

ZWEITZEUGEN e.V. - Activity report for the year 2019

The association pursues exclusively and directly charitable purposes within the meaning of the “Tax-privileged purposes” section of the German Tax Code. The purpose of the association is to promote international sentiment, tolerance in all areas of culture and international understanding. In particular, the association pursues the purpose of actively preventing anti-Semitism and racism and sensitizing young people in particular to the topic.

The purpose of the statutes is realized in particular by (cf. in detail § 3 of the statutes)

1. the documentation of life stories of contemporary witnesses of the Holocaust,
2. promoting a lively culture of remembrance of the National Socialist era, for example in the form of exhibitions, didactic concepts and publications,
3. Educational measures, especially in schools, with school classes (from the fourth grade) and youth groups,
4. the implementation and publication of academic research projects.

This was implemented in 2019 as follows

1. documentation of the life stories of Holocaust survivors and their publications

In 2019, five new interviews were conducted with Holocaust survivors: with Margot Friedländer in June 2019, with Tamara Dreifuss in October 2019, with Grete Hamburg also in October 2019, with Herta Goldmann in November 2019 and with Peter Finkelgrün also in November 2019. This included establishing and maintaining contact as well as discussions between the association members and the survivors. The conversations were recorded for later transcription and editing.

The work with contemporary witnesses prevents the Holocaust from being forgotten - especially with regard to personal fates. Documenting the life stories of an ageing generation is an essential basis for the sustainable promotion of a living culture of remembrance. The documented interviews are then processed and made available in the form of publications. This directly promotes mutual tolerance and prevents racism and anti-Semitism.

Maintaining contact with contemporary witnesses:

All 25 living eyewitnesses had a contact person in the association in 2019. In this way, these contemporary witnesses receive regular mail. As far as possible, contact with the eyewitnesses is maintained regularly by telephone, email and visits.

As part of the school projects, pupils can also write letters to the eyewitnesses. These are regularly handed over to the survivors, some of whom live in Israel, or to the descendants of deceased eyewitnesses. In 2019, the association was able to send 1,139 letters from schoolchildren. This also helped to promote international understanding and good relations between people.

Quality assurance:

The focus was on internal quality management in all teams and areas of the association. In addition to team-specific milestones, e.g. the creation and revision of guidelines, the description of work processes or the renewal of the training system for new workshop leaders, the association-wide infrastructure was expanded under the leadership of the Internal Development team: As an important basis for customer relation

management, the association has put a version of the salesforce contact database adapted to its needs into operation and implemented the work with it in the first teams. The database represents a central backup of all contacts and allows the systematic storage of all relevant information. The database thus also represents a central tool for knowledge management in the association.

Processing and publishing interviews with contemporary witnesses:

In 2019, the association continued to work on processing the interviews for publication: three transcripts were completed; six interview texts were edited and 38 short texts supplementing the interviews were written.

Support and maintaining contact in the event of death

In 2019, however, three of the eyewitnesses died (Sister Johanna, Heinz Hesdörffer and Gerda Rosenthal), with whom members of the association had maintained regular contact. To support the association's internal contact persons, a (mourning) support service for volunteers was developed and set up for these cases in 2019. The stories of the deceased are passed on by association members.

2. promoting a lively culture of remembrance of the National Socialist era, for example in the form of exhibitions and events

The documented life stories were made accessible to the public by ZWEITZEUGEN e.V. as part of the association's traveling exhibition. In 2019, two exhibitions were successfully realized together with cooperation partners. A total of around 1,086 visitors were reached in this way on 38 exhibition days. At the same time, children and young people were sensitized to racism and anti-Semitism in 10 didactic workshops. Since 2019, the exhibition and events team has also focused in particular on so-called image sponsorships, in which associations or companies can permanently exhibit a portrait of the survivors at their premises - two of these projects have already been realized in 2019.

Oldenburg: Oldenburg City Museum

13.01.2019 - 03.02.2019, 22 days exhibition

Accompanying program: Two events (vernissage, film evening, discussion rounds, closing event); four didactic workshops (140 children and young people).

Haltern: Protestant parish of Haltern

09.11.2019 - 24.11.2019, 16 days exhibition

Accompanying program: Two events (vernissage, film evening, discussion rounds, closing event); Six didactic workshops (180 children and young people); 136 written letters to contemporary witnesses.

3. educational measures, particularly in schools, with school classes (from the fourth grade) and extracurricular youth groups, as well as the development of didactic concepts and materials:

In 2019, HEIMATSUCHER e.V. carried out numerous projects in schools. In the projects, the personal life stories of contemporary witnesses are presented in their historical context and young people are sensitized to the current topic of racism and anti-Semitism. To this end, the association has developed its own educational concept, in which volunteers are increasingly being trained, including in 2019. This year, with the support of the Paritätisches Jugendwerk, contacts were established with extracurricular educational institutions and other independent child and youth welfare organizations and the first workshops were held. In 2020, the

association plans to continue using these contacts to strengthen cooperation with extracurricular (educational) institutions.

The association continues to be pleased with the sharp rise in popularity in the school landscape and the increasing number of inquiries from educational institutions. With the 2019 educational projects, the association was once again able to increase the number of people and institutions reached in the target groups compared to previous years. In 2019, the association reached 2,433 children and young people. In total, the association worked with 51 different educational institutions in Germany and carried out 117 educational projects.

The educational projects carried out by the association support teachers in teaching children and young people democratic values. Information on this was provided at four specialist events for teachers.

The aim of making this offer accessible to educators outside the school system was pursued further in 2019.

The association has been a recognized provider of independent youth welfare services since 2019, which also makes us strong in the area of extracurricular education. We expanded this area in 2019 and would like to see further growth here in the future.

School cooperations

In order to sustainably promote the association's efforts to promote a lively culture of remembrance in schools, seven new collaborations were entered into with schools - so-called second-witness schools - in 2019.

Didactic concepts and materials

The existing interviews are constantly being adapted to suit the age group. They are shortened and arranged chronologically, as the eyewitnesses often switch between storylines in the interviews. Illustrations are created for each booklet, and footnotes and explanatory texts are written especially for children and young people. There is also a work section with tasks for the children and young people. They answer in-depth questions about the interview, explain the meanings of quotes and can sometimes write their answers creatively, for example by drawing. The children and young people then take the booklets home with the task of retelling the story. The idea of international understanding can thus be carried on beyond the project boundaries.

In 2019, two more survival stories were developed and printed in the form of didactic materials. The existing catalog of survivor stories was also revised and republished.

4. implementation and publication of scientific research projects

The association works together with institutions, chairs and academics at various universities. This includes presenting the association and the didactic methods that have been explicitly introduced into the current academic discourse and discussed there. In addition to joint publications, these collaborations provide impetus for new methods or formats that are integrated into the association's work, or the joint organization of seminars for students. In 2019, cooperation with the following universities was particularly noteworthy

- Ruhr University Bochum
- University of Essen-Duisburg
- University of Cologne

3. other activities

Communication / PR

The Communications team is divided into the areas of social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), newsletter, website and press relations and is supervised and organized by a team leader. The entire team works on a voluntary basis. The volunteers exchange information on relevant topics through regular meetings and telephone calls. The association tries to fill each area of responsibility with at least two people in order to implement public relations work in a structured and professional manner and to create opportunities for representation.

In 2019, the Communications team analyzed the existing work processes within the team and took a joint look at the interfaces with other teams in the association. Processes were adapted where necessary and appropriate. Over the course of the year, the association developed processes to inform all volunteers and full-time employees about topics that were relevant to internal and external communication.

Association life

186 association members supported the association's work in 2019.

Other year-round activities

The association was represented at various events throughout the year, in particular commemorative events and networking events in the field of education and remembrance work.

Throughout the year, members gave lectures in a non-academic context on the need for a living culture of remembrance and the promotion of mutual tolerance and international understanding. This also includes lectures on the association's educational concept, which is gaining increasing recognition.

5. cooperations

Important cooperation partners were acquired in 2019 to ensure the most effective and sustainable implementation of the association's purpose. In addition to educational institutions and universities, FESCH (Forum Eltern Schule) should be mentioned here in particular. We were also able to establish further contacts with commercial enterprises and public funding bodies.

In 2019, our association was recognized as an independent youth welfare organization with the aim of expanding our educational work outside of schools.

6 Prizes and awards

The sustainable impact of our work was confirmed at the end of 2019 following an audit by the non-profit analysis and consulting firm for effective engagement "Phineo" and awarded the "Wirkt-Siegel" seal of approval.

Under the title "Being different - thinking differently - acting together", the Paritätische Jugendwerk NRW (PJW) awarded prizes in 2019 to three initiatives in which children and young people stick together and act together despite all their differences. Two associations also received honorable mentions. The first prize (2,000 euros) went to the HEIMATSUCHER association for the "Second Witnesses" project.