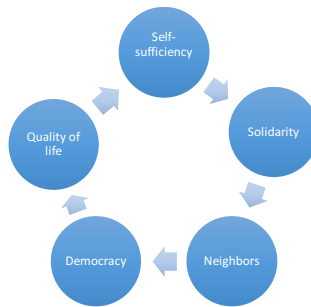


LIVING COMMUNITIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Via Foundation’s Living Communities program aims to help Czech communities improve their quality of life, encourage neighborly relations and strengthen their resilience, shared identity and commitment to democratic values.



The “Living Communities “program builds on Via Foundation’s 19 years of experience working with people and non-profit organizations in the Czech Republic and continues our mission of **“building the future, one community at a time.”**



Via will award 25 grants to project teams throughout the Czech Republic. Alongside grants, we will provide participants with workshops focusing on community engagement techniques and consultations with mentors who are experts in the field of community development. We have found that combining small grants with learning and mentoring make project impacts more lasting because project leaders take what they learn home and share it with others.

WHO IS THE “LIVING COMMUNITIES” PROGRAM INTENDED FOR?

This program is intended for people who:

- Have an interesting idea for improving the quality of life in their communities,
- Want to engage their neighbors in a useful community project.

Groups of at least three people or small non-profit associations run by volunteers are eligible to apply for program support.

HOW DOES THE “LIVING COMMUNITIES” PROGRAM WORK AND WHAT IS ITS POTENTIAL IMPACT?

Through the “Living Communities” program, Via Foundation supports a diverse range of projects in Czech communities that have the potential to initiate change and give people opportunities to work collaboratively for the betterment of their community (e.g. establishing a community center, holding a neighborhood celebration or improving a local park). We encourage and support program participants to use the assets in their own community, engage neighbors as volunteers, initiate a dialogue with other local partners such as the local government, associations, etc.

EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS ELIGIBLE FOR PROGRAM SUPPORT

- Community events on streets and public squares, street festivals, guided walks and picnics,
- Neighborhood gatherings, community workshops and theatre performances,
- Volunteer-run cultural events,
- Community centers, gardens and parks,
- Renovation of neglected/unused/abandoned sites,
- Restoration of monuments and traditions, mapping local history and seniors’ memories,
- Public discussion forums, community planning and community vision processes,
- Renovation of the landscape, trails, wells and tree planting.

WHAT DOES OUR SUPPORT INCLUDE?



Grants + fundraising incentive grants + consultations + educational workshops + mentoring + networking = 25 community improvement projects

We will award small grants up to \$3,300 to 25 projects (disbursing a total of \$100,000). We will also provide project teams with comprehensive and individualized non-financial assistance including:

- Consultations about project ideas and throughout implementation (with fundraising, community engagement specialists, etc.),
- Matching grants for local fundraising proceeds up to \$800, grants for fundraising costs up to \$200
- Workshops and educational opportunities (on topics such as mapping community needs, community engagement, fundraising, etc.)
- Mentoring (by former community project leaders),
- Facilitation of interaction with other community leaders (meetings, helping organizations

form regional networks).

TIMEFRAME

Program launch is September 2016. We will hold calls for proposals four times per year. Projects can last up to 1 year.

WHY ARE WE LAUNCHING “LIVING COMMUNITIES”, AND WHAT MAKES THE PROGRAM UNIQUE?

We are responding to the opportunities we see in Czech society:

- Despite considerable disparities and a decreasing level of trust in democracy, 45% of the population is engaged in public affairs, with most (65%) at a local level.
- People are becoming more and more creative in how they engage in community affairs, many people including young people are ready to become engaged and work together, give back and help others.

Sources: research by the Center for Citizen Education, Via Foundation experience and strategic planning process.

HOW MUCH DOES THE PROGRAM COST?

Budget for August 2016 – December 2017: \$188,000

LIVING COMMUNITIES WILL SUPPORT PROJECTS LIKE...

Cultural centre in the Zauhlovačka Tower



This 100-year old tower in Vratislavice was finally opened to the public on June 12 after a local association called AvantgArt and many volunteers spent countless hours cleaning and restoring the cultural monument. Their vision is to set up a cultural center in the historic tower and host concerts, lectures and other community events. Via Foundation supported them with a grant.