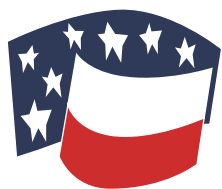


2000-20**25 YEARS**
POLISH-AMERICAN
FREEDOM FOUNDATION

WARSAW 2025



2000-20**25 YEARS**

**POLISH-AMERICAN
FREEDOM FOUNDATION**

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Warsaw 2025

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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 publication summarizing a quarter-century of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation's programmatic activity.

The establishment of the Foundation was made possible by the success of the Polish-American Enterprise Fund, which was created at the initiative of U.S. President George H. W. Bush under the "Support for Democracy in Eastern Europe Act" and passed by the U.S. Congress in 1989. During the 1990s, the Enterprise Fund was very active and efficient in supporting the development of a full-fledged market economy in Poland. Thanks to its targeted investments, the Fund was able to generate a robust return on the original fund of \$240 million that had been granted by Congress. As agreed by the governments of Poland and the United States the Fund returned half of its initial capital – \$120 million – to the U.S. budget while the other half, along with the entire surplus – in total \$255 million – was earmarked for the newly established Polish-American Freedom Foundation's endowment.

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. Two key themes have come to define its programs from the very beginning: levelling the playing field in education, along with improving the general quality of education, and supporting the development of local communities, which also contributes to building social capital. We were guided by the conviction that social capital, which fosters the growth of cooperation networks

within communities, and education – its quality and accessibility – were paramount for the country's long-term development. There were, of course, other factors at play but we chose to focus our efforts on these two, believing that we would be able to meaningfully contribute to them in the long run.

Over the course of its twenty-five years, 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 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 currently 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" (RITA) program, and over 1,000 graduates of the Lane Kirkland Scholarship Program.

Most of the Foundation's programs were designed with a long-term perspective, ensuring they would reinforce and complement one another. The intention was for the initiatives supported by our programs to continue beyond the duration of PAFF's funding. The Foundation focused on those projects that could be replicated in other locations and communities. Each program placed strong emphasis on engaging local project leaders and building networks for cooperation and the sharing of experiences. Almost all the Foundation's programs were subject to external evaluation.

This anniversary offers a timely opportunity to showcase the outcomes of projects the Foundation has carried out 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 program not only transformed the work of participating teachers and principals but also exerted a tangible influence on the entire education system in Poland. Best practices promoted over the years, such as formative assessment, have now become embedded in mainstream education.

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. Now in its 25th year, the "Act Locally" program has evolved through a long path of organic development and stands out as a unique initiative at the European level. 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" (RITA) program 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 the following years the Foundation launched a series of other programs, most of which are still ongoing. 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 curriculum was developed in collaboration between PAFF and Columbia University Teachers College in New York and has, since its inception, been setting new standards in the professional training of teachers. 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 in support of 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. Bohen, Colin G. Campbell, John H. D'Arms, Robert G. Faris, Aleksander Koj and Nicholas A. Rey.

In this anniversary year, 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 this 25-year chapter with a sense of tasks well-accomplished. Throughout this time 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 wave of the 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.

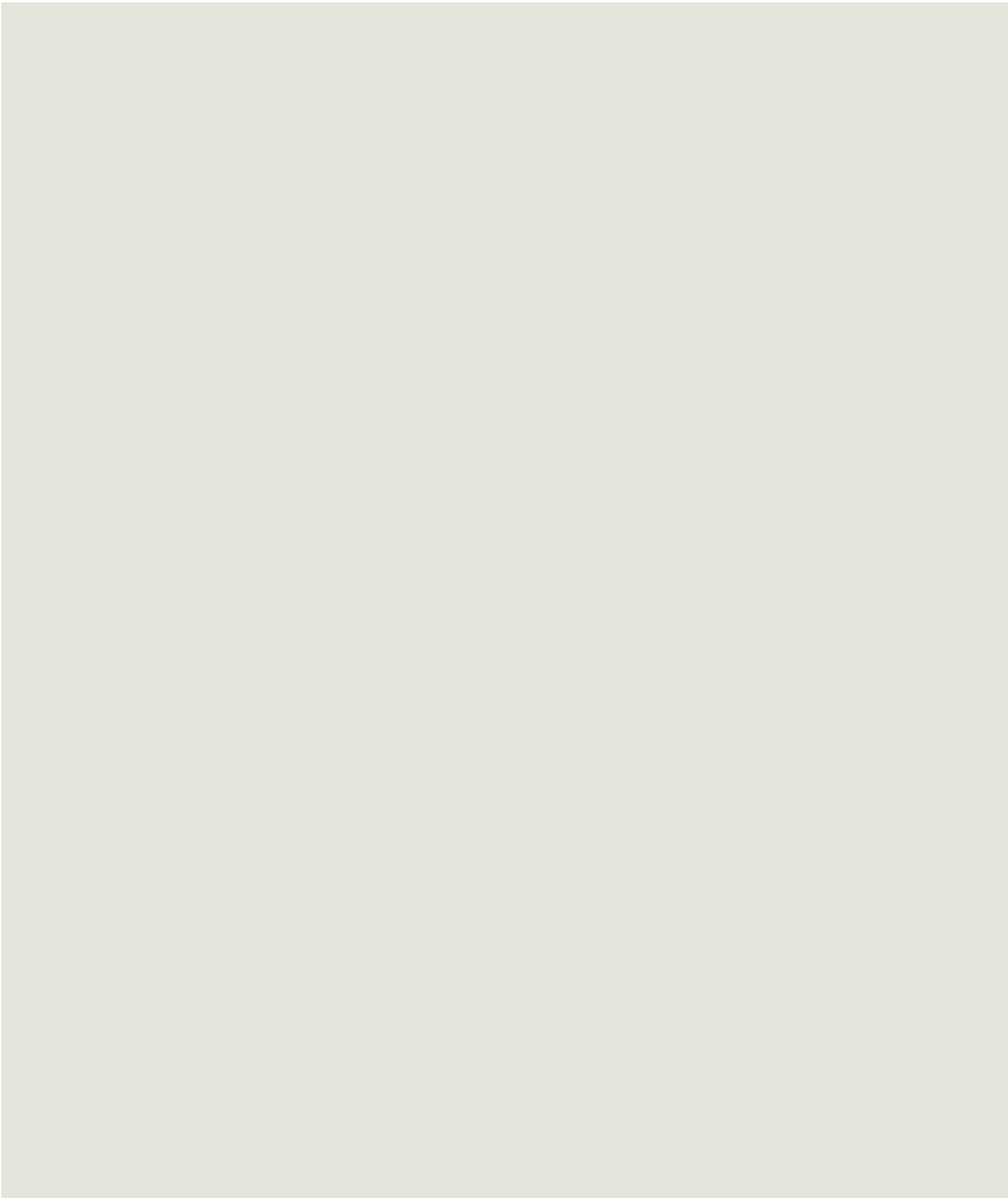


Andrew Nagorski
Chairman of the Board of Directors



Jerzy Koźmiński
President and Chief Executive Officer

New York/Warsaw, May, 2025



FROM THE PAFF HISTORY

1989

U.S. President George H. W. Bush addresses the Polish Sejm and announces the active participation of the USA in construction of a market economy in Poland through creation of the Polish-American Enterprise Fund, among other means.



1989

JUNE

After the Roundtable Talks and the June 4 elections, Poland embarks on the road of profound political transformation.



NOVEMBER

U.S. Congress passes the "Support for the East European Democracy" Act, the basis for establishing the Polish-American Enterprise Fund (PAEF).

1990

MAY

The Polish-American Enterprise Fund starts operations. John P. Bireklund is appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors and Robert G. Faris becomes President and CEO of the Fund.



1992

AUGUST

PAEF initiates the formation of the Enterprise Investors Group to manage PAEF's investments. Today, Enterprise Investors is the region's leading private equity fund manager.

1999

JUNE

President Aleksander Kwaśniewski presents PAEF with a Special Economic Award, which is received by Ambassador Nicholas A. Rey on behalf of the Fund. John P. Bireklund, Chairman of the PAEF Board of Directors, is awarded the Commander's Cross with Star of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland. Having invested in more than 50 Polish businesses, the Fund has established and developed many companies and institutions; to this day, these enterprises continue to play an important role in the economy. PAEF has also initiated loan schemes for SMEs of nearly 100,000 entrepreneurs, as well as contributing to the establishment of five banks in Poland. The PAEF's investment activity helped increase its initial capital of \$240 million by more than 50%. Funds amounting to half of the Fund's initial capital – \$120 million – were returned to the U.S. budget in 2001.

AUGUST

Establishing of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation by PAEF. The first Board of Directors included Marek Belka, Joseph C. Bell, John. P. Bireklund (Chairman), Michał Boni, Zbigniew Brzeziński, John D'Arms, Robert G. Faris, Aleksander Koj, Krzysztof Pawłowski, and Nicholas A. Rey. With the consent of the U.S. Congress and in accord with the Government of the Republic of Poland, a gradual transfer of funds to the Foundation by the Enterprise Fund begins – the first installment being \$40 million.

2000

Opening of the Representative Office of the Foundation in Warsaw, with the consent and support of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Bronisław Geremek.



2000

MARCH

The Board of Directors approves the main programmatic areas for the Foundation: initiatives in education, development of local communities, and sharing the Polish experience in transformation. Jerzy Koźmiński, Polish Ambassador to the U.S. in 1994-2000, becomes President and CEO of the Foundation.

The PAFF Board of Directors meets with Foreign Minister Bronisław Geremek.



MAY

The Foundation launches its first programs.

2001

JULY

Poland suffers a devastating flood. In cooperation with the "Rzeczpospolita" daily, the Foundation awards grants to the schools that were most affected, located mainly in rural areas. Additionally, almost 200 small businesses receive preferential loans to repair damages caused by the flood; the loans supported by the Foundation were from the PAEF's Micro Fund.

OCTOBER

Launching of the "Equal Opportunities" program aimed at leveling the playing field in education for children and young people from rural areas and small towns.

NOVEMBER

Representatives of the Foundation and the Polish-American Enterprise Fund are received by U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell.



2002

MAY

Initiation of the Bridge Scholarships Program for talented young people from villages and small towns.



MAY

The Foundation becomes a partner and founder of the "Benefactor of the Year" competition, which promotes socially responsible companies.

JULY

Conclusion of the second edition of the Lane Kirkland Scholarship Program with the participation of Irene Kirkland and Speaker of the Sejm Marek Borowski.



SEPTEMBER

Launch of the "Citizen and Law" program aimed at developing various forms of civic and legal counseling.



2005

Members of the PAFF Board are received by the President of Poland Aleksander Kwaśniewski.

2003

JANUARY

Grant competitions at the local community level are launched as part of the "Act Locally" program.



JUNE

In a referendum, Poles decide that Poland should join the European Union. The Foundation initiates the "EURO-NGO" program to prepare Polish non-governmental organizations to acquire EU funds.

2004

JANUARY

Assets of the Foundation's endowment exceed \$200 million thanks to another transfer from the Polish-American Enterprise Fund.

FEBRUARY

As part of the "Region in Transition" (RITA) program, the "Study Tours to Poland" initiative is launched in which every year several hundred representatives of various environments and professional groups, mainly from Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, and Georgia, participate.



MAY

Prime Minister Marek Belka is a special guest at the finale of the 3rd round of the "Act Locally" program.



SEPTEMBER

Interklasa.pl is rated the best educational portal in Poland by the "Komputer Świat" magazine.



2005

MAY

The year of the fifteenth anniversary of the Polish-American Enterprise Fund and the fifth anniversary of the Foundation. Among the guests are former President of Poland Lech Wałęsa and Speaker of the Sejm Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz.



AUGUST

Grzegorz Jędrzyński takes over the post of the Head of the Representative Office of the Foundation in Poland, formerly held by Ryszard Kruk.



2007

Two former Polish Prime Ministers – Professor Jerzy Buzek and Professor Marek Belka – conduct classes for schoolchildren as part of the “Student Volunteers” program.

2006

MARCH

Finale of the “Transparent Poland” campaign, promoting high standards in the functioning of local governments and cooperation between citizens and local authorities. Certificates are presented to 403 local governments by representatives of several organizations that carried out the program together with PAFF.



2007

FEBRUARY

The Foundation establishes cooperation with the world's largest non-governmental grant-making institution, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which results in the decision to launch the Library Development Program in Poland.



2008

MARCH

The Polish-American Freedom Foundation establishes the Information Society Development Foundation to implement the Library Development Program.

JUNE

Signing of a cooperation agreement between the Foundation and the Ministry of Culture and the National Heritage for the development and modernization of public libraries.



SEPTEMBER

The first visit to the U.S. by participants and alumni of the “PAFF Leaders” program.

OCTOBER

The International Economic Forum in Krynica presents PAFF with the Award for Central and Eastern European's Non-governmental Organization of the Year 2008.



NOVEMBER

George Zamka, the space shuttle “Endeavour” commander, visits Poland at the invitation of the Foundation and the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw. He meets with schoolchildren participating in the Foundation's educational programs.



2009

PAFF, as a partner of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, signs a grant agreement for the implementation of the Library Development Program in Poland. The total grant from the Gates Foundation is \$31 million.



2009

FEBRUARY

The Foundation co-establishes the "Shipyard" Center for Social Innovation and Research, whose aim is to effectively combine the theory and practice of civic activities.

FEBRUARY

The Foundation becomes a partner to the "Philanthropy Stars" competition, recognizing socially active public figures.



MARCH

Purchasing of the property at 48 Królowej Marysieńki Street, Warsaw, where the seat of PAFF's Head Office in Poland is to be built.

JULY

The first group of teachers participating in the "English Teaching" program takes part in a TESOL Summer Institute training program run by Gonzaga University, U.S.



JULY

1,873 libraries qualify for the first round of the Library Development Program.



AUGUST

Signing of a three-year agreement between the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Administration, the Information Society Development Foundation and the Telekomunikacja Polska Group, under which the TP Group offers free Internet access to all public libraries in Poland and exempts them from subscription fees.



OCTOBER

Inauguration of the Teacher Internet Academy with participation of the Minister of National Education Katarzyna Hall.

2010

The 10th anniversary of the Foundation's celebration attended by the Sejm Speaker and the Acting President of Poland Bronisław Komorowski, Prime Minister Donald Tusk, and Ministers: Radosław Sikorski, Katarzyna Hall, Krzysztof Kwiatkowski and Michał Boni.



2010

APRIL

After the tragic Smolensk air crash, the Foundation becomes involved in the establishment of the Tenth of April Foundation (now: the Grow Up With Us Foundation) to support the children who lost their parents while performing official civil service duties.

MAY

The 10th anniversary of the Foundation's celebration is attended by a group of American astronauts. The guests also include representatives of non-governmental organizations and PAFF partners – its Program Mangers, civic leaders, scholarship holders, representatives of schools and libraries. Congratulations and words of recognition of PAFF's achievements are sent by U.S. President Barack Obama, President of the European Parliament Jerzy Buzek and two former Polish Presidents – Lech Wałęsa and Aleksander Kwaśniewski.



JUNE

The Foundation becomes involved in assistance to schools, libraries and local civic organizations in rural areas and small towns affected by a flood, in cooperation with the Center for Citizenship Education Foundation, the Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland, and the Information Society Development Foundation.

SEPTEMBER

The funds earmarked by the Foundation for its programmatic activities since 2000 exceed \$100 million.

OCTOBER

In cooperation with the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw, the Foundation launches the Polish-American Internship Initiative – summer internships in major American corporations for Polish students involved in PAFF's programs.



OCTOBER

The "Scholarships in Polish Education" conference is attended by Harriet Mayor Fulbright, widow of the late Senator J. William Fulbright.





2011

Opening of the new Head Office of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation in Poland, with participation of Minister Michał Boni, Minister Jacek Michałowski, and U.S. Ambassador to Poland Lee Feinstein.

2011

JANUARY

Construction of the Head Office of the Foundation in Poland begins. Thanks to swift and efficient work, the Foundation moves to its new headquarters ten months later.



MARCH

1,454 libraries qualified for the second round of the Library Development Program, joining the libraries that are already participating in the first round. The program covers a total of 3,327 libraries.

JUNE

At the Commemoration of the June '76 Protests, the President of Poland, Bronisław Komorowski, visits the ARKA Association in Radom and meets participants of the "PROJECTOR - Student Volunteers" program.



JULY

The first group of 22 participants of the "Bridge Scholarships" and "PROJECTOR - Student Volunteers" programs take part in summer internships in the U.S. under the Polish-American Internship Initiative.

JULY

The 10th jubilee of the Lane Kirkland Scholarship Program. President Bronisław Komorowski addresses the conference participants in a letter, read aloud by Minister Jacek Michałowski, Head of the Chancellery of the President of Poland. Other conference guests include Professor Leszek Balcerowicz, Minister Michał Boni, Minister Beata Stelmach, and U.S. Ambassador to Poland Lee Feinstein.



DECEMBER

President Bronisław Komorowski decorates former President of the Polish-American Enterprise Fund and member of PAFF's Board of Directors, Robert G. Faris, with the Commander's Cross with Star of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland.





2012

The Information Society Development Foundation is presented with the prestigious "E-Inclusion Award" for implementation of the Library Development Program in a competition organized by the European Commission.

2012

JANUARY

Launching of the "ICT for Local Development" program (now called "Sector 3.0").



MARCH

Former President of Poland, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, visits PAFF's new Head Office in Poland.



MAY

John P. Birkelund, founding Chairman of the PAFF's Board of Directors decides to step down. Andrew Nagorski, award-winning journalist and writer, former foreign correspondent and Senior Editor of Newsweek International, is elected as the Board's new Chairman.



JUNE

Polish-American Internship Initiative participants meet with Michael Camunez, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Market Access and Compliance at the U.S. Department of Commerce, during his visit to Warsaw.



JULY

The Modern Patriotism project is implemented as part of the "PROJECTOR - Student Volunteers" program with participation of ministers and advisors from the Chancellery of the President of Poland.

OCTOBER

The first Forum of Young Discoverers' Clubs is held at the Copernicus Science Center, Warsaw, under an agreement between PAFF and the Copernicus Science Center, concluded in July, to develop a network of almost 300 Clubs operating all over Poland.

NOVEMBER

The inaugural ceremony of the 11th edition of the Bridge Scholarships Program is held at the Belvedere Presidential Residence with the attendance of the First Lady Anna Komorowska, who assumed patronage over the 10th jubilee edition of the program.





2013

Launching of the Warsaw Euro-Atlantic Summer Academy (WEASA) – a joint initiative of the Foundation, the College of Europe, and the German Marshall Fund of the United States. The inauguration is attended by Günter Verheugen, former Deputy Chairman of the European Commission, and Professor Leszek Balcerowicz along with other distinguished guests.

2013

JANUARY

Beginning of the third round of the Library Development Program, made possible by the efficient management of funds granted by the Gates Foundation, along with PAFF's financial contributions. Within three rounds, support is provided to a total of 3,808 libraries.



JANUARY

PAFF establishes the Academy of Civic Organizations Foundation to put into action a program to build competencies and develop skills of NGO managers.



MAY

The Foundation becomes a partner of the Polish round of the international TechCamp conference – an initiative of the U.S. Department of State.



JULY

U.S. Ambassador to Poland Stephen Mull meets student-volunteers of the "PROJECTOR – Student Volunteers" program at Kazimierz Wielki University of Bydgoszcz.



SEPTEMBER

PAFF establishes the Foundation for Quality Education, whose aim is to support development of Polish education by improving the quality of teacher education.

OCTOBER

The finale of the 3rd round of the "PAFF Local Partnerships" program and presentation of awards in the "Civic Leader of the Year" Competition of the Newsweek Polska weekly. The event is attended by Minister of Labor and Social Policy Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz.



OCTOBER

Minister of Culture and the National Heritage Bogdan Zdrojewski is a special guest of the Library Congress.





The Foundation receives the Freedom Award presented by the Atlantic Council. The statuette is presented to PAFF President Jerzy Koźmiński by Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski.

2014

2014

FEBRUARY

In response to the dramatic events in Ukraine special funds under the "RITA" program are made available to support activities addressed to Ukrainian partners.

FEBRUARY

PAFF supports celebrations of the 25th anniversary of Poland's transformation as part of the Together '89 Initiative as well as the 100th anniversary of the births of Jan Nowak-Jeziorański and Jan Karski.

JUNE

Members of the PAFF Board of Directors take part in celebrations of the 25th anniversary of Poland's political breakthrough, at a dinner with U.S. President Barack Obama along with other heads of states and governments.



JULY

NGOs that participate in the Foundation programs and have been celebrating the 25th anniversary of Poland's transformation since the beginning of the year, organize hundreds of initiatives with the participation of local communities as part of the Together '89 Initiative.



DECEMBER

Chairman Andrew Nagorski, accompanied by Grzegorz Jędrzyński and Joanna Lempart, pays a visit to PAFF programs' participants in the areas of Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Radom, and Stoczek Łukowski.

2015

MAY

Celebrations of the 15th anniversary of the Foundation are attended by the First Lady Anna Komorowska, former Prime Minister of Poland and former Speaker of the European Parliament, Jerzy Buzek, and U.S. Ambassador to Poland Stephen Mull.



MAY

The Foundation receives congratulation letters from President of Poland Bronisław Komorowski, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, and former Presidents of Poland Lech Wałęsa and Aleksander Kwaśniewski.

MAY

Joseph C. Bell, C. Douglas Ades, and Norman E. Haslun III are awarded high state decorations for supporting the Polish transformation by President of Poland Bronisław Komorowski.



OCTOBER

The Commissioner for Human Rights Dr. Adam Bodnar is a special guest of the Civic Activity Festival – an event marking the 15th anniversary of the "Act Locally" program.



2017

The "English Teaching" program receives a prestigious award of the European Language Label – a certificate of high quality education provided in the language education sector.

2016

MARCH

Andrew Nagorski, accompanied by Grzegorz Jedrys and Joanna Lempart, visits beneficiaries of the Foundation local programs in Warka and Bończa, the Mazowieckie Province.



JULY

Madeleine Albright, U.S. Secretary of State between 1997-2001, is the special guest of the Warsaw Euro-Atlantic Summer Academy (WEASA).



NOVEMBER

Andrew Nagorski visits the PAFF and UW School of Education, to attend classes for teachers of the Polish language and literature and to meet with the staff and students.



JULY

The School of Education of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation and the University of Warsaw is established: an innovative initiative in training future teachers.



2017

APRIL

The PAFF and UW School of Education receives the Quality Label – an award in the "Studies with a Good Future" competition organized by the Foundation for Development of Education and Higher Education in Poland.

SEPTEMBER

The 10th anniversary of the PAFF's participation in the International Visitor Leadership Program: U.S. Ambassador to Poland Paul W. Jones receives 100 PAFF local leaders who have been participants of study visits to the United States.



NOVEMBER

The ceremony of the 15th anniversary of the Bridge Scholarships Program. From 2002 to 2017, the program awarded 21,000 scholarships.

2018

Minister of Digitization Marek Zagórski, EU MP Michał Boni, President of the Polish Humanitarian Action Janina Ochojska, and Head of the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity Jerzy Owsiak, are special guests of the "Sector 3.0" Festival.



2018

MARCH

PAFF supports the "Our Independent" Initiative – a nation-wide civic platform for cooperation of those NGOs that are celebrating the 100th anniversary of Poland's regaining its independence.



SEPTEMBER

PLN 600,000 is awarded to seven new PAFF Local Partnerships and three start-up projects created in the course of the 6th round of the program.



OCTOBER

184 PAFF Leaders participate in local government elections. 83 of them are elected.

OCTOBER

The "PAFF Local Partnerships" program is a partner of the 13th Civic Congress and the organizer of its thematic panel: "Local Communities – How To Build Them And Tap Into Their Power".



NOVEMBER

The "Sector 3.0" program is a finalist in the European Digital Skills Awards competition, within the Digital Skills for All category.

2019

MARCH

The 10th, jubilee, round of the "Civic Leader of the Year" competition of the Newsweek Polska weekly. The "Civic Leader of the Decade" award is granted posthumously to Piotr Pawłowski, founder of the Friends of Integration Association and the Integration Foundation.

SEPTEMBER

As the "Study Tours to Poland" program turns 15, more than 10,000 active university students and professionals from Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia have visited Poland since 2004.



NOVEMBER

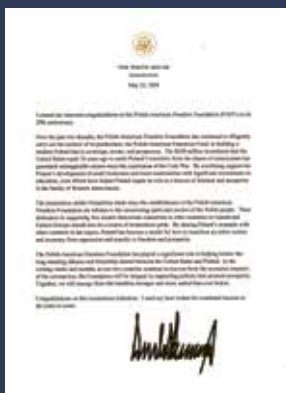
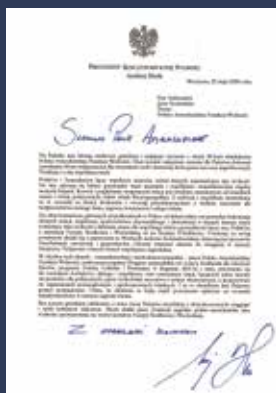
The Commissioner for Human Rights Adam Bodnar participates in the 10th jubilee Library Congress.



DECEMBER

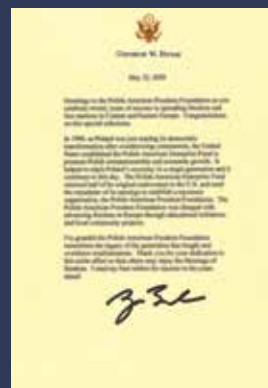
Andrew Nagorski, accompanied by Grzegorz Jędrzyński and Joanna Lempart, visits participants of PAFF programs in the Wołomin and Legionowo districts.





On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, the Foundation receives congratulatory letters from President Andrzej Duda and President Donald Trump. PAFF is also honored with congratulatory letters from former Polish Presidents Lech Wałęsa, Aleksander Kwaśniewski and Bronisław Komorowski, as well as former U.S. Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

2020



2020

FEBRUARY

The COVID-19 pandemic necessitates significant shifts in PAFF's programs. Sanitary restrictions permit only online conferences, seminars, workshops and other meetings. In response to the pandemic-related challenges, PAFF introduces new programmatic offerings.



APRIL

The Foundation launches the "Relief Fund for Non-Governmental Organizations and Civic Initiatives" – a program to support NGOs amid the COVID-19 pandemic to mitigate its negative effects.

DECEMBER

Over the first year of the pandemic the Foundation contributes a total of \$1.6 million to support NGOs and civic initiatives.



2021

JANUARY

In the fourth round of the Library Development Program another 247 libraries from villages and small towns with up to 50,000 residents receive support.



OCTOBER

Andrew Nagorski, along with Grzegorz Jędrzyński and Agnieszka Mazur, visit participants of the PAFF's new "Green Leader" program in Klembów.



NOVEMBER

As part of the "Pro Publico Bono" program, PAFF launches "Media Forum. Local Development" – a training project for local media journalists.



DECEMBER

Summarizing the first "Relief Fund" edition: grants totaling more than PLN 5 million have gone to 158 organizations across Poland to counter the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.





In response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, together with partner organizations, takes active steps in support of Ukraine. In both international and domestic programs the Foundation launches in-kind and financial support for civilians in Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees in Poland.

2022

2022

MARCH

The Foundation initiates "Support for Ukraine" – a special program with a budget of PLN 4 million.

Launch of the "Study Tours to Poland for Ukraine" initiative, in cooperation with the Leaders of Change Foundation and the Borussia Foundation, with a budget of nearly PLN 1 million.

Start of the "Act Locally and in Solidarity with Ukraine" project, in cooperation with the Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland – more than 200 projects aiding Ukrainian refugees receive some PLN 1 million in total. Also, PAFF Program Managers raise \$25 million from external sources for PAFF's domestic programs.

The Library Development Program launches the "Libraries for Ukraine" initiative to support libraries that help refugees.

Iryna Vereshchuk, Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine and Minister for Temporarily Occupied Territories, alumna of the Kirkland Program, expresses gratitude for the assistance delivered by the Polish-American Freedom Foundation and the Leaders of Change Foundation to Ukraine and refugees in Poland.



APRIL

Professor Lillia Hrynevich, Ukrainian Minister of Education and Science in 2016–2019, a Kirkland Program alumna, takes part in the first conference of Ukrainian refugee teachers residing in Poland, organized by the PAFF and UW School of Education.



MAY

"PROJECTOR" volunteers organize educational activities for more than 3,000 Ukrainian refugee children residing in Poland.

2023

JANUARY

Film premiere of "Treasure", attended by Nobel Prize Winner Olga Tokarczuk. Film production was made possible thanks to the support from the "Act Locally" program.



MAY

PAFF Board of Directors visits the School of Education. UW Rector Prof. Alojzy Nowak is in attendance.



MAJ

Angela Brav, PAFF Director, meets with the "Learning Schools" Program Team. The "Equal Opportunities" program wins the Janusz Korczak Award.

JUNE

Inauguration of the fifth round of the Library Development Program: 168 libraries join the program. Five LDP rounds had provided support to a total of 4,221 library facilities from 1,385 communities.

OCTOBER

PAFF Leaders – Iwona Karolewska and Marcin Skonieczka – win seats in parliamentary elections.

NOVEMBER

PAFF Leader Monika Horna-Cieślak is elected Commissioner for Children's Rights by the Sejm and the Senate.



DECEMBER

Review of the "Relief Fund for Non-Governmental Organizations and Civic Initiatives" program: 250 organizations have received support totaling nearly PLN 9 million.



U.S. Ambassador Mark Brzezinski attends a meeting of the PAFF Team with Partners from other non-governmental organizations that cooperate with PAFF.

2024

FEBRUARY

PAFF launches "Fostering Resilience in Children and Youth", a program that serves to strengthen the mental resilience of children and young people.



APRIL

152 PAFF Leaders run for mayor, governor or councilor in the local elections. 76 are successful.

MAY

PAFF Board of Directors visits the Nidzica Development Foundation "NIDA" in Kamionka. Agnieszka Kowalska, ambassador of the "English Teaching" program, conducts a demonstration class for children.



JUNE

Marek Kamiński, a traveler, philosopher, Guinness Prize winner, is a guest at the 20th English Teaching Market jubilee meeting.



SEPTEMBER

PAFF allocates a PLN 1 million from the budgets of its several programs to help flood victims.



OCTOBER

Agata Passent, Jerzy Baczyński, Andrzej Andrysiak, Michał Rusinek and Szymon Jadczyk attend as guests the summing-up meeting of the "Media Forum. Local Development" project.



HOW WE OPERATE

GOALS

The Polish-American Freedom Foundation was established with the double mission of:

- consolidating the results of the Polish changes triggered in 1989, with particular emphasis on evening out development opportunities,
- sharing Poland's experiences in transformation with other countries.

The Foundation pursues the first goal in two programmatic areas:

- leveling the playing field in education, combined with improving the overall quality of education,
- supporting local community development and civic initiatives within those communities, which also contributes to building social capital.

In Poland the Foundation operates primarily in rural areas and small towns. This approach follows from PAFF's decision, in 2000, to focus on those groups and communities that needed special support during the transformation.

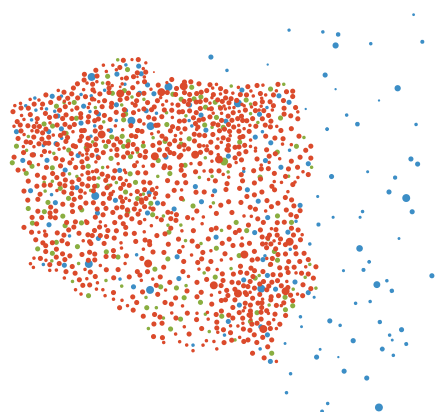
While designing its programs, the Foundation continued to be guided by the belief that social capital, which fosters the growth of cooperation networks within communities, and education – its quality and accessibility – are of crucial importance for the country's long-term development.

MODE OF OPERATION

The Foundation pursues its objectives through close cooperation with a group of Polish non-governmental organizations. Each of them acts as a PAFF Program Manager. Decisions on providing a grant, a scholarship or some other form of support under individual programs of the Foundation are made by selection committees composed of independent experts.

THE FOUNDATION

designs a program in consultation with third sector partners, provides funding followed by close cooperation with the Program Manager, monitors and evaluates the implementation, results and further prospects for the program.



PROGRAM MANAGERS

receive funds for programs from the Foundation, and manage them in line with guidelines and procedures agreed with PAFF.

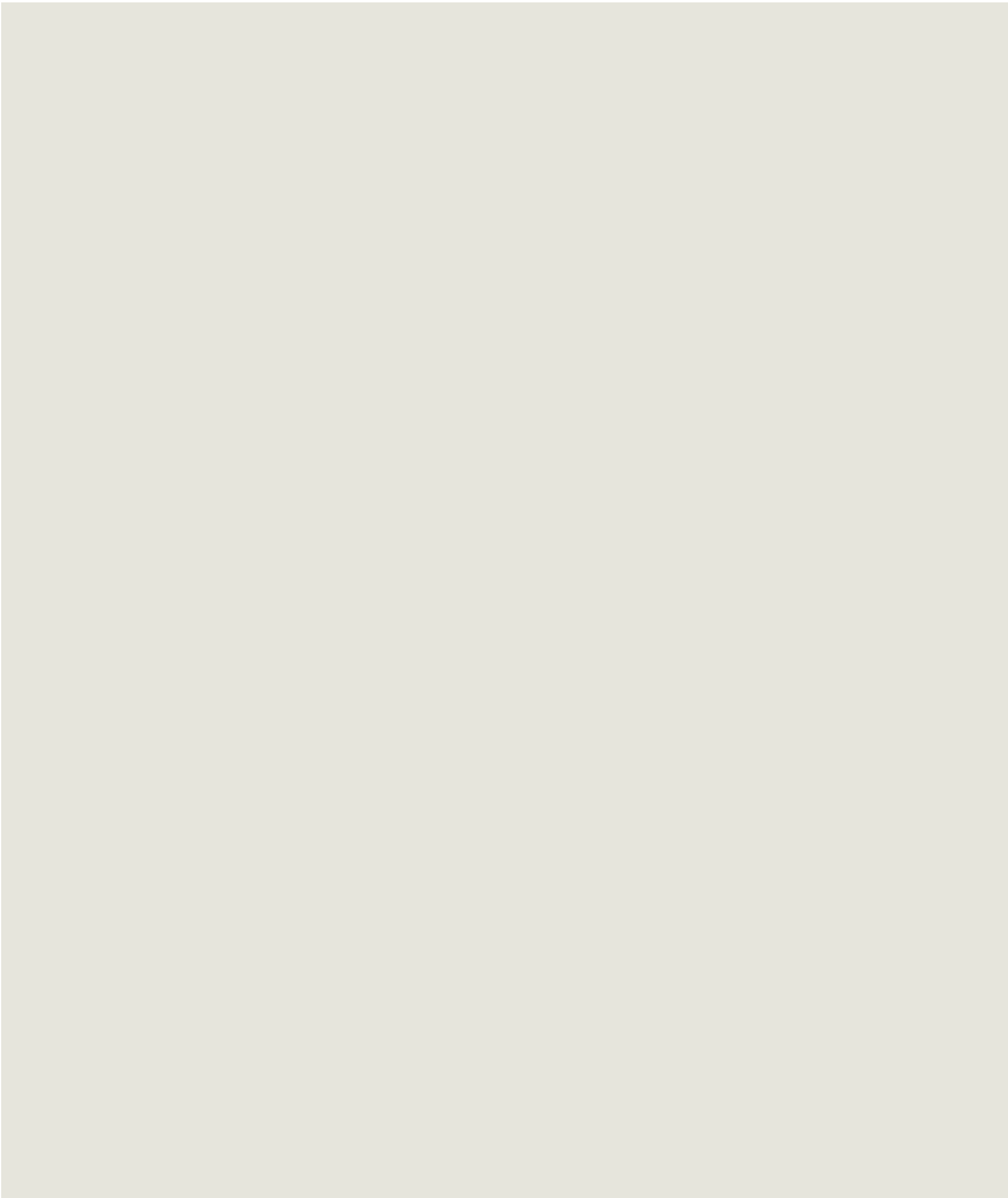
PROGRAMS

Those interested in receiving support apply directly to the Program Manager; in the case of grants and scholarships, the decisions are made by selection committees composed of independent experts appointed by the Foundation.

MAXIMIZING THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF PAFF PROGRAMS

Over the past 25 years, in order to most effectively pursue its goals, the Foundation has developed and implemented the following approaches and guidelines:

	<p>1. LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE</p> <p>PAFF has planned that the majority of its programs be long-term, enabling to achieve the desired changes, having the ability to adapt to emerging new challenges and opportunities.</p>	
<p>2. SYNERGY OF EFFECTS</p> <p>The Foundation has designed its programs in such a way as to strengthen and complement each other, bringing about synergy.</p>		<p>3. SUSTAINABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>The Foundation has aimed at ensuring that its programs and the projects implemented within them bring permanent effects – that they continue to live and develop once PAFF ceases to fund them.</p>
<p>4. MODEL PROJECTS</p> <p>PAFF has paid special attention to the projects whose mechanisms and experience can be introduced in other regions or environments.</p>	<p>5. SUPPORT FOR LEADERS</p> <p>PAFF has attached special importance to cooperation with local leaders: to develop their knowledge and skills regardless of the type of program or project they are implementing.</p>	<p>6. NETWORKING</p> <p>When working with leaders, the Foundation has helped develop their networks so that they can inspire each other and share experience. Similar cooperation links are created for NGOs and other institutions participating in Foundation's programs.</p>
<p>7. BUILDING COALITIONS</p> <p>The Foundation has established broader coalitions to implement socially important goals by combining the resources of various partners. The Bridge Scholarships Program and the "Transparent Poland" initiative are examples of such undertakings.</p>		
<p>8. DEVELOPMENT OF THE THIRD SECTOR</p> <p>PAFF has strengthened the entire third sector's infrastructure in Poland as well as supporting the operational and programmatic capabilities of hundreds of individual civic organizations, primarily in villages and small towns.</p>	<p>9. EXTERNAL FUNDING</p> <p>The Foundation has attracted external funds to its programs, including \$31 million from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for the Library Development Program. PAFF Program Managers have played a vital role in raising additional funding, especially EU funds.</p>	



25 YEARS IN PAFF PROGRAMS

ACTIVE PROGRAMS
COMPLETED PROGRAMS

25 YEARS IN PAFF PROGRAMS

ACTIVE PROGRAMS

Initiatives in Education

Since inception the Foundation has recognized education as a high priority in its activities in Poland. That stems from the role education plays in nation's overall development. Its accessibility and quality have a long-lasting impact on the attitudes, knowledge, competencies and skills of citizens.

The disparities in access to quality education and unequal starting points for rural and small-town youth are issues that continue to be a challenge to the country. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a serious impact on the well-being of children and youth.

For 25 years the Foundation has stayed the course of leveling the playing field in education and striving to improve education overall. The Foundation's steadfast commitment is to ensure that one's place of residence and financial standing should not be an obstacle to following one's life goals. To this end the Foundation offers grants for educational projects, training and workshops, for extra-curricular school, and language classes. These are addressed mainly to children and youth from small localities. They can develop their passions and interests, learn to work in a group, and gain self-confidence.

Scholarships covering the first and successive years of academic study await those from rural areas and small towns who wish to enroll at universities. And, over the course of their studies, scholars are encouraged to share their knowledge and interests as volunteers through working with schoolchildren.

Quality education can be defined as a school that is open to change, staffed by well-prepared teachers who employ modern teaching methods, who know how to motivate students, cooperate with parents, and engage in the life of their local communities.

It is easier to unleash development potential through wide access to modern technologies. Therefore, the Foundation has a strong commitment to improving tech skills in teaching and self-education. It supports the development of teacher and school principal competencies, and helps educational institutions improve their work organization so that they can serve students to acquire knowledge as effectively as possible.

The Foundation also pursues initiatives which offer a comprehensive approach to building the mental resilience of children and young people.

Other PAFF's activities target seniors and focus on their social activation, primarily through intergenerational initiatives.

PAFF educational programs are diverse in form, but all share the common goal of strengthening opportunities for a better life and contributing to Poland's further advancement.

ENGLISH TEACHING

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

THE LEARNING SCHOOLS (LES)

BRIDGE SCHOLARSHIPS

PROJECTOR – STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

PAFF AND UW SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

FOSTERING RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

THIRD AGE UNIVERSITIES (TAU)



ENGLISH TEACHING

Introduced in 2000, “English Teaching” initiates and supports activities that promote the English language and improve the quality of its teaching among rural and small-town children and youth. And, the program serves their equal access to educational opportunities overall. These goals are achieved through the professional development of English language teachers who work in small localities.

Highlights of the “ET” offer are: methodology training and a grant competition for schools and non-governmental organizations operating in localities of up to 20,000 inhabitants, as well as individual consultancy and training for teachers. The program also runs “Weekends

with English Teaching” teacher training sessions, and the annual all-Poland “English Teaching Market” meetings primarily to expand cooperation networks that bring together English teachers from villages and small towns.

The initiative of the “English Teaching” Ambassadors, the program’s most active participants, led to the establishment of the Nationwide English Teachers Association – “English Teaching”. The Association supports the professional development of English teachers, especially from rural areas and small towns, as well as providing advocacy for them.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Nidzica Development Foundation “NIDA”
2000-2001 The Polish Children and Youth Foundation

englishteaching.org.pl

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For twenty-five years now, the “English Teaching” program has been changing the way English is taught in rural areas and small towns across Poland. This change is visible in teachers: in their professionalism and the quality of education provided. The approach of Polish schoolchildren is also evolving. English is no longer merely a subject; it is a language they use every day.

Justyna Kowalczyk,
“English Teaching” Program Coordinator

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$10,248,276*in PAFF grants***1,284***educational projects involving 75,000 school-children, 5,000 teachers and 200,000 local community members***9,000***people took part in “English Teaching Market” meetings***7,800***teachers participated in “Weekends with English Teaching” training*

During his travels across Poland, Douglas Ades, PAFF Senior Consultant, visited 68 schools, giving English lessons and encouraging 1,300 children to learn more about the United States of America, and to persist in improving their language skills in order to broaden their horizons.



European Language Label Awarded to “English Teaching”

In 2017 the “English Teaching” program received the prestigious European Language Label (ELL), a certificate of quality in language education awarded for applying innovative teaching techniques and promoting achievements in the field of language teaching didactics and methodologies.

“We are greatly pleased that ‘English Teaching’ has been recognized with this distinction”, said Justyna Kowalczyk, the Program Coordinator. The competition honors the most innovative initiatives conducive to the professional development of foreign language teachers and contribute to remedying deficiencies in student competencies. “The very same goals are behind the projects implemented by teachers and local leaders enrolled in the ‘English Teaching’ program”, Justyna emphasized.

The ELL’s underlying concept is to encourage foreign language learning and developing self-learning skills, as well as enhancing foreign language teachers’ competencies, raising awareness of cultural and language diversity in Europe and across the globe, along with intercultural dialogue, and promoting multilingual capabilities.

The European Language Label was introduced to Poland in 2001, and has since been awarded by the Polish National Agency of the Erasmus+ Program (i.e. the Foundation for the Development of the Education System), and the Ministry of National Education. The ELL winners receive certificates signed by the European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, and the Polish Minister of National Education.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The objective of this program, in operation since 2001, is to support civic initiatives that create equal opportunities for rural and small-town youth, giving them a good start to adulthood. “Equal Opportunities” achieves its aims by enhancing the skills of its target groups’ participants. The program fosters personal skills, such as the ability to plan one’s own activities, and develops social skills such as teamwork and securing the support necessary for fulfilling one’s goals.

The program invites non-governmental organizations, community centers and libraries to apply for grants to fund projects which stimulate cognitive and creative aspirations in children and youth, shape their active and open attitudes, and inspire actions that benefit their

environment. The program’s offer includes training sessions for local project coordinators that help improve their qualifications in conducting initiatives for young people with their active involvement. The “Equal Opportunities” offer would not be complete without the Summer School for Young Leaders. Each edition attracts more than 20 participants of “Equal Opportunities” projects.

The Foundation also supports the “Young Explorers’ Clubs”, an initiative launched as a follow-up to one of the program’s past model projects. By now, the “Young Explorers’ Clubs” network embraces nearly 1,300 units; over 200 operate in Georgia and several dozen in other countries.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Civis Polonus Foundation

2001-2020 The Polish Children and Youth Foundation

rownacszanse.pl

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“Equal Opportunities” is a program where we really help young people. We know what actions we need to take because we listen to their needs. We want to support them, not be yet another problem they have to face.

Mirosław Czyżewski
PAFF Program Officer

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$19,657,147*in PAFF grants***3,500***projects to level
the playing field
in education***155,000***project
participants***1,300***Young Explorer
Clubs*

Paweł Walecki: I placed my trust in the young

Paweł Walecki perfectly understands the “Equal Opportunities” program participants. Just 20 years ago, he was one of them – a small-town teenager. Today, he is the program’s national coordinator.

He first came across “Equal Opportunities” at his high school in Stoczek Łukowski. Encouraged by a classmate, he signed up for the “From Stoczek to Broadway” project. Formed by teenagers, the group was tasked with preparing a musical about their town. The show was a success, as well as a catalyst for new projects which were implemented in successive “Equal Opportunities” rounds. The young people shot promotional videos for Stoczek Łukowski and organized an outdoor urban game. Although he rose to project coordinator

in just a year and worked with various initiatives, Paweł’s fondest memory is of the musical. Perhaps because it brought him and his future wife together.

Paweł holds a graduate degree in political science from the Siedlce-based Academy of Podlasie, as well as one in administration from the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw. After becoming the youngest member to sit on the Stoczek Łukowski town council, he moved on to work at the Ministry of Administration and Digitization.

Paweł has coordinated the “Equal Opportunities” program at two foundations: the Polish Children and Youth Foundation since 2014, and the Civis Polonus Foundation for several

years now. His responsibilities include training and monitoring. Every year he visits nearly 90 villages and small towns to talk to project participants. “At first, young people don’t want to take matters into their own hands. My role is to help them realize that they should firmly believe in themselves,” Paweł stressed. The further into the project they move, the more confident they usually become. “They are pleased. They tell me that they got someone to give them a workshop in graphic design, designed a leaflet themselves, then compared quotes from three companies and successfully negotiated a considerable discount. They are happy about their success and I am happy I trusted them”, said Paweł.



THE LEARNING SCHOOLS (LES)

Under the program, implemented since 2000, comprehensive activities have been conducted to improve the quality of Polish education on the basis of the best foreign models as well as the Foundation's own experiences. The goal is to raise the level of Polish schools' operations, especially those in rural areas and small towns, chiefly by improving the teaching methods and techniques of teachers.

Higher quality is achieved by introducing a "LES" quality assurance system into daily school operation. As a result, learning outcomes improve and pupil development is supported. "LES" works with schools primarily by using formative assessment, as well as other pupil-centered learning strategies. The "LES" training offer covers long-term activities for holistic school development,

year-long e-learning courses for teachers, one-day workshops for educational faculty boards, as well as Postgraduate Studies for Educational Leaders conducted in cooperation with Collegium Civitas. As a result, "LES" enhances teaching effectiveness, strengthens the autonomy of teaching teams, develops the school as a "learning organization" and promotes cooperation with the external environment.

An important part of "LES" is to promote the outcomes of expert analyses and present best practices in education, pupil guidance, and school organization. These are actively used to ensure continuous improvement of the education system. An expert team actively participates in "LES" activities and is involved in consulting new legal solutions.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Center for Citizenship Education Foundation

sus.ceo.org.pl

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Being part of "LES" benefits the entire school community. Young people start taking responsibility for their learning process and are better prepared for adulthood, teachers develop practical skills and learn innovative teaching methods, while principals gain the competencies necessary to run a modern school.

Marianna Hajdukiewicz
PAFF Program Director

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$17,094,951*in PAFF grants***12,000***schools covered by
the program***200,000***teachers – training
participants***11,000***school principals
covered by the program***“Resilient School” Campaign**

Starting from 2022, “Resilient School” activities have been focused on supporting Polish schools in integrating the 160,000 Ukrainian schoolchildren accepted into the Polish education system after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. The challenge was to help educational facilities prepare for coping with a mass influx of refugees. Polish schools had to introduce an effective system of communication, psychological support, and gradual integration of children into the learning process.

“A ‘Resilient School’ supports schoolchildren in difficult times, mobilizes resources in a crisis situation, and adapts quickly to new challenges”, explained Jędrzej Witkowski, PhD.

To date, the core part of the campaign, focused on Ukrainian pupil integration, has led to more than 128 educational events which attracted more than 86,000 participants. The campaign was funded by PAFF and other partners, including the Norwegian Refugee Council.



BRIDGE SCHOLARSHIPS

This program was launched in 2002 in response to the significant and persistent problem of the disparity in access to higher education between urban and rural youth. The underlying concept of this initiative was to help talented young people from villages and small towns, especially former state-owned farm areas, in making the decision to begin university studies by offering them first-year scholarships.

From the very outset, “Bridge Scholarships” has been a joint venture of many partners. At present, the scholarships are financed by the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, the Inter Cars Foundation, and the Klemm Family Foundation, as well as a coalition of several dozens of local NGOs. The program receives informational support from the National Center for Agricultural Support (KOWR, formerly, the Agricultural Property Agency) and is implemented in cooperation with the Professor Bronisław Geremek Center Foundation.

High-achieving scholarship holders are eligible for support in successive years of study: the “Top Student” competition is open to sophomores, while juniors and seniors can apply for corporate scholarships. Doctoral, language and “Study Abroad” scholarships are also available. The “Diploma of Dreams” campaign helps local NGOs create their own scholarship programs in keeping with the “Bridge Scholarships” concept. Moreover, the program offers summer internships in the United States organized in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw (the Polish-American Internship Initiative – PAII). Under the Bridge Scholarships Program PAFF also supports the *mojstypendium.pl* portal, and the “Good Scholarships” competition held by the “Good Network” Foundation, as well as the Entrepreneurship Olympics – a joint initiative of the Foundation for the Promotion and Accreditation of Economic Education, and Poland’s five largest business universities: the Warsaw School of Economics, and the Universities of Economics in Katowice, Kraków, Poznań, and Wrocław.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Educational Enterprise Foundation

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“Bridge Scholarships” are the result of collective action and the desire to do good. We all build this bridge together – both its creators and those who support the education of bridge scholars.

Dr Zofia Sapijaszka
President of the Educational
Enterprise Foundation

www.stypendia-pomostowe.pl www.paii.pl

FACTS AND FIGURES

31.427.240 USD*in PAFF grants***28,000***scholarships awarded,
including 19,000 for
the first year of study***PLN 149 million***earmarked for
scholarships by
program partners***126***students completed
internships in the USA
thanks to PAII*

Fot. Jacek Szabela

“Innovators Under 35” title awarded to Bridge Scholarships holder

In 2015 Katarzyna Nawrotek, PhD Eng., Bridge Scholar, received the title of “MIT Technology Review Innovator Under 35” in the first Polish edition of this prestigious competition which identifies young visionaries and innovators across the globe.

Our winner hails from Byszewy in the Łódź Province. Her adventure with the Bridge Scholarships program began in 2004, when she received support for her first year of study. “Thanks to financial support, I could focus on my scientific development, without having to take up gainful employment” stressed the Bridge Scholar.

Katarzyna holds a PhD in chemical engineering with a specialization in biomedical engineering. Her doctoral dissertation entitled “The kinetics of drug release from thermosensitive chitosan gels” focused on the use of biomaterials in terms of their potential use in controlled drug release and central nervous system regeneration. Katarzyna won the 2013/2014 Polish National Student-Inventor Competition of the Rector of the Kielce University of Technology, and received a gold medal from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in the “Best Female Inventor” category.

She is the co-author of seven patents granted by the Patent Office of the Republic of Poland.

Katarzyna Nawrotek conducts research in collaboration with scientists from national and international centers, including: the Faculty of Biology and Environmental Protection at the University of Łódź; Institut des Sciences du Mouvement at the Aix Marseille Université in France; the Faculty of Science and Engineering at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands; and Developmental and Disease Epigenomics at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research in Australia.



PROJECTOR – STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

The objective of this program, similar to other PAFF undertakings in education, is to create equal educational opportunities for children and youth living in rural areas and small towns. Groups of two to three university student-volunteers carry out self-designed projects which help extend knowledge and develop skills and interests in children and young people.

Program participants implement projects in their free time throughout the school year as well as during summer and winter breaks. They focus on several leading themes, such as responsible use of the Internet, ecology, healthy lifestyles, and building and maintaining social relationships. By promoting positive role models, the program

encourages pupils to develop their abilities, while fostering a sense of social responsibility among students and enabling them to pursue their own passions in an attractive formula.

Among the greatest benefits listed by students are: the opportunity to gain new practical experience, the development of social skills, and the positive impact of the program on shaping pro-community attitudes. Participating teachers appreciate that they can expand their educational offer and make their school's image more attractive, while participating children benefit mainly by developing competencies that facilitate group cooperation, and creative and critical thinking skills.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Educational Enterprise Foundation

2009-2016 The Foundation for the Development of Voluntary Service
2006-2009 The Polish Association of Pedagogues and Animators "Klanza"
2003-2005 The "Voluntary Service Center" Association



"PROJECTOR" shows children that science is fascinating. For one day, traditional lessons give way to captivating workshops held by student volunteers. The activities stimulate children's curiosity and help them discover their own interests.

Kamil Wrzos
Program Director

www.projektor.org.pl

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$8,983,889*in PAFF grants***45,000***educational projects
at 3,000 schools***16,000***student-volunteers***467,000***schoolchildren - project
participants*

Former Prime Ministers volunteer for “PROJECTOR”

Not just student-volunteers think summer vacation is a good time for implementing interesting educational projects. In 2007, two former Prime Ministers, Professor Jerzy Buzek and Professor Marek Belka, accepted the invitation extended by “PROJECTOR” to work as volunteers for the program.

Professor Jerzy Buzek dedicated his meetings to discussing and promoting the program. “There was a time when one had to die for Poland; now Poland needs one to work well and with a feeling of self-fulfillment”, said the former Prime Minister. He successfully proved his thesis by taking a volunteering

vacation to teach children through play. The nine-day-long tour across Poland kicked off in Wieprz with Professor Buzek’s class on European affairs. Children gathered in crowds at meetings with the former PM. Their enjoyment was best proven by such statements as: “I thought he would be stiff, but he’s cool. Not like the politicians I watch on TV”, said twelve-year-old Kamil Mazur from the Futoma Primary School after a game of soccer. Thirteen-year-old Przemek Rzęsa ran straight home to boast about scoring two goals against the former Prime Minister. Professor Buzek’s involvement showed that important public figures

can actively engage in local community life in a natural way, without expecting any political benefits. It was also very important for promoting the “PROJECTOR” program as a whole.

Professor Marek Belka is another important public figure who embarked on a similar task. He spent a week in the villages and small towns of the Roztocze Region, working with student-volunteers to hold classes for children. The former Prime Minister chose to focus mainly on the United Nations and global issues.



PAFF AND UW SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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

Daily in-school internships form an integral part of the School of Education's teacher training. Students both attend academic classes and spend time in real classrooms. They observe and conduct lessons, as well as participate in staff and parent-teacher meetings. Their school experiences are discussed on a regular basis during the academic part of the course.

Students are provided with individual guidance by the School of Education's tutors and mentors: the teachers who work at schools of practice. Academic classes are held in small groups. Strong emphasis is placed on discussion and regular reflection on one's individual learning progress.

The School of Education's classes are conducted by experienced school staff who are active in the area of education and provide diverse perspectives of in-service teachers, academics, and education enthusiasts. The School of Education's lecturers represent a variety of academic centers and have received training from leading U.S. and European teacher education experts.

Students may apply for a scholarship to help cover the costs of living and request a place in a UW dormitory.

The SE program also covers research aimed at scientific validation of the teaching methods and tools used in teacher education and students training. Tried-and-tested practices are widely promoted across schools, universities, and teacher training centers in Poland.

The Alumni Office offers long-term support to former SE students. Among other things, it helps them find employment in the teaching profession. Alumni collaborate with SE faculty to continuously improve their skills and exchange in-school experiences.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Foundation for Quality Education

www.szkoledukacji.pl



We invite students of the School of Education to join us on a journey toward anchoring modern teaching methodology in Polish schools, so as to ensure the development of all learners. For this journey we open our backpacks and pack cooperation, reflection, tools, openness to diversity and the passion of an explorer!

Profesor Jolanta Sujecka-Zajac
Director of the School of Education

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$9,787,264*in PAFF grants***220***alumni***11,000***teachers trained***21,000***people reached by SE promotion*

Professor Lillia Hrynevich visited the PAFF and UW School Of Education

“We need to develop a model for integrating Ukrainian pupils and teachers into the Polish education system. The PAFF and UW School of Education is a good example in this respect, as it shows that Ukrainian teachers are a group we should be working with”, stressed Professor Lillia Hrynevich, Ukrainian Minister of Education and Science in the years 2016–2019, a Sakharov Scholar, Lane Kirkland Scholarship holder, teacher, educational activist, co-initiator of the education reform in Ukraine, currently Vice Rector at Boris Hrinchenko Kyiv University, at a conference organized by the PAFF-UW School of Education in 2022, three months after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

The “Ukrainian Teacher in Poland” conference, organized by the PAFF and UW School of Education, brought together

Ukrainian teachers who found refuge in Poland after Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. SE faculty conducted workshops in teaching methodology, psychology and guidance, and mathematics. The need for exchanging experience and tightening cooperation between Polish and Ukrainian teachers was the focal point of the meeting with Roman Shyyan, a representative of the Reform Support Team of the Ukrainian Ministry of Education.

Professor Jolanta Sujecka-Zajac, Director of the PAFF and UW School of Education, pointed out that the conference focused not only on professional development, but also sought to give Ukrainian teachers a sense of belonging to a professional community and provide them with a platform to discuss the challenges they face.



FOSTERING RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

This latest undertaking of PAFF 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 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 becoming involved in social activities.

The program offers a comprehensive approach to building the mental resilience of children and young people. The activities aimed at teachers and implemented in schools are based on the long experience of the School with Class initiative. Participating NGOs, libraries and community centers provide offerings for those working outside of schools. The program attaches importance to building synergies between in-school and out-of-school activities by establishing cooperation networks of schools, libraries and NGOs.

PROGRAM MANAGERS:

The School with Class Foundation
The Education for Democracy Foundation

kursnaodpornosc.pl

”



"Fostering Resilience in Children and Youth" helps those who work with children and youth learn methods for building friendly relationships in a peer group, strengthening self-esteem, self-assessment, and digital hygiene. Participants also learn how to recognize the symptoms of mood disorders in the youngest children, and how to react to crisis situations.

Marianna Hajdukiewicz
PAFF Program Director

FACTS AND FIGURES (2024)

\$524,836*in PAFF grants***140***participating schools***30***NGOs, libraries and
community centers***400***teachers covered
by the program*

Building Resilience at Schools. From theory to practice

“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 a conference inaugurating the new edition of the “School with Class” initiative, implemented under PAFF’s “Fostering Resilience in Children and Youth” program.

In her speech, Minister Paulina Piechna-Więckiewicz placed special emphasis on carrying out preventive activities, while Marianna Hajdukiewicz, in her opening address, described

“School with Class” as an initiative that has been accompanying schools for more than 20 years and continues to respond to the current needs of pupils and teachers. “It offers support where it is needed most, so we are confident that it will effectively support the mental resilience of the youngest”, said the PAFF Program Director.

The following speakers addressed conference participants: Alicja Pacewicz, initiator of the “School with Class” undertaking and Chair of the School with Class Foundation Board; Professor Jacek Pyżalski of the Adam Mickiewicz University; psychologist and SWPS

lecturer Magdalena Śniegulska, PhD; Marta Badowska, principal of Elementary School No. 49 in Gdańsk; and psychologist Tomasz Kuźmicz, lecturer at SWPS and the PAFF and UW School of Education.

The meeting attracted more than 100 teachers. Participants discussed the mental health of schoolchildren and the necessary measures to support their development. It was unanimously agreed that building mental resilience among young people was crucial and required the implementation of long-term strategies that would support not only pupils but also teachers.



THIRD AGE UNIVERSITIES (TAU)

Launched in 2005, the program aims to promote educational and other activities for senior citizens, as well as to encourage the elderly to become socially involved. Program implementation consists mainly of supporting and promoting seniors' civic initiatives, and in harnessing their potential, knowledge, experience and time, to benefit their communities. Since inception the program supports the network of Third Age Universities (TAU).

Between 2005 and 2008, 131 grants were awarded to Third Age Universities in grant competitions for projects aimed at improving the quality of the TAU educational offer. In the following years the program offered

workshops and opportunities to exchange experiences at the TAU representatives' nationwide conferences and regional meetings. Since 2013, TAUs can participate in the "Third Age Universities for Local Communities" workshop cycle, which supports creating senior volunteer groups and their cooperation with local communities.

The "Seniors in Action" grant competition offers grants for intergenerational projects and social activation training for beneficiaries over 60 years of age. The competition targets both active seniors who take action as part of the TAU program, those associated with other organizations and institutions.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Association of the Creative Initiatives "ę"

2005–2008 The Foundation for Jagiellonian University

”



Seniors are not just recipients of the "TAU" offerings, they are also the animators and managers of valuable activities in their communities. Their initiatives contribute to solving local problems, counteracting senior loneliness, promoting an interesting range of activities for children, and creating intergenerational meeting spaces.

Katarzyna Świątkiewicz
PAFF Program Officer

www.pokoleniawakcji.pl

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$6,836,672*in PAFF grants***438***intergenerational projects***131***grants aimed at improving TAU offer quality***110***TAUs participating in the "TAU for Local Communities" workshops*

The Super Granny and Super Granddad School

The first such school was established in Lublin in 2008 at the initiative of Zofia Zaorska, PhD., an academic teacher, counselor, gerontologist, co-founder of the Third Age University in Lublin, and grandmother of three.

The project was conceived out of the need to support senior citizens in improving their relationships with grandchildren of preschool age and with these children's parents. Supplementing senior citizens' valuable experience with information on how to support child development, e.g. through creative play, is more than worthwhile. It is essential that grandmothers help parents out but refrain from interfering with child development and upbringing matters in which parents have sole com-

petence and responsibility. Super Granny and Super Granddad Schools teach many types of games for children as well as real and fictional storytelling, and encourage sharing experience in child development under the guidance of a counselor, a psychologist and a Super Mom – a person who is well-versed in using grandma help.

Meetings and workshops also provide an opportunity to discuss and reflect on such topics as what it means to love grandchildren differently than one's own children, and how to maintain contact with parents in difficult situations. Concerned about the personal development of its elderly students, the school also organizes relaxation activities and provides access to cultural events. Super Grandmas and Super Granddads

vary in terms of "years of service": some have a long track record, others are waiting for their first grandchild. "We are open to everyone; however, our intention is to ensure that the knowledge and skills we deliver are used not only when interacting with one's own grandchildren, but also to the benefit of children in orphanages, hospitals and families without contacts with the elderly", explained Zofia Zaorska.

"This initiative is right on target", claim school participants. Geographical spread is one measure of its success. Currently, Super Granny and Super Granddad Schools operate in Białystok, Kraków, Lublin, Ozimek, Poznań, Rajgard, Warsaw, and Wrocław.

25 YEARS IN PAFF PROGRAMS

ACTIVE PROGRAMS

Development of Local Communities

The Foundation attaches particular importance to initiatives that build and strengthen social capital – its level largely determines the development opportunities of both smaller and larger communities.

PAFF seeks to stimulate and support grassroots initiatives in education, culture, social welfare, and economic activity. This is made possible by the Foundation's grants for civic projects, as well as for training community leaders and facilitating their exchange of experiences. The Foundation's programs foster action in support of jointly set goals, contributing to the development of cooperation between residents, local authorities, NGOs, as well as local media and business. This often leads to the building of permanent multi-sector coalitions that work together for the common good.

Well-functioning civic organizations and initiatives of active local leaders help stimulate development aspirations and solve the problems of local communities. The Foundation not only supports their projects, but also boosts the institutional capacity of NGOs, while attempting to strengthen third-sector infrastructure.

The Foundation's activities also serve to increase digital literacy, both among representatives of NGOs and entire local communities, thus contributing to information society development. Thanks to PAFF's partnership with the world's largest private grant-making institution, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, it was possible to establish a program which has turned more than 4,000 Polish rural and small-town libraries into modern, multifunctional centers of access to information, culture, and education that animate civic activity.

Another pressing problem is environmental degradation and climate change, which exert a negative impact on the lives of all people. That's why PAFF has taken actions, mainly at the local community level, that introduce new, more sustainable development methods.

ACT LOCALLY

SECTOR 3.0

SUPPORT FOR NGOS

PRO PUBLICO BONO

PAFF LEADERS

PAFF LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

THE LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

GREEN LEADER



ACT LOCALLY

The goal of “Act Locally”, a program implemented since 2000, is to support and activate local communities in small towns and villages by supporting civic projects that stimulate development aspirations and improve the quality of life, while also contributing to building social capital.

Grants are awarded in local competitions organized by the Act Locally Centers (ALC) network, which brings together associations and foundations from towns of up to 50,000 residents. To date, “Act Locally” has provided support to more than 15,000 local projects. Rural and small-town NGOs and informal civic groups are the beneficiaries of program competitions. Supported initiatives focus on stimulating shared activities taken up by residents, creating new leisure options, and enhancing the attractiveness of the region. The program also organizes trainings, workshops, regional meetings and study visits to exchange best practices among ALCs, improve the knowledge and competencies of ALC leaders, and strengthen cooperation within the network.

The “FIMANGO School of Local Advisors” has been in operation since 2016. This initiative draws from the resources of PAFF’s “Act Locally” and “Financial Management in Non-Governmental Organizations” (FIMANGO) programs to improve ACL competencies in providing financial management counseling.

The “Act Locally and in Solidarity with Ukraine” initiative enabled channeling nearly PLN 1 million to more than 200 projects for Ukrainian refugees. The “Intercultural Dialog in Action” pathway has opened the way for implementing more such projects.

Thanks to the expert assistance of WWF Poland, the program has gained a thematic grant pathway entitled “Act Locally and Ecologically”. This path helped implement 64 initiatives for nature and climate protection.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

**The Academy for the Development
of Philanthropy in Poland**

dzialajlokalnie.pl

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For 25 years, the “Act Locally” program has offered support to active local communities whose members define their own needs and take joint action. The common denominator is local activism, through which residents learn to better self-organize and respond to new problems.

Joanna Lempart
PAFF Program Director

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$22,284,698*in PAFF grants***15,000***local projects***7 million***participants and
260,000 volunteers***78***Act Locally Centers
operating in 673
municipalities*

Act Locally Centers build social capital

ALCs are non-governmental organizations partnering with the Polish-American Freedom Foundation and the Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland (ADPP) to implement the “Act Locally” program. ALCs are efficient, reliable, innovative and seasoned associations and foundations that have been selected in open competitions.

The ALC network has been steadily growing from 15 organizations in 2004 to 78 in 2025, and now covers 652 municipalities. There are at least two ALCs in each Polish province.

Special certificates are awarded to ALCs that meet the highest standards in terms of program implementation, create operating models for other organizations, and effectively build social capital.

ALCs serve as centers of local animation. They employ various tools, such as grant programs, civic and fundraising campaigns, guidance and training, local volunteering promotion and development, and dialog with stakeholder groups. The Act Locally Centers also engage in raising additional funds and

attracting new (local government and business) partners to the program.

“Act Locally” makes certain that the potential of ALC network members is continuously strengthened, so that they can keep increasing the quality of their offerings. PAFF and ADPP offer ALCs nationwide workshops, training sessions, expert advice on fundraising, study visits, regional meetings, webinars, an ALC network resource base, and support in promotion efforts.



SEKTOR 3.0

Implemented since 2012, this program aims to improve the knowledge and skills of NGO activists and staff in the effective use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in their daily work.

The program provided thematic training to NGOs and presented examples of how to use modern technologies in communication, marketing or management. Some of these organizations received grants for the purchase of hardware and software, as well as for projects aimed at the practical application of ICT in third-sector activities.

Local organizations received support from the Mobile ICT Advisor Network, which provided nearly 9,000 consultations. 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 using modern technologies.

Sector 3.0 Festivals, the program's annual conferences, play an important role. These hybrid events bring together representatives of NGOs, ICT specialists from business, public figures, scientists and experts from abroad. The Festivals provide a platform for the exchange of information on contemporary trends in the use of modern technology in social activities.

The program also offers funds and expert support for new ICT tools that can be used by non-profit organizations. The "Sector 3.0 Award" serves as a token of appreciation for Polish NGOs that make innovative use of ICTs in their daily operations for the purpose of fulfilling their missions.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Information Society Development Foundation

sektor-3.0.pl



In an era dominated by the development of information technologies, especially artificial intelligence, the efficiency of our actions is heavily influenced by our capacity to efficiently and safely navigate this world, so we are looking for and promoting good role models that can serve as practical examples and inspiration for NGOs.

Radosław Jasiński
PAFF Program Director

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$5,495,901*in PAFF grants***12,000***participants
of Sector 3.0 Festivals***9,000***Mobile Advisor
consultations***15,000***TechClub
participants*

The Sector 3.0 Festival. How technology can support NGOs

The Sector 3.0 Festival, organized since 2012 by the Information Society Development Foundation, is a key event for anyone interested in using new technologies in civic activities. The goal of the Festival is to inspire people to explore the opportunities offered by digitization and to present practical solutions that can be applied in everyday work.

Invited guests include international experts as well as Polish representatives of tech companies, universities, NGOs, and the media. The Festival not only provides a practical portion of

knowledge about the use of ICT tools but also serves the Sector 3.0 community as a meeting space for exchanging experiences and creating solutions useful to communities.

In previous years the Festival took up such issues as using technology in NGO operations, digital hygiene, work-life balance, and nurturing relationships with loved ones in an age of ubiquitous automation. The 2024 motto, "Work Smarter", encouraged participants to discuss artificial intelligence for effective management,

communication and automation in individual and team work.

Since 2012, the hybrid Sector 3.0 Festival has attracted more than 11,000 participants. "The Festival brings together a growing number of participants. It is also important that the group of domestic and foreign event partners is expanding", assessed Dawid Szarański of the Information Society Development Foundation, Director of the "Sector 3.0" program.



SUPPORT FOR NGOS

The goal of the program is to provide Polish NGOs and civic leaders, especially from small towns and villages, with effective support by providing access to information, guidance and training. "Support for NGOs" helps improve the operating conditions of its beneficiaries, and raise the quality of their management, which translates into better, more efficient implementation of civic projects. At present, the program has three open pathways.

Pathway one, "Mutual Information Society," is a system of information for civic organizations, the backbone of which is the NGO Portal www.ngo.pl – Poland's largest online service on civil society issues. The system is

also equipped with an Information Center having an infoline 801-646-719. It also conducts research and issues publications. The second path, "EURO-NGO+", follows up on the "EURO-NGO" program closed in 2007, and aims to increase the capacity of civic organizations to acquire European funds. The third pathway, "NGO Training", consists of two parts. The first, "Financial Management in NGOs" (FIMANGO), provides training, guidance and publications for NGO financial managers. The second part is a comprehensive educational offer for NGO managers, launched in 2013, made up of the "PROMENGO" training program, the "Kursodrom" e-learning platform, and specialist seminars.

PROGRAM MANAGERS:

The Klon/Jawor Association ("MISANGO")
The Civil Society Development Foundation ("FIMANGO")
The Academy of Civic Organizations Foundation ("PROMENGO")

2003-2006 The "SPLOT" NGO Support Network
 2006-2007 the Association for the Forum of Non-Governmental Initiatives

ngo.pl promengo.pl kursodrom.pl frso.pl

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$17,538,213*in PAFF grants***4 million***ngo.pl users annually***4,450***NGOs covered
by training***6,600***NGO representatives
participated in training
sessions*

NGO.pl – portal for non-governmental organizations

Ngo.pl has been operating since 2000. At the very beginning, it offered free access to valuable resources: a database of NGOs, information about important events, and gave users the possibility to add posts. It continues to be the largest source of reliable information, practical advice and contacts for Poland's third-sector community.

Over successive years the portal expanded its offerings by adding a counseling service and a service on EU funds, the Polish Law on Public Benefit Activity and Volunteering. More than 100 new

items of information appear daily, and about 80 are added by users themselves. Poradnik.ngo.pl is an important component of the portal, as it offers information on various aspects of managing an organization (finance, law, accounting). The site also has an Information Center which provides expert support to NGOs. The Center delivers approx. 5,000 consultations a year.

From the first days of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, ngo.pl engaged in providing information and guidance in support of war-stricken Ukraine. Ngo.pl

publishes journalistic materials on refugee assistance, and offers guidance to NGOs which assist Ukraine by, e.g. organizing charity drives (financial and in-kind), raising donations, or delivering career counseling.

"Today NGO.pl is a brand recognized by more than 80 percent of Polish NGOs. In 2023, a record 5 million users helped themselves to ngo.pl resources", said Urszula Krasnodębska-Maciula, President of the Management Board of the Klon/Jawor Association, which runs the NGO portal.



PRO PUBLICO BONO

The “Pro Publico Bono” Competition for the Best Civic Initiative was initiated in 1999 by Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek. Since 2000, PAFF has become engaged in the Competition and has funded its prizes.

The purpose of the Competition was to support the development of civil society by annually selecting and promoting the most valuable activities of non-governmental organizations – at the national, regional and, especially, local community levels. When evaluating initiatives, the “Pro Publico Bono” Chapter, whose first honorary chairman was Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, looked at their social impact, innovativeness, impact on the development and competitiveness of a given locality, as well as efficiency and transparency in the use of social funds.

The year 2007 saw the establishment of the Bolesław Wierzbiański Award for editors of local press titles,

funded by the Polish-American Freedom Foundation. Building on the experience of the Wierzbiański Award, in 2021 PAFF launched the “Media Forum. Local Development” project, which aims to foster the professional development of local media journalists by improving their competencies through training courses led by experienced national and local journalists and other experts.

The Foundation also supports the Civic Congress, a unique form of civic involvement in dialog about Poland’s development directions. Every year, the Congress gathers nearly a thousand attendees, recently mostly online, including representatives of public administration, NGOs, academia, business, student organizations, and local communities.

PROGRAM MANAGERS:

The Local Press Association
(The Bolesław Wierzbiański Award)

The Media Forum Foundation
(Media Forum. Local Development)

The Institute for Market Economics
(Civic Congress)

2000-2014 The Pro Publico Bono Competition Foundation
2014-2015 The Union of Polish Counties
2012-2013 The Barka Foundation for Mutual Help

gazetylokalne.pl lokalnemediamedia.org.pl www.kongresobywatelski.pl

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$3,595,691*in PAFF grants***193***“Pro Publico Bono”
awards***350***journalists
trained***19***supported
Civic Congresses*

Alicja Molenda. Why “Media Forum. Local Development”?

“Media Forum. Local Development” is part of the “Pro Publico Bono” program managed by the Media Forum Foundation. It aims to ensure the professional development of local media journalists by improving their competencies through training held by experienced Polish and local media journalists and other experts.

“A well-thought-out training agenda with well-known experts like journalists Ewa Ewart and Magdalena Rigamonti was the magnet that attracted participants. I carefully listened to the discussions of young radio and podcast hosts. My group was very involved and

creative; we’re still in touch”, said Alicja Molenda, a participant-turned-lecturer at “Media Forum. Local Development”.

Alicja Molenda is the creator and publisher of the “Przełom” weekly and the przelom.pl portal. She graduated in Slavic philology from Jagiellonian University and completed a post-graduate course in press law and intellectual property at the same university.

Drawing from her rich professional experience, Alicja has for many years supported journalists and media development in Poland and abroad. She has worked in Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia

and Moldova, as well as Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, as trainer and expert in journalistic projects implemented by the East European Democratic Center, Democratic Society East, the Lech Wałęsa Institute, and the SGL Local Press Association.

Alicja rejoined the workshops organized as part of the “Media Forum. Local Development”, this time as a lecturer. She now shares her knowledge and experience in print-net synergy, methods for attracting audiences online and learning about visitor behavior.



PAFF LEADERS

The purpose of the program is to support those acting for the benefit of their communities, by helping such leaders improve their skills and qualifications. This is achieved mainly by means of the tutoring method, which consists of ongoing cooperation between a local leader and a seasoned tutor. The program is primarily addressed to active participants of local projects funded under various PAFF programs.

An essential part of the program is a year-long tutor-leader cooperation, and a series of training courses in self-development planning, team building, organizational leadership, communication and local partnership formation. The intention is that the skills acquired help leaders in their efforts to benefit local communities.

Program alumni are welcome to join the “Alumni Initiative”, which organizes meetings with well-known

public figures, workshops and grants to further improve leadership skills. Some participants and alumni have become involved in public activities. In 2023, the Polish Parliament appointed Monika Horna-Cieślak (an eighteenth edition alumna) as Commissioner for Children’s Rights. In last year’s parliamentary elections, Iwona Karolewska (a fourteenth edition alumna) and Marcin Skonieczka (a second edition alumnus) won seats in the lower house of the Polish Parliament (Sejm). A total of 164 program participants and alumni ran for office in the 2024 local elections. 80 won, becoming mayors or members of municipal boards, town councils, and provincial assemblies.

Since 2008, the International Visitor Leadership Program enables study tours for about a dozen PAFF leaders and tutors to the United States, organized in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy in Poland.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

Zbigniew Pełczyński
School of Leadership Foundation

programliderski.pl



When I joined the “PAFF Leaders” program, I felt that I was in the right place, among people who believe that the world really can be changed. That’s why I am very happy to be an alumna. The program gave me a sense of agency, and a feeling that my voice mattered.

Monika Horna-Cieślak
Commissioner for Children’s Rights

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$7,373,176*in PAFF grants***935***PAFF Leaders***71***tutors***134***participants
of study tours
to the United States***Monika Horna-Cieślak:****PAFF Leader appointed as Commissioner for Children's Rights**

In 2023, the Polish Parliament approved the appointment of Monika Horna-Cieślak as Commissioner for Children's Rights. Monika Horna-Cieślak is an alumna of the "PAFF Leaders" program. Protecting children's rights is her life mission and passion, which she has pursued ever since she was 19 years of age.

Commissioner Horna-Cieślak is lawyer who calls herself: "a civic activist and actor". She provides legal counsel to young people who are experiencing mental, physical, and sexual violence. She is also active in other areas of children's rights, such as education, equality and access to psychological care.

She sits on the Human Rights Committee of the Polish Bar Council, serves as head of the Children's Rights Section, and is a member of the Committee for cooperation with courts at the Regional Bar Council in Warsaw. She is also a tutor in the Council of Europe's HELP program.

Monika has co-authored a number of important acts of legislation on children's rights, in particular, the Law on the Protection of Minors. It was young people who saw her as an expert in children's rights, and initiated and endorsed her as a candidate for Commissioner for Children's Rights. She also

had the support of youth organizations, such as the Autism Team Foundation, the Informed Youth Club of Autism Team Foundation, Teenage Asylum, the Pro Aperte Foundation, Future for Youth.

"Monika gave her whole heart and most of her life to the youngest. She pushed for the law that gave young people under 18 a way to seek psychological assistance without the consent of a legal guardian. Monika often burned the midnight oil to write that document", said Angelika, a leader of Teenage Asylum, a support group for young people in mental crisis.



PAFF LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

The program, launched in 2009, initiates and develops cooperation between participants of various PAFF undertakings so as to forge partnerships which will implement projects important to their local communities. Projects are based on a social diagnosis conducted in advance, while partnership participants seek to tap into the local potential for the common good. Such projects directly benefit local communities, while also strengthening social capital by creating synergies between the experiences and results of various initiatives.

A local partnership is formed by PAFF program beneficiaries, who establish an Initiative Group to act as the core of their coalition. The Initiative Group is joined by local governments, businesses, local media, NGOs and other institutions that have not yet participated in the Foundation's programs. Numerous municipality residents

and volunteers are involved in implementing the projects. The projects focus on changes to public space, community integration around local resources, and the cultivation of local traditions. "Workshop for the Common Good" is a program's undertaking addressed to program alumni.

The program promotes the community animation method, which was developed in cooperation with the Shipyard Foundation and presented in the publications "How to Build Common Good? A Guide for Local Actors" and "How to Build Local Partnerships". The year 2021 saw the publication of "The Local Community Animation Method for the Common Good. Theory and Practice", a scientific summary of the conclusions of a study conducted by a University of Warsaw research team led by Professor Anna Giza, which confirmed the usefulness and effectiveness of this method in the activation of local communities.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

**The Academy for the Development
of Philanthropy in Poland**

www.lokalnepartnerstwa.org.pl

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Local civic activity rests upon three pillars: social capital, the common good, and partnership. We support all three by means of the "PAFF Local Partnerships" program. Local partnerships organize resources and, importantly, are community leaders in bringing about social change.

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

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$3,834,745*in PAFF grants***83***local partnerships,
including 19 partner
start-ups***130***municipalities covered
by the program***1,200***partners involved
in program activities***“For a smog-free Żywiec”**

This social campaign, aimed at reducing air pollution in Żywiec (home to 30,000 inhabitants), was initiated in 2009 by the Żywiec Development Foundation. “Smog is emitted by the residents themselves. They burn plastic bottles and other trash in their stoves. To save money on fuel”, explained Gabriela Gibas of the Żywiec Development Foundation.

A bus sporting the campaign’s slogans cruised the streets and a short video was posted online. It shows a small girl with a teddy bear leaving her home after she sees a grown-up throw a plastic bottle into the stove. Outside, everyone is wearing masks, even the girl and her teddy bear. A similar message is conveyed by the graffiti painted next

to the Żywiec train station during the opening press conference. It reads, “If you love your children, don’t burn trash. Let us enjoy a smog-free Żywiec!”

School art contests and ecology lessons have already yielded results. Youngsters are making sure their parents don’t dump trash into heating stoves. The Foundation has also succeeded in encouraging the Żywiec-based “Janosik” Cinema to host a festival of ecological films. Leaflets, posters and other materials explaining the consequences of environmental pollution have also been distributed.

Clean air was the common good that brought citizens, schools, NGOs and city authorities together in this project.

“The clean community concept is in line with the pro-ecological efforts of the town authorities so we didn’t have any doubts that it was worth joining”, said Marek Czul, Deputy Mayor of Żywiec. The town hall helped change waste removal regulations: fees are now calculated per resident, not by volume. Municipal guards check on what residents use as heating fuel and an ecological hotline was set up.

The successful Żywiec campaign won recognition in the competition held to select the best project financed in the first “PAFF Local Partnerships” round in 2009. It was celebrated as a model project for the common good.



THE LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Since 2008, the Library Development Program (LDP) has aimed at supporting public libraries in villages and small towns across Poland. The program focuses on upgrading libraries, transforming them into centers of access to information, culture, education, and social activity. To date 4,224 libraries in 1,385 municipalities have received support, which accounts for 70% of the target group.

From 2008 to 2015, the project was operated in partnership between the Polish-American Freedom Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The Gates Foundation entrusted PAFF with a \$31 million grant for LDP implementation.

Libraries received modern computer equipment and librarians were provided with substantive support in the form of counseling and training. Additionally, libraries received Microsoft software worth \$18 million.

The Library Development Program contributed to the emergence of many initiatives for strengthening the entire library system. The program led to the formation of

the National Partnership for Library Development, as well as 16 regional partnerships with provincial authorities.

In 2008 PAFF signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, which initiated the "Library+" program. In 2009, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the Ministry of Administration and Digital Affairs, the Information Society Development Foundation and Orange Poland concluded an agreement that gave free Internet access to all public libraries in Poland. The value of these services is estimated at nearly \$20 million.

PAFF has been using its own funds since 2016 to continue supporting libraries with training and e-learning courses for library staff and their local partners.

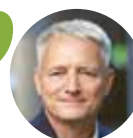
PAFF and the Program Manager, the Information Society Development Foundation, boost sustainability of the program outcomes by including program participants in other initiatives, such as the Public Library Congress and networks, e.g. the LABiB Association and the "Initiatives" Association of Library Directors.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Information Society Development Foundation

biblioteki.org labib.pl

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To me, the Library Development Program has been a unique experience, as I could be there and witness the development of thousands of librarians. I could observe how librarians themselves develop, and how they change their libraries and, as a result, impact the communities they serve.

Jacek Królikowski

President of the Information Society Development Foundation

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$7,972,597*in PAFF grants***4,224***libraries from 13,35
communes covered
by the program***11,000***items of hardware donated
to libraries, including 3,500
computers with software,
2,500 multifunction devices,
700 printers, 1,200 tablets***12,500***librarians trained*

“E-Inclusion Award” for the Information Society Development Foundation

The Foundation was among the winners of the European Commission’s competition. “E-Inclusion Awards” recognize individuals and organizations for promoting best practices in ICT and digital technology use, as well as those tackling digital exclusion. Two competition categories, “I Am Part of IT” (for individuals) and “Be Part of IT” (for organizations), attracted nearly 300 submissions from 35 countries. The Information Society Development Foundation won the latter category with its Library Development Program.

“The Foundation feels greatly honored with the European Commission’s award. We are glad that Brussels appreciates the Library Development Program and, more importantly, recognizes libraries themselves as important centers of access to new technologies and digital education. This award is a distinction for the librarians who helpfully encourage their neighbors in modern technology and teach them how to use it”, said Rafał Kramza, President of the Information Society Development Foundation.

The awards ceremony took place at the seat of the European Parliament in Brussels on June 22, 2013, during a two-day Digital Agenda Assembly conference. The Library Development Program was presented by Neelie Kroes, Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for the Digital Agenda.



GREEN LEADER

The program, launched in 2021, supports local leaders in acquiring knowledge and competencies for environmental and climate action in local communities. It also provides assistance in effective EU fund acquisition and raising funds from other sources.

The program is addressed to active participants of local PAFF programs, as well as other community and local government leaders who wish to action environmental and climate issues. Between 2021 and 2024, 212 people from 74 municipalities across Poland participated in the program.

Training and counseling form the core of the program. Program participants, i.e. leaders with their teams, can opt for one of three thematic pathways: waste management, local retention and drought control, and energy efficiency. Green Leaders can also apply for a grant for an international or domestic study visit or establishing

cooperation with partners, transferring innovative solutions, and preparing project ideas. Program participation helps leaders learn how to solve environmental problems relevant to their local community, learn how to use methods and tools to facilitate change in those communities, and gain knowledge on how to apply for EU grants and other funds for environmental projects.

Another valuable component of the “Green Leader” program is the “Network of Advisors – Funds for Climate”, which is a nationwide system of information and advice on the principles and mechanisms of environmental and climate funds, primarily from the EU. The Network supports NGO leaders and partnerships of rural and small-town organizations and local governments. Assistance is provided by specialized advisors based in each Polish region. The program is coordinated by the Polish Green Network.

PROGRAM MANAGER

The Sendzimir Foundation

zielonylider.org

”



Environmental degradation and climate changes have a negative impact on the lives of all people. It is a dramatically growing challenge to reduce them, to introduce new, more sustainable ways of development, including at the local community level.

Agnieszka Mazur
PAFF Program Director

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$842,339*in PAFF grants***212***Green Leaders***40***Advisors
of the Funds
for Climate Network*

Andrew Nagorski visits Klembów

In October 2021, Chairman of the PAFF Board of Directors Andrew Nagorski, accompanied by Head of the PAFF Representative Office in Poland Grzegorz Jędrys, and PAFF Program Director Agnieszka Mazur met with “Green Leader” program participants.

The purpose behind the Chairman’s visit to Klembów (the Mazowieckie Province) was to meet with participants of the “Green Leader” pilot and learn more about its first outcomes. Program management was entrusted to the Sendzimir Foundation, whose representatives, Managing Director Ilona Gosk and Program Coordinator Maria

Wiśnicka, attended the meeting held at the Klembów Commune Office.

Klembów Mayor Rafał Mathiak, Marcin Piotrowski of the “Folkowisko” Association of Borderland Culture Animation in Gorajec, and Katarzyna Fornal-Urbańczyk of the Zamość Town Hall presented the environmentally beneficial actions made possible by the “Green Leader” pilot project. The pilot successfully promoted composting among Klembów residents, resulting in a significant decrease in collected bio-waste. “Green Leader” brought about the creation of a model wastewater management solution in a housing

estate in Zamość. Folkowisko Festival organizers managed to notably decrease the amount of mixed waste and, at the same time, make festival waste easier to segregate, e.g., by not using disposable utensils and promoting eco-friendly attitudes among festival participants.

The meeting participants in Klembów agreed that the PAFF program not only provided knowledge, but also a valuable opportunity to meet leaders from various parts of Poland, exchange experiences and inspire each other in matters related to environmental and climate protection.

25 YEARS IN PAFF PROGRAMS

ACTIVE PROGRAMS

Sharing Polish Experiences in Transformation

Parallel to its activities in Poland, PAFF is committed to a second part of its mission: sharing Polish experiences with other former Eastern Bloc countries.

Upon launching its activity in 2000, the Foundation initiated two programs to pursue this objective. One is the Lane Kirkland Scholarship Program addressed to active representatives with diverse backgrounds, who hail from different countries of the Region and share an interest in Poland's successful track record of internal transformation as well as EU integration. The second program was "Region in Transition" (RITA), whose mechanism encourages Polish NGOs to develop cooperation with partners from Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus, and Central Asia.

The year 2004 marked the inauguration of a third program – "Study Tours to Poland" (STP), addressed to student leaders and professionals from countries of the Region. Through "STP" the Foundation supports the Warsaw Euro-Atlantic Summer Academy (WEASA), a joint initiative of PAFF, the German Marshall Fund of the United States, and the Natolin European Centre. WEASA targets young analysts, experts and advisors from Eastern Partnership countries who specialize in transatlantic relations, European integration and political transition.

In response to Russia's brutal aggression against Ukraine in 2022, the Foundation, in cooperation with partner organizations, has taken active steps to support civilians of war-stricken Ukraine, and joined efforts to aid war refugees in Poland. It sought first to address the needs of former and current Ukrainian participants of the three international PAFF programs. Between 2000 and 2024, these undertakings hosted 9,285 Ukrainian citizens in Poland, including 581 Kirklanders, 1,485 "RITA" participants, and 7,219 study visit participants (4,916 professionals and 2,303 university students).

In March 2022, in order to bolster the efforts of the Polish NGOs that rushed to aid Ukrainians, PAFF created a special grant program – "Support for Ukraine", to which it allocated PLN 11 million. The program contributed both to the expansion of Polish NGO activities in cooperation with their partners in Ukraine and those carried out for Ukrainian refugees in Poland. Nearly 97,000 refugees in Poland have directly benefited from the program so far, about half of them were children and young people under the age of 18. In Ukraine itself, the support reached nearly 160,000 people.

LANE KIRKLAND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

REGION IN TRANSITION (RITA)

STUDY TOURS TO POLAND (STP)

SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE



LANE KIRKLAND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The program, launched in 2000, aims to transfer Polish experiences in systemic transformation and European integration to representatives of Eastern European countries, as well as those in the South Caucasus and Central Asia, through two-semester supplementary studies at Polish universities. The program is currently addressed to candidates from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

As part of their individual study programs, Kirkland Scholars explore selected aspects of such subjects as economics and management, public administration and business, law, social and political science, and journalism. The program also includes preparatory courses in Polish studies, integrative meet-ups and specialist sessions, and offers internships at state and private institutions.

The Kirkland Research Program, which has been in operation since 2016, offers one-semester research and scientific internships for established academics from the countries covered by the program. The program also involves alumni reunions, as well as other post-scholarship projects that help alumni stay in touch with Poland and take up joint projects through national alumni associations.

Since the beginning of the Russian aggression on Ukraine, February 2022, Kirkland scholars and alumni residing in Poland have been provided with information and organizational support, and offered assistance in bringing their families to Poland.

From 2017, some of the Kirkland Program scholarships are funded by the National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA).

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Leaders of Change Foundation

2000-2001 The Center for East European Studies of the University of Warsaw
2001-2013 The Polish-U.S. Fulbright Commission
2013-2016 The Education for Democracy Foundation

kirkland.edu.pl

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$18,402,476*in PAFF grants***1,073***scholars***13***countries of Central
and Eastern Europe,
South Caucasus
and Central Asia*

Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk thanks for support

Iryna Vereshchuk, Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine and Minister for Temporarily Occupied Territories, conveyed her gratitude for the assistance delivered by the Polish-American Freedom Foundation and the Leaders of Change Foundation to Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees in Poland.

Iryna Vereshchuk (currently Deputy Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine) is among the 571 Ukrainian alumni of the Lane Kirkland Scholarship Program. She had served as mayor of Rawa Ruska and a civic activist

involved in Ukraine's 2014 Revolution of Dignity; she stayed in Poland as a Kirkland Scholar in the 2015/16 academic year.

Upon her return to Ukraine, Iryna Vereshchuk took on the leadership of a think tank on international relations in the Baltic-Black Sea region, and then entered politics. In 2020, she ran for mayor of the Ukrainian capital as a representative of the presidential party, Servant of the People. Representing the party, she won a parliamentary mandate and was a member of Verkhovna

Rada of Ukraine from 2019–2021. From 2021 to 2024, she served as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Temporarily Occupied Territories in the government of Denys Shmyhal.

As she commended PAFF's long-standing work for the transition and development of Eastern European countries, including Ukraine, she wrote: "Thank you for the new aid programs for Ukraine, for helping refugees. Today it is very important to us that the families of our military personnel, our women and children, are safe".



REGION IN TRANSITION (RITA)

Launched in 2000, the program is addressed to Polish non-governmental organizations and educational institutions that want to share Poland's experience in social and economic transitions as well as its European integration with partners in Eastern European, South Caucasus and Central Asian countries.

"RITA" awards grants in open competitions for projects aimed at transferring the Polish experience, especially in civil society development, local social initiatives, local government transformation, education reform, and the functioning of free media. From the very outset, the program has provided financial support to a total of 1,234 projects. Additionally, the "RITA – Partnership to Power"

competition offers follow-up grants to experienced NGOs – implementers of projects under the "RITA" program.

NGOs may also apply for small travel grants to consult and strengthen cooperation with a partner organization abroad. "RITA" offers training opportunities and expert support to Polish NGOs and schools, as well as assistance in establishing cooperation with foreign partners. Every two years meetings of the "RITA" program grant recipients, "Ambassadors of Transition in the Region", are held. The civicportal.org portal, which features an e-learning platform, facilitates information exchange between organizations and civic leaders from the countries covered by the program.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Education for Democracy Foundation

programrita.org

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Over 25 years the "Region in Transition" program has evolved – its structure has changed, the people involved have changed, and the situation in the region has changed. Two factors have remained the same: it is a program that responds to the needs arising from a changing reality, and it places strong emphasis on building relationships between people.

Martyna Bogaczyk
President of the Education
for Democracy Foundation

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$18,598,795*in PAFF grants***1,234***projects supported***11***countries of Central and Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia***“Under Kyrgies skies”**

Can astronomy be used to develop key educational competencies? By all means, as proven by the initiators of this project, carried out in Kyrgyzstan in 2015 by Wrocław's Angelus Silesius House of Meetings in partnership with “Svet Lubvi”, a Kyrgyz Bishkek-based NGO.

“Under Kyrgies skies” was addressed to teachers of physics, geography, and mathematics, as well as to students of schools in the Suzak Raion of the Jalal-Abad Region. The project objective was to equalize the educational opportunities of children and youth, and activate their teachers by encouraging them to launch attractive educational initiatives.

A competition was held to select the participating educational institutions,

and their teachers attended training in how to design a fascinating astronomy lesson, hold sky observations, and use advanced ICTs in the process. “The training sparked great interest and enthusiasm, and the outcomes surpassed the highest expectations of both participants and instructors. Teachers who joined only to ‘seize’ some computers for their schools left as enthusiasts of astronomy”, remarked project leader Ewelina Grądzka.

The schools were equipped with computers, telescopes, sky atlases and globes. They now boast their own science clubs, and have enriched their educational offer by adding astronomy lessons. “The extra classes have given pupils lots of joy, as they enabled the

discovery of new, surprising things. The children now build models of the Solar System, go night sky observing, and learn manual telescope assembly”, stated Jarosław Pióro with great satisfaction, one of the project's trainers. The classes are also open to parents and members of local communities.

The project demonstrated that astronomy may serve as an excellent tool for the intellectual development of school-children – it teaches independent thinking, asking questions, and searching for answers. At the same time Kyrgyz teachers have come to understand that studying astronomy broadens their horizons, giving them new competencies.



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 shed light on the realities of Poland and the European Union, while developing and strengthening professional and personal contacts between young leaders from the East and their Polish hosts.

The program offers students several-day visits to Poland. Currently, they are open to 18- to 23-year-olds from Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine who want to learn more about Polish academia, civic organizations, meet with leaders in public life, attend lectures, workshops, seminars and cultural events. Students apply to participate in the program individually. The visits take place in groups of about a dozen participants from various countries, twice a year – in the spring and autumn. They are run by experienced Polish NGOs, selected through an open competition. The “Borussia” Foundation serves as coordinator of the student visits.

The offer for professionals is addressed to representatives of local governments, government administration, central state institutions, NGOs, the media, the education sector and other institutions and groups from Eastern Europe, as well as the South Caucasus and Central Asia. The visits, based on sharing the Polish experience in transition and European integration, are conducted in cooperation with Polish NGOs and central and local government units.

Under the “Study Tours to Poland” program, PAFF 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. WEASA welcomes experts from EU Eastern Partnership and Western Balkan states. Over the past few years, WEASA classes have focused on disinformation and cybersecurity issues.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Leaders of Change Foundation

2007-2016 Jan Nowak-Jeziorański College of Eastern Europe

studytours.pl

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$8,862,995*in PAFF grants***11,000***visitors to Poland***522***WEASA participants*

WEASA is a series of lectures, workshops and meetings with experts that are addressed to people coming from countries of the EU Eastern Partnership and Western Balkans. Analysts, political and government advisors, think tank and NGO employees, civil servants and journalists are invited to attend the Academy.



Madeleine Albright visits fourth WEASA edition

In 2016, Madeleine Albright, U.S. Secretary of State from 1997 to 2001, attended the Warsaw Euro-Atlantic Summer Academy as special guest; for several hours she shared her rich knowledge and experience with the participants. “WEASA is an important and much needed initiative for both the Eastern Partnership as well as transatlantic relations and European integration”, concluded the former Secretary of State.

Workshops and lectures focused on four thematic blocks related to regional politics and development. They primarily touched upon regional security and crisis management, as well as economic development, cross-border cooperation and regional relations, with particular emphasis on the role of local leaders.

The Academy was attended by 45 people from six EU Eastern Partnership countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. For two weeks, WEASA participants enjoyed classes taught by leading specialists in their respective fields, including former President of the National Bank of Poland Professor Leszek Balcerowicz, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor David J. Kramer, former Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Paweł Kowal, PhD, and President of the German Marshall Fund Karen Donfried, PhD.



SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

P AFF launched this special grant program in response to the war in Ukraine. “Support for Ukraine” aimed to assist Polish NGOs which provided aid to civilians in Ukraine, as well as refugees who had fled the war and were staying in Poland. It was an extension of an initiative launched as part of the “Region in Transition” (RITA) program in February 2022. To date, PAFF has allocated more than PLN 11 million for 217 “Support for Ukraine” projects.

T hese projects have been carried out by Polish NGOs in cooperation with their partners in Ukraine, as well as in Poland; their goal is to support Ukrainian refugees. Funding is also available for coordinating Polish NGO activities for Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees, in cooperation with other institutions and communities.

P riority is given to those NGOs that have well-established cooperation with their partners in Ukraine, as well as those operating in Polish small towns where Ukrainian war escapees have arrived.

C urrently, open grant competitions channel funding to projects that support Ukrainian children and youth in Poland and Ukraine, especially their education, as well as aid Ukrainian refugees through legal, civic, career, public service counseling, and psychological assistance. Such projects are also aimed at preventing discrimination and hostile acts to which Ukrainian refugees may be exposed, as well as countering disinformation and providing reliable information about the war refugee community in Poland and the situation in Ukraine.

PROGRAM MANAGER:

The Education for Democracy Foundation

fed.org.pl/support-ukraine/

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$3,089,001*in PAFF grants***97,000***supported
refugees in Poland***160,000***beneficiaries
in Ukraine***70,000***people covered by
humanitarian support***“Academic Invincibles” in Kharkiv**

The bombing of Kharkiv, a city with a population of 1.5 million, started on February 24, 2022, alongside with the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

“Kharkivians suddenly faced unceasing and indiscriminate bombing raids”, said Donatella Rovera, Amnesty International’s Senior Crisis Response Adviser.

The “Point of Academic Invincibles” is a shelter created in the Kharkiv State Academy of Physical Culture in 2023 as part of the “Support for Ukraine” program, thanks to the cooperation

between the University Sports Association of the University of Economy in Bydgoszcz and the Kharkiv Academy.

The project intended to secure rooms in the Kharkiv Academy of Physical Culture to provide safe instruction even during an air raid threat. The Academy has rooms in its basement that serve students, Academy faculty and Kharkivians as a shelter during bombardment.

The room covered by the project has been thoroughly refurbished and

equipped with furniture, teaching aids, and an Internet connection so that education can be provided during an air strike alarm.

“To us, this is much more than renovation and equipment. To us, it is proof that the world, Poland, and you, friends, have not forgotten about Kharkiv, that we are not alone in this fight”, said Professor Viacheslav Mulyk, Rector of the Kharkiv Academy of Physical Culture.



MONITORING, EVALUATION AND ANALYSES (MEVA)

MEVA, launched in 2005, is an expert and research program. The objective of MEVA is to conduct ongoing analytical work that contributes to maximizing the effectiveness of PAFF's programs, as well as those of other third-sector organizations in Poland.

MEVA analyses help assess to what extent PAFF program objectives, actions and outcomes address existing needs and problems, especially at the local community level. The methods developed under the program and the analytical results obtained also serve other NGOs in their efforts.

Potential PAFF initiatives are examined in the context of existing and anticipated social needs. This is done by surveying specific groups – such as rural youth, librarians, or NGO workers – and testing new projects. Complementary and reinforcing elements of PAFF current

programs are also being analyzed to improve the quality and effectiveness of Foundation activities.

In 2022 and 2023, part of the analysis and evaluation efforts, carried out in “Act Locally” and the Library Development Program, was directed at identifying the problems faced by NGOs due to the influx of refugees from Ukraine, so as to adjust the activities of these programs accordingly. Similarly, in earlier years, based on analysis and research, modifications were made to PAFF programs in response to changing external conditions – this was the case during the pandemic, for example. MEVA also analyzed whether PAFF and its cooperating organizations could become involved in educational activities and animating local communities for environmental and climate protection. One of the outcomes was the “Green Leader” program.

THE MANAGER OF THE CORE PROGRAM PART IS:

The “Shipyard” Foundation

stocznia.org.pl

\$2,955,454

in PAFF grants



BOX – social capital impact study

The “Shipyard” Foundation is the publisher of a document that forms part of the “MEVA” analysis and focuses on a topic that is essential for many NGOs: namely on the local communities’ ability to take up a joint action, which is related to social capital.

BOX (an acronym meaning the analysis of influence on social capital) is a methodology and a collection of tools that can be used to evaluate a given activity so far as well as in drafting plans for the future. Jan Herbst, a co-author of the publication who is working for “Shipyard” said: “This guidebook was created for those NGOs that operate locally. It helps you answer the following question: what are the actual outcomes of actions of this sort. How

do they contribute to a permanent change in the communities in which they are run? Which of the many elements that constitute social capital are they reinforcing? Which should be reinforced to have the biggest impact on the surrounding reality?”.

The guidebook presents the concept of social capital in an accessible way. It presents six research tools that one can use to measure the strength of social capital; they are introduced in the form of short presentations that were tested in practice by selected Act Locally Centers. Rafał Rudnicki, the second co-author, said: “The tools that we present were designed so that even small local organizations can apply them. But large program operators should find them

useful as well. We tried to design them in such a way that virtually anyone could use them and that their application didn’t require any specialist knowledge or considerable effort”.

BOX was created together with the Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland (the “Act Locally” Program Manager) and with Act Locally Centers. It is available free-of-charge on the following website: www.kapitalspoleczny.org. In his interactions with BOX authors, the author of the “social capital” concept, Professor Robert Putnam, spoke highly of the BOX project and expressed the hope that it would receive widespread attention.

25 YEARS IN PAFF PROGRAMS

COMPLETED PROGRAMS

From the very outset the Foundation has endeavored to respond to the emerging needs that fell within its programmatic mandate and financial constraints. For example, in 2000 PAFF launched one of the first non-commercial, educational portals in Poland. It aimed at providing free and fast access to educational resources and services for schools, teachers, students and parents. In 2000 a training effort was developed for the effective operation and oversight of medical centers for health care managers, mainly in small towns. In response to serious, emerging unemployment a program was initiated that addressed job-seeking youths and vocational groups threatened with structural unemployment. In 2001 and 2010, when Poland was struck by two devastating floods, the Foundation mobilized additional funds to support schools, libraries and local NGOs in the rural areas and small towns that suffered the greatest damage.

Joining the European Union opened new prospects for Poland. In 2003 PAFF launched the “EURO-NGO” program to support the integration process and take advantage of the new opportunities for NGOs. Under the program a network of 120 experts was created to prepare NGOs from small localities to acquire EU funds.

The Foundation has always tried to transfer previously gained experience to new activities by making use of its know-how and network of contacts. The Library Development Program serves as an example. Its introduction was preceded by experience gained in the “Village in Transition: Building Information Society” (e-VITA) program. Under this program the “e-VITA Method” was developed as a way of designing and implementing initiatives devoted to the computerization of communities with the active participation of residents.

Within the “Citizen in a Democratic State of Law” field, the Foundation implemented a program, completed in 2014, to assist development of free legal advocacy. The resources and achievements of the program were then popularized on the Internet. The “Transparent Community” and, later, the “Transparent Poland” undertakings were the result of increased interest in transparent governing, especially at the local level. The guidelines for “Transparent Poland” were further promoted in other countries, just as the experiences of numerous other Polish NGOs were transmitted abroad, largely through the “RITA” program.

The “Relief Fund for Non-Governmental Organizations and Civic Initiatives” was the most recently completed program. It was launched amid the COVID-19 pandemic and ended three years later, in 2023. The final “Relief Fund” edition focused on minimizing pandemic-related educational losses, and improving the mental and physical health of children and youth in rural areas and small-towns. The “Relief Fund” experience paved the way for PAFF’s newest program – “Fostering Resilience in Children and Youth” – launched in 2024.

POLISH EDUCATIONAL PORTAL INTERKL@SA
COMPUTER FOR A TEACHER
COMPUTER LONG DISTANCE TRAINING
TRAINING FOR HEALTHCARE MANAGERS
FOR CHILDREN
ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT SCHOOL
VILLAGE IN TRANSITION (VITA)
VILLAGE IN TRANSITION: BUILDING
THE INFORMATION SOCIETY (e-VITA)
EURO-NGO
UNDOING UNEMPLOYMENT
WORK IN POLAND
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT FOR NGOS (FIMANGO)
THE 2001 FLOOD
THE “FLOOD. RELIEF!” PROGRAM
CITIZENS AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT
TRANSPARENT COMMUNITY
TRANSPARENT POLAND
CITIZEN AND LAW
RELIEF FUND FOR NON-GOVERNMENTAL
ORGANIZATIONS AND CIVIC INITIATIVES

POLISH EDUCATIONAL PORTAL **INTERKL@SA**

\$2,755,713

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGERS:

2000-2008

The Economic Education Foundation

2008-2010

The Poznań Supercomputing and Networking Center

2010-2011

The Polish Educational Portal Interkl@sa Foundation

The program, carried out between 2000 and 2011, created and managed an Internet platform enabling access to educational resources, content and services, thereby contributing to the modernization of education as well as creating equal opportunities for schoolchildren from various environments. As one of the first professional, non-commercial educational portals in Poland, www.interklasa.pl was addressed to students, teachers and parents. It was a joint undertaking of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation and the Interkl@sa Initiative. The modern technological infrastructure was provided by the Poznań Supercomputing and Networking Center (Poznańskie Centrum Superkomputerowo-Sieciowe).

The Portal's editorial staff organized educational competitions like the Contest for the School Website and the Interkl@sa Quality Trademark Competition. It also offered various services such as the Multimedia Library, comprising a wide base of educational aids, the Virtual Class, supporting distance learning and teaching, and the Interactive Map of Schools, providing information on each of the 30,000 registered educational institutions. The Portal was honored twice by the "Komputer Świat" magazine as the best and most interesting educational website. In 2007 it won in the Webstarfestival contest promoting the best internet projects in the "Education" category.

COMPUTER **FOR A TEACHER**

\$446,048

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2000-2005

The National Foundation for Computer Literacy

The program, implemented between 2000-2005, was addressed mainly to teachers in junior-high schools in small towns and rural areas. It was intended to enable the purchase of a personal computer using a preferential instalment payment system. The Foundation paid the interest and covered the costs of the commission. More than 3,000 teachers from all over Poland took advantage of the offer. "Computer for

a Teacher" was the first PAFF initiative whose execution and outcome were made subject to external evaluation. The results of the survey conducted by the Pentor Institute, confirmed that the purchase of computers had helped teachers prepare better lessons and encouraged them to make broad use of educational resources available on the Internet, with special regard to the Interkl@sa Portal.

COMPUTER LONG DISTANCE TRAINING

\$180,548

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2002-2004

The National Foundation for Computer Literacy

Using the experience gained in the "Computer for a Teacher" program, the Foundation launched distance computer training via the Internet. The undertaking, which was implemented between 2002 and 2004, enabled teachers to participate in training sessions on the Internet use. Participants in the training learned how to use Internet resources, create websites, prepare multimedia presentations, and build tools for testing their pupils' knowledge. The program consisted of two modules: distance training via a dedicated Internet service and daily workshops. Nearly 1,200 people completed the training and received certificates recognized by the Ministry of National Education and Sports.

TRAINING FOR HEALTHCARE MANAGERS

\$520,332

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2000-2006

The Society for Healthcare Managers

The program, implemented in 2000-2006, was designed to raise the level of knowledge in the field of modern management of medical institutions. Within the undertaking, 22 training centers received funding and over 400 post-graduate study scholarships were awarded to health care managers, coming mainly from small towns. The offer also included conferences with the participation of foreign experts who shared their experiences in managing modern health care systems with Polish doctors. The program resulted in designing and implementing a system of social accreditation of post-graduate study programs in managing health care services.

FOR CHILDREN

\$702,344

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2005-2010

The Comenius Foundation for Child Development

This program, carried out between 2005-2010, aimed at creating equal educational opportunities for children from rural areas and small towns by improving the quality of elementary education. The program guidelines were set out in The Strategy for Elementary Education Development. In the pilot round, selected elements of this strategy were implemented in seven rural communities with the assistance of experts and partnerships between NGOs and local authorities. The experience gained during the first year of the pilot was used as the basis for a "Report on the Situation of Small Children in Poland", one of the

first studies of this kind in the country. Additionally, a database of NGOs supporting elementary education was created. In the second round of the program 24 NGOs took part in training sessions devoted to modern methods of working with small children, and 17 non-governmental organizations were awarded grants for projects to introduce elements of the "Strategy". In 2007 "Partnership for the Education of Small Children" was established, affiliating nearly 50 NGOs. The program's third round was aimed at popularizing the experience gained within the first two rounds.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT SCHOOL

\$882,381

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2004-2010

The Junior Achievement Foundation

The objective of the program, in operation between 2004 and 2010, was to support initiatives aimed at stimulating and fostering the entrepreneurial spirit among junior-high and high school students, especially in villages and small towns. The program's main component was "Junior-High Enterprise". That initiative was jointly implemented with the Junior Achievement Foundation, which supports teachers who help shape creative, entrepreneurial attitudes among their pupils as well as teaching effective teamwork. To meet the needs of the program, an online system distri-

buting educational materials was created. It was used by more than 3,200 teachers and nearly 1,300 schools. The program also included the IDEA National Competition for the Best Student Initiative and supported the National Entrepreneurship Olympics, organized by the Foundation for the Promotion and Accreditation of Economic Education. Every year several thousand high school students from all over Poland take part in the Olympics for which PAFF still provides its patronage. The winners are invited to study at the universities which hold the competition.

VILLAGE IN TRANSITION (VITA)

\$498,956

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2001-2003

The Rural Development Foundation

The program, carried out between 2000 and 2003, aimed to stimulate grassroots civil initiatives among rural communities with low levels of activity as well as initiating a regular exchange of information and experiences between non-governmental organizations and local leaders working for the benefit of villages. The

program was implemented in three stages: informational – covering over 1,500 persons from 72 communes; training – with approximately 3,000 persons participating in 120 workshops; and execution – consisting of the implementation of 77 local projects, most of which were continued after PAFF ceased financing them.

VILLAGE IN TRANSITION: BUILDING THE INFORMATION SOCIETY (e-VITA)

\$1,654,889

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2004-2011

The Rural Development Foundation

The undertaking, carried out between 2004-2011, stemmed from the experiences of the “Village in Transition” (VITA) program and aimed at promoting the practical application of modern information and communication technologies (ICT) in the social and economic development of rural areas, as well as preparation of local communities and local governments to acquire EU funds. In the first years of the program implementation a model solution – “e-VITA Method” – was developed and in subsequent years financial and expert support was provided for communities that started to build their technical infrastructure, including public Internet hotspot

sites and Internet networks. Thanks to the operation of 13 partnerships, 11 non-commercial community computer networks were set up, as a result of which residents of 60 villages acquired access to the Internet. Additionally, 1,360 residents improved their computer and Internet literacy, and 500 people took part in Internet training for project creation. Educational activities were also performed as part of the program. They were mainly addressed to entrepreneurs, NGOs and youth. Model solutions within this program – especially “e-VITA Method” – were presented in publications, during seminars and on the “Witryna Wiejska” website.

EURO-NGO

1.175.127

USD

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGERS:

2003-2006
The "SLOT" Network of Support for NGOs

2006-2007
The Association for the Non-governmental Initiatives Forum

The program, launched in 2003, was to help NGOs use funds offered by the European Union. As part of the program a public information system to counsel on rules and mechanisms of EU funds was created. The system was addressed mostly to civic initiatives and non-governmental organizations' leaders from small towns and rural areas. In 2004-2006, thanks to the counseling provided by 120 EURO-NGO experts, Polish non-governmental organizations managed to acquire over \$48 million from EU funds for implementation of 373 individual and 21 partnership projects. Currently, a part of the program is continued as the "EURO-NGO+" path under the "Support for NGOs" program.

UNDOING UNEMPLOYMENT

\$974,586

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGERS:

2001-2003
The Enterprise Development Foundation in Suwalki

2004-2006
The Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives

This program, implemented in 2001-2006, was intended to encourage local initiatives to combat unemployment and its effects. The program reached a total of 1,165 individuals, who benefited from psychological counseling and legal advice as well as vocational and in-service courses. They also took advantage of the employment agency services supported by a specially organized databank with 3,000 job offers. Almost half of those taking part in the program found new jobs shortly thereafter or created new ones through self-employment. Next, the activities focused on spreading information about the outplacement method adjusted to the needs and capabilities of NGOs and local social partners. In 2004-2006 almost 300 labor market experts completed the Outplacement Academy training. The creation of labor market institutions' portal www.bezrobocie.org.pl is another result of the program.

WORK IN POLAND

\$810,277

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2007-2010

The Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives

The purpose of this undertaking, based on the experiences of the “Undoing Unemployment” program, was to bolster the competence and efficiency of non-governmental organizations in the realm of services for the labor market. The program comprised research and analyses, educa-

tional-informational activities targeting NGOs and their local government partners involved with unemployed as well as grants for local efforts implemented with the use of ICT. The program also entailed training for non-governmental organizations through the distance learning method.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT FOR NGOS (FIMANGO)

\$1,793,021

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2000-2006

The Civil Society Development Foundation

The program, carried out between 2000 and 2006, aimed at improving the quality of financial management in non-profit organizations. This was achieved mainly through free-of-charge training courses in which

more than 1,300 accountants and people responsible for NGO finances participated. Since 2007, these training courses have been carried out within the “Support for NGOs” program.

THE 2001 FLOOD

\$102,359

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2001
The Klon/Jawor Association, in cooperation
with the "Rzeczpospolita" daily

The initiative was launched in 2001 in cooperation with the "Rzeczpospolita" daily. PAFF awarded 17 grants to support the schools most touched by the flood, located mainly in rural areas. Also, almost 200 small businesses obtained preferential loans to repair damages caused by the flood, provided by the Micro Fund and subsidized by the Foundation. Thanks to the cooperation between PAFF and the Klon/Jawor Association, a special website, "The Flood", was established.

THE "FLOOD. RELIEF!" PROGRAM

\$329,370

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGERS:

2010
The Center for Citizenship Education Foundation
The Information Society Development Foundation
The Academy for the Development
of Philanthropy in Poland

The initiative, launched in May 2010, was a joint undertaking of PAFF, the Center for Citizenship Education Foundation and the Information Society Development Foundation, all under the auspices of the "Gazeta Wyborcza" daily. The goal of the initiative was to help schools and public libraries located in small towns and rural areas, where the flood had struck. At the same time PAFF, together with the Academy for the Development of Philanthropy in Poland, launched a campaign to help all the local civic organizations participating in the "Act Locally" program that were located in the flooded areas. 72 schools and public libraries as well as 70 local civic organizations received financial support. Voluntary Fire Brigades were also provided with aid.

CITIZENS AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

\$266,515

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2002-2004

The Foundation in Support of Local Democracy

The program, implemented in 2002–2004, was intended to improve relations between local governments and local communities through establishing clear and consistent mechanisms of cooperation between local authorities and citizens as well as civic organizations. The program

resulted in the creation of “Cooperation Charters” developed jointly by representatives of local governments and the third sector. Experiences of the program constituted the basis for launching the “Transparent Community” campaign.

TRANSPARENT COMMUNITY

\$171,967

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2003-2005

The Foundation in Support of Local Democracy

The “Transparent Community” program learned from the experience of the “Citizens and the Local Government” program and was a pilot for the “Transparent Poland” initiative. “Transparent Community” was carried out in 2004 with the participation of selected local governments. Its goal was to improve the quality and promote appropriate standards of

public life in villages and small towns. The pilot program prepared 16 local governments to become consultants for the “Transparent Poland” mass campaign. 800 local governments from all over Poland applied, ready to implement a set of tasks developed earlier under the “Transparent Community” action.

TRANSPARENT POLAND

\$472,556

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2005-2008

The Foundation in Support of Local Democracy

The aim of the “Transparent Poland” campaign, implemented in 2005–2008, with joint participation of local governments and communities, was to introduce and consolidate six principles of good governance: transparency, zero tolerance for corruption, civic participation, predictability, accountability and professionalism. The campaign was the product of a partnership between PAFF, the Foundation in Support of Local Democracy, the Stefan Batory Foundation, the “Gazeta Wyborcza” daily, the Agora Foundation, the Center for Citizenship Education Foundation and the World Bank. It stemmed from the

experiences of “Citizen and the Local Government” and the pilot “Transparent Community” programs. The campaign was joined by 800 local governments from all over Poland. 426 of them received certificates confirming completion of the program. Local governments participating in the campaign took advantage of experts’ support – in total more than 3,000 local officials were trained under the campaign. The experiences of the program were presented to interested countries, including Ukraine, Georgia, Bulgaria, Romania, Kazakhstan and the Balkan countries.

CITIZEN AND LAW

\$3,442,628

in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2002-2014

The Institute of Public Affairs

Implemented between 2002-2014, the program supported development of various forms of civil and legal counseling. It did so by providing support to non-governmental organizations which dispense free, expert legal information and advice and encouraging citizens to exercise their rights in the public sphere. Thanks to the development of free legal counseling, the program provided assistance mainly to individuals in difficult financial straits or life situations. It also fostered public debate on reforming the system of access to legal assistance. A grant competition was regularly organized for non-governmental organizations providing legal and civic consultancy, in which 190 projects were funded. This made

it possible to provide over 170,000 legal and civic consultations. The activities within the program were overseen by a Council of Experts comprised of individuals highly valued in the legal community. The work of the Council led to the creation of the *mediacjajemza.pl* website, promoting civil mediation and the Pro Bono Center, thanks to which NGOs were able to obtain free legal assistance from well-known law offices. Also, the Active Citizen Forum was created, which dealt with obstacles limiting voter turnout and developed recommendations on how to improve citizens’ involvement. The Platform of Consultancy Organizations was established and training for organizations providing advice was offered.

RELIEF FUND FOR NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CIVIC INITIATIVES

\$266.515

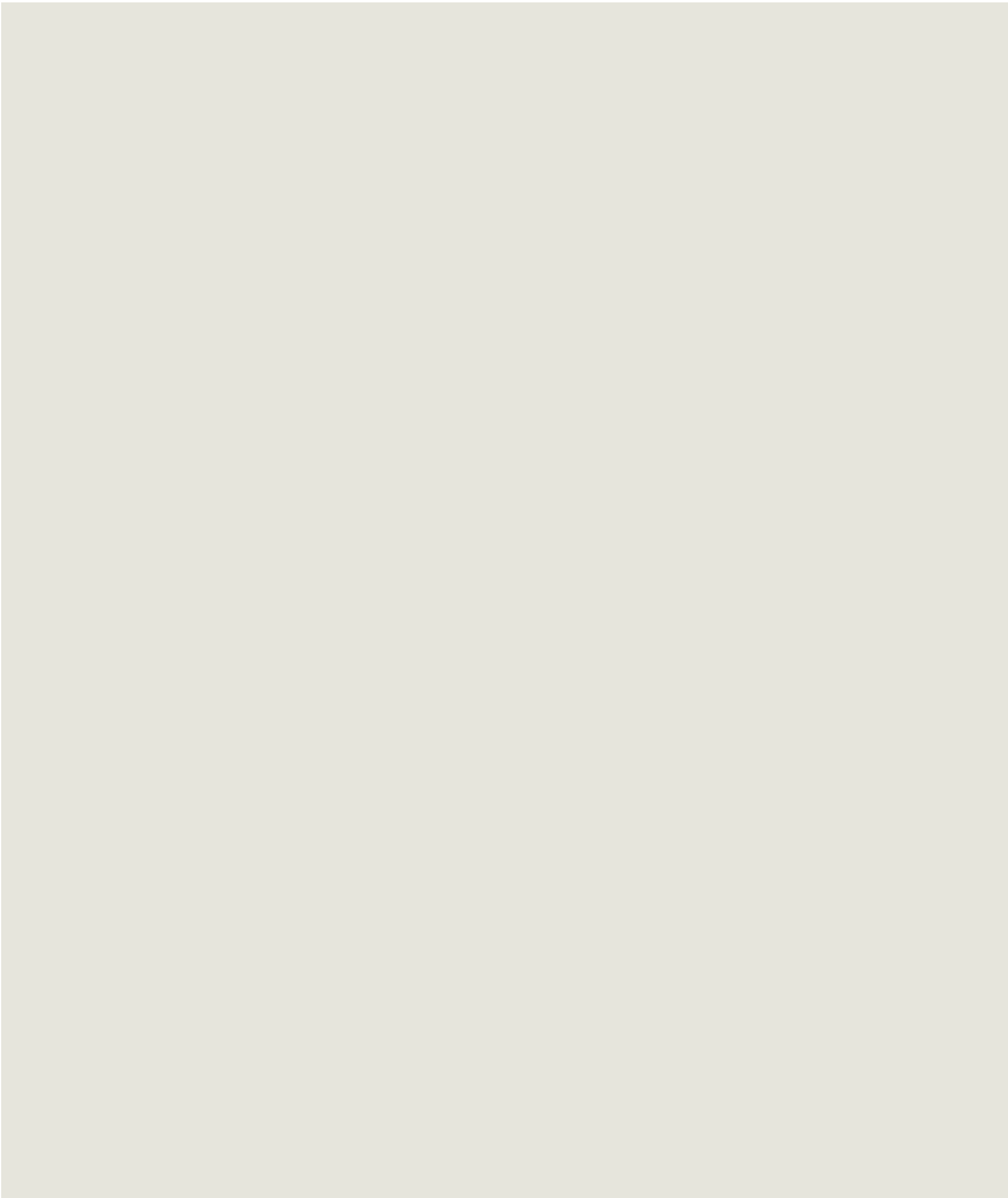
in PAFF grants

PROGRAM MANAGER:

2020-2023

The Education for Democracy Foundation

The program, implemented in 2020-2023, supported NGOs during the COVID-19 pandemic and helped them counteract and mitigate its negative effects. The offer was addressed both to organizations involved in the implementation of PAFF programs (e.g. Act Locally Centers) as well as those that had not cooperated with the Foundation before but whose activities match its mission. Thanks to the "Relief Fund", NGOs adapted to the new conditions and were able to implement projects aimed at people who needed assistance the most. The priority was initiatives aimed at minimizing educational losses, ensuring safety, overcoming isolation and improving the mental and physical health of children and young people from localities with up to 20,000 inhabitants, children with disabilities, from migrant families or families facing economic constraints. NGOs also received support to cover administrative and payroll costs. A total of PLN 9 million was channeled to 250 projects. In addition, information and advisory activities were carried out to improve the quality of activities carried out, as well as networking meetings. One of the results of the program is a publication presenting best educational practices for building the mental resilience of children and adolescents. The "Relief Fund" experiences have laid the groundwork for PAFF's newest "Fostering Resilience in Children and Youth" program, which was launched in 2024.



FACTS AND FIGURES

FACTS AND FIGURES



35,000
awarded scholarships



4,224
modernized libraries



12,500
trained librarians



22,000
supported local projects



16,000
*student-volunteers
with more than 45,000
educational projects
at 3,200 schools involving
467,000 children and youth*



230,000
*teachers improved
their professional
competencies*



12,000

*schools participated
in PAFF programs*



30,500

*NGO leaders and staff
benefited from PAFF's
training offer*



1,073

*post-graduate scholarships
awarded to young people
from Eastern Europe, the South
Caucasus and Central Asia
(including 581 to Ukrainian
citizens)*



1,234

*supported projects in East
European, South Caucasian
and Central Asian countries*



11,000

*participants of study tours
to Poland from 10 countries
of the region*

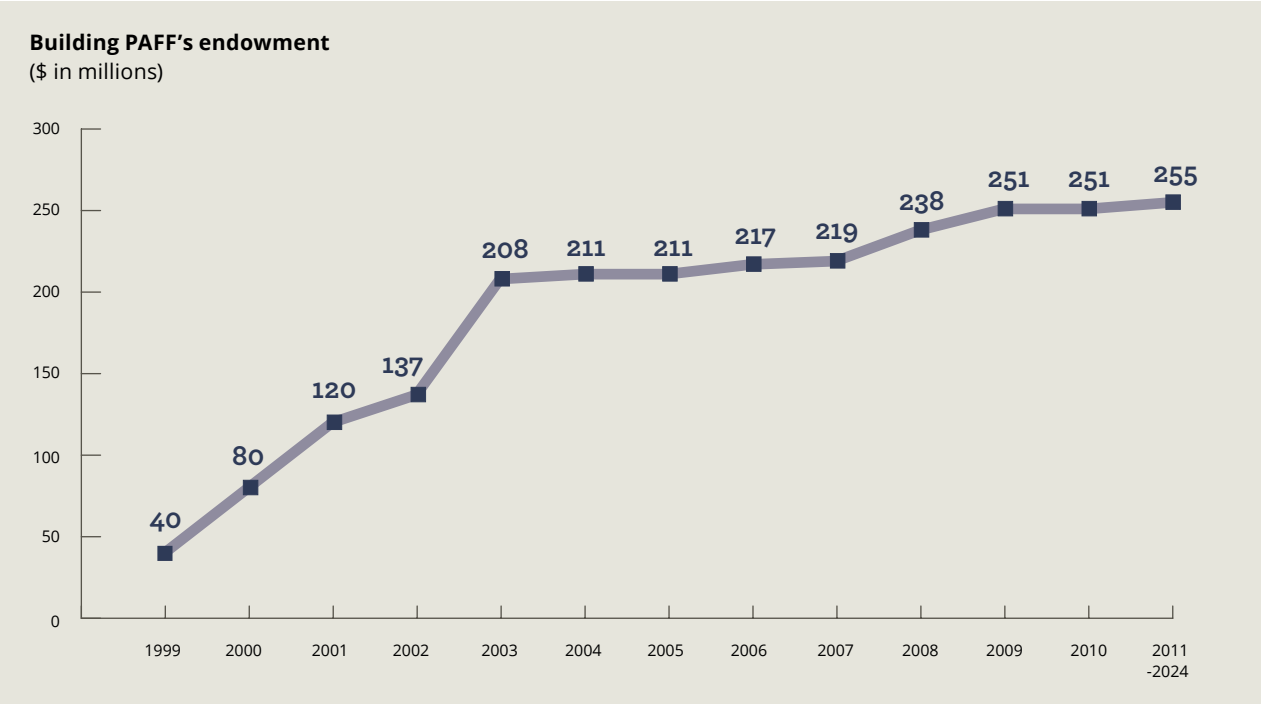


23,000

*PAFF program participants
attended meetings
at PAFF's Warsaw
Representative Office*

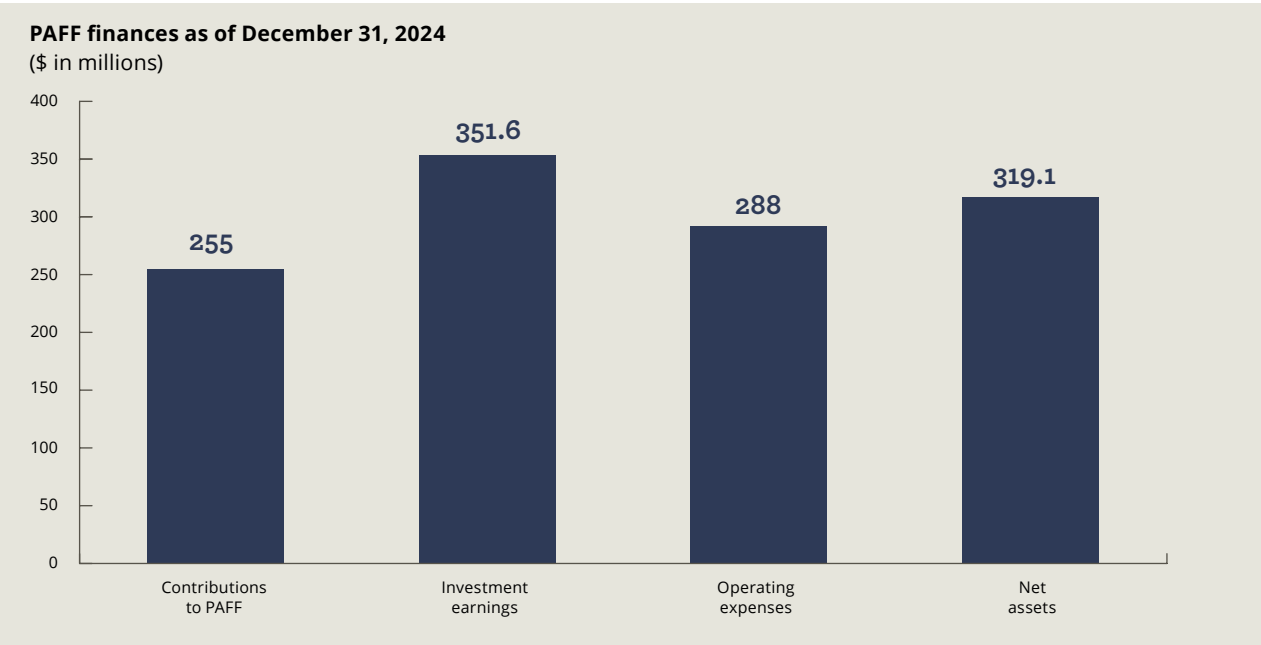
THE ENDOWMENT OF THE POLISH-AMERICAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION

As the Polish-American Enterprise Fund (PAEF) was phasing out its activities, it gradually transferred the proceeds from completed investments to the Foundation’s endowment. PAEF transferred its final funds to a PAFF account in 2011. Since then, the Foundation’s endowment stands at \$255 million.



INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT

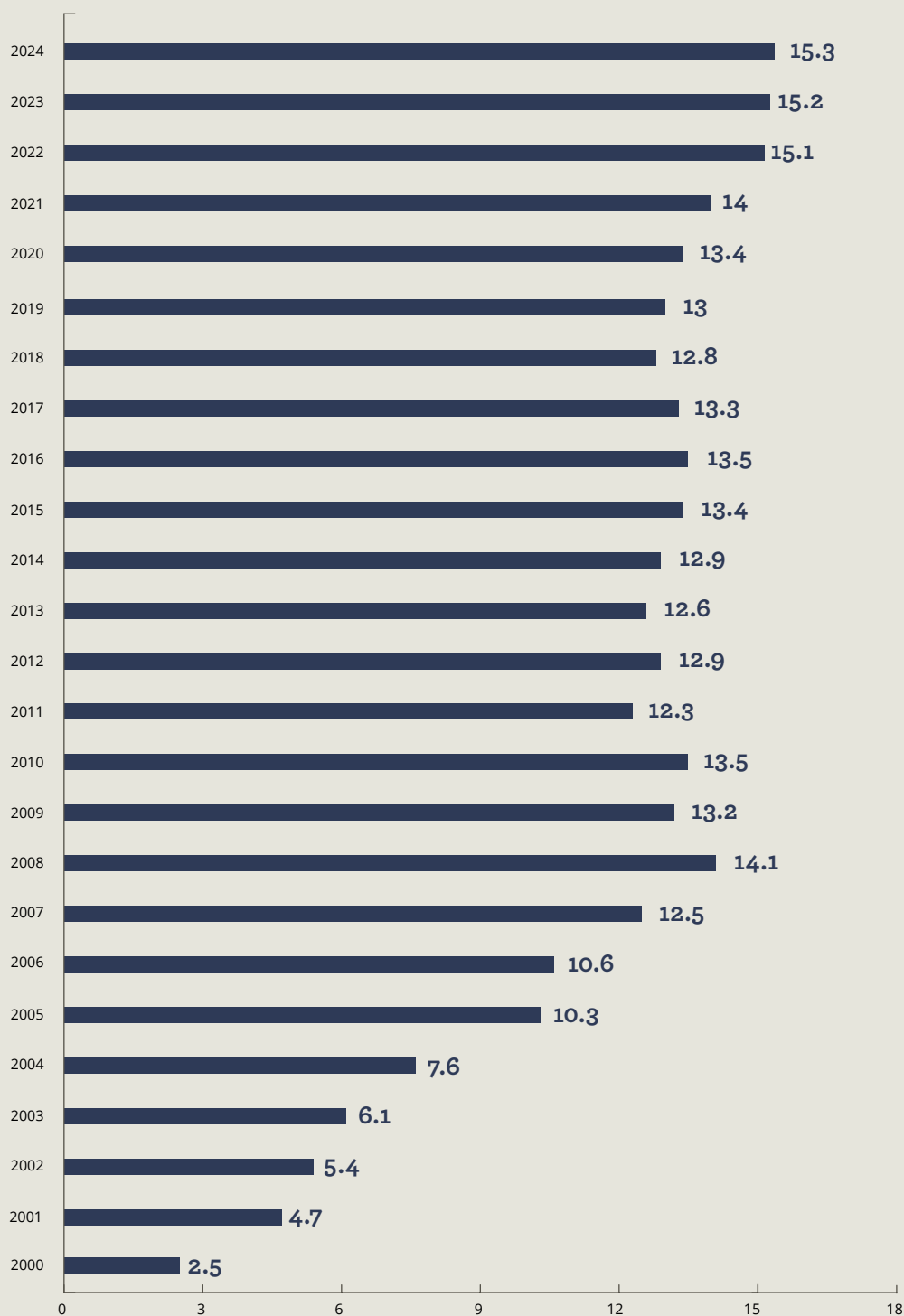
The Investment Committee, composed of several Members of the PAFF Board of Directors and external experts, is responsible for managing the Foundation’s investment portfolio. Since 2022, the Committee has been chaired by John Kasnicki. Previously, it was led by Frederick M. Bohen, Robert G. Faris, and Carla H. Skodinski. Investment earnings on the portfolio over the 25 years amounts to \$351.6 million.



FOUNDATION'S ANNUAL BUDGETS

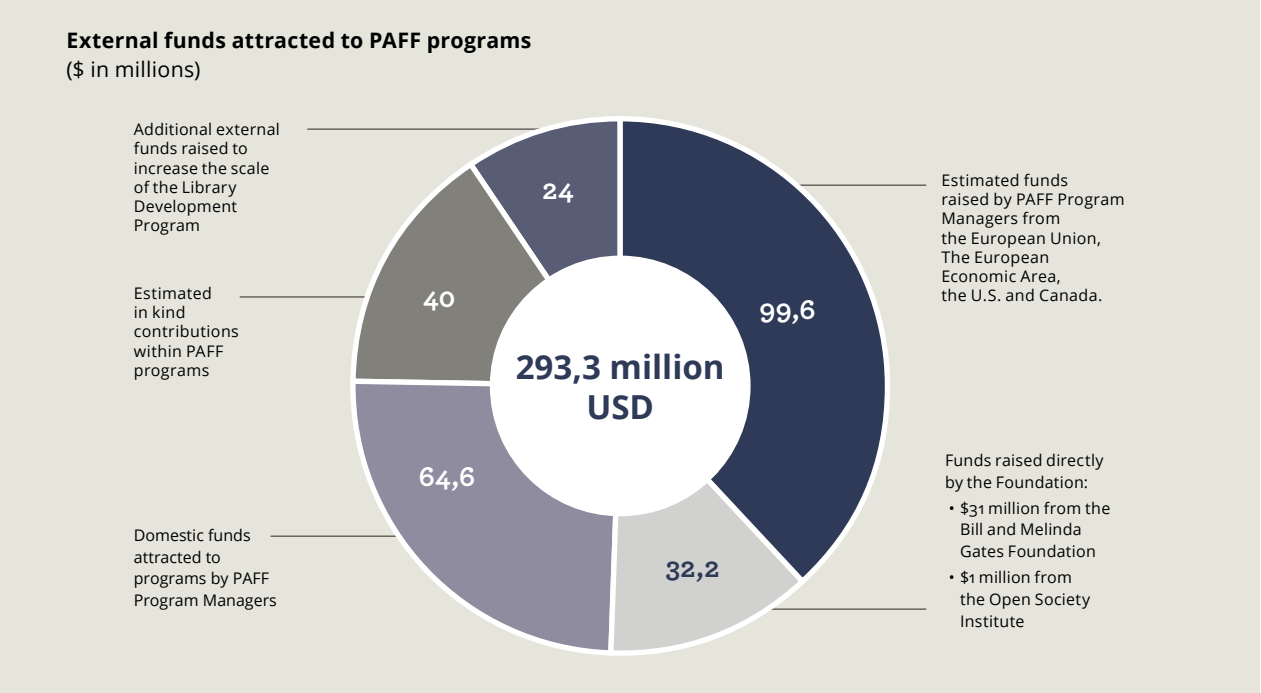
The PAFF Board of Directors approves the Foundation's budget, in USD, for each subsequent year of operation. For the purpose of implementing programs in Poland, PAFF funds are gradually exchanged to PLN. Between 2000 and 2024, the Foundation allocated \$285 million to its activities.

The Foundation's annual spending (2000-2024)
(\$ in millions)



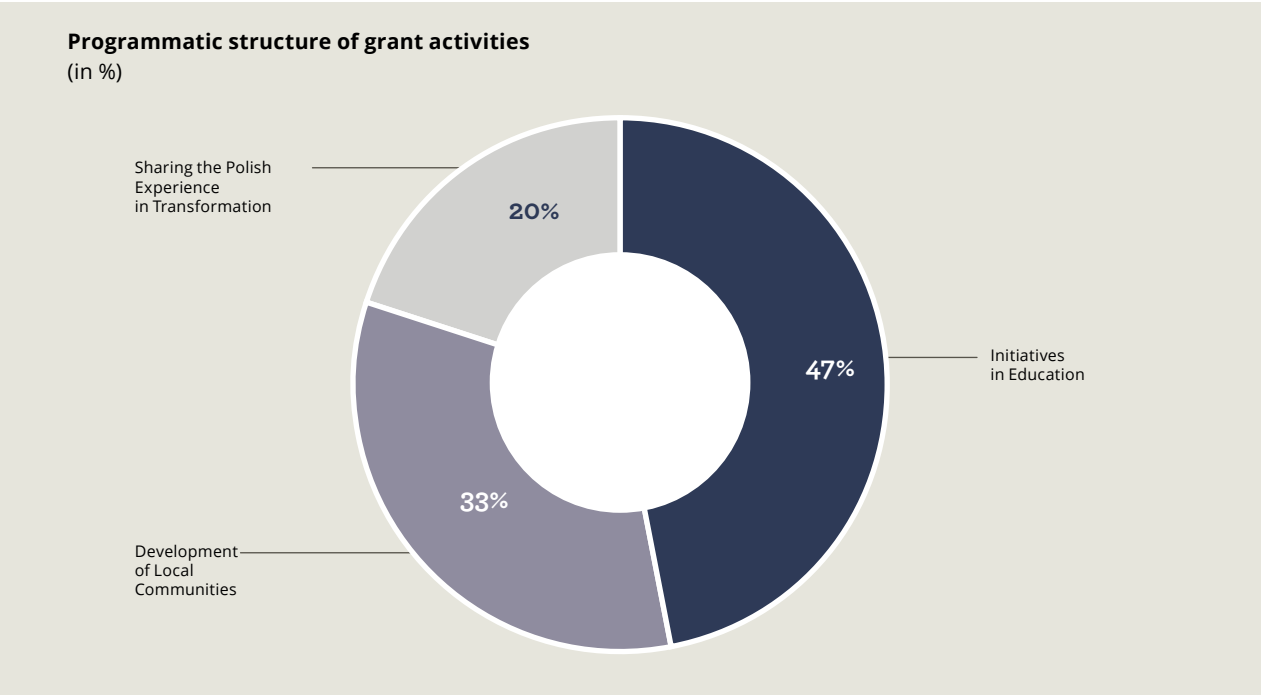
EXTERNAL FUNDS ATTRACTED TO PAFF PROGRAMS

Between 2000 and 2024, external funds totaling \$293.3 million were raised for the Foundation’s programs.



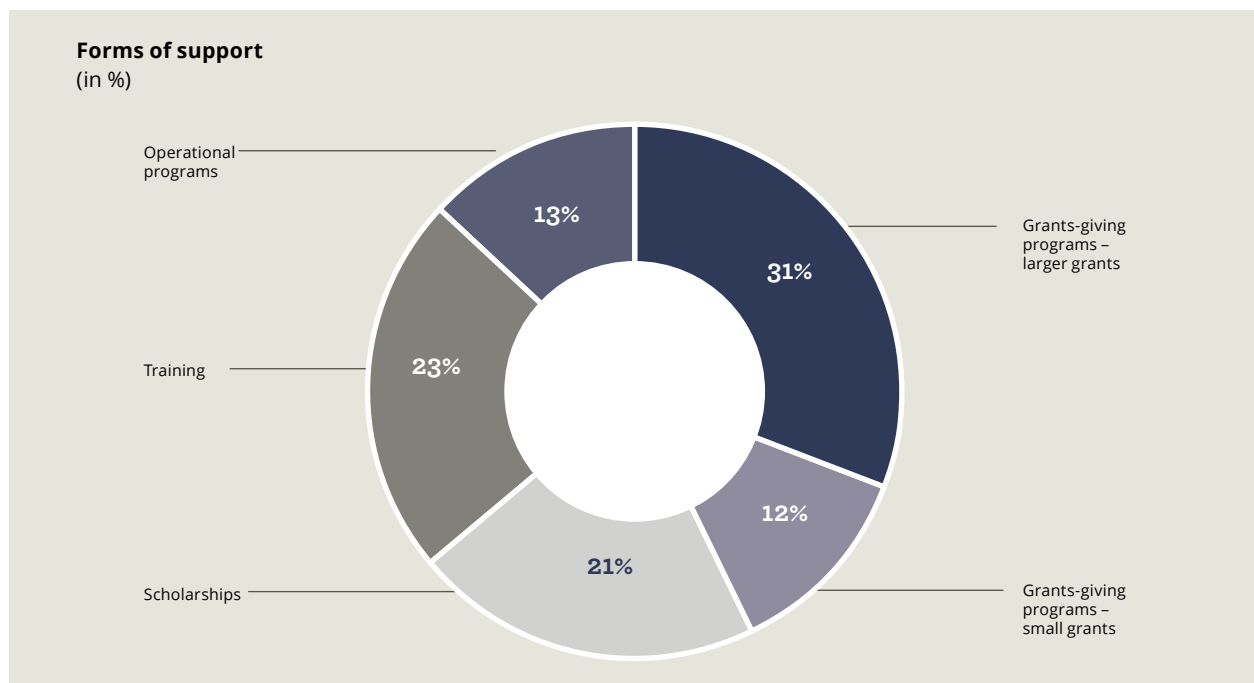
PROGRAM AREAS

The Foundation concentrates its efforts in three programmatic areas: Initiatives in Education, Development of Local Communities, and Sharing the Polish Experience in Transformation. Between 2001 and 2008 the Foundation also encompassed a fourth area: Citizen in a Democratic State of Law.



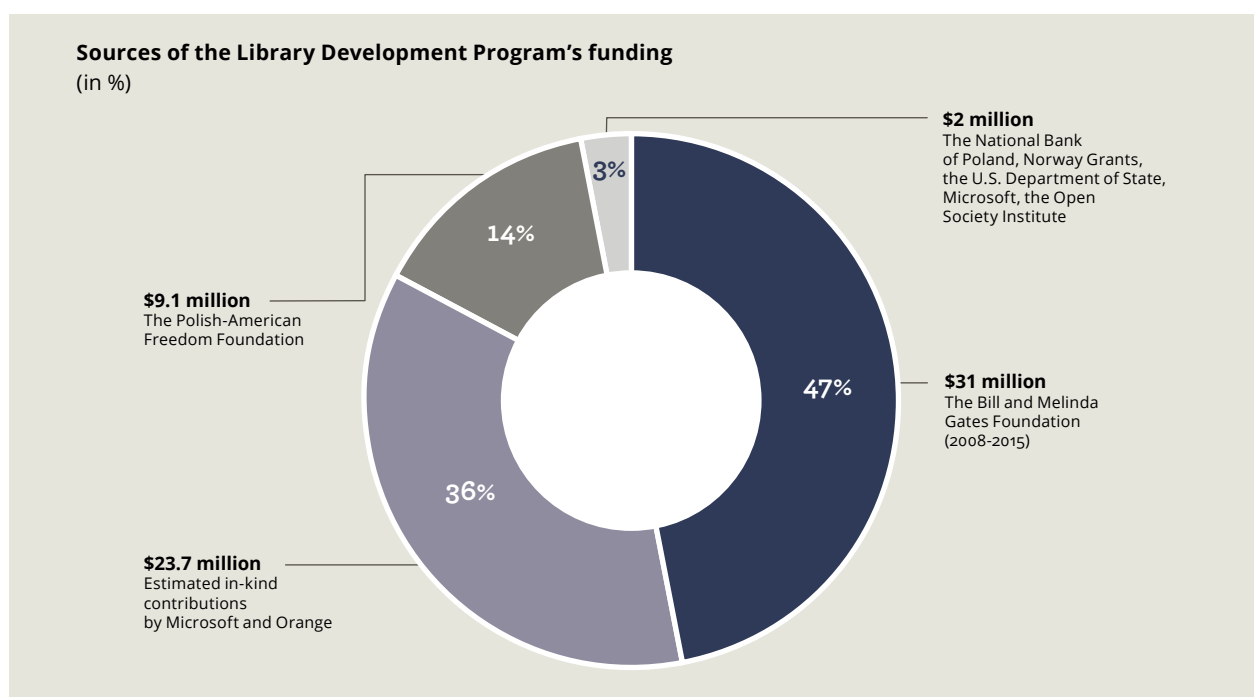
FORMS OF PAFF SUPPORT

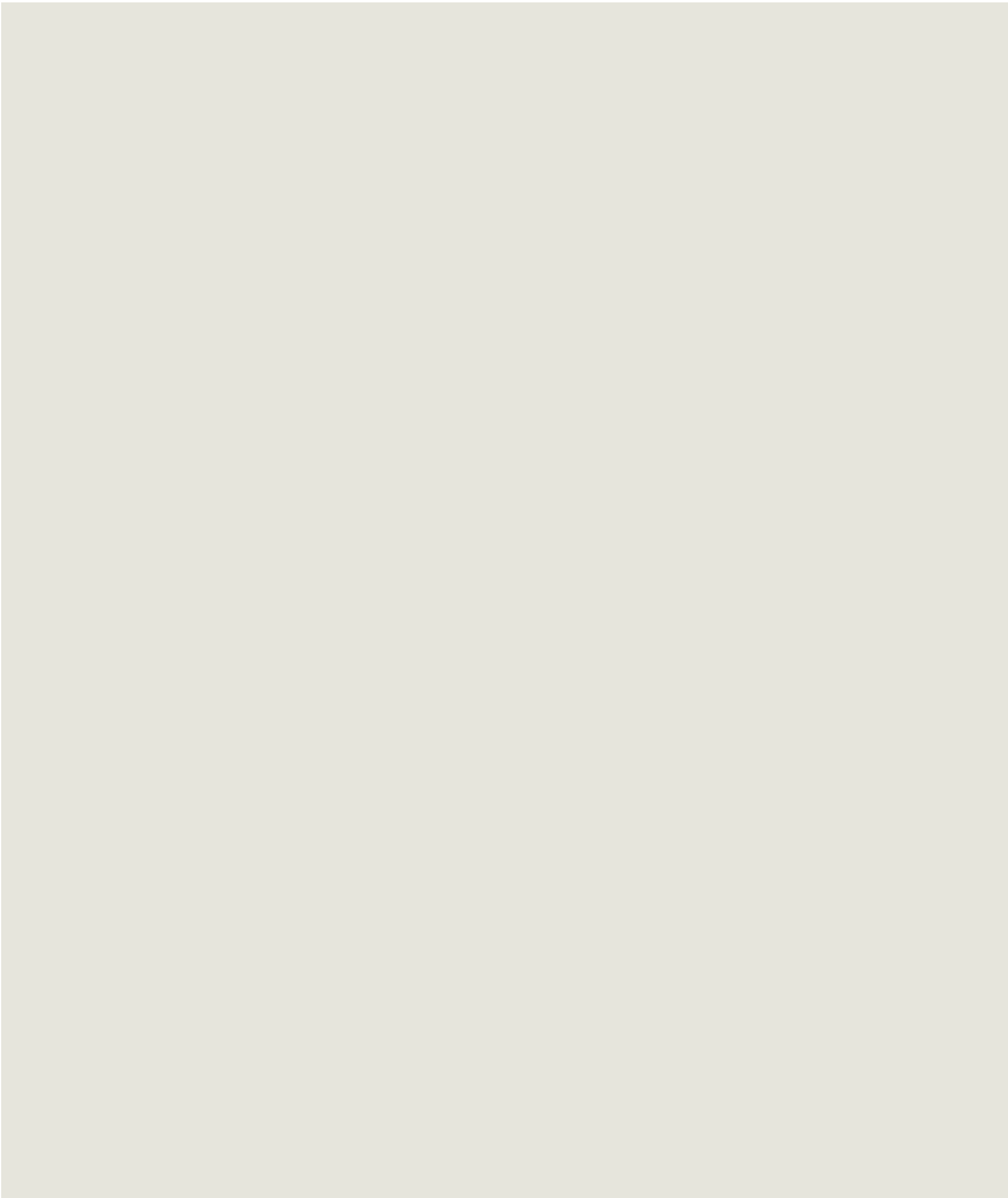
Since its beginning the Foundation provided support in the following forms: grants, scholarships, training, counseling and networking.



THE LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM'S FINANCING

Funds contributed by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (including income from investments and exchange gains on the original grant) ultimately funded 50 percent of the Library Development Program's costs, and the other 50 percent was contributed from other sources.





WHO **WE ARE**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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 Sacz, 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 Fornalczyk – 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 † – 2000

John H. D'Arms † – 2000-2002

Robert G. Faris † – 2000-2015

Aleksander Koj † – 2000-2010

Nicholas A. Rey † – 2000-2009

U.S. AMBASSADORS TO POLAND – HONORARY GUESTS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Mark Brzezinski – 2022-2025

Georgette Mosbacher – 2018-2021

Paul W. Jones – 2015-2018

Stephen D. Mull – 2012-2015

Lee A. Feinstein – 2009-2012

Victor H. Ashe – 2004-2009

Christopher R. Hill – 2000-2004

Daniel Fried – 2000

MANAGEMENT, STAFF AND ASSOCIATES



Jerzy Koźmiński
President and Chief
Executive Officer



Grzegorz Jędrys
Chief Operating Officer, Head of
the Representative Office in Poland



Norman E. Haslun III
Treasurer and CFO, Secretary
to the Board of Directors



C. Douglas Ades
Senior Consultant



Matthew R. Elkin
Legal Counsel



Radosław Jasiński
Program Director



Joanna Lempart
Program Director



Marianna Hajdukiewicz
Program Director



Agnieszka Mazur
Program Director



Mirosław Czyżewski
Program Officer



Katarzyna Świątkiewicz
Program Officer



Kalina Grzeszuk-Zająchkowska
Program Officer



Agnieszka Kwiatkowska
Chief Accountant



Justyna Podraza
Programs' Financial Controller



Przemysław Zaroń
Public Relations Specialist



Maciej Makulski
Consultant



Grażyna Skrzypiec
Accounting



Julia Chęcińska
Administrative Assistant



Julia Sowa
Administrative Assistant



Tomasz Wojciechowski
Administrative Assistant



Izabela Kopczyk
Administrative Assistant
(maternity leave)

FORMER STAFF MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES:

Ryszard Kruk

Head of the Representative Office in Poland,
Vice President (2000-2005)

Anna Rozicka

Program Director (2000-2001)

Jacek Michałowski

Program Director (2000-2010)

Anna Wojakowska-Skiba

Program Director (2001-2009)

Renata Koźlicka-Glińska

Program Director (2004-2022)

Rafał Kramza

Program Director (2007-2012)

Katarzyna Maniszewska

Program Director (2013-2016)

Robert Milewski

Program Officer (2004-2009)

Małgorzata Rurewicz-Rzesos

Chief Accountant (2000-2003)

Mira Osiecka

Programs' Financial Controller (2000-2018)

Grzegorz Borczyk

Financial Analyst (2009-2016)

Adela Makarewicz

Accounting (2000-2014)

Joanna Rechnio

Administrative Coordinator (2010-2018)

Karolina Rewska

Administrative Assistant (2016-2020)

Aleksandra Wróblewska

Administrative Assistant (2019-2020)

Agnieszka Łukasik

Administrative Assistant (2000-2013)

Marta Szymczyk

Administrative Assistant (2000-2004)

Justyna Florczak-Tylkowska

Administrative Assistant (2015-2018)

Sławomir Doniecki

Administrative Assistant (2000-2007)

Rafał Milewski

Administrative Assistant (2007-2015)

Paulina Kołaczyńska

Administrative Assistant (2009-2016)

Izabela Jaroń

Administrative Assistant (2011-2012)

Monika Kotlarz

Administrative Assistant (2001-2003)

Dorota Górka

Consultant (2006-2019)

Agnieszka Chorley

Consultant (2006-2007)

Robert C. Odle †

Legal Counsel (2000-2012)

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