

Stichting Muses / Muses Foundation
Amsterdam

Annual Report 2012



Office

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Annual report

The mission of the Muses foundation is to increase the impact of volunteers worldwide.

On one hand to support small-scale projects in development countries on the other hand, to make the voluntary work a life changing experience for the volunteers. From our own experience we know that a good preparation is essential.

The Muses foundation focuses on the thousands of people who are willing to apply themselves for the less fortunate people in this world. We take care of a solid preparation for volunteers before they start their trip to development countries around the world. We offer an instructive, interactive and enjoyable training day. According to us, the experience of the volunteer is not finished when he/she is back in Holland. Perhaps it has only just started. During the comeback day we gather the acquired knowledge of the volunteers. Together we evaluate and see how a volunteer can keep active in volunteer work back home.

In 2012 we have:

- Developed a full day training programme to prepare inexperienced volunteers and lay the foundation for the debrief training held twice in 2012
- Trained 250 volunteers travelling to 41 different countries; These volunteers raised over 250,000 euro for the projects they visited and surrounding communities.
- Captured the experiences of these 250 volunteers to build up the online community now consisting of 500+ volunteers, project owners and professionals. 7500 family and friends have been reading the blogs of volunteers and through donating been an active part of the experience and support community of this volunteer
- We have signed 4 partnerships within the 5 largest dutch travel organizations specialised in volunteering. An additional 37 agreements were made with smaller volunteer organizations and dutch project owners. Collectively they represent \pm 3000 volunteers per year.
- We have improved our communication (website, flyers and other materials) to the target audiences both online and offline (volunteer events, partner events)
- We have recruited almost 20 experienced volunteers that are now actively supporting training, online community and promotional events taking some resource constraints of our small team
- Starting to build up a network of entrepreneurs and private investors to fund our initiative and obtain technologies that can help us reach more goals with less resources (online publishing, online recruitment, telecommunications and digital advertising expertise)
- Build up a weekly factbased performance dialogue to help bring focus in our weekly & daily routines and link to our operational plan and value proposition

Approach

We have followed the same approach as outlined in the plan for 2011-2013. We did move towards a model where the partner organization pay a small fee for each volunteer trained. In 2013 we need to check that this model is generating sufficient value for the partners to ensure sustainability.

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Through our increased number of partnership our independence has proven to be more important. We continuously balance promoting projects or events from one partner over the other. Our general guideline is that they can use our channels to do promotions and stimulate their volunteers to do the same.

In 2013 we are ramping up the train-the-trainer programme to train volunteers to become trainers and support us in training the 700+ volunteers in 2013 as well as the ambassador program to train volunteers to grow the online community. Both programmes are supported by some of the best experts industry has to offer.

Donations to individuals and projects

In 2012 we followed the same policy as 2011 to need give funding to any project or volunteer as they are able to raise sufficient themselves. We do want to investigate in years to come what other incentives we can use to stimulate experience sharing and retention. This was part of the research done by the students from the University of Amsterdam (UvA/HvA).

Certification ANBI – Erkend Leerbedrijf

Through the help of one of our partners and PWC Tax we have been granted the ANBI status which means we are now officially a good cause and any donations are tax deductible. More importantly the strengthens our brand and opens door for other fund/resource raising initiatives.

We have opted to get certified by Kenwerk as Erkend Leerbedrijf which will allow us to attract interns and strengthens our identity as trainer/educator. Certification is expected by February 2013.

Other

VIP: We held a fundraising/networking dinner (Volunteer Investment Partner) with participants from our network with diverse background (banking, private equity, strategy, training, coaching, elearning, recruitment, sales, marketing) where we pitched our revised business model. Based on the feedback we decided to launch the pilot with 2 partners (Activity International & Projects Abroad) which was considered successful enough to continue our project. The VIP dinner was a great way to problemsolve and generate ideas but also ensured continuous support which gave a good return on investment (free office and training space, free online publishing, free telecom, free Online Advertising consulting, free tax advice and introduction with different new parties such as Triodos and COFRA).

Housing: We moved office in November accepting the offer from Diaconie (Protestant Church) to become resident in their network of social enterprises. We feel well at home and already our small office (4 desks) is sometimes too small to house all volunteers and interns. The environment is very supportive and consists of many smaller and larger volunteer organizations we can work with to exchange expertise (grants, subsidies and fundraising) and setup joint projects for example around online communities.

Role of technology: Looking back our small team has mastered most of the technology tools minimizing our dependency on outside expertise. We are able to update our community, website and publications and make active contributions to social media. In 2013 we are looking to integrate and leverage the different systems even more to minimize administrative handling and maximize transparency over our processes and results.

2013

In 2013 will we need to prove to our partners we are able to deliver the best training and support community to their volunteers but also to make the value for them even more apparent so they will continue to partner with us in the years to come.

We are building up pace and get more and more volunteers/interns in our office. We need to develop a mature way of coordinating this enthusiasm and help bring focus in the activities performed by all the different volunteers.

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In 2013 we will need to start laying the ground work for social activation through our online community to facilitate even more co-creation and knowledge sharing. We hope to attract sufficient funding to have one full time resource working on this together with a group of experts after the training peak in Juni-August.

In order to grow sustainable we need to grow our base on donations and sponsorships. We expect our training FTE (Romy) should be able to generate 50-60% on training income, maybe more if we can start with the company workshops. The remainder should come from our loyal base of sponsors/investors supplemented with a carefull selection of entrepreneurial funds.

Board changes

We are very proud to announce the addition of Serra Lise Kammoun to our Board. In 2011 and 2012 Serra Lise helped professionalize our foundation. Her background in Law and Communications proved very valuable. Her development leave from Deloitte ended in August 2012 but she continues to help drive Muses forward as Vice-Chairman responsible for Legal & Tax matters.

Muses Board

Amsterdam,

January 27th 2013

Financial Report 2012

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