

# Policy Plan of 'Stichting Kastanje'

Date: 07/07/2025

Version 1.2

## Introduction

The war in Ukraine has been ongoing for more than three years, and per June 2025 over 129,000 Ukrainians have sought refuge in the Netherlands. The country has proven to be a generous and welcoming host, providing a haven for those fleeing the Russian war in Ukraine. The Dutch government has played a crucial role in offering support, while countless citizens have contributed by providing assistance and resources to the newcomers. Over time, Ukrainians have become an integral part of Dutch society.

The significant migration of people from all over the world, including those from Ukraine, is inevitably impacting the structure of Dutch society. Managing rising migration and integration has become a policy priority for the Dutch government. Ensuring successful integration is vital to achieving an inclusive, tolerant and flourishing society. The culture and traditions of Ukraine may still be relatively unknown to many people in the Netherlands. Similarly, the reverse holds: Ukrainians who have fled to the Netherlands due to the war have likely limited knowledge and awareness of Dutch society. Maintaining the dialogue and establishing ways for Ukrainians and Dutch people to interact and familiarise themselves with each other's cultures is crucial. This effort is becoming even more important as the duration of the war and the length of stay for these newcomers remain uncertain.

Stichting Kastanje was established with the main objective of bridging this cultural gap. Mariana Dzhulai is the founder and the driving force behind this initiative. The Russian invasion forced Mariana to leave behind a successful career as an art curator and gallery owner. After having arrived in the Netherlands, Marianna quickly realised her new mission: to be an ambassador of Ukrainian art and culture. In this new role, she can use her extensive Ukrainian network, her promotional and organisational skills. While in the Netherlands, Mariana has already organized numerous exhibitions and cultural projects in the Netherlands, as well as two projects in Germany and one in Denmark.

Stichting Kastanje aims to elevate these efforts by establishing a platform for cultural exchange and exploration between Ukrainian and Dutch cultures. In this policy plan, we, as a foundation, outline the intended activities of Stichting Kastanje for the 2025/2026 period, as well as describe the mission, vision, objectives and structure of our organization.

## Ukrainian culture under attack

As of May 2025, the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine reports that over 1,480 cultural heritage sites and more than 2,300 cultural infrastructure facilities have been damaged due to the Russian aggression. These include libraries, museums, theatres, art education institutions, and other cultural venues across 18 regions of Ukraine. Among them, over 430 facilities have been completely destroyed.

In response to the immense pressure on Ukrainian art today, Stichting Kastanje actively seeks collaborations with Ukrainian artists, musicians, theatre collectives, creatives, and museums to provide them with a platform in the Netherlands to present and celebrate Ukrainian culture in all its richness and diversity.

## Dutch-Ukrainian Cultural Center

Stichting Kastanje is dedicated to facilitating cultural exchange and exploration between Ukrainian and Dutch cultures. To achieve this goal effectively, we advocate for the establishment of a physical hub—a Dutch-Ukrainian Cultural Centre. This centre would serve as the focal point for all Stichting Kastanje initiatives, consolidating our efforts under one roof. We aim to establish it in Amsterdam, home to the largest Ukrainian community in the Netherlands, yet still lacking a dedicated space where both Ukrainians and Dutch people can engage with and learn about Ukrainian culture.

We envision the Dutch-Ukrainian Cultural Centre as an inclusive, multifunctional space featuring an exhibition area, event hall, workshop rooms, a café, and accommodations such as studios for Ukrainian artists in residence. By offering these diverse facilities, we aim to create an inclusive environment that fosters dialogue and mutual appreciation between Ukraine and the Netherlands..

The establishment of this physical centre in Amsterdam is seen as a crucial step towards nurturing a deeper understanding and connection between our two cultures. It will serve as a welcoming space for individuals of all backgrounds and ages residing in the Netherlands, functioning as a vital resource for promoting cross-cultural dialogue and engagement.

# Mission

The mission of Kastanje is to introduce, connect and constantly develop cross-cultural dialogue between Ukrainian and Dutch cultures.

# Vision

Stichting Kastanje aims to support inclusion by promoting understanding between Dutch and Ukrainian cultures. Its focus is on encouraging diversity and cultural exchange.

Through a variety of programmes and activities, Stichting Kastanje works to reduce barriers and improve mutual understanding between communities. By presenting the traditions, art, and customs of both cultures, it creates both physical and online spaces where people from different backgrounds can meet and learn from each other.

The foundation's goal is to contribute to a society where cultural differences are recognized and respected through open dialogue and cooperation.

# Objectives

Our objectives include, but are not limited to:

1. **Keep attention** on Ukraine and enhance its global support by showcasing the richness, depth, and diversity of Ukrainian culture, highlighting its art, music, literature, and history.
2. **Represent** the best of Ukrainian culture, from its timeless heritage to its modern creative expressions to celebrate the beauty of Ukrainian identity on the world stage.
3. **Bridge connections** by exploring the shared threads, differences and unique nuances of Dutch and Ukrainian cultures;
4. **Build empathy and unity** by creating a welcoming haven where everyone is welcome to explore Ukrainian culture.
5. **Aid** Ukrainians in the Netherlands in nurturing their connection to their heritage and roots;
6. **Safeguard and promote** the Ukrainian cultural legacy, which faces threats in the present day.

# Strategy

We plan to achieve our objectives by the following strategy:

- Establish cultural exchanges and partnerships between Ukrainian, Dutch, and other European art institutions, museums, and cultural venues
- Present outstanding examples of Ukrainian visual art, theatre, cinema, and other creative disciplines in the Netherlands
- Facilitate joint projects and collaborations between Ukrainian and Dutch artists
- Secure resources to support Ukrainian artists, with a focus on cross-cultural initiatives
- Organize cultural events and activities for both adults and teenagers that encourage interaction and mutual understanding

Until the permanent space for the Cultural Center becomes a reality, Stichting Kastanje will continue to host events at various locations throughout the Netherlands and Europe. These events serve as important opportunities to showcase the richness of both Dutch and Ukrainian cultures and lay the groundwork for the future establishment of the envisioned Cultural Centre.

# Activities

Activities of Stichting Kastanje include, but is not limited to:

- **Cultural Projects:** Stichting Kastanje organises a diverse range of events, including exhibitions, music concerts, theatre shows, dance performances, film screenings, and lectures that highlight the cultural diversity of Ukraine and the Netherlands. Collaborative projects with museums, theatres, and other cultural institutions from both countries will enrich intercultural communication and appreciation.
- **Supporting Creative Individuals:** Stichting Kastanje is committed to nurturing creative talent by establishing collaborations with patrons, cultural funds, and public and private institutions. Through these partnerships, resources will be provided to support and develop creative individuals. Additionally, Stichting Kastanje will create opportunities for Ukrainian artists, musicians, actors, directors, poets, writers, and other creatives to showcase their work in the Netherlands. Building a network between cultural institutions and individuals from both countries will strengthen professional ties and foster joint initiatives.
- **Educational Programmes:** Stichting Kastanje offer educational programmes such as masterclasses, seminars, and lectures to explore the traditions, art, history, and modern achievements of both nations
- **Festival Activities:** Stichting Kastanje will develop and host various festivals, focusing on social and cultural topics relevant to Ukraine and the Netherlands.

Overall, these initiatives will enable Stichting Kastanje to effectively address the cultural and educational needs of the Ukrainian community in the Netherlands while promoting greater mutual understanding and respect between Ukrainians and the Dutch population. Stichting Kastanje aspires to be a stronghold for preserving and nurturing cultural diversity and creative potential.

## Focus on Ukrainian youth

As many Ukrainian women fled to the Netherlands with their children, approximately 25% of the Ukrainian refugees are minors (-18), and when we add the group of young adults from 18 to 25, it comes to 40%. We can therefore conclude that a large part of the Ukrainian refugees are young.

Younger children typically assimilate quickly, learning the language and forming new friendships. Teenagers, on the other hand, often face integration challenges, becoming isolated and only interacting within school and family circles.

In response to this, Stichting Kastanje feels a strong urge to organise engaging cultural events specifically for young Ukrainians. We aim to immerse them in the world of art, theatre, cinema, and music, helping them maintain their connection to Ukrainian culture while also forming new friendships with Dutch peers.

Our events are not just entertainment but a true journey into the world of creativity, helping young Ukrainians feel part of their new society while preserving their cultural identity.

## Organisation

Kastanje is managed by the Managing Director and the Board. The main responsibility of the Director is the execution of the core activities of the Stichting Kastanje, as outlined in the Activities section, including organizing and managing the projects and applying for funding.

### The Board of Directors

The primary responsibility of the Board is oversight and advisory services. The Board and the Director are meeting regularly to discuss, plan and execute activities of Kastanje.

The Board of Kastanje consists of: the Chairperson, the Treasurer, and the Secretary:

- The Chairperson – Tetiana Polietaieva, psychologist and organisational consultant
- The Treasurer – Dr. Vira Kartseva, CFA , financial sector professional.
- The Secretary – Viktoriia Gryshko, Marketing manager, specialized in technology marketing.

The Board was formed and composed in a short time on the basis of relevant expertise and network, and the willingness to contribute substantively and functionally. The Board members are not getting any financial or other material compensation for managing Stichting Kastanje.

## The Managing Director

The Managing Director of Stichting Kastanje is Mariana Dzhulai. Mariana is an art curator, manager and gallery owner from Kyiv, Ukraine. Mariana has been working in the art scene in Ukraine for almost 30 years. As of the time of writing, Mariana has already been executing multiple projects directly related to the goals of the Stichting Kastanje. Her work while in the Netherlands includes organising exhibitions of prominent Ukrainian artists in Europe, a special event for the Ministry of Justice, an event for the University of Amsterdam, and an exhibition at the Ukrainian Embassy in The Hague. The activities of Mariana Dzulai so far have been on a pro bono basis.

To achieve its goals, Stichting Kastanje has brought together a team of committed and skilled volunteers beyond The Board and The Director — professionals who have already expressed a clear interest in supporting the foundation's mission.

## Non-Profit Purpose

Stichting Kastanje has a non-profit purpose, as also stated in Article 3 of the Statuten. All received funds, except for administrative and organisational costs, are fully utilised to achieve the goals of the foundation.

## Independence of the Board Of Directors

Stichting Kastanje is independent of donors and beneficiaries. These individuals may not control the assets of Stichting Kastanje as if it were their own. The independent decision-making is ensured by a board of at least 3 persons with equal voting rights. The division of tasks and board relations, and power are described in Article 5 of the Articles of Association.

## Compensation Policy

The Board members are not getting any financial compensation for managing Stichting Kastanje. This is in line with Article 4 of the Statuten, where it is stated that board directors do not receive any remuneration for their activities in respect of the foundation Stichting Kastanje other than reimbursement of expenses.

Regarding the Director, initially, her activities will be without any material compensation. With time, as Stichting Kastanje secures funding, the aim is to compensate the work of the Director according to a fair market rate and limits established by the ANBI-related laws.

Other individuals will be doing work for Stichting Kastanje as volunteers without any material compensation. As Stichting Kastanje grows and secures funding, we realise we might need to provide some compensation to individuals to ensure we have the proper skills and resources to achieve our goals. Over time, our preference would be to pay our volunteers the minimum volunteering compensation, as established by Dutch law.

## Recruitment of Funds

Stichting Kastanje is entirely dependent on donations and grants. The foundation aims to raise funds through, among other things, but not limited to, sponsorship, donations, gifts, philanthropy, crowdfunding and revenue from its own events.

As soon as the ANBI status is granted, Stichting Kastanje will send requests to famous Dutch and Ukrainian personalities with the request to support the projects. Additionally, we will approach various charity foundations with a cultural focus, such as those in Fondsenboek. Finally, we will search for donations from Ukrainian, Dutch and international businesses. As of the time of writing, with the struggles caused by the war continuing, the empathy towards the situation of Ukrainians in the Netherlands and internationally remains strong, hence we believe there are possibilities to attract funds for our objectives.

Stichting Kastanje does not have a reciprocal obligation to sponsors. Donors may indicate which projects they give the donation to. If the donation is not earmarked for a Project, Stichting Kastanje decides itself what project to assign it to, according to the internal priority list. Stichting Kastanje decides itself whether and in what way attention is given to sponsors during its events, on the website or publications.

## Management of the Assets

The funds will be spent solely to achieve the goals of Stichting Kastanje. This includes covering general costs associated with running Stichting Kastanje.

The costs include Fixed costs (including website hosting, web domain fee, bank fees, accounting software fee, notary fees, and accountant fees) and Variable costs, which depend on the needs of the projects.

The contributions will be collected in the ABN AMRO account of the Stichting Kastanje. If the received contribution is earmarked for the project, it will solely be spent on the project.

Otherwise, the contribution will be spent to achieve the goals of the Stichting Kastanje according to the priority of the projects as assigned by the Board and the Director.

According to Article 12 of the Articles of Association, the board of Stichting Kastanje closes the foundation's books on the last day of the fiscal year and as soon as possible, but no later than six months after the end of the fiscal year, prepares a balance sheet and a statement of income and expenses for the past fiscal year. The foundation's fiscal year is the same as the calendar year. The financial statements are prepared by the treasurer or an accountant appointed by the Board. After approval and adoption, the financial statements are published on a public website.

## Administration

The administration is set up in such a way that the requirements for ANBI (Public Benefit Organisation) status can be verified by the Tax Authorities.

## Application for ANBI status

The aim of the foundation “Stichting Kastanje” to apply for ANBI status as soon as we have all requirements in place, in particular the website where we can publish our information required to apply for the ANBI status.

## Appendix 1: Plan for 2025-2026

The phased plan for Stichting Kastanje for the coming year. Can be separated into execution of (1) Projects, independently of securing a location for the Dutch-Ukrainian Cultural centre, (2) applying for Funding, and (3) related to establishing the Center itself:

### Projects

1. Execution of organizational and social media projects
  - Fill in the content of the website: [www.kastanjecenter.nl](http://www.kastanjecenter.nl)
  - Apply for ANBI status
  - Continuously maintain social-media profile on Linked In , Face book, and Instagram by regularly publishing events organized by stitching Kastanje or related parties and partners.
2. Implementing existing projects and developing new ones:
  - Establishing cooperation agreements to facilitate activities with various already existing initiatives related to Ukrainian culture in the Netherlands

- Planning and executing events as per strategy and objectives
  - Developing and signing collaboration agreements with Ukrainian and Dutch cultural institutions.
3. Securing semi-permanent location:
- Negotiating with local authorities, museums, cultural institutions, and potential partners about cooperation and use of space;
  - Signing lease or partnership agreements.

### **Funding**

- Applying for government and non-government organisation grants and subsidies.
- Developing a strategy for attracting donations and sponsorships, including crowdfunding campaigns and charity events.

### **Establishing the Dutch-Ukrainian Cultural Centre in Amsterdam**

- Applying for funding for the Center;
- Finding the location;
- Applying for permits.

## **Appendix 2: Past projects**

Mariana Dzulaj has already realized several notable cultural and artistic within Stichting Kastanje and before it was formed, some of which are listed below. Detailed information about these projects can be found on our LinkedIn page (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/kastanje-dutch-ukrainian-cultural-center/posts>).

Exhibition "In This Moment of My Life" Contemporary Ukrainian Art in Wartime in GEDOK Künstlerinnenforum, Markgrafenstr.14, 76131 Karlsruhe, 13.01.2023 – 02.02. 2023. Curated by O. Bashinova, M. Dzulai, E. Jager.

Exhibition “A view from Kyiv” by Oleg Tistol and En Rosen at the Embassy of Ukraine in The Hague. 18.10.2023 - 26.02.2024

Performance by Belgian-Ukrainian artist O. Rabycheva. Creation of a collective "Painting of Peace" for displaced persons on 22.11.2023

Exhibition for a special event by the Ministry of Justice of the Netherlands. 5.03.2024 features the work of the Dutch-Ukrainian duo Barro Donker and Olga Tykhonova, and the Ukrainian-Belgian artist Olena Rabycheva.

Exhibition and artist talk at the University of Amsterdam as part of the program Easts Plainers, March 8 – 11, 2024

Exhibition about the war in Ukraine by Dutch and Ukrainian artists at the Suzanne Biederberg Gallery, Amsterdam. March 16 – April 13, 2024

Exhibition “Polyna Raiko, Disappearing” in Amsterdam, September 5-25, 2024

Exhibition “The House of Light: A Tribute to Polina Raiko” at Copenhagen Light Festival 2025, January 31 - February 28 2025

## Appendix 3: Social media

We write about our projects and activities at various social media outlets, including:

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- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/kastanje-dutch-ukrainian-cultural-center><https://www.instagram.com/kastanje2023>
- <https://www.instagram.com/blockagallery>
- [https://www.instagram.com/marianna\\_djulay](https://www.instagram.com/marianna_djulay)
- <https://www.facebook.com/blockagallery>
- <https://www.facebook.com/marianna.djulay>
- <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61555776101317>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/kastanje-dutch-ukrainian-cultural-center>