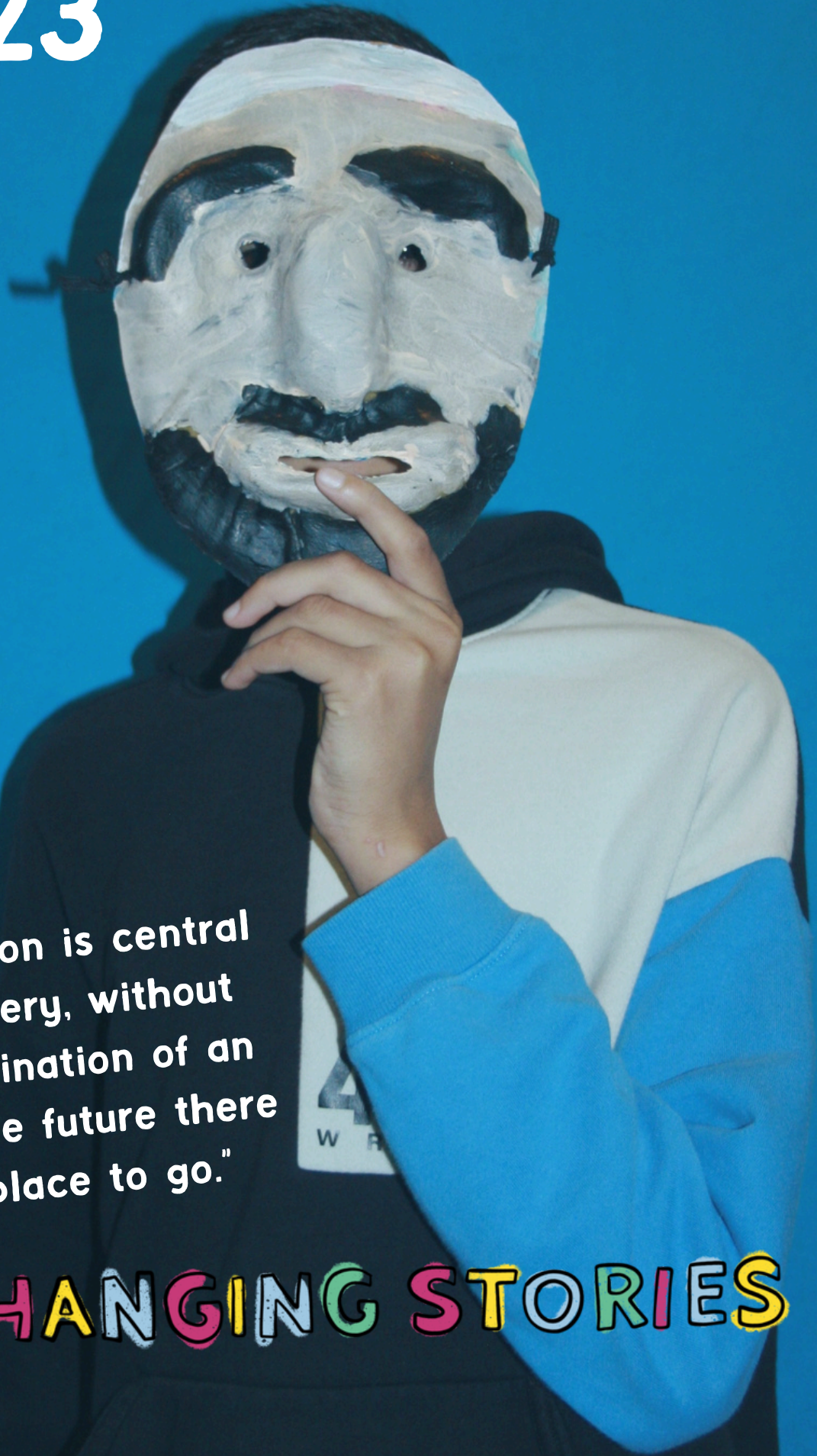


Annual Report 2023



"Imagination is central
to recovery, without
the imagination of an
alternative future there
is no place to go."

CHANGING STORIES

Changing Stories Foundation

2023

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Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Preface | 1 |
| Mission & vision | 2 |
| The rights of the child | 2 |
| Mission, vision & values | 3 |
| Post-crisis | 3 |
| High necessity | 4 |
| Key-principles | 5 |
| How our work delivers our aims | 6 |
| Professional team | 6 |
| Anti-racism | 6 |
| Non-therapeutic | 6 |
| Pop-up | 7 |
| Reflection | 7 |
| Highlights 2023 | 8 |
| 2023 in numbers | 8 |
| Calais/Dunkirk | 9 |
| Athens & Ritsona area | 10 |
| Turkey | 11 |
| Serres | 12 |
| Pilot unaccompanied minors | 13 |
| Kids' projects in the Netherlands | 14 |
| Education | 14 |
| Looking forward (ambitions) | 15 |
| The next 3 years | 15 |
| Education | 15 |
| Expanding our method | 16 |
| The Netherlands | 16 |
| Abroad projects | 16 |
| Financial report | 17 |

Preface

Approximately 40% of the world's displaced population are minors under the age of 18. In 2023, the number of displaced children worldwide increased from 41 million to 50 million. Many of these children travel alone, sent ahead by their parents in a desperate attempt to secure their family's survival. Almost all displaced children endure the trauma of witnessing things no child should ever see. Many of these minors reside in camps at the borders of Europe, where the conditions are dire.

The stress and trauma they experience can lead to a range of issues, such as loss of appetite, inability to sleep and a diminished capacity for play and imagination. This loss is significant, as play and imagination are crucial for human development. They enable children to explore, experiment, solve problems and express themselves creatively. Through play, children learn about the world, develop social skills and process their experiences. The synchrony of play helps restore a sense of wholeness, belonging, and well-being.

Article 31 of the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child states:

"All children have the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to their age and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts."

This is why Changing Stories Foundation creates moments of wonder and happiness for displaced children. We aim to reignite their ability to imagine and play, providing them with moments of carefree childhood.

In this annual report, we provide insights into our mission, organisation and 2023 projects. We also share our big, creative, and hopeful dreams for the future of our foundation.

Mission & vision

The Rights of the Child

In 1989, world leaders made a historic commitment to the children of the world by adopting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child—an international agreement on childhood. Nearly every country in the world has signed this convention, with the Netherlands joining in 1995.

The rights of children fleeing from war are being violated in numerous ways, contravening many articles enshrined in this convention. One such article is Article 31, which states:

"States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child, and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational, and leisure activity."

We are motivated to act against the injustices faced by displaced children in Europe. As European citizens, we believe it is our responsibility to act. By leveraging our strengths and talents, we have the power to make a meaningful difference in the world and stand up for the rights of the most vulnerable—children who, through no fault of their own, find themselves in dire situations.



Mission, vision & values

Our mission

Using the power of imagination to empower refugee children and at the same time raising awareness about displaced children and their well-being and development, inspiring the next generation to use their talents for a better world.

Our vision

We believe in a world where every kid has the right to play.

Our values

Humanity, positivity, creativity, playfulness, and co-creation.

Post-crisis

Most of the children we work with are living in a post-crisis situation (and have experienced war, violence or nature disasters). It is a conscious choice not to work with children who are in a direct crisis situation; because we believe that in crisis children need emergency care and that is not what we offer. In post-crisis situations however, for example in camps, the care often comes down to the very basics - food, clothing, sanitary facilities; while play and recreation are often being forgotten or even being perceived as not necessary.

We feel there is a gap in what children need and what is being offered, we try to fill this gap by using our capacities and getting active. While doing so we are very aware we are learning ongoingly and are questioning ourselves all the time: for our reasons, for our capacities. We aim to 'do good' but do we? We are working in a field where a lot of racism and white saviourism takes place and for this reason we believe this critical attitude is a necessity.

High necessity

Changing Stories carries out projects both in the Netherlands and internationally in places where the need is high. To ensure this goal, we have established criteria to determine when a location meets these requirements. In advance of a project we use the criteria to measure if there is a high necessity for us to go there. This could either be because there are no other organisations present to provide leisure and play, or because the circumstances in the specific location are very appalling.

Method

Our main goal is to create a moment of play and creativity together with the children and people we work with and provide them with a sense of agency. We see the children we work with as the humans they are and not as the single identity of being 'a refugee'. Through our method we make sure that together with the children and everyone else involved at that moment in time we create a positive time and positive memories.

As mentioned before: for children that experienced trauma it is important to restore emotion-regulation, increase self-confidence, feel a sense of agency and awaken the ability to be playful and creative. These are all aspects that we've integrated in our method. Our approach is based on talent development, the power of synchronicity, the participative effect of Forum Theatre and knowledge about trauma sensitivity. We invite participants to be both performer and maker of the performance.

Key principles

Agency. Our projects have an open structure that not only welcomes but relies on the input of the participants. It is not us who are 'Changing Stories' or aiming to do so; we co-create imaginary stories that are open for change.

Imagination. Imagination is key to imagine alternative realities, for hope. But also needed for play. We stimulate imagination by inviting the children to take part in an imaginary world in which we need their input; *what happens next?*

Play. Play is key to experiment and learn about life; social interactions, resolving conflict, to build new, positive and healthy memories but also a way to process experiences.

Belonging. Through synchronicity in games and by creating a small 'pop-up community' with the children who we work with at a given moment we aim to create a sense of belonging. Feeling part of a group is extremely powerful and healing.

Resilience. People, but children in specific are incredibly resilient. By the lack of perspective on change and by trauma this resilience can be affected. For this reason we hope to enable children to increase their resilience.



How our work delivers our aims

Professional team. Our team consists of professionals who undergo a rigorous training process before going on a project. The team consist of theatre makers, drama teachers, clowns and drama therapists and each team member has their own qualities that contribute to the benefit of the team and the quality of our projects. We are actively working towards becoming a more diverse team in terms of background, gender, colour, religion etc. to create a team that consist of different role models for the children we work with.

Anti-racism. Our foundation stands for the core values of human dignity, integrity and equality. We are aware that we are a predominantly white group who work in spaces where a lot of racism takes place. We take a definitive stance against racism and discrimination in all its forms. We recognise that White Saviourism and White Supremacy are prevalent within humanitarian work and we actively work against this.

Non-therapeutic. However we are aware play and imagination often makes a positive impact on trauma we very consciously decide we are not focussing on 'healing' or the therapeutic aspect of the arts. We are not a full team of therapists, there is no sequence in working with the children and there is no call to help from the children or their parents. Also, we find it unethical to strive for change while people are not asking for it. But, we do believe the projects we do have a lot of positive and healing benefits and make a lot of impact on the lives of children, their parents or caretakers, partner organisations and other people that come across our work.

Pop-up. Our abroad projects are pop-up. This means we visit sites for a short amount of time. If we go to a place where we work for a few days in a row with the same group of children we go for a maximum of 3-days and if we aim to visit different (for example) camps, slums, shelters or orphanages within the period of one project we go for about 10-days. Because of this we do everything we do with a lot of energy. Furthermore we stand actively against the existence of 'refugee camps' and for that reason we do not want to contribute to improving the situation of the camps. Last and even most important we have our pop-up character to make sure there is no attachment between children and artists. The children we work with are often vulnerable and we do not want to risk them getting attached to us and then leaving them - by which we believe we would do more harm than good.

Reflection. We continually evaluate our activities to ensure they are in line with our objectives and mission statement. We communicate with all team members and volunteers on an ongoing basis and gather their feedback post-project. We also seek feedback and evaluation from the organisations we work with in order to find out exactly what the value of our projects is in and in which way we could develop them to deepen our impact. Considering the broad spectrum of needs and specific challenges within the groups we work with, we feel it is essential to continually adapt our methodology to incorporate new techniques and ensure the skills of our team are used to the maximum benefit of the participants.



Highlights 2023

6

Years of establishment

4

Years foundation

15+

Volunteers

5

Foreign projects

1

Successful pilot for unaccompanied minors

1,618

Engaged children



Calais/Dunkirk

We visited Calais/Dunkirk twice in 2023. In this area there is a makeshift camp, families sleep in tents and there are no facilities such as running water. Only four hours' drive from our hometown Arnhem, there are families sleeping in dilapidated tents in the mud, without facilities or education. For many, travelling to the UK is their last hope for a safe home. The children living here have already experienced a lot and there is a great need for an outlet.

Luckily, there are our colleagues from Project Play! Who organise weekly activities with the children in the area. On their invitation we have visited the camp twice this year, providing children with play and imagination.

Our first visit was in March 2023, it was very cold in the camp and it even snowed for one of the days we were there. The number of kids in the camp is very unpredictable. During our first visit there weren't many children, so instead we created a creative outlet for the minors/young adults in the camp. They had an amazing time making costumes and props for the show.

During our second visit (July 2023) we saw more children. Together with them we created a wonderful few days filled with colour. We had a blast while we painted their faces and they painted ours the other way around. They also joined in workshops to build towards the show with us.

In 2023 we saw 29 children and 115 (young) adults in our projects in Calais/Dunkirk.



Athens & Ritsona area

We were already familiar with the city of Athens and the difficulties for families on the move. At least that's what we thought, but there were almost no children left in the city. We do not know whether this is good news. We have heard from our partners in the city that there is a lot of policy to prevent groups of refugees from gathering together. No one knows where all the children have gone.

Due to the lack of children, we painted our costumes with young men on the square, which became a real party! It produced beautiful results, making our costumes completely ready for the second part of the adventure.

After 3 days in Athens we went to a village an hour's drive from the city. Here we worked together with the organisation Rolling Safespaces (ROSA), a German organisation that provides safe places for women on the run. Together with ROSA we visited the camps Thiva, Malakasa and Ritsona to organise activities for the children and relieve the women of their child-care duties. A wonderful collaboration that resulted in many beautiful moments.

This is the feedback we received from Rosa:

"Everybody LOVED you work. It was very exciting to see you working with the kids. Lari (person from our kids space) even created a sheet based on your work called "calming down strategies for kids", that we want to include in our work."

In 2023 we have reached 123 children and 28 (young) adults in Greece.



Both Turkey and Serres were new locations that we visited in 2023 because of the high necessity.

Turkey

In Turkey we worked on the border with Syria where the earthquake struck. Our group of artists worked hard to visit as many of the 60 camps in the region as possible, ultimately visiting more than 10 different places.

We worked together with the organisation Kids Paradise that provides emergency aid to families in the region. These are their words about our visit:

"We experienced the transformative power of play during the visit to the camps in Turkey. Despite the difficult times these children found themselves in after recent earthquakes, your team brought joy and laughter into their lives. You have spread happiness."

We couldn't have said it better ourselves. These children have endured so much and often lack even the most basic rights, including the right to play and be a child.

In 2023 we have reached 440 children in Turkey.

Serres

In Serres we worked in a camp where we saw mostly Yezidi children from Iraq, as well as Palestinian children. Between the two groups residing in the camp tensions were tangible. Fortunately together with our partner Lifting Hands International we were able to provide an outlet for these children in this stressful period of their lives, we created safe places amidst the chaos.

In 2023 we have reached 505 children in Serres.

Pilot unaccompanied minors

Also in the Netherlands, the situation for children and young people on the run is often hopeless. Waiting for status or family reunification procedures can take years. The holidays can feel desperate if the structure of going to school disappears and there is no money to go on holiday or family to visit.

For this reason, in 2023 we started a project for unaccompanied minors in Arnhem. In an emergency shelter we organised a summer program for the minors during the summer break. In different workshops they worked with fashion, storytelling, mask making and photography, resulting in an exposition showcasing their work.

The young people at the shelter have been through a lot. They all fled alone, without their parents. But we did not want to talk about the past, we preferred to look at the future. Their hopes and dreams. These guys have an enormous desire to learn, grow and make a positive contribution. What quickly became clear: dreams are universal and talent can be found in every child.

During this pilot project we have reached 50 minors.



Kids' projects in the Netherlands

There are many emergency shelters in The Netherlands due to a shortage of shelters and housing. Unfortunately, not all the emergency shelters are equipped to house people in an humane and safe way.

During the Christmas holidays we went on a 'Winter Tour'. We visited emergency shelter locations throughout the country. We went to Oss, Den Bosch and Ter Apel.

In Oss we worked with unaccompanied minors. With cameras and an improvised set, they got to work like real photographers. We then printed out those photos to make quirky collages. Inspired by our summer project, the shelter soon turned into a photo studio. The atmosphere was carefree and warm.

In Ter Apel we held a parade around the grounds where we had a lot of fun contact with residents who danced along to our music from behind the windows. We had an enthusiastic audience at the performance and blew bubbles in the snow for the first time ever.

We reached 232 children during our project days in the Netherlands.



Education

This past year we worked on expanding and developing our educational programme for students in higher education and professionals already working in the field. The programme is built to share our experiences and to create awareness on how to use your skills to contribute to a more humane tomorrow.

In 2023 we visited students from the Theater Teacher course at ArtEZ in Zwolle, where we provided training in our interactive working method. We also provided a workshop at the International Conference of Drama Therapy, highlighting the power of (non-verbal) play.

We reached 35 students/professionals with our educational programmes.

Our total reach of kids, minors, students and professionals in 2023 is lower than planned. This is because we have consciously taken time to develop our strategy, in which we've had guidance from a business coach. We strive for sustainable contacts with schools and universities, which requires a well-considered approach.



Looking forward

The next 3 years

Our mission for the next three years is to create more support in the Netherlands for psychosocial help for children on the run, with the power of play and creativity as a spearhead. Over the next three years, Changing Stories wants to grow into a centre of expertise in the field of non-verbal, trauma-sensitive, interactive and intercultural work. We will work towards realising this social mission step by step and in phases from 2024 onwards.

From 2024, we will anchor our play and theatre method within the training offering for (social and artistic) vocational education. We are also looking for connections in the research field with the theme of psychosocial help for children on the run, for example through the professorship.

The startup phase we are currently in is aimed at growing our offering of our expertise and simultaneously generating more income. We aim for limited dependence on funds by 2027 (25 - 30%).

Education

Those studying and the current professionals will be shaping the future. We aim to inspire students in the arts and social studies to actively use their talents for a better world. Furthermore, we aim to humanise the people referred to as 'refugees'.

Our method emphasises empathy, creativity, and resilience-building, equipping participants with practical strategies to address the multifaceted challenges faced by those affected by displacement. Through interactive workshops, case studies, and hands-on exercises, participants learn to harness the power of storytelling, play, and artistic expression to foster healing and empowerment.

In the coming years we want to introduce and hopefully implement this method in higher education organisations in the Netherlands.

Expanding our method

To make this possible, we seek ongoing collaboration with research centres to further develop and improve our method. The goal is to validate the method through research findings on the impact on hopelessness and trauma in displaced children and youth.

We then aim to integrate this method into educational programmes in the Netherlands, introducing it into the curriculum of theatre and social education. The aim is to pass on knowledge and train new professionals. This can be achieved through postgraduate training programmes or within the regular curriculum.

The Netherlands

We want to gradually expand our output in the Netherlands, especially implementing our project with unaccompanied minors. The need in Dutch asylum seeker centres and emergency reception locations is increasing, and we do not foresee it decreasing any time soon. We also want to deepen and expand our offerings for minors.

Unaccompanied minors are often misunderstood or unfairly stigmatised. However, they are simply young adults in need of understanding and assistance. We believe there is a gap in knowledge and hands-on methods that allow this group of refugees to be seen for who they are and to thrive. That is why we want to expand our methodology to reach this group as well.

Abroad projects

To realise our ambitions, our output abroad remains consistent. For the next three years, Changing Stories will continue to travel five times a year to places on the European borders where children in need grow up. A Changing Stories pop-up theatre project lasts between 5 and 10 days. We always endeavour to go to places where the need is high and where we have access to the children through a partner organisation. **16.**

Financial Report

(in Dutch)

Stichting Changing Stories 2023

Balans

| | <u>31 dec 2023</u> | | <u>31 dec 2022</u> | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| | € | % | € | % |
| ACTIVA | | | | |
| <i>Debiteuren</i> | 0 | 0 | 807 | 4 |
| <i>Vooruitbetaalde bedragen</i> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Liquide middelen</i> | 25.999 | 100 | 17.558 | 96 |
| <i>Totaal activa</i> | <u>25.999</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>18.365</u> | <u>100</u> |
| PASSIVA | | | | |
| <i>Eigen vermogen en reserves</i> | 3.540 | 14 | 18.297 | 100 |
| <i>Nog te betalen bedragen</i> | 459 | 2 | 68 | 0 |
| <i>Vooruitontvangen bedragen</i> | 22.000 | 84 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Totaal passiva</i> | <u>25.999</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>18.365</u> | <u>100</u> |

Resultatenrekening

| | <u>2023</u> | | <u>2022</u> | |
|--|----------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| BATEN | € | % | € | % |
| Crowdfunding | 10.314 | | 20.238 | |
| Donateurs | 15.667 | | 10.816 | |
| Fondsen & Stichtingen | 22.000 | | 10.700 | |
| Scholen, verenigingen & kerken | 1.035 | | 5.778 | |
| Samenwerkingspartners | 7.064 | | 8.292 | |
| Binnenland en overige acties | 2.109 | | 655 | |
| | 58.189 | 100 | 56.479 | 100 |
| | | | | |
| LASTEN | | | | |
| Algemene kosten | 11.950 | | 7.661 | |
| Acquisitie & Promotiekosten | 0 | | 284 | |
| Bedrijfsvoering | 25.493 | | 20.170 | |
| | 37.443 | 64 | 28.115 | 50 |
| | | | | |
| BESTEED AAN PROJECTEN / DOELSTELLINGEN | | | | |
| Projecten algemeen | 0 | | 17.909 | |
| Projecten buitenland | 24.349 | | 0 | |
| Projecten binnenland | 9.188 | | 0 | |
| Projecten educatie | 1.965 | | 0 | |
| | 35.502 | 61 | 17.909 | 32 |
| | | | | |
| TOTALE LASTEN | 72.946 | | 38.067 | |
| | | | | |
| FINANCIELE BATEN en LASTEN | 0 | 0 | 213 | 0 |
| | | | | |
| Surplus/Tekort | -14.757 | -25 | 10.242 | 18 |

Stichting Changing Stories 2023

Toelichting op de balans

| | <u>31-dec-23</u> | <u>31-dec-22</u> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | € | € |
| LIQUIDE MIDDELEN | | |
| Lopende rekening .813 | 9.772 | 10.558 |
| Spaarrekening .303 | 9.227 | 5.000 |
| Spaarrekening .997 | 0 | 2.000 |
| Spaarrekening .472 | 5.000 | 0 |
| Spaarrekening .450 | 2.000 | 0 |
| | <hr/> 25.999 | <hr/> 17.558 |
| EIGEN VERMOGEN | | |
| Eigen vermogen per 1 januari | 18.297 | 8.055 |
| Resultaat boekjaar | - 14.757 | 10.242 |
| Eigen vermogen per 31 december | <hr/> 3.540 | <hr/> 18.297 |
| NOG TE BETALEN BEDRAGEN | | |
| Crediteuren | 459 | 68 |
| | <hr/> 459 | <hr/> 68 |
| VOORUITONTVANGEN BEDRAGEN | | |
| Vooruitontvangen van fondsen | 22.000 | 0 |
| | <hr/> 22.000 | <hr/> 0 |

Stichting Changing Stories 2023

Toelichting op de resultatenrekening (1)

| | <u>2023</u> | <u>2022</u> |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| | € | € |
| BATEN | | |
| Crowdfunding | 10.314 | 20.238 |
| Donateurs | 15.667 | 10.816 |
| Fondsen & Stichtingen | 22.000 | 10.700 |
| Scholen, verenigingen & kerken | 1.035 | 5.778 |
| Samenwerkingspartners | 7.064 | 8.292 |
| Binnenland en overige acties | 2.109 | 655 |
| | <u>58.189</u> | <u>56.479</u> |
| ALGEMENE KOSTEN | | |
| Huur, energiekosten, overige huisvesting | 2.850 | 2.051 |
| Verzekeringen | 675 | 675 |
| Kantoorkosten | 1.553 | 1.498 |
| Administratiekosten | 833 | 508 |
| Cursuskosten | 1.930 | 0 |
| Promotiekosten | 2.156 | 0 |
| Diverse organisatiekosten | 1.953 | 2.929 |
| | <u>7.661</u> | <u>7.661</u> |
| ACQUISITIE & PROMOTIEKOSTEN | | |
| Social media kosten | 0 | 90 |
| Representatiekosten | 0 | 0 |
| Overige kosten fondswerving | 0 | 194 |
| Materialen festivals | 0 | 0 |
| | <u>0</u> | <u>284</u> |

Stichting Changing Stories 2023

Toelichting op de resultatenrekening (2)

| | <u>2023</u> | <u>2022</u> |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| | € | € |
| BEDRIJFSVOERING | | |
| Office management | 1.920 | 0 |
| Administratie | 7.233 | 0 |
| Personeel & Organisatie | 3.531 | 0 |
| Communicatie | 4.678 | 0 |
| Fondsenwerving | 8.131 | 0 |
| | | |
| Vergoeding coördinatoren | 0 | 17.287 |
| | | |
| Vergoeding vrijwilligers | 0 | 2.283 |
| Vergoeding artiesten | 0 | 600 |
| | | |
| | <u>25.493</u> | <u>20.170</u> |
| | | |
| BESTEED AAN PROJECTEN (algemeen) | | |
| | | |
| Vergoedingen artiesten | 0 | 1.697 |
| Vergoedingen projectcoördinatie | 0 | 3.127 |
| Voorverkenning | 0 | 1.483 |
| Accommodatie | 0 | 3.447 |
| | | |
| Reis- en transportkosten divers | 0 | 5.918 |
| Kostuums en spelmaterialen | 0 | 0 |
| Materialen | 0 | 1.973 |
| Decors | 0 | 0 |
| Kostuums | 0 | 0 |
| Overige uitvoeringskosten | 0 | 264 |
| | | |
| | <u>0</u> | <u>17.909</u> |

BESTEED AAN PROJECTEN BUITENLAND

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|----------|
| Coördinatie | 5.508 | 0 |
| Vrijwilligersvergoeding | 4.040 | 0 |
| Materialen | 2.830 | 0 |
| Reiskosten | 7.984 | 0 |
| Accommodatie | 3.019 | 0 |
| Overige onkosten | 968 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 24.349 | 0 |

BESTEED AAN PROJECTEN BINNENLAND

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|----------|
| Coördinatie | 4.383 | 0 |
| Vrijwilligersvergoeding | 2.956 | 0 |
| Materialen | 575 | 0 |
| Reiskosten | 874 | 0 |
| Accommodatie | 0 | 0 |
| Verkenning | 400 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 9.188 | 0 |

BESTEED AAN PROJECTEN EDUCATIE

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|----------|
| Coördinatie | 1.643 | 0 |
| Vrijwilligersvergoeding | 80 | 0 |
| Materialen | 198 | 0 |
| Reiskosten | 45 | 0 |
| Overige onkosten | 0 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 1.965 | 0 |