the Festival was held exclusively online. The 2024 hybrid event attracted more than 1,000 attendees.

For ten years now, the Sector 3.0 Award serves as a token of appreciation for Polish NGOs who make innovative use of ICTs in their daily operations for the purpose of fulfilling their mission. The 2024 Award went to the Center for Citizenship Education Foundation. ■

PAFF LEADERS

The objective of this program is to support the development of skills and qualifications of individuals working for the benefit of their local communities. This is achieved mainly through the tutorial method consisting of regular cooperation between an experienced tutor and a local leader.

The program is addressed to active participants of projects carried out within various programs of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation: “Act Locally,” “Equal Opportunities,” “English Teaching,” “Region in Transition” (RITA), “PAFF Local Partnerships”, and the Library Development Program.

The main part of the program is the 12-month leader-tutor cooperation and the training cycle adjusted to user needs and priorities consisting of planning their own development, team building, organization management, communication, engaging the community, and building a local partnership. Skills acquired during the program help leaders act for the benefit of local communities.

An important part of the program is the offer address-

sed to the graduates – the “Alumni” initiative – which provides an opportunity for cooperation and experience exchange. This initiative enables the participants to meet with well-known public figures, take part in workshops that respond to their needs, and access funds from graduate initiatives to carry out leader projects. Thanks to the newsletter subscription, the alumni regularly receive news about current program actions. The experience exchange between leaders is also possible during annual meetings and through the social media.

A special group of program participants and alumni are those who are active in local governments. In 2023, the Polish Parliament appointed Monika Horna-Cieślak (an alumna of the eighteenth round) as Commissioner for

Children's Rights. Two PAFF leaders secured mandates in the 2023 parliamentary elections: Iwona Karolewska (a fourteenth edition alumna) and Marcin Skonieczka (a second edition alumnus). In the 2024 local government elections a total of 164 PAFF leaders ran for office: 80 of them were elected mayors, members of provincial parliaments as well as town, municipality and rural community councils.

Since 2008 the PAFF Leaders study tours to the United States have been organized in cooperation with the US Embassy in Poland. Each year a group of about a dozen PAFF leaders and tutors participate in the tours.

In 2022 more than 100 alumni actively engaged in aiding Ukrainian refugees. In the very first days following the Russian aggression against Ukraine, 40 PAFF leaders visited the Polish-Ukrainian border to work with organizations coordinating support for Ukrainians fleeing from the war to neighboring Poland. Also, three NGOs, where PAFF leaders were active, received grants for actions

connected with coordinating the relocation of refugees in Poland and organizing the work of volunteers receiving refugees from Ukraine.

In 2023 the cooperation of four organizations – the Kościuszko Foundation, the Pogranicze Foundation, the Folkowisko Association, and Zbigniew Pełczyński School of Leaders Foundation – resulted in organizing a series of meetings for young Belorussian leaders. The program prepared young people for taking on leadership roles in their communities, as well as initiating and continuing international cooperation between Ukraine, Belarus, and Poland. Participants took part in workshops, webinars, and study visits to NGOs with experience in implementing cross-border projects.

The program's twenty editions that have been held to date have resulted in raising the qualifications of 935 local leaders from across Poland as well as creating their active nation-wide network, and educating 72 experts in employing the tutoring method. ■

FACTS AND FIGURES



935 local leaders from all over Poland improved their qualifications, and they have established an active nationwide network. 68 tutoring experts have been educated in employing the tutoring method.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$7,373,176
including \$579,015 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
programliderski.pl

PROGRAM MANAGER:
Zbigniew Pełczyński School for Leaders Foundation

PRO PUBLICO BONO

The “Pro Publico Bono” Competition for the Best Civic Initiative was initiated in 1999 by then Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek. From 2000 until 2014, the Polish-American Freedom Foundation funded the Competition awards.

The objective of the Competition was to support the development of civil society by annually selecting and promoting the most valuable and creative NGO activities – on a national, regional, and especially local community level. The Competition reviewed actions

taken in the fields of education, culture and national heritage, healthcare, social assistance and charity, environment and regional development, as well as social diplomacy and European integration.



350 local media journalists
attended training sessions organized
as part of the “Media Forum. Local
Development” project in 2021 and 2024.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$3,595,691
including \$90,677 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
gazetylokalne.pl
lokalnemedi.org.pl
www.kongresobywatelski.pl

PROGRAM MANAGERS:
The Local Press Association
The Media Forum Foundation
The Institute for Market Economics
The Pro Publico Bono Competition Foundation (2000-2014)

When considering an initiative submitted for the competition, the Competition Chapter (Jury), whose first honorary chairman was Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, took into account the social importance of the initiative, its innovativeness, its impact on development and competitiveness of local communities, as well as the effectiveness and transparency of how public funds were used. Additionally, the Chapter assessed the institutional stability of a given organization, its adherence to ethical methods, and the quality of cooperation with the public administration and other institutions.

In 2007 the Bolesław Wierzbiański Award for the editorial staff of local press was established and was funded by PAFF. Until 2011 the initiative was conducted by the Polish Journalists Association. At present, it is awarded by the Local Press Association. The 2024 Bolesław Wierzbiański Award went to the editorial staff of the Nowiny.pl portal.

In 2021, a new undertaking, “Media Forum. Local Development”, was launched, based on the experience gained within the competition for the Bolesław Wierzbiański Award. The objective of this project is to support the professional development of local journalists by improving their competencies through training sessions conducted by experienced journalists of local and national media along with other experts. Between 2021 and 2024, 350 local media journalists attended training sessions organized by the Media

Forum Foundation as part of the “Media Forum. Local Development” project.

As part of the “Pro Publico Bono” program, the Foundation also supports the Civic Congress, organized annually by the Institute for Market Economics. This event, held since 2005, is a unique method of engaging citizens in discussions about the directions of Poland’s development, the condition of society and the common good. The Congress is an open event which each time attracts nearly a thousand participants, including representatives of central and local administrations, non-governmental organizations, the academic milieu, business people, student organizations, and local community leaders. Additionally, the Congress offers an opportunity to present PAFF’s experience in activating local communities.

The 19th Civic Congress, held in hybrid form, took place in 2024 under the motto, „Time for responsibility – time to build your own strength!”. The Civic Congress offer is complete with interactive “Ideas for Poland” newsletters which provide a platform for discussion about issues pertinent to Poland’s national and regional development. Every week the newsletter, containing expert-authored texts, is sent out to subscribers via e-mail. ■

LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Library Development Program (LDP) has operated since 2008 to support public libraries across Poland in becoming modernized local points of access to information, culture and education, as well as of social activity. An important part of the program is to increase the competencies of librarians and strengthen the prestige of their profession.

To date 4,224 libraries in 1,335 communes (70% of the target group) received support under five rounds of the program. More than 12,500 librarians have joined LDP activities.

Until 2015 the program was carried out within the partnership of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. It was part of a broader initiative of the Gates Foundation, "Global Libraries," covering about a dozen countries. In Poland, the Information Society Development Foundation, established by PAFF in 2008, was the manager from the outset of the Library Development Program. The Gates Foundation entrusted PAFF with a \$31 million grant for the program.

3,808 public libraries from 1,256 communes with populations of up to 20,000 (nearly 60% of the target group) were involved in the program, recruited in three rounds between 2008 and 2015. 10,000 librarians received specialist support in the form of counseling and training, while libraries were equipped with nearly 8,000 pieces of hardware: computers, tablets, printers, multimedia projectors, and other devices. Additionally, libraries received software worth \$18 million provided free of charge by Microsoft. 450 libraries received small grants for expanding their offer aimed at local resident activation. Funds for organizing 1,000 study tours found their way to librarians, who also participated

in experience exchange forums such as the annual Library Congress.

The Library Development Program contributed to the emergence of many initiatives for strengthening the entire library system. LDP communication and advocacy efforts led to the establishment of the National Partnership for Library Development (consisting of more than 100 representatives of different backgrounds), 16 regional partnerships with provincial authorities aiming to promote public library modernization in areas with smaller populations, and local partnerships for library development in more than 300 communes.

In 2008 PAFF signed a cooperation agreement with the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, which initiated the multiannual "Library+" program carried out by the Polish Book Institute. The objectives of both initiatives were similar – the Foundation and the Ministry were shaping their activities in such a way as to reinforce and complement each other. Another memorandum was signed with the Ministry of Administration and Digitalization and the Orange company, where all public libraries in the country were provided with free Internet access from 2009 to 2015. There were also joint actions carried out with the National Library, provincial public libraries, the Association of Polish Librarians, and numerous non-governmental organizations.

FACTS AND FIGURES



4,224 libraries from across Poland benefited from the program offer. Improving librarian competencies and the prestige of their profession constituted an important component of the program.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$7,972,597
including \$846,247 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
biblioteki.org

PROGRAM MANAGER:
The Information Society Development Foundation

In 2012 the Information Society Development Foundation received the E-Inclusion Award for the Library Development Program from the European Commission in a competition that promotes best practices in using modern information and communication technologies and preventing digital exclusion.

Since 2016 libraries in rural areas and small towns have been further supported by PAFF funds through numerous training and e-learning courses for library employees and their local partners, grants for technological expansion of selected libraries, support in their networking and cooperation efforts aimed at benefiting the local community, as well as creation and development of innovation incubators based on library infrastructure. The LABiB initiative has also been developed: a network of librarian-innovators using the LABiB.pl social portal to popularize best practices in activities held at libraries.

In 2021–2024, the outreach of the fourth and fifth editions of the program again covered the existing library network as well as 413 new facilities based in villages and small towns with populations of up to 50,000 inhabitants. Participating libraries joined training sessions, received advisory, equipment, and numerous opportunities to exchange experiences.

The present program offer is addressed to the entire network of 4,224 facilities, who are welcome to seek assistance in, among other things, aiding the integration of Ukrainian refugees with local communities, delivering non-formal education on climate change and natural environment protection to residents under the “Library for Climate” component, as well as providing digital education combined with assistance in improving critical media literacy.

The program promotes a wide array of socially activating efforts, public consultations and actions aimed at involving the residents concerned in relevant issues. Libraries are flexible in their response to changing needs and emerging challenges.

Involving program participants in existing initiatives and networks ensures a higher sustainability of program outcomes. Among these networks is the LABiB Association, which brings together library directors who run support groups for other directors of nearby facilities. Another is the “Initiatives” Library Director Association, which is composed of library directors who advocate for librarians and develop leadership skills. ■

PAFF LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

The objective of the program is to initiate and develop cooperation among participants of various PAFF programs to promote establishing partnerships capable of implementing social projects important to entire local communities. The program uses the local community civic activation method to build common good on the basis of a social needs diagnosis.

Thanks to the diversified PAFF programmatic offer many local communities in Poland have carried out projects which have created opportunities for gaining experience and building resources that unleash civic energy. The “PAFF Local Partnerships” program offers participants of these projects the possibility of building joint partnership initiatives using the accumulated potential for work benefiting their local communities. This contributes to strengthening local social capital through a synergy of experiences and results of various initiatives. Partnerships primarily composed of participants of several PAFF programs, who constitute an Initiative Group within each coalition, are established. They are joined by local governments, businesses, the local media, as well as non-governmental organizations and institutions that have not previously participated in any PAFF programs. Organizations participating in one of the following PAFF programs can become partnership leaders: “Act Locally”, “English Teaching”,

“Equal Opportunities”, “The Learning Schools” (LES), “PAFF Leaders”, the Library Development Program, “Region in Transition” (RITA), “Seniors in Action”, and “Green Leader.” Many local residents and volunteers are engaged in the execution of the projects.

In the nine editions held since 2009, 83 PAFF Local Partnerships have been formed, including 19 partner start-ups, reaching 130 communes and engaging 1,200 partners.

Thanks to the partner projects it was possible to amend existing legal regulations and reduce air pollution in Żywiec, create a local citizen television channel in Grodzisk Mazowiecki, develop a public park in Biłgoraj, and regenerate a historical park in Drawsko Pomorskie. Dębica gained a powiat volunteer center, Płużnica – a “Co-Sharing Point,” which provides a resident-friendly and modern space of informal education. A “Local



83 PAFF Local Partnerships,
including **19 partnership start-ups,**
were set up over 9 rounds of the program.
They cover **130 communes**
and municipalities, and involve
1200 partners.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$3,834,745
including \$286,419 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
www.lokalnepartnerstwa.org.pl

PROGRAM MANAGER:
The Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland

Integration Center” now operates in Orneta, while Oborniki Śląskie and Łubiany have acquired educational spaces. Project outcomes also promote local products. A “Carp Trail” now runs through Barycz Valley, Warka offers an “Apple Route,” while Ćmielów cultivates its porcelain-making traditions. Podkarpacie now hosts a Network of Youth-friendly Places, Złotoryja gained a “Volcano” Activity Center which seeks to engage young people, while Niemce established a Youth Forest Guard, which helps keep the Kozłowieckie Forests clean and beautiful by promoting eco-friendly approaches. Niepołomice succeeded in integrating its residents by involving them in acting for the formerly shunned Niepołomice Primeval Forest. Gołdap banked on the region’s multiculturalism, Wojkowice established a Polish-Ukrainian business generator. The Dragacz and Mosina partnership focused on cultivating cultural and natural heritage, Nowy Tomyśl created its first “Library Garden.” Bircza opened an eco-museum. Efforts of the local residents and partners saved the first Polish locomotive factory, “Fablok” SA, from being forgotten, and made it a highlight of Chrzanów. Krotoszyn gave the neglected square near to its public library a new lease of life.

Since 2022, the partnerships completed 10 special projects for refugees from Ukraine. These projects consisted of organizing adaptation and integration meetings for Polish and Ukrainian families, therapy workshops for children and youth, Polish language courses, as well as legal and psychological support.

In 2024, the ninth program edition led to the emergence of six partnerships and two start-ups. These paved

the way for the “Green Oasis,” a Centre for Ecologically Active Youth in Starogard Gdański, the Youth Leadership Academy in Jabłonna, a youth zone in Kowary, and the Local Initiative Park in Kijewo Królewskie.

The program promotes the local community activation method developed together with the Shipyard Foundation, which has been showcased in two publications: “How to Build Common Good. A Guide for Local Actors” and “How to Build Local Partnerships.” The scientific publication entitled, “The Local Community Animation Method for the Common Good. Theory and Practice”, was published in 2021 and presents the conclusions reached by a team of University of Warsaw researchers led by Professor Anna Giza. The monograph confirmed that this method was effective and useful in practice, i.e. that it stimulated local communities, and that its effects responded to local residents’ needs and expectations.

Another program component – the Common Good Lab – is addressed to program alumni. The objective of this initiative is to popularize cooperation of local communities working for the common good, promoting methods of local communities’ animation and enhancing the sustainability of existing partnerships. The initiative offers expert support and access to a database of materials, as well as regular alumni gatherings, training sessions, and webinars. The most active participants form the Civic Activists’ Community, which works to improve the animation method and develop tools to mobilize local communities. They also support creating new partnerships in locations that have not yet been reached by the program. ■

GREEN LEADER

Launched in 2021, the program supports local leaders who want to gain knowledge and competencies in conducting actions aimed at protecting the environment in their local communities and dealing with climate change, as well as effectively obtaining EU and other funds for implementation of their initiatives.

Natural environment degradation and climate change harm all our lives. Thus, the challenge to mitigate them and introduce new, more sustainable ways of developing local communities has significantly increased. These are the assumptions of the “Green Leader” program launched by PAFF and successfully tested in a 2021 pilot version.

The program exploits experiences gained in the implementation of many local pro-ecological projects within PAFF’s and other NGOs’ activities in the past.

The initiative is addressed to local leaders in villages and towns of up to 50,000 residents (towns with populations of up to 150,000 in justified cases); particularly PAFF program participants, as well as other civic and local government leaders who believe it is important to protect the natural environment and address climate change. From 2021 to 2024, 212 participants from 74 communes across Poland joined the program.

The main part of the program involves training and consulting. Its participants – leaders and their teams – can follow one of the three thematic paths: waste management, local water retention and counteracting droughts,

or energy efficiency. They can also apply for a study tour grant – abroad or within Poland – that would enable them to establish cooperation with partners, acquire innovative solutions and, potentially, prepare ideas for joint projects. Through the program leaders learn how to solve an environmental problem important for their local community, and/or climate change mitigation and adaptation. They use these methods and tools to introduce change within the local community and apply for grants from the European Union and other funds for their own green projects.

An important component of the “Green Leader” program is “The Green Euro-NGO Advisors” network, the national information and advisory system on the rules and mechanisms of managing environment and climate protection funds, mainly those from the EU. The network supports NGO’s as well as local government partnership’s leaders in small towns and villages. The support is provided by specialized experts present in all Poland’s regions. At present, such support is delivered by 40 specialist advisors in each Polish region (2 experts per region). ■

FACTS AND FIGURES



*212 participants from
74 communes across Poland
joined the program in 2021 and 2024.*

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$842,339
including \$246,426 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
zielonylider.org

PROGRAM MANAGER:
The Sendzimir Foundation

Sharing the Polish Experiences in Transformation

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LANE KIRKLAND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The objective of this program, launched in 2000, is to share the Polish experiences in transformation and European integration with representatives of Eastern European countries, the South Caucasus, and Central Asia by offering them two-semester complementary courses at Polish universities. The program is currently addressed to candidates from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

In the course of their individual programs, the scholarship holders study selected aspects of economics and management, public administration and business, law, social and political sciences, journalism, NGO management or culture management. Starting from the 2023/24 academic year, the thematic scope of the scholarship was expanded to cover issues related to the recovery of war-stricken Ukrainian areas, e.g., urban planning, civil engineering, and forensic science.

The scholarship begins with a preparatory course, which aims to present and systematize knowledge about Poland's history and the current socio-political situation. Scholarship holders then go on to attend their individual programs at universities in either Warsaw, Cracow, Poznań, Wrocław, or Lublin, where they write semester and diploma papers under the tutelage of their academic supervisors. Integration and knowledge-sharing meetings are organized for the scholarship holders, as well as internships in public, non-governmental, and private institutions (e.g. the Supreme Court, the National Bank of Poland, or regional marshal offices). Participants are also welcome to take part in classes concerning the preparation and execution of civic projects and teamwork.

In 2016 the Kirkland Research Program was launched. This is a one-semester offer of research and scientific

internships for academics holding an established position in participating countries. Interns following this path write a scientific article under the supervision of their academic supervisor.

Each year, the program is attended by ca. 45 individuals. Over the years 2000-2024 the program was completed by 1,073 people from 13 countries (including 53 Kirkland Research scholarship holders): 571 from Ukraine, and 189 from Belarus, 71 from Georgia, 69 from Russia, 45 from Armenia, 33 from Kazakhstan, 25 from Moldova, 20 from Kyrgyzstan, 15 from Azerbaijan, 12 from Lithuania, 10 from Slovakia, 7 from Uzbekistan and 6 from Tajikistan.

The most popular faculties are economics and management, and law. Also, popular are social sciences, journalism, political sciences, and international relations. Academic staff, public institutions' representatives and experts have accounted for the largest number of professionals coming to Poland.

After the program's completion, the graduates keep in regular touch between themselves and with their Polish hosts through the bulletin, alumni reunions, and the kirkland.edu.pl website. The alumni conferences held every 4-5 years, help maintain alumni ties with Poland and with each other, as well as establishing new

FACTS AND FIGURES



*1,073 people from 13 countries have completed the Lane Kirkland Scholarship Program since 2000. Each year approximately **45 scholars** participate in the program.*

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$18.402,476
including \$758,433 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
kirkland.edu.pl

PROGRAM MANAGER:
The Leaders of Change Foundation

contacts. They also offer an opportunity to broaden alumni knowledge about Poland and the European Union, as well as to discuss possible directions of changes in countries of the region. Former scholarship holders are supported by the Coordinator of Post-Scholarship Projects, whose task is to maintain graduates' contacts with Poland and encourage them to undertake joint initiatives, including those within their national alumni associations.

From the very outbreak of the war in Ukraine, launched by Russia's aggression in February 2022, the program provides all Kirkland scholars currently staying in Poland with a broad informational and organizational support. Kirkland's scholars have also been offered assistance in bringing their families to Poland. The Program Team strove to meet all individual and collective needs reported by Ukraine-based alumni. Among others, the program sent medication, medical equipment, and food. In just two weeks, nearly PLN 100,000 from the Kirkland Program budget was redirected toward humanitarian aid and coordinating aid efforts in Ukraine.

The Leaders of Change Foundation, Manager of the program, worked together with Kirkland alumni to raise funds and in-kind donations. These efforts enabled the equipping of three ambulances, which were delivered to Ukraine by Kirkland alumni currently residing in Poland.

Many former Kirkland scholars play a pivotal role in Ukrainian public administration, local government units, academia, institutions of culture, NGOs, business, and media. For example, former Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine and Minister of Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories, Iryna Vereshchuk, studied at the National School of Public Administration in Warsaw from 2015 to 2016.

Between 2001 and 2013 the Kirkland Program was managed by the Polish-U.S. Fulbright Commission. In the following period leading up to 2016, the Education for Democracy Foundation took over managing the program.

Since 2017 some of the Kirkland scholarships have been financed from funding provided by the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange. ■

REGION IN TRANSITION (RITA)

The program, launched in 2000, is addressed to non-governmental organizations willing to share Poland's experience of social and economic transformations as well as EU integration with partners from Eastern European countries, the Southern Caucasus, and Central Asia.

The program's open grant competitions award grants to Polish non-governmental organizations for projects designed to share experiences, especially in building civil society, social assistance, transformation of local government, education reform, and free media. The average grant amount is PLN 60,000. About 30 grants are awarded annually.

As part of the program, organizations may also apply for small travel grants which can be earmarked for project consultation with a foreign partner before the application for a regular grant is submitted, for strengthening cooperation with a partner organization or evaluation of an implemented project. Under a special grant path, "RITA" program grants may be used for co-financing a larger project for which a given organization had been awarded a grant from other sources – Polish or foreign. Such projects must comply with objectives of the "RITA" program as well as geographic and thematic areas of its operations.

The main grant competition is announced twice a year. Applications may be submitted by mid-March and by mid-October. Applications for travel grants and subsidies for larger projects are accepted on an ongoing

basis until the funds earmarked for those activities are exhausted.

Starting from 2021, seasoned non-governmental organizations, i.e. managers of "RITA" projects, are welcome to apply for grants of up to PLN 100,000 under the "RITA – Partnership To Power" competition to continue their work.

Additionally, the program offers training opportunities and expert support to Polish NGOs and schools, as well as assistance in establishing contacts and developing cooperation with foreign partners. Every two years meetings of the "RITA" program grant recipients, "Ambassadors of Transition in the Region," are held.

Information exchange between organizations and civic leaders is facilitated by the www.civicportal.org social networking site. The portal is also an e-learning platform offering training to Polish and foreign NGOs.

Between 2000 and 2024, "RITA" provided support to 1,234 projects.

In the first days of March 2022, in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the immediate aid



1,234 projects designed to share Polish experiences, especially in building civil society, strengthening social activities, promoting local government transformation, reforming the educational system and free media, have been supported by “RITA” in the years 2000–2024.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED

\$18,598,795

including \$647,190 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
programrita.org

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Education for Democracy Foundation

efforts of Polish NGOs, “RITA” opened an ad-hoc “Ukrainian path” in its grant competition. Organizational and financial “RITA” resources that were available were re-directed to the new path. The “Ukrainian path” became

the beginning of a separate “Support for Ukraine” program, where a total of PLN 1.7 million was allocated to ad-hoc projects. ■

STUDY TOURS TO POLAND (STP)

Launched in 2004, the program is addressed to active university students and professionals from countries of Eastern Europe and other post-communist states. The objective of the program is to show participants the realities of Poland and the European Union, as well as develop and strengthen professional and personal contacts between young leaders from Eastern Europe and their Polish hosts.

University students are offered a study tour of a dozen or so days to Poland. Currently, the candidates eligible to participate are age 18–23, from Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine. They meet representatives of the Polish academic community, civic organizations, leaders of public life. They also participate in lectures, workshops, seminars, and cultural events. Students apply to the program individually. The tours are organized for mixed groups of about a dozen people coming from various countries. They are held twice a year, in the spring and the fall, and are managed by experienced Polish NGOs, selected in an open competition. Study tours for students are coordinated by the Borussia Foundation.

The offer for professionals is addressed to representatives of local governments, state administration, central state institutions, NGOs, media, education, and other professional groups from Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus, and Central Asia. The tours, aimed at sharing

Polish experiences in transformation and European integration, are held in cooperation with Polish NGOs as well as central and local administration bodies.

After the Maidan events of 2014, special emphasis in contacts with Ukraine has been placed on sharing experience with people involved in local government reform and activities related to integration of Ukraine with EU structures. From 2004 to 2024, study tours to Poland were held for 7,219 citizens of Ukraine, including 4,916 professionals and 2,203 students.

The recruitment of participants in study tours for professionals is preceded by a letter of intent sent to the “STP” program office in Warsaw by an interested institution and its partner organization from the countries of the region, or by a Polish NGO and other institutions.

Between 2004 and 2024, a total of 11,000 participants, including 4,000 university students and 7,500



11,000 participants,
both university students and experts
in different fields, took part in the study
tours to Poland between 2004 and 2024.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$8,862,995
including \$511,040 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
studytours.pl

PROGRAM MANAGER:
The Leaders of Change Foundation

professionals representing various environments took part in the study tours.

In 2022, after the Russian aggression in Ukraine had started, PAFF launched the “STP for Ukraine” initiative with a budget of PLN 900,000. Polish NGOs that had hosted student and professional leader groups in Poland, channeled material and financial aid through program alumni to people affected by the war. Aid reached most of Ukraine’s 24 oblasts, including the city and oblast of Kyiv, as well as the oblasts of Lviv, Ternopil, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Sumy, and Luhansk.

Under the “Study Tours to Poland” program, the Foundation is involved in the Warsaw Euro-Atlantic Summer Academy – WEASA – a joint initiative of PAFF, the German Marshall Fund of the United States and the College of Europe.

The Academy offer involves two weeks of classes, based at the Natolin campus, and is addressed to experts from

the EU Eastern Partnership countries: analysts, political and government advisors, think tank and NGO staff, civil servants, and journalists. Over the first several years, the thematic scope of the Academy covered political transformation, European integration, and transatlantic relations. Since 2017, WEASA’s main subjects have been digital challenges, cybersecurity in particular. “Euro-Atlantic Relations and Integration in Times of Crisis” was the title adopted for the twelfth WEASA round in 2024. Poland’s experiences in joining NATO and the UE were an important item on the agenda, owing to the 25th and 20th anniversaries respectively, of Poland’s accession to these organizations.

From 2013 to 2024, the twelve WEASA editions attracted 522 people from Eastern Partnership countries and (since 2017) the Western Balkans, including: 50 participants from Armenia, 38 from Azerbaijan, 47 from Belarus, 92 from Georgia, 43 from Moldova, and 143 from Ukraine. ■

SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

This special grant program was launched by PAFF in response to the war in Ukraine. It is aimed at assisting Polish non-governmental organizations which provide aid to civilians in Ukraine and refugees fleeing to Poland from the war. To date, PAFF has allocated more than PLN 11 million to the program, which enabled it to co-finance almost 217 projects.

Priority has been given to those organizations that have well-established cooperation with their partners in Ukraine, as well as those operating in Polish villages and small towns where Ukrainian war escapees were

arriving and staying. Funding is also available for coordinating Polish NGOs’ activities for Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees – including cooperation with other Polish institutions and communities.



PLN 11 million to support the activities of Polish activities of Polish NGOs carried out in cooperation with their partners in Ukraine, as well as support activities of NGOs in Poland that are aimed at taking care of refugees from Ukraine.

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$3,089,001
including \$610,163 in 2024.

MORE INFORMATION AT:
fed.org.pl/wspieramy-ukraine

PROGRAM MANAGER:
The Education for Democracy Foundation

Under open grant competitions, “Support for Ukraine” provides funding for projects which provide Ukrainian children and youth with care and education during their stay in Poland, as well as support for those staying in Ukraine. This includes delivering legal, civic, professional and psychological aid to Ukrainian refugees in Poland, along with assistance in accessing public services. The projects may also relate to preventing acts of discrimination and hostility against Ukrainian refugees, counteracting disinformation, and providing reliable information about the Ukrainian refugee community in Poland and the situation in Ukraine.

„Support for Ukraine” builds on a special initiative that was launched as part of the “RITA” program. At the beginning of March 2022, in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, “RITA” opened an ad-hoc “Ukrainian pathway” in its grant competition. The organizational and financial RITA resources available at the time were redirected to the new path. Once the “Support for Ukraine” separate program was established, the “Ukrainian path” became part of it.

In March 2022, 422 Polish NGOs presented their initiatives in the competition for grants for intervention projects. The Grant Committee selected 59 projects: 44 implemented in 14 Polish provinces, and 15 in Ukraine. Those projects were aimed at protecting the life and health of the civilian population in Ukraine.

Under the subsequent five rounds of grant competitions held from the fall of 2022 to the spring of 2024,

132 grants were awarded for projects, mainly those supporting Ukrainian children and young people both in Poland and Ukraine. The aid focused on improving their access to school and non-school education, as well as psychological, legal, and language support. Information activities, legal consulting, as well as campaign of counteracting discrimination and disinformation on Ukrainian refugee communities in Poland and events in Ukraine were also co-financed.

The program’s direct support benefitted almost 97,000 refugees staying in Poland, about half of which were children and young people under 18, as well as almost 160,000 people in Ukraine, including over 34,000 children and young people. More than 70,000 people received humanitarian aid, 14,000 got psychological support, and 15,000 – legal and citizen advice. The campaign aimed at counteracting disinformation about refugees from Ukraine reached over 220,000 people in Poland.

Alongside “Support for Ukraine,” Program Managers raised more than PLN 30 million for several domestic PAFF programs from such foreign organizations as Save the Children and PLAN International. These funds were used to assist Ukrainian refugees in Poland, chiefly children and youth integration, through the Library Development Program, “Learning Schools”, “School with Class”, and “Act Locally”. ■

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND ANALYSES (MEVA)

“MEVA” is an expert-research undertaking initiated in 2005. The primary purpose is to carry out regular analytic research in order to maximize the impact and effectiveness of PAFF programs. The methods developed under “MEVA” and the results of its analyses are also used by other NGOs to pursue their activities.

The analytical work aids in determining the extent to which the goals defined in PAFF programs and activities, as well as achieved results, meet the existing needs and are capable of resolving the problems addressed, especially with regard to local communities, equal education opportunities and overall education quality improvement.

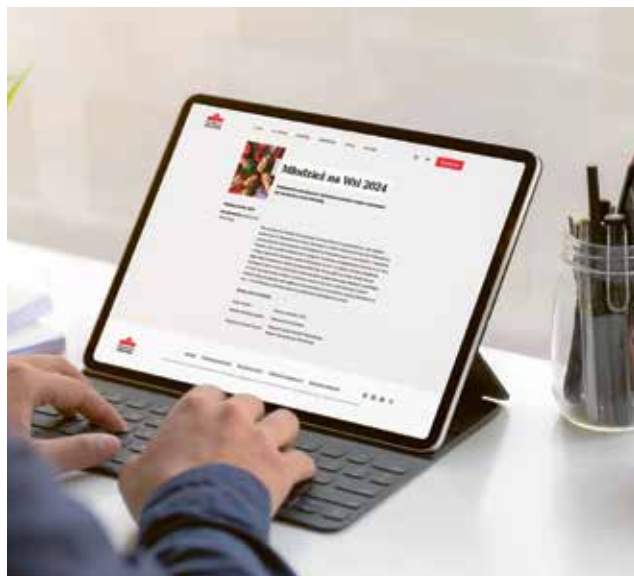
For example the results of evaluation studies of programs, such as „Act Locally,” „Third Age Universities,” or PAFF and UW School of Education, helped the Foundation both to determine future program initiatives and modify existing ones. One of the tasks of „MEVA” is to monitor completed PAFF projects in terms of the durability of their outcomes.

PAFF’s potential actions are evaluated in the context of existing and anticipated social needs. To that end selected social groups and communities are studied – for example village youth, librarians, or NGO employees – and new initiatives are tested. An example is the study on key trends influencing social activities in villages and small towns and their impact on the role of a local leader, carried out in 2019 under the “PAFF Leaders” program. Another example is the analysis of the Library Development Program’s impact on its participants, which compared program libraries with the libraries and communities that did not participate in the program.

In 2024, a qualitative research “Rural Youth 2024” on the behaviors, attitudes and factors influencing the social activity of young people living in towns and villages within municipalities of up to 20,000 inhabitants was carried out.

Between 2022 and 2023, some analyses and evaluations (including „Act Locally” and the Library Development Program) were aimed at identifying the problems faced by NGOs and local institutions due to the influx of refugees from Ukraine, so as to adjust their actions. As in previous years, MEVA analyses and studies provided the basis for modifying programs and adjusting them to the changing conditions – just as during the pandemic. An analysis was also carried out to assess the possibilities for PAFF and cooperating institutions to join local community educational and animation activities aimed at protecting the environment and climate. These led to the creation of the “Green Leader” program.

As part of the “MEVA” program, mutually complementing and strengthening elements of PAFF programs are analyzed in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of the Foundation’s activities overall. Among the projects serving that goal is the “Squared Evaluation” initiative helping foster evaluation culture among the organizations closely cooperating with PAFF, part of which the “Evaluation – How do You Carry It out?”



*In 2024, a qualitative research “**Rural Youth 2024**” on the behaviors, attitudes and factors influencing the social activity of young people living in towns and villages within municipalities of up to 20,000 inhabitants was carried out.*

THE FOUNDATION
HAS DISBURSED
\$2,955,454
including \$125,717 in 2024.

guide was prepared. Cyclical seminars about evaluation research are also being held. Special among these is the "Impact on Social Capital in PAFF Communities" project (the so-called „BOX") that helped create and test a set of methods and research techniques enabling the determination of changes in the level of social capital resulting from the impact of Foundation programs on local communities.

Through „MEVA," PAFF supports also the „Shipyard" Foundation, which it co-founded. At the same time, the „Shipyard" Foundation is the manager of a significant part of the "MEVA" program itself. ■

People, Projects, Initiatives

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ENGLISH TEACHING

20TH JUBILEE "ENGLISH TEACHING MARKET" MEETING WITH MAREK KAMIŃSKI

For twenty years now, the Polish nationwide "English Teaching Market" educational meetings for English teachers from small towns and rural areas have been contributing to the development of a cooperation network. The 2024 jubilee gathered more than 300 teachers, educators and civic leaders from all over Poland.

The event focused on key educational issues, such as working with pupils with special educational needs, in-class communication, and creativity in the teaching process.

Marek Kamiński, a famous traveler and life philosopher, was a highlight of the jubilee agenda. He shared experiences from his countless trips, e.g. the successful expeditions to both Earth's poles. In his speech, Marek Kamiński stressed how important it was to overcome one's personal limits and approach the world with an open mind. "When you get to the verge of a cliff, you can fall, but you can also see so much more," he said. Event participants found true inspiration in Marek Kamiński's story about the English language and how it opened doors to international opportunities.

Other outstanding speakers also addressed the jubilee audience, i.a. Paul Jenkins (the Psychology of Positivity), Jen MacArthur – representative of the U.S. Embassy

(Reading Pictures: Treating Images as Text to Promote Critical Thinking), and Toni Bourgea (Team Work). Anita Rucioch-Gołek, Polish teacher and winner of the Irena Sendlerowa "Repairing the World" Award, demonstrated how literature can foster empathy in pupils and unleash their imagination. Joanna Kowalczyk, PhD, language education expert, presented modern methods for working with students with special educational needs. She provided hands-on tips for participants to employ in their daily practice. A psychologist and trainer, Adam Jankowski, discussed effective in-class strategies for motivating pupils and building relationships.

"English Teaching Market is not just about interesting and inspiring workshops, but mostly about meeting teachers like me – from small rural schools. Our meet-ups, chats, how we spend time together and exchange information is just as valuable to me as participating in training," summed up one of the teachers.



*When you get to the verge
of a cliff, you can fall, but you
can also see so much more.*

Marek Kamiński
traveler and life philosopher



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

READY FOR THE FUTURE: (DIS)EMPOWERED

The debate entitled “Ready for the Future: (Dis)empowered”, was held in September 2024 under the patronage of Commissioner for Children’s Rights, Monika Horna-Cieślak, as part of a seminar cycle organized by the “Equal Opportunities” program to discuss present challenges faced by young people. Gonic.pl assumed media patronage over the debate.

The event brought together speakers and participants to discuss empowering the younger generation and instilling a sense of agency in young people.

The list of keynote speakers included Monika Horna-Cieślak, Anna Lewandowska, and Prof. Marcin Matczak. Janusz Schwertner, Editor-in-Chief of the Gonic.pl portal, assumed the role of moderator.

The debate covered various limitations which adult environments impose on young people, stifling their initiative, creativity and sense of responsibility for their actions.

In her address, Commissioner Horna-Cieślak emphasized that “children have a voice, and that voice is very important: that voice is authentic. We are still living in a culture which questions the agency of young people.

We adults are afraid to empower young people because to us it may mean losing a bit of our power”.

When discussing support for young people, Anna Lewandowska pointed to the need for letting young people make mistakes and learning from them, using failure as a springboard for skill development. Prof. Matczak called for a mindset change in education. He argued that schools should inspire and foster development, not just convey knowledge.

Other issues raised involved social pressure, excessive control and the absence of a space where young people can take action on their own. Event participants received practical recommendations on how to support young people in tapping into their own potential along with building self-confidence.



We are still living in a culture which questions the agency of young people. We adults are afraid to empower young people because to us it may mean losing a bit of our power.

Monika Horna-Cieślak
Commissioner for Children's Rights,
PAFF Leader



LEARNING SCHOOLS (LES)

DR. IGOR BYKOWSKI, FROM TEACHER TO LEADER

The inspiring journey of Igor Bykowski demonstrates how the “Learning Schools” (LES) program supports the development of educational leaders in Poland. His career – from teacher to Chief Education Officer for the Wielkopolska Region – illustrates how purposeful leadership and openness to change can improve education quality.

Igor Bykowski embarked on his educational journey in 2012 as a teacher of Polish, history and ethics, as well as school counselor. He expanded his skills at the Post-graduate Studies for Educational Leaders at Collegium Civitas, a course offered as part of the “LES” program. In 2023, when he was serving as headmaster of the School and Preschool Complex in Stryków, his school joined “Comprehensive School Development”, a flagship “LES” initiative.

Introducing formative assessment and an integrated approach to learning initiated change at his school. “The ‘LES’ program gave us a new perspective on teaching. Partner relations between teachers and pupils became key, as they boosted internal motivation in children”, Dr. Bykowski underlined.

In 2024 Igor Bykowski was appointed Chief Education Officer for the Wielkopolska Region. His priorities are

aligned with “LES’s” objectives: promoting formative assessment, developing cooperation in schools, and supporting the autonomy of children and teachers. “Education is not only about exam results. Every pupil has challenges of their own to cope with, their own Mount Everest to climb”, he explained.

The outcomes of “LES” participation are visible in how individual schools provide education, as well as across the entire education system. Schools supported by “LES” focus on perfecting their teaching methods, monitor pupil outcomes, and build a culture of cooperation. Thanks to leaders like Dr. Bykowski, Poland’s education is getting better at preparing young people for the challenges of the modern world. Since inception, the “LES” program has provided support to more than 12,000 schools and 200,000 teachers. “LES” bolsters schooling in its entirety by introducing real and lasting changes.



The “LES” program gave us a new perspective on teaching. Partner relations between teachers and pupils became key, as they boosted internal motivation in children.

Dr. Igor Bykowski



PAFF AND UW SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

CAN THE PAFF AND UW SCHOOL OF EDUCATION INSPIRE UKRAINE?

Much suggests that can be the case. All thanks to a week-long study visit of representatives of Ukrainian academia. Academics and education experts from research centers relocated from war zones, Luhansk, Donetsk, and Berdiansk, participated in the visit.

One of the visit initiators was Prof. Lillia Hrynevich, Ukrainian Minister of Education and Science from 2016 to 2019, an education activist, co-initiator of Ukraine's education reform, and alumna of the Kirkland Program of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, currently Vice Rector of the Karazin Kharkiv National University.

"The aim of the visit was to immerse our guests in Poland's education system and take a closer look at how we prepare future teachers at the School of Education. We planned very diverse activities, ranging from observation to active task performance. I hope we have succeeded in drafting a concept for educating teaching staff in Ukraine", explained Magdalena Swat-Pawlicka, School of Education Program Director.

For five days, the visitors observed how the School of Education is organized and how SE classes are held. They took part in workshops on teaching methodologies for individual school subjects, and learned about the assumptions behind integration seminars. The guests

also visited schools of practice and a Ukrainian school in Warsaw. They listened to presentations on the results of surveys concerning Ukrainian pupils in the Polish education system.

"We are very grateful for this opportunity. This experience was very interesting to us. We've learned many new methods for working with children and future teachers. We were most impressed by the curriculum of the School of Education, its sustainability, and the whole system of preparing teachers for service. We would like to draw from your experiences along with offering future teachers a shorter education program. We were greatly impressed by your programs for mentors, the network of schools of practice, and the fact that students weren't weighed down by theory but instantly proceeded to practical application during their internships. You are getting great things done here", said Olha Vyhovska, Vice Director of the Teacher's Academy of the Vasyl Karazin Kharkiv National University.



We were most impressed by the curriculum of the School of Education, its sustainability, and the whole system of preparing teachers for service.

Olha Vyhovska

Vice Director of the Teacher's Academy of the Vasyl Karazin Kharkiv National University.



PROJECTOR – STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

SCIENTIFIC PICNIC WITH
“PROJECTOR” IN KURYŁÓWKA

“PROJECTOR” Scientific Picnics are an initiative aimed at sparking an interest in sciences in children and youth from rural areas and small towns. Interactive workshops organized by student-volunteers give participants the chance to conduct experiments and discover the spectacular secrets of science.

The initiative, addressed primarily to classes 4 to 8, offers a variety of workshops on robotics, forensics, and financial and environmental literacy. Apart from inspiring young people to take up science, each such event promotes cooperation and develops social skills in the young people and volunteers involved.

“We show children that science is fascinating. For one day, traditional lessons give way to captivating workshops. Student-volunteers inspire younger learners to unravel the world of science. Children have an opportunity to learn about the mysteries of each scientific area and find their passion”, explained Kamil Wrzos, Director of the “PROJECTOR” program.

The Scientific Picnic, which took place in March 2024 at the Franciszek Kycia Primary School in Kuryłówka (the Podkarpackie Region), attracted 50 volunteers. They

organized workshops on eight branches of science and technology, including mathematics, spatial construction, aviation, and first aid. Children were free to actively participate in the activities, which proved that science can be an exciting adventure and can open doors to many interesting professions.

Workshops were held by students from the Rzeszów University of Technology and the University of Rzeszów. Volunteers represented the “ROBO” Automation and Robotics Technicians Scientific Group, the First Aid Student Scientific Group, and a number of other organizations.

The joint efforts of everyone involved made the Scientific Picnic a unique event which unleashed creativity and a passion for knowledge in the young residents of Kuryłówka.



Student-volunteers inspire younger learners to unravel the world of science. Children get a chance to learn about the mysteries of each scientific area and find their passion.

Kamil Wrzos

Director of the “PROJECTOR” program



BRIDGE SCHOLARSHIPS

INTERNSHIP AT THE U.S. CONGRESS. THE CASE OF ZBIGNIEW STALMACH

“My 2024 internship at the U.S. Congress, which I completed under the Transatlantic Future Leaders Forum Program, was a gamechanger in my life”, declared Zbigniew Stalmach, a Bridge Scholarships participant and law graduate of the Cracow University of Economics.

After completing a multi-stage recruitment process, Zbigniew was delegated to work with the Human Rights Committee by its Chair, Congressman Chris Smith, who has been representing the Fourth District of the state of New Jersey for 40 years.

Zbigniew said the following about his work: “I organized events, starting from planning the logistics, through promoting a given initiative and running the website, to coordinating the whole event. I was also responsible for drafting Congressman Smith’s speeches and proposed legislative amendments after congressional hearings. What I found most rewarding, however, was being invited to a few ‘behind-closed-doors’ meetings with only the Congressman, his chief of staff and high-level stakeholders”.

Zbigniew not only worked on the Hill but also participated in meetings organized as part of the Transatlantic

Leaders Forum Program with private-sector experts, representatives of international organizations, and a former U.S. Ambassador to Poland. He has fond memories of numerous trips, including an exciting visit to New York and a get-away to Miami Beach.

“When I heard about internships at the U.S. Congress, they became not just my professional goal, but also my dream. The last two months I spent in Washington were a great honor for me. The experience I gained shaped my cultural and professional awareness. I am certain that this unique time on Capitol Hill will impact my future and will remain etched in my memory as an incredible adventure. I wholeheartedly recommend these internships to my Colleagues participating in the Bridge Scholarships Program”, said Zbigniew.



The experience I gained shaped my cultural and professional awareness. I am certain that this unique time on Capitol Hill will impact my future and will remain etched in my memory as an incredible adventure.

Zbigniew Stalmach



THIRD AGE UNIVERSITIES (TAU)

“LANGUAGE PAIRS – CULTURE IN THE CITY”: BRINGING GENERATIONS AND CULTURES TOGETHER IN GDAŃSK

How did Gdańsk use the power of language and culture to become a space for intergenerational and intercultural dialog? Here’s the story of a unique project which changed the lives of its participants.

In 2024 the NOVA Foundation in Gdańsk, in cooperation with social animators Krystyna Woźniczka and Joanna Leszczyńska, initiated activities in the “Language Pairs – Culture in the City” social project. The project received support from the “Seniors in Action” competition. This initiative helped Polish seniors and Ukrainian war refugees discover the charm of the Polish language and the culture of Gdańsk together.

Twelve Polish-Ukrainian language pairs not only chatted away in Polish but also took part in cultural outings, such as theater plays, philharmonic concerts, and museum visits. These experiences laid the groundwork for lasting friendships between the participants.

Project animator Krystyna Woźniczka emphasized that: “It fills me with joy to see a change in older people after these activities. We need each other. They need me, and I need them”. A Chełm District Councilor Joanna Leszczyńska added: “It was our priority to make people

from Ukraine part of our community. Culture and shared conversations turned out to be the perfect combination.”

The finale of the project saw the publication of a guide entitled “Following Polish-Ukrainian Pairs. Gdańsk: A Very Cultured Guide”, which is made up of the participants’ memories and reflections, and a subjective description of Gdańsk’s places of culture. It is a symbol of joint experiences and an inspiration for others.

The project helped Ukrainian refugees learn Polish and become part of the local community. Senior citizens found purpose and satisfaction in volunteering. The relations that were forged may well survive many years.

“Language Pairs – Culture in the City” is an example of how local initiatives can bring generations together, overcome cultural barriers, and build lasting social bonds.



It was our priority to make people from Ukraine part of our community. Culture and shared conversations turned out to be the perfect combination.

Joanna Leszczyńska
Councilor of Chełm District in Gdańsk



FOSTERING RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

BUILDING RESILIENCE AT SCHOOLS. FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

In October 2024 Warsaw hosted “Caring for pupils, Caring for oneself. From theory to the practice of building resilience at schools”, a conference which inaugurated the new edition of the “School with Class” program. “School with Class” is currently run as part of the newest PAFF initiative, “Fostering Resilience in Children and Youth”, managed in cooperation with the School with Class Foundation and the Education for Democracy Foundation. The meeting attracted more than 100 teachers.

“We should speak cautiously about the mental health crisis of young people and not limit the debate on mental health to interventions only”, said Paulina Piechna-Więckiewicz, Undersecretary of State at the Polish Ministry of National Education, at the conference. In her address, Madam Undersecretary placed particular emphasis on preventive action. Marianna Hajdukiewicz, PAFF Program Director, described “School with Class” as an initiative which for over 20 years has been accompanying schools and has been responding to the current needs of learners and teachers. “It offers support where it is needed most, so we are confident that it will effectively bolster the mental resilience of the youngest”, she noted.

Participants discussed mental health of schoolchildren and the necessary measures to support their development. “Building mental resilience among young people

is crucial and requires the implementation of long-term strategies that support not only pupils but also teachers. We want to help teachers present ideas for specific actions and offer them assistance in implementation. Today’s meeting is the first step toward building a support network”, explained Agata Łuczyńska, President of the “School with Class” Foundation.

The following speakers addressed conference participants: Alicja Pacewicz, initiator of the “School with Class” campaign and Chair of the School with Class Foundation Board; Prof. Jacek Pyżalski of Adam Mickiewicz University; a psychologist and SWPS lecturer Magdalena Śniegulska, PhD; Marta Badowska, Principal of Elementary School No. 49 in Gdańsk; and psychologist Tomasz Kuźmich, lecturer at SWPS and the School of Education of PAFF and UW.



*We want to help teachers
present ideas of specific
actions and offer them
assistance in implementation.*

Agata Łuczyńska
President of the School
with Class Foundation



ACT LOCALLY

ACT LOCALLY CENTERS AMID STRUGGLE WITH FLOOD AFTERMATH

In the fall of 2024, Lower Silesia was struggling to cope with the tragic aftermath of the floods that hit the region. Devastating flooding wreaked havoc across the region.

Numerous relief campaigns were promptly initiated thanks to two factors: the immediate reaction of Act Locally Centers, and their sound knowledge of the needs of local residents. ALCs organized efforts ranging from donation drives and fund-raisers to volunteer coordination. Many years of ALC engagement and their well-established position in the local communities facilitated an effective response to flood victims' needs, and enabled delivering the necessary aid at the most difficult of times.

The Anti-Crisis Support Fund, launched under the "Act Locally" program, channeled PLN 126,000 to local NGOs suffering from the aftermath of the floods. Aid was distributed through Act Locally Centers, which enabled the purchase of power generators, driers, heaters, and antifungals. Apart from ad-hoc assistance, psychological support was also provided to local residents. Children and youth whose schools had been washed away were provided with shelters.

These Act Locally Centers benefited from the aid: "The Spirit of the Mountains" Partnership LAG, the Śnieżnik Mountains Local Fund, the Kłodzko Local Fund, and the "Stobrawa Valley" Association LAG.

Four Act Locally Centers – from Bystrzyca Kłodzka, Kłodzko, Kowary, Niemodlin – which cover the worst-hit 20 municipalities, launched donation drives for flood victims.

"The Act Locally Centers form a community with a great capacity to help. Recent experiences proved the value of cooperation between organizations. In the face of a crisis, the network is capable of redirecting support to whatever region is in need", said Paweł Łukasiak, President of the Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland.



Recent experiences proved the value of cooperation between organizations. In the face of a crisis, the network is capable of redirecting support to whatever region is in need.

Paweł Łukasiak
President of the Academy
for the Development
of Philanthropy in Poland



SECTOR 3.0

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

The non-profit organization sector increasingly employs cutting-edge technological solutions, including artificial intelligence (AI). In 2024 the “Sector 3.0” program launched a pilot educational initiative which trained nearly 50 civic society organization representatives. Participants not only improved their digital skills but also tested AI on practical examples of their CSO’s operations.

The main objective of the training was to demonstrate how CSOs can use AI to ramp up their effectiveness and automate processes. As “Sector 3.0” Program Director Dawid Szarański, PhD, underscored, this initiative implemented jointly by DELab UW, Campus AI and Google helped participants gain experience and prepare recommendations, which were summed up in a short publication, “Artificial intelligence in the operations of civil society organizations. Conclusions and recommendations” that is available in a free e-book. The publication opens for a discussion of the future and acceptance of technological developments in the third sector, as well as individual accountability for the process of adapting AI to social activity.

The e-book contains conclusions from analyses of the current application of AI in CSOs, points to key areas of technology use, and provides practical recommen-

dations on AI implementation in CSOs. The publication also offers expert recommendations and additional educational materials. The e-book may serve as a signpost which opens up new perspectives, but requires an individual approach.

Representatives of participating organizations had different professional experiences and were active in various areas, which catered for a broad overview of the possibilities and challenges related to AI implementation.

Prof. Katarzyna Śledziewska of the University of Warsaw (UW) and Managing Director of DELab UW, argued that education and openness technological changes were key in AI implementation. “Effective AI use is determined mainly by our capacity for life-long learning and adaptation”, she said.



Effective AI use is determined mainly by our capacity for life-long learning and adaptation.

Prof. Katarzyna Śledziewska
of the University of Warsaw (UW)
and Managing Director of DELab UW



PAFF LEADERS

DOMINIKA PIOTROWSKA – LEADER
OF CHANGE IN GOLUB-DOBRYŹYŃ

PAFF Leader Dominika Piotrowska, incumbent Mayor of Golub-Dobrzyń, is an example of an activist devoted to her local community.

The “PAFF Leaders” program alumna started her adventure with local leadership by returning to her hometown after graduating from a Bydgoszcz university. Together with her friends, she established the Factory of Culture Association, which completed numerous community projects, from painting murals to organizing concerts and charity campaigns; she paired her passion for action with the knowledge acquired at the “Leadership 101” workshops. However, her development witnessed a real breakthrough when she joined the “PAFF Leaders” program.

To Dominika, the key element of the program was the possibility of working in a safe space, where failures were starting points for learning. “I understood that there were no failures, only experience gathering. I met people who, like me, were coping with challenges, and I could draw from their knowledge and energy”, she added. Regular tutoring sessions provided by the program helped Dominika clarify her goals and manage tasks more efficiently.

In May 2024, Dominika assumed the role of Mayor as one of the precious few women-leaders in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Region. She emphasized that her roles – leader, mother, wife, and mayor – are a real balancing act and entail a lot of responsibility. Today, she smoothly manages a team and introduces changes that will improve the quality of life of Golub-Dobrzyń residents.

“Serving as mayor means I need to constantly introduce changes. These changes need to be well-thought-out, and they require courage. The “PAFF Leaders” program boosted my self-confidence and equipped me with practical tools that I use to this day”, said PAFF Leader.

“I learn how to be a better leader every day. To me, leadership is about knowing how to motivate your team and set goals together to develop our town and improve the quality of life of local communities. The ‘PAFF Leaders’ program gave me the courage, self-confidence, and tools to tackle the challenges that come with the role”, she summed up.



The “PAFF Leaders” program boosted my self-confidence and equipped me with practical tools that I use to this day.

Dominika Piotrowska
Mayor of Golub-Dobrzyń, PAFF Leader



PAFF LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

NEW PAFF LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS
JOIN THE PROGRAM

For nearly 15 years, the “PAFF Local Partnerships” program has been promoting cross-sectoral cooperation for the common good in local communities. In 2024, six new partnerships and two partner start-ups joined the existing several dozen coalitions.

At the inauguration PAFF Program Director Joanna Lempart underscored the importance of cooperation and experience exchange. “I congratulate all the initiative groups involved. It is these partnerships, based on shared values, that contribute to building the social capital that is capable of overcoming crises”, she said. Paweł Łukasiak, President of the Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland, added that acting for the common good was of particular significance in today’s polarized society.

New partnerships and start-ups received grants totaling more than half a million Polish zlotys. These funds enabled the implementation of projects aimed at creating an ecospace designed and developed by young people in Starogard Gdański (the Pomorskie Region), establishing a citizen budget initiated by youth in Jabłonna (the Lubelskie Region), regenerating a park, taking actions to integrate the residents of Kijewo Królewskie (the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Region), intergenerational

actions inspired by youth in Iława and Lubawa (the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region), participatory designing of a cultural route showcasing the region in Redzikowo (the Pomorskie Region), and creating a youth zone at the municipal cultural center in Kowary (the Dolnośląskie Region).

The meeting also served as an opportunity to present the conclusions from the “Rural Youth 2024” study conducted by the Shipyard Foundation, which offers valuable recommendations to partnerships that intend to include young people in joint actions for their local communities.

The current program edition covers 12 municipalities and supports partnerships which implement actions aligned with the local community animation method for the common good. Since its establishment, the program led to the creation of 75 partnerships engaging 1,200 partners in 120 municipalities across Poland.



It is these partnerships, based on shared values, that contribute to building the social capital that is capable of overcoming crises.

Joanna Lempart
PAFF Program Director



THE LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

“LIBRARIES FOR CLIMATE”: EDUCATION AND ACTION FOR THE FUTURE

The initiative, managed as part of the Library Development Program in partnership with the European Climate Foundation, seeks to turn libraries into centers of education, inspiration and social integration. Libraries are to serve as spaces that bring people together around the common goal of climate and environment protection. The training cycle offered by the Climate Academy is a key element of the initiative.

By participating in workshops and lectures, librarians learn about climate change, how to engage residents, and organize environment-friendly events. Tutor support and a theoretical basis pave the way for implementing local pro-environmental initiatives. The Climate Academy has already contributed to the completion of 24 diverse projects, from educational meetings to specific actions impacting local surroundings. Below are some of its participants.

Justyna Skwarska, a librarian from Nadolice Wielkie (the Dolnośląskie Region), Olga Rok scholar, creator of “EcoBrigade”, a group of women who work together to increase biodiversity in their gardens. She also engaged local residents and municipal authorities in clearing rubble from the vicinity of an old oak tree, a place which used to be an unofficial parking lot. These actions were accompanied by meetings with experts, which sensitized the community to the role of trees in climate protection. “It’s always worth creating a climate for action – even in places as small as ours”, said Justyna Skwarska.

Joanna Przybyło, director of the Municipal Public Library in Wierchosławice (the Małopolska Region), promoted the concept of a plant-based diet among the residents of ten villages and towns across her municipality. This initiative covered an expert workshop, food tasting, and an all-plant-based cooking contest for the members of the Rural Housewives’ Circles. She stressed that “promoting a plant-based diet is a simple way to achieve positive climate change – it’s good for one’s health, and for the environment”.

Anna Akus-Szklarzewska and Anna Wojsław from the Library and Cultural Center in Szczuczyn (the Podlaskie Region) created an educational climate calendar. “Every day matters” is brimming with photos and quotes which inspire the local community to protect nature as they perform their daily chores. Anna Akus-Szklarzewska explained: “Our calendar aims to raise awareness that even mundane daily tasks can bring about positive climate change”.



*It’s always worth creating
a climate for action – even in
places as small as ours.*

Justyna Skwarska
Olga Rok Scholar



PRO PUBLICO BONO

ON THE PRACTICE OF JOURNALISM,
LOCAL AND NOT ONLY

October 2024 saw the Warsaw-based summary of the first edition of training held under the “Media Forum, Local Development” project organized by the Media Forum Foundation. Nearly 100 local media journalists from across Poland attended the event.

President and CEO of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, Jerzy Koźmiński, emphasized the importance of free, independent, and professional local media which galvanize the development aspirations and resolve the issues affecting local communities. He stressed that it was primarily the alumni – more than 300 journalists from all over Poland – who were behind the success of the project.

Agata Passent, Jerzy Baczyński, Andrzej Andrysiak, Michał Rusinek, and Szymon Jadczyk were the special guests of the event.

“Does independent and free journalism make sense in today’s world? I firmly believe it does. Only independent journalism has social purpose. Independent media serve as the fundamental backstop for communities, democracy, and state institutions”, claimed Jerzy Baczyński, Editor-in-chief of “Polityka” weekly. Baczyński believed that the journalistic profession was a form of public mission.

Szymon Jadczyk and Andrzej Andrysiak discussed journalistic integrity and the challenges faced by the media sector at the local and national level. They shared their experiences and insights in an inspiring discussion. Agata Passent underlined that the local media may be a source of fascinating topics, irrespective of the geographical location they cover. Michał Rusinek humorously pointed out linguistic errors to prove they can inspire reflection and a bit of fun.

Challenges related to running local media were also touched upon during the event. Anna Kondraciuk and Argymir Iwicki discussed establishing local papers. “The training gave me the courage to create a medium close to every Chojnice resident”, said Argymir Iwicki.



Only independent journalism has social purpose. Local media serve as the fundamental backstop for communities, democracy, and state institutions.

Jerzy Baczyński
Editor-in-chief of “Polityka” weekly



GREEN LEADER

THE GREEN TRANSITION OF LUBOŃ: WATER RETENTION AND LOCAL COOPERATION

Luboń, a dynamically developing town in the Wielkopolska Region, sets an example of how local initiatives can tackle environmental challenges. The “Green Leader” program helped participants take action to minimize the impact of heavy rain, as well as engage the community in caring for blue and green infrastructure.

Falling groundwater levels and recurring local flooding prompted the Luboń team, headed by Mayor Małgorzata Machalska, to adopt a comprehensive action plan by drawing from the expertise acquired thanks to the “Green Leader” program. The project focused on managing precipitation waters by micro-retention, greening, and educating local residents.

Public consultations and resident participation led to the drafting of a spatial development plan for the area surrounding the retention basin, which became part of the municipal park. Cooperation also resulted in carving out areas for flower meadows and rain gardens from public space, and designing a model rain garden near the Town Hall. The study visit to London proved inspiring in terms of innovative solutions, such as variable height curbs and community gardens.

“The program really put the wind in our sails and made us forget about our daily rut. It showed us how to effectively prepare ourselves for fighting climate change”, said Mayor Małgorzata Machalska, and underlined how important education was in raising awareness across local communities. Apart from exploratory walks, Luboń schools introduced workshops on water retention, and local seniors learned about the benefits of rain gardens.

The “Green Leader” program helped Luboń become a role model for other towns, as it proved that cooperation between leaders, residents and experts can foster sustainable development and mitigate climate change consequences at the same time.



The program really put the wind in our sails and made us forget about our daily rut. It showed us how to effectively prepare ourselves for fighting climate change

Małgorzata Machalska
Mayor of Luboń



LANE KIRKLAND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

MARYNA OHORODNIICHUK:
THE 1000TH KIRKLANDER

Ukrainian psychologist Maryna Ohorodniichuk's outstanding achievements are yet another success story brought about by the Kirkland Program. As the thousandth program alumna, Maryna stands as proof that cooperation and knowledge can make a difference.

For 25 years, the Kirkland Program has facilitated sharing Poland's experiences in systemic transformation and European integration with representatives of countries in the Region. Kirkland scholars participate in university courses, internships and civic projects to acquire knowledge that may support the development of their homelands. The program has produced over a thousand alumni, more than half of whom hail from Ukraine.

The Kirkland scholarship took Maryna Ohorodniichuk to the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Warsaw where, guided by Prof. Małgorzata Dragan, she designed an innovative online course for teachers of Ukrainian teenagers entitled "9 steps to reach out to a teenager in times of war". The course has already won recognition and will be made available as a mobile application. It sets an example of how to make practical use of the knowledge acquired.

"Working with Prof. Dragan was an incredible experience for me. The Kirkland scholarship gave me the opportunity to not just delve into psychology but also to develop specific tools for supporting parents and young people, which is particularly crucial in times of war", Maryna acknowledged.

The Kirklander also engaged in civic actions in Poland, serving as a volunteer at the UW Psychological Aid Center and working with Polish Radio for Ukraine to support refugees. Upon returning to Lviv, Maryna intends to follow up on the projects she initiated, establish her own psychology center, and promote mental health culture. "It is an honor and a duty. I wish to convert my experience into specific activities that will serve those in need. I am grateful to the Kirkland Program for this opportunity", she said.



The Kirkland scholarship gave me the opportunity to not just delve into psychology, but also develop specific tools for supporting parents and young people, which is particularly crucial in times of war.

Maryna Ohorodniichuk
thousandth alumna of
the Kirkland Program



REGION IN TRANSITION (RITA)

RITA AMBASSADORS MEET IN BYDGOSZCZ

In September 2024 Rother's Mills in Bydgoszcz became the center of discussions about international cooperation and building a strong civil society. More than 80 participants of the "Region in Transition" and "Support for Ukraine" programs exchanged experiences and ideas connected with contributing to political transformation in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the South Caucasus.

The meeting of "Region in Transition Ambassadors", organized by the Education for Democracy Foundation, aimed to integrate non-governmental organizations involved in civic support programs and promote an exchange of expertise and best practices. For the first time in six years the participants enjoyed an offline conference held in a space more conducive to discussing the challenges facing their countries.

"I am delighted that we can discuss such crucial topics together, including civil society development and the fight against disinformation. Your engagement lays the groundwork for change in the Region", said Agnieszka Mazur, PAFF Program Director, in her welcome speech.

The agenda of the meeting was teeming with substantive discussions. The panel on the current state of the region brought together experts, such as President of the Education for Democracy Foundation Martyna Bogaczyk and Wojciech Górecki of the OSW Center

for Easter Studies, while thematic workshops covered humanitarian and educational project standards.

'This meeting opens up new opportunities for cooperation and inspires the implementation of local initiatives. Experience exchanges between participants are invaluable', stressed event participant Emilia Bryś.

25 years of the "RITA" program led to the completion of more than 1,000 projects which support the development of education, free media and social reforms in countries of the Region. Regular meetings of "RITA" Ambassadors are an important tool for building cooperation networks and exchanging best practices between program participants. They also provide space for showcasing examples of effective NGO and civic leader support in international cooperation.



I am delighted that we can discuss such crucial topics together, including civil society development and the fight against disinformation.

Agnieszka Mazur
PAFF Program Director



STUDY TOURS TO POLAND (STP)

SUKRAM – SOLIDARITY THROUGH MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION. COOPERATION FOR UKRAINE

In early 2024 Warsaw hosted the participants of the SUKRAM project. The event was attended by Ukrainian Ambassador Vasyl Zvarych, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Justice Zuzanna Rudzińska-Bluszcz, Deputy Minister of National Education Andrzej Szeptycki, and representatives of the U.S. Embassy, USAID, the Polish Confederation Lewiatan, PAFF, and the Leaders of Change Foundation. The project aimed to highlight the importance of mediation and arbitration as important instruments in the Ukrainian rule of law system.

Solidarity Ukrainian Arbitration and Mediation (SUKRAM) is a project implemented as part of the “Study Tours to Poland” program in cooperation with the Polish Confederation Lewiatan, the Lewiatan Mediation Center and the Lewiatan Arbitration Court. SUKRAM attracted more than 20,000 lawyers from Ukraine, including representatives of the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Justice, war veterans and Ukrainian lawyers, including women alumni of the Lane Kirkland Scholarship Program.

The agenda offered 15 hours of training in mediation and 15 hours of arbitration training, plus practical workshops and study visits to mediation centers. Mediation and arbitration training was delivered by lawyer-volunteers from large Polish law offices. Training participants received a certificate in mediation/arbitration issued by the organizers. The Ukrainian guests appreciated the hands-on approach adopted for the project. “It is a unique chance to acquire real skills and establish contacts with world-class experts”, said participant Olena Stepanenko.

Arbitration and mediation are vital to rule of law, which is key to Ukraine’s post-war recovery and European integration. Arbitration and mediation, as alternative forms of dispute resolution, can be used to resolve disputes while preserving better relations between entrepreneurs, especially international ones. As Ambassador Vasyl Zvarych pointed out: “Arbitration and mediation are effective tools not for just dispute resolution but also for building social trust and Ukraine’s European integration”.

The training involved a meeting with invited guests, including Commercial Counselor at the U.S. Embassy James Lindley, President of the Polish Lewiatan Confederation Maciej Witucki, President of the Lewiatan Arbitration Court Marcin Asłanowicz, President of the Lewiatan Mediation Center Roman Rewald, PAFF Program Director Agnieszka Mazur, President of the Leaders of Change Foundation Agata Wierzbowska-Miazga, and “STP” Program Director Mirosław Skórka.



Arbitration and mediation are effective tools for not just dispute resolution but also building social trust and Ukraine’s European integration.

J.E. Vasyl Zvarych
Ambassador of Ukraine



SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

RENOVATED EMERGENCY SHELTER FOR STUDENTS IN LUTSK

“Support for Ukraine”, a PAFF program managed by the Education for Democracy Foundation, enabled the renovation of a university shelter, which improved security and continuity of higher education.

On February 24, 2022 Russia launched a brutal full-scale invasion against Ukraine and changed the lives of millions. In this dramatic situation students of the Technical College of the Lutsk National Technical University had no safe shelter to fall back on when the air raid sirens sounded. “Lectures and workshops were frequently interrupted by alarms. Renovating the shelter became a priority”, said Jurij Kresak, a LNTU lecturer and President of Heritage of the Future.

The onslaught of missiles caused serious damage in Lutsk. Despite limited financial resources, the LNTU started clearing the existing hiding places. It was not until Polish partners stepped in, however, that a comprehensive shelter overhaul was possible.

A “Support for Ukraine” grant provided the means for the complete renovation of the shelter: new flooring

was provided, the walls were refreshed, and toilets, showers and Wi-Fi were installed. Shelter space was adjusted to security requirements, as noted College Director Oleh Herasymczuk: “It’s a simple, yet effective cover against bombs”. Shelter rooms have been furnished, and the LNTU plans to install utilities and workout equipment in the future.

“We are pleased that we could help create a safe place for students”, said Marek Zapór of the Partnerships for Central and Eastern Europe Foundation.

Joint efforts made the shelter not just a protected space, but also a center for education and integration. “Support for Ukraine” funds proved crucial for raising the quality of life of LNTU students and lecturers amid the war.



Lectures and workshops were frequently interrupted by alarms. Renovating the shelter became a priority.

Jurij Kresak
the Lutsk National Technical University



Consolidated Financial Statements

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Polish-American Freedom Foundation

**Consolidated Financial Statements as of and for
the year ended December 31, 2024, and
Independent Auditors' Report**



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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Directors the Polish-American Freedom Foundation

Opinion

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of Polish-American Freedom Foundation (the "Corporation"), located in the United States of America, which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as at December 31, 2024, and the consolidated statement of activities, and consolidated statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the consolidated financial statements ("Consolidated financial statements").

In our opinion, the accompanying Consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of the Corporation as of December 31, 2024, and its consolidated financial performance and its consolidated cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the applicable accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America and the adopted accounting policies.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing ("ISAs"). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements* section of our report.

We are independent of the Corporation in accordance with the principles of professional ethics specified in the Manual of International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including International Independence Standards) ("Code of ethics") introduced by the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code of ethics.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of the Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Consolidated Financial Statements

The Corporation's Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of Consolidated financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America and for such internal control as the Corporation's Management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of Consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the Consolidated financial statements, the Corporation's Management is responsible for assessing the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Corporation's Management either intends to liquidate the Corporation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Corporation's financial reporting process.

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Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the Consolidated financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these Consolidated financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the Consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Corporation's internal control;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Management;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the Consolidated financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Corporation to cease to continue as a going concern;
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the Consolidated financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the Consolidated financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation;
- obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the Corporation to express an opinion on the Consolidated financial statements. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control identified during our audit.

Deloitte Assurance Polska spółka z ograniczoną odpowiedzialnością sp. k.

Deloitte Assurance Polska spółka z ograniczoną odpowiedzialnością sp. k.

Warsaw, May 9, 2025

POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

ASSETS

ASSETS:

Investments, at fair value (Notes 3 and 6):		
Common and Preferred Stocks	\$	25,156,465
Exchange Traded Fund - S&P 500 Stock Index		41,465,538
Public Mutual Fund – Fixed Income		17,964,128
Alternative Investments		188,199,722
Private Mutual Fund – Equity		23,808,795
Cash and cash equivalents (Notes 3 and 5)		12,728,451
Land and fixed assets, net (Note 7)		3,921,580
Loans, net of allowance for loan losses (Note 9)		5,426,235
Prepaid expenses and other assets		76,781
Total assets	\$	318,747,695

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

LIABILITIES:

Grants payable (Note 3)	\$	10,536,297
Accounts payable and accrued expenses		319,712
Total liabilities		10,856,009

NET ASSETS (Note 2):

With donor restrictions		-
Without donor restrictions		307,891,686

Total liabilities and net assets	\$	318,747,695
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POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024

	Without Donor Restrictions
Changes in net assets without donor restrictions:	
Increases in net assets without donor restrictions:	
Interest and dividend income	\$ 2,853,584
Decreases in net assets without donor restrictions:	
Employee compensation and benefits	1,812,011
Operating expenses	860,964
Occupancy	180,292
Depreciation and amortization	132,660
Total decrease in net assets	2,985,927
Grants (Note 3)	(15,805,299)
Grants and decrease in net assets without donor restrictions in excess of income	(15,937,642)
Net realized gain on investments (Note 6)	9,361,775
Net unrealized appreciation on investments (Note 6)	23,073,071
Net currency remeasurement loss (Note 3)	(275,345)
Total increase in net assets without donor restrictions	16,221,859
Net assets without donor restrictions, beginning of the year	291,669,827
Net assets without donor restrictions, end of the year	\$ 307,891,686

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024

Cash flows from operating activities:	
Increase in net assets without donor restrictions	\$ 16,221,859
Adjustments to reconcile increase in net assets without donor restrictions to net cash provided by operating activities:	
Net realized gain on investments	(9,361,775)
Net unrealized appreciation on investments	(23,073,071)
Net currency remeasurement loss	275,345
Provision for loan losses	80,707
Depreciation and amortization	132,660
Increase in accrued interest on loans	(16,108)
Decrease in accrued interest on investments	8,104
Decrease in investment redemption receivable	8,310,654
Decrease in prepaid expenses and other assets	9,488,053
Increase in accounts payable and accrued expenses	76,159
Increase in grants payable	2,170,366
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>4,312,953</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:	
Proceeds from sales/redemption of investments	60,505,531
Cost of investments purchased	(65,109,898)
Loans disbursed	(5,271,532)
Proceeds from loan repayments	4,488,356
Purchase of fixed assets	(78,935)
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(5,466,478)</u>
Effects of exchange rate changes on cash and cash equivalents	<u>(335,180)</u>
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	(1,488,705)
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	<u>14,217,156</u>
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	<u>\$ 12,728,451</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

1. ORGANIZATION

The Polish-American Freedom Foundation (the "Foundation," and, together with its subsidiary, the "Corporation") is a U.S. not-for-profit corporation established on August 11, 1999. The Foundation was created by the Polish-American Enterprise Fund (the "Fund") to advance the purposes of the Support for East European Democracy Act of 1989 by building upon the successful assistance programs and sound practices established by the Fund, and to undertake other developmental initiatives designed to solidify Poland's successful transition to democracy and free markets.

The Foundation concentrates its efforts in three main program areas: (i) Initiatives in Education, (ii) Development of Local Communities, and (iii) Sharing the Polish Experiences in Transformation. The Foundation generally seeks an external program manager (typically a well-established non-governmental organization in Poland) to execute the objectives of each individual grant, thereby leveraging the Foundation's resources. The Foundation does not have ownership or control of the external program managers.

With the permission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, the Foundation maintains a representative office in Poland (the "Representative Office"), the purpose of which is to engage in activities to promote the Foundation and to provide information and consultation to the Foundation with respect to its activities.

Polsko-Amerykański Fundusz Pożyczkowy Inicjatyw Obywatelskich Sp. z o.o. ("PAFPIO") is a separately managed subsidiary of the Foundation which extends loans to non-governmental organizations, associations and other non-profit initiatives in Poland. On May 31, 2011, the Fund contributed 100% of the shares of PAFPIO to the Foundation as a grant. PAFPIO is an independent and distinct business unit from the Foundation and, given that the Foundation owns all the outstanding shares, PAFPIO is consolidated with the accounts of the Foundation, as required by accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America ("U.S. GAAP").

2. BASIS OF PRESENTATION

In accordance with U.S. GAAP, the Corporation is required to classify information regarding its consolidated financial position and consolidated activities according to two classes of net assets: (i) net assets without donor restrictions, which may be expended for any purpose, and, (ii) net assets with donor restrictions, which are net assets subject to donor-imposed stipulations that must be expended in accordance with those stipulations. At December 31, 2024, the entire balance of net assets was classified as net assets without donor restrictions and the Corporation had no net assets designated by the Board of Directors as restricted.

3. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Principles of Consolidation

The consolidated financial statements are prepared in conformity with U.S. GAAP and include the accounts of the Foundation and PAFPIO, the Foundation's only subsidiary. All intercompany balances and transactions have been eliminated in consolidation.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of the consolidated financial statements in conformity with U.S. GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of (i) assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the consolidated financial statements and (ii) income and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

Investments, at Fair Value

The Corporation records investment transactions on the trade date. Interest and dividend income, unrealized appreciation and depreciation and realized gains and losses are reported in the consolidated statement of activities. The Corporation's investments are assets of the Foundation. The Corporation engages professional investment managers and advisors who manage and monitor the Corporation's investments. See Note 6 for more detailed disclosures of the Corporation's investments. Investments, at fair value, are categorized according to the "Fair Value Hierarchy" or measured at "Net Asset Value" ("NAV"), as described below.

Investments, at Fair Value, Categorized According to the Fair Value Hierarchy

The Corporation's investments categorized according to the Fair Value Hierarchy are valued at fair value and disclosed according to the "fair value hierarchy" in the Financial Accounting Standards Board ("FASB") Accounting Standards Codification ("ASC") Topic 820, Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures. The fair value hierarchy defines fair value as the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. The Corporation's investments categorized according to the fair value hierarchy are classified as described below:

Level 1: Inputs to the valuation methodology are unadjusted quoted prices available in active markets for identical assets or liabilities as of the reporting date;

Level 2: Inputs to the valuation methodology are other than quoted prices in active markets, which are either directly or indirectly observable as of the reporting date, and fair value can be determined through the use of models or other valuation methodologies; and

Level 3: Inputs to the valuation methodology are unobservable in situations where there is little or no market activity for the asset or liability and the reporting entity makes estimates and assumptions related to the pricing of the asset or liability including assumptions regarding risk. The inputs into the determination of fair value require significant judgment. Due to the inherent uncertainty of these estimates, these values may differ materially from the values that would have been used had a ready market for these assets and liabilities existed.

A financial instrument's level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. A description of the valuation methodologies used for instruments measured at fair value, including the general classification of such instruments pursuant to the fair value hierarchy, is presented below:

Common and Preferred Stocks, Exchange Traded Fund - S&P 500 Stock Index and Fixed Income Securities: Equity and fixed income securities (Polish government treasury securities) are valued based upon the closing price as quoted on major exchanges. Common and preferred stocks, Exchange Traded Fund - S&P 500 Stock Index and certain fixed income securities are classified within level 1 of the fair value hierarchy.

Public Mutual Funds – Equity and Fixed Income: These investments are public investment vehicles valued using the NAV provided by the administrator of the investment vehicle. The NAV for public mutual funds is a quoted market price and classified within level 1 of the fair value hierarchy.

Investments, at Fair Value, Measured at Net Asset Value

Investments measured at NAV are valued as of December 31, 2024 using the NAV of the investment vehicle as a practical expedient. The NAV is based on the value of the underlying assets owned by the investment vehicle, minus its liabilities. The fair value of investments valued using NAV represents the portion of the NAV owned by the Corporation, and are comprised of Alternative Investments and Private Mutual Fund – Equity:

POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

Alternative Investments: These investments are private investment vehicles valued using the NAV provided by the investment vehicle manager. Underlying investments that are determined by the investment vehicle manager to be illiquid and/or lacking a readily accessible market value are valued using current estimates provided by the investment vehicle manager. The investment vehicle manager determines valuation inputs and methodologies.

Private Mutual Fund – Equity: This investment is a private investment vehicle valued using the NAV provided by the investment vehicle manager. The NAV for this private mutual fund is the NAV's unit price which is quoted on a private market that is not active; however, the unit price is based on underlying investments which are traded on active markets and the Corporation can redeem its investment at the measurement date or within the near term without redemption restrictions.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

For purposes of the consolidated statement of cash flows, the Corporation considers all highly liquid financial instruments with an original maturity of three months or less when purchased to be cash equivalents. At December 31, 2024, the Corporation had no restricted cash.

Grants and Grants Payable

Grants without conditions are recorded as grant expense in the consolidated statement of activities and grants payable in the consolidated statement of financial position after the grant is approved in accordance with policies set by the Board of Directors and when the parties have signed the grant agreement. Grants with conditions ("Conditional Grants") are recorded in the period the condition or conditions on which they depend are substantially met as grant expense in the consolidated statement of activities and grants payable in the consolidated statement of financial position after the grant is approved in accordance with policies set by the Board of Directors and the parties have signed the grant agreement. In 2024 there were no Conditional Grants.

Contributions

Contributions with no donor-imposed conditions are reported as income in the consolidated statement of activities in the period (i) the contribution is made, and/or (ii) the grant agreement between the Corporation and the donor is signed. Contributions with donor-imposed conditions are reported as income in the consolidated statement of activities in the period the condition or conditions on which they depend are substantially met. In 2024 there were no contributions.

Interest and Dividend Income

Interest income is recognized on an accrual basis. Dividend income is recorded in the period in which the dividend is declared and the Corporation was the holder of the security as of the record date.

Foreign Currency

The Corporation's functional and reporting currency is the U.S. dollar. The functional currency of the Representative Office and PAFPIO is the Polish zloty. Income and expenses transacted in Polish zlotys are translated into United States dollars during the year at current exchange rates. Polish zloty denominated assets and liabilities are translated at the year-end spot currency rate. Remeasurement and translation adjustments are reflected in the consolidated statement of activities as net currency remeasurement gain or (loss).

POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

Donated Services

The Corporation's directors receive no compensation or fees for serving as directors. The Corporation's chairman of the board of directors (the "Chairman") receives an honorarium in exchange for his services as the Chairman. The Corporation's non-executive Polish directors receive a consulting fee for support of the Foundation's programs in Poland. For the year ended December 31, 2024, the total fees paid to all Polish directors and the Chairman amounted to \$103,155.

Depreciation and Amortization

Land and fixed assets are initially recorded at cost. All fixed assets, other than land, which is not depreciated, are depreciated on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives as follows: land improvements, 15 years, building, 39 years, and computer equipment, software, furniture, equipment and automobiles, from three to five years.

Operating Expenses

Professional services, expenses of Board of Directors meetings, fees paid to Polish directors and the Chairman, expenses for travel, lodging and meals, administrative expenses, VAT, PAFPIO Polish income tax and PAFPIO allowance for loan losses are classified as operating expenses.

Credit risk

Credit risk is the possibility that loss may occur from counterparty failure to perform according to the terms of a contract. Unless noted otherwise, collateral or other security is not normally required by the Corporation to support financial instruments or loans with credit risk. At December 31, 2024, the Corporation had credit exposure mainly from debt instruments in the Corporation's investment portfolio and loans extended by PAFPIO. The maximum risk of loss from these assets is represented by their respective consolidated statement of financial position amounts.

4. POLISH-AMERICAN ENTERPRISE FUND GRANT

Pursuant to an agreement signed in 1999 between the Fund and the U.S. Government and in consultation with the Government of Poland, the Fund returned \$120 million of the Fund's assets to the U.S. Treasury and contributed the Fund's remaining assets to the Foundation pursuant to a grant agreement between the Fund and the Foundation (as amended, the "Grant Agreement"). The total amount the Fund contributed to the Foundation is \$255.3 million, which was originally recorded as unrestricted net assets and, beginning in 2018, was recorded as net assets without donor restrictions when the Corporation implemented FASB Accounting Standard Update 2016-14, Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities. According to the terms of the final amendment to the Grant Agreement, the Grant Agreement terminated upon the Fund's dissolution on December 27, 2011 except that certain provisions survived termination, including that the U.S. Government may require the Foundation to return the assets received from the Fund, together with any earnings generated thereby, to the U.S. Treasury if the U. S. Government determines that the Foundation has provided grants to or otherwise financed certain prohibited activities.

5. MANAGEMENT OF LIQUID RESOURCES

The Foundation relies on returns on its investment portfolio (the "Portfolio") and PAFPIO relies on interest income from loans to support spending for operations, which are the costs incurred to carry out the mission of the Foundation and the mission of PAFPIO. The Foundation has adopted an investment policy to govern the management of the Portfolio, which includes a spending policy that provides that annual spending, which includes grants, operating expenses and capital expenditures, shall be based on approximately 5.0% of the average quarter-end Portfolio value for the most recent twelve quarters. To meet cash needs for operations within one year of the balance sheet date, the Corporation had

POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

available liquid resources of \$12.7 million held in cash ("Year-End Cash"). Approximately 95% of the Foundation's spending is in Polish zlotys. Included in Year-End Cash is approximately 9 months of zloty spending in zlotys. In addition, \$84.6 million of the Corporation's investments at fair value have daily liquidity.

6. INVESTMENTS AT FAIR VALUE

See "Investments, at Fair Value" in Note 3, above, for discussion of the methodologies and assumptions used to determine the fair value of the Corporation's Investments. The cost, fair value and accumulated unrealized appreciation on investments at December 31, 2024 is presented in the table below:

	Cost	Fair Value	Accumulated Unrealized Appreciation
Investments Categorized According to the Fair Value Hierarchy:			
Common and Preferred Stocks	\$ 15,219,407	\$ 25,156,465	\$ 9,937,058
S&P 500 Stock Index Exchange Traded Fund	28,333,024	41,465,538	13,132,514
Public Mutual Fund – Fixed Income	17,885,595	17,964,128	78,533
Investments Measured at NAV:			
Alternative Investments	124,787,890	188,199,722	63,411,832
Private Mutual Fund - Equity	9,752,993	23,808,795	14,055,802
	<u>\$ 195,978,909</u>	<u>\$ 296,594,648</u>	<u>\$ 100,615,739</u>

POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION
NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

The net unrealized appreciation (depreciation) and net realized gain on investments for the year-ended December 31, 2024 is presented in the table below:

	Net Unrealized Appreciation/ (Depreciation)	Net Realized Gain
Investments Categorized According to the Fair Value Hierarchy:		
Common and Preferred Stocks	\$ 3,507,322	\$ 1,096,002
Exchange Traded Fund - S&P 500 Stock Index	7,800,432	-
Public Mutual Fund - Fixed Income	(17,069)	1,227,623
Investments Measured at NAV:		
Alternative Investments	11,800,179	7,038,150
Private Mutual Fund - Equity	(17,793)	-
	<u>\$ 23,073,071</u>	<u>\$ 9,361,775</u>

Set forth in the table below are the Corporation's investments as of December 31, 2024, at fair value on a recurring basis by the hierarchy levels described in Note 3:

	Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Measured at NAV	Total
Investments Categorized According to the Fair Value Hierarchy:			
Common and Preferred Stocks	\$ 25,156,465	\$ -	\$ 25,156,465
Exchange Traded Fund - S&P 500 Stock Index	41,465,538	-	41,465,538
Public Mutual Fund - Fixed Income	17,964,128	-	17,964,128
Investments Measured at NAV:			
Alternative Investments	-	188,199,722	188,199,722
Private Mutual Fund - Equity	-	23,808,795	23,808,795
	<u>\$ 84,586,131</u>	<u>\$ 212,008,517</u>	<u>\$ 296,594,648</u>
% of total	28.5%	71.5%	100.0%

For the year ended December 31, 2024, the Foundation's investments, net of external and direct internal investment expenses had an annual rate of return of 12.05%.

POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

Presented in the table below is information about the Corporation's investments valued using the NAV of the investment vehicle as a practical expedient, categorized by investment strategy, as of December 31, 2024:

	Fair Value	Redemption Frequency	Redemption Notice Period	
Alternative Investments:				
Multi-strategy	\$ 41,753,496	Quarterly / over four quarters	65-75 days 15 business days	(a)
Emerging markets	20,547,118	Monthly	to 30 days	(b)
Long/short equity	21,620,096	See note	45-90 days	(c)
Long Only	77,819,018	See note	see note	(d)
Private equity	26,459,994	Not able to redeem	Not applicable	(e)
	188,199,722			
Private Mutual Fund – Equity:				
International	23,808,795	Monthly	10 business days	(f)
	<u>\$ 212,008,517</u>			

There are no unfunded commitments to the Corporation's investments other than commitments totaling \$11.9 million as disclosed in note (e), below. It is probable that the amount ultimately received if investments measured at NAV were to be sold would be different than the fair value of these investments at December 31, 2024.

- a) **Multi-strategy:** This category includes alternative investment funds that pursue multiple investment strategies, including long/short equity, event driven, credit, merger arbitrage, distressed debt and private transactions primarily in the United States and countries comprising the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. Redemptions may be made (i) quarterly for 69% of this category and (ii) over four quarters at a rate of 25% of NAV per quarter for 31% of this category.
- b) **Emerging markets:** This category includes two alternative investment funds. One fund comprising 53% of this category pursues a long-only strategy for investment in emerging markets which primarily invests in companies located in countries that are included in the MSCI Emerging Markets Index and the MSCI Frontier Markets Index. The other fund invests in equity securities of companies operating outside the U.S. and particularly within Europe, Australia, the Far East and Canada. Redemptions from these two funds may be made monthly.
- c) **Long/short equity:** The one alternative investment fund in this category pursues long/short equity strategies by investing in equities focused on the global technology, media and telecommunications sectors. Redemptions may be made annually.
- d) **Long Only:** This category is comprised of six investments that pursue the following investment strategies:
 - I. two funds invest in companies in the industrial, consumer discretionary, and healthcare sectors,
 - II. one fund invests in companies in the healthcare sector.

POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

- III. one fund invests in companies located in the United States, internationally and in emerging markets,
- IV. one fund invests in international large-cap companies, and
- V. one fund invests in small cap growth companies.

Redemptions may be made monthly and quarterly for 30% and 56% of this category, respectively. Redemptions may be made on December 31, 2025 upon 150 days prior notice and as of each 36-month anniversary thereafter upon 150 days prior notice for 13% of this category.

- e) Private equity: The Corporation has invested in fourteen private equity funds. These funds do not provide for redemptions as distributions are expected to be made as the underlying assets are sold by the funds; it is not possible to estimate the period of time over which the underlying assets will be sold; pursuant to the fund documents, all distributions are due to be made by the termination date of each fund, which may be extended. This category is comprised of:
- I. two investments in private equity funds that invest in the energy sector in North America; the Corporation has committed to invest \$9.0 million in these funds, \$4.5 million to each, and, at December 31, 2024, the Corporation's remaining commitment to both funds was \$0.3 million. The termination dates of the first and second fund are in 2022 and 2025, respectively,
 - II. investments in four private equity funds that invest in expansion and growth-stage healthcare investments primarily in the specialty pharmaceuticals, therapeutic/pharma services, medical technologies and healthcare services sectors; the Corporation has committed to invest \$14.0 million to these funds and, at December 31, 2024, the Corporation's remaining commitment to these funds was \$4.8 million. The termination dates of these funds are in 2025, 2029, 2032 and 2032, respectively,
 - III. an investment in two private equity funds that are dislocation funds designed to invest during periods of market stress. These funds have a focus on stressed and distressed securities, mainly in the United States and OECD countries; the Corporation has committed to invest \$10.0 million to these funds and, at December 31, 2024, the Corporation's remaining commitment to these funds was \$2.5 million. The termination dates of the first and second fund are in 2025 and 2028, respectively,
 - IV. an investment in a globally diversified portfolio of venture capital funds that also pursues co-investment opportunities; the Corporation has committed to invest \$1.5 million to this fund and, at December 31, 2024, the Corporation's remaining commitment to this fund was \$0.3 million. The termination date of this fund is in 2031,
 - V. an investment in a fund of funds focused on creating a concentrated portfolio of primary and secondary commitments in established and up and coming venture funds, and direct investments in growth stage companies; the Corporation has committed to invest \$1.5 million to this fund and, at December 31, 2024, the Corporation's remaining commitment to this fund was \$0.1 million. The termination date of this fund is in 2035,
 - VI. an investment in a private equity fund that invests in early-stage growth and durable growth companies in private markets. The Corporation has committed to invest \$0.5 million in this fund and at December 31, 2024, the Corporation's remaining commitment to this fund was \$0.2 million. The termination date of this fund is in 2031.
 - VII. an investment in two private equity funds that invest in market leading, rapidly growing internet-enabled, consumer, enterprise software and financial technology companies primarily based in the U.S., China and India. The Corporation has committed to invest \$3.5 million in these funds and at December 31, 2024, the Corporation's remaining commitment to these funds was \$0.1 million. The termination dates for these funds are in 2031.
 - VIII. one investment fund (the "Parent Fund") with an investment strategy to invest in secondary fund managers through commitments to three underlying funds in the same

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investment family. The percent of the Parent Fund commitments to each of the three underlying funds and each underlying funds' investment strategy are (i) Fund 1: 47% of Parent Fund commitments. Fund 1 will acquire limited partner interests in buyout, venture capital and growth equity funds and opportunistically in real estate, energy and other sector-specific underlying funds, (ii) Fund 2: 22% of Parent Fund commitments. Fund 2 will invest in limited partner interests alongside Fund 1 in deals that are \$25 million and larger, and (iii) Fund 3 will invest in limited partner interests primarily in small-deal (total transaction size of \$500 million or less). The Corporation has committed to invest \$5.0 million in the Parent Fund and the Corporation's remaining commitment to the Parent Fund was \$3.6 million. The termination date for this fund is in 2034.

- f) International: This category has one investment fund whose objective is to achieve long-term growth primarily by investing in a diversified portfolio of equity securities of companies located in any country other than the United States. The fund invests primarily in established international markets; however a portion of the fund's assets may be invested in emerging markets. Redemptions may be made monthly.

7. LAND AND FIXED ASSETS

As of December 31, 2024, land and fixed assets consisted of:

Land	\$ 1,913,359
Land improvements	174,158
Building	2,769,692
Computer equipment and software	160,242
Furniture and equipment	314,258
Automobiles	104,701
	<u>5,436,410</u>
Less - Accumulated depreciation and amortization	<u>1,514,830</u>
Net book value	<u>\$ 3,921,580</u>

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8. FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION AND ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES

Expenses of the Corporation's operations incurred to carry out the mission of the Foundation and the mission of PAFPIO are classified as grants without and with donor restrictions and decreases in net assets without and with donor restrictions in the Consolidated Statement of Activities ("Decreases in Net Assets without and with Donor Restrictions and Grants"), which are allocated to functional classifications as follows:

	Decreases in Net Assets	Program Services	Management and General
Decreases in Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions:			
Employee compensation and benefits	\$ 1,812,011	\$ 1,236,292	\$ 575,719
Operating expenses	860,964	215,967	644,997
Occupancy	180,292	111,052	69,240
Depreciation and amortization	132,660	83,268	49,392
Total decrease in net assets without donor restrictions	2,985,927	1,646,579	1,339,348
Grants:			
Without Donor Restrictions	15,805,299	15,805,299	-
Grants and decrease in net assets	\$ 18,791,226	\$ 17,451,878	\$ 1,339,348

Program services expenses consist of services rendered to beneficiaries that fulfill the mission of the Foundation and the mission of PAFPIO ("Program Services"). Management and general expenses are expenses of all other activities of the Foundation and PAFPIO that support Program Services ("Management and General").

Expenses are allocated to functional classifications as follows: (i) employee compensation and benefits and depreciation and amortization are allocated to functional classification by employee based on estimates of time and effort spent by functional classification; (ii) operating expenses are allocated to functional classification (a) by employee based on estimates of time and effort spent by functional classification or (b) to the Management and General classification based on actual expenses incurred for expenses that by their nature are not programmatic expenses; (iii) Occupancy is allocated to functional classification based on square footage and by employee based on estimates of time and effort spent by functional classification; and (iv) grants are classified in the Program Services functional classification.

9. LOANS AND ALLOWANCE FOR LOAN LOSSES

Loans are generated by PAFPIO and are stated at the principal amount outstanding plus accrued interest reduced by an allowance for loan losses. Interest on loans is credited to income based on principal amounts outstanding at applicable rates. The accrual of interest is discontinued when the loan agreement is terminated or there is doubt regarding collectability.

The allowance for loan losses is maintained at a level determined by PAFPIO management to adequately absorb potential losses in the loan portfolio. This determination is based on the exposure to loss related to specific borrower situations, including their financial position, payment history and collateral values, and other relevant factors and estimates which are subject to change over time. Estimating the risk of loss and amount of loss on any loan is necessarily subjective and ultimate losses may vary from current estimates. These estimates are reviewed by PAFPIO management periodically and, as adjustments become necessary, are reported in the periods in which they become known. The allowance for loan losses is (i) increased by provisions for loan losses charged to operations, (ii) decreased by recoveries of loans previously provided for in the allowance for loan losses

POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

and (iii) decreased by write-offs. Collection efforts continue after a loan is charged-off by PAFPIO Management and future recoveries may occur.

Changes in the PAFPIO allowance for loan losses for the year ended December 31, 2024 were as follows:

Beginning balance	\$ 200,884
Additional provision charged to operations	80,707
Recoveries of loans previously provided for in allowance for loan losses	(14,282)
Loans written-off	(33,771)
Foreign currency translation adjustment	(11,585)
Balance, end of year	<u>\$ 221,953</u>

10. COMMITMENTS AND OFF-BALANCE SHEET COMMITMENTS

As of December 31, 2024 the Corporation had approved 21 programs totaling \$19.3 million that were subject to the completion of grant negotiations and the signing of grant agreements to the satisfaction of all parties. Subsequent to December 31, 2024 the Foundation signed grant agreements for these approved programs in the total amount of \$6.7 million.

As disclosed in Note 6, at December 31, 2024 the Foundation had \$11.9 million in commitments to private equity funds. Subsequent to December 31, 2024, the Corporation funded \$0.8 million of these commitments.

11. WAR IN UKRAINE

The ongoing military conflict in Ukraine and the related sanctions targeted against the Russian Federation may have an impact on the Polish, European and global economies. The Corporation's programmatic activities include programs conducted in Poland that are addressed to representatives, partners, students and professionals from Eastern European countries, the South Caucasus, Central Asia, Ukraine, Belarus and Russia. The Foundation's programmatic activities are financed from returns on its investment portfolio (the "Portfolio"), which does not have any significant direct exposure to Ukraine, Russia or Belarus. However, global financial markets and/or the general economic situation may be impacted, which could affect certain Portfolio related assumptions and estimates which could lead to adjustments to the carrying value of the Portfolio within the next financial year. The Corporation's available liquid resources are in excess of spending needs for the next financial year and to date the Corporation's programmatic and other activities have not been adversely impacted.

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12. TAX STATUS

United States

The Foundation is exempt from U.S. Federal income taxes under Section 501(c)(4) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. In addition, the Foundation is exempt from state and local income taxes.

Poland

The Representative Office is not subject to Polish corporate income taxation. PAFPIO is a Polish limited liability corporation subject to Polish Corporate income tax. For the year ended December 31, 2024, PAFPIO incurred \$40,143 of income tax expense, which is included in operating expenses in the consolidated statement of activities.

13. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

The Corporation has evaluated subsequent events through May 9, 2025, the date the consolidated financial statements were available to be issued and has determined that there were no events requiring consideration as adjustments to, or disclosures in, the consolidated financial statements as of and for the year ended December 31, 2024.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

* as of June 2025

ANDREW NAGORSKI – CHAIRMAN

Award-winning journalist and author, former foreign correspondent and senior editor of Newsweek International

JOSEPH C. BELL

Senior Counsel, Hogan Lovells

ALFRED B. BIEĆ

Former Undersecretary of State, Office of the Council of Ministers, Secretary of the Government's Economic Committee, former President and CEO of the Bank PEKAO New York and the Post Bank

ANGELA BRAV

President, Hertz International

SARA GAY FORDEN

Best-selling author and experienced journalist, Team Leader for Legal DC, Bloomberg News

GEOFFREY HOGUET

Managing Member, GRH Holdings, LLC

JOHN KASNICKI

Managing Director on the Investment Team, Summit Rock Advisors

KATARZYNA KIELI

President & Managing Director Warner Bros. Discovery Poland and CEO TVN

JERZY KOŹMIŃSKI

President and Chief Executive Officer of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, former Polish Ambassador to the United States

STEPHEN D. MULL

Vice Provost for Global Affairs, University of Virginia, former U.S. Ambassador to Poland and Lithuania

KRZYSZTOF PAWŁOWSKI

President of the High School of Business-National Louis University in Nowy Sącz, former Polish Senator

SYLWIA WILKOS

Film producer and screenwriter, President of the Moondragon Film, academic teacher in social and political studies

FORMER MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

MAREK BELKA – 2000-2004 and 2005-2010

MICHAŁ BONI – 2000-2008

ANNA FORMALCZYK – 2001-2025

CHRISTOPHER R. HILL – 2010-2022

DAVID NIEMIEC – 2011-2020

CARLA H. SKODINSKI – 2009-2022

JOHN P. BIRKELUND † – 2000-2019

FREDERICK M. BOHEN † – 2003-2013

ZBIGNIEW BRZEZIŃSKI † – 2000-2015

COLIN G. CAMPBELL † – in 2000

JOHN H. D'ARMS † – 2000-2002

ROBERT G. FARIS † – 2000-2015

ALEKSANDER KOJ † – 2000-2010

NICHOLAS A. REY † – 2000-2009

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

* as of June 2025

President and Chief Executive Officer

JERZY KOŹMIŃSKI

Chief Operating Officer

Head of the Representative Office in Poland

GRZEGORZ JĘDRYS

Program Directors:

RADOSŁAW JASIŃSKI

JOANNA LEMPART

MARIANNA HAJDUKIEWICZ

AGNIESZKA MAZUR

Program Officers:

MIROSŁAW CZYŻEWSKI

KATARZYNA ŚWIĄTKIEWICZ

KALINA GRZESZUK-ZAJĄCZKOWSKA

Chief Accountant

AGNIESZKA KWIATKOWSKA

Programs' Financial Controller

JUSTYNA PODRAZA

Public Relations Specialist

PRZEMYSŁAW ZAROŃ

Consultant

MACIEJ MAKULSKI

Accounting

GRAŻYNA SKRZYPIEC

Assistants / Administration:

JULIA CHĘCIŃSKA

JULIA SOWA

TOMASZ WOJCIECHOWSKI

IZABELA KOPCZYK (*maternity leave*)

Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer

Secretary to the Board of Directors

NORMAN E. HASLUN III

Senior Consultant

C. DOUGLAS ADES

POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION

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