



Strangers can be friends

data + facts 02/2018

Legal form: Non-profit organization (e.v.)

Founded: 2014

Current locations (18):

NORTH - Hamburg, Oldenburg, Bremen

EAST - Berlin, Dresden, Potsdam, Leipzig

SOUTH - Freiburg, Stuttgart, Lampertheim, Mannheim, Landau, Tübingen

WEST - Köln, Bonn, Aachen, Frankfurt, Düsseldorf

Employees: 10 [full and part time], 24 fellows [starting part time in march]

Voluntary locals: ca. 3,200

Voluntary intercultural mediators: > 200

Formed tandems: Over 3,200

Funding: By the Federal Ministry of Family and Seniors, Women and Youth, and via donations.

Start with a Friend History

2014

- Franziska Birnbach, inspired by her own tandem with a refugee Syrian, has the first idea for a tandem project in Berlin
- The three friends Franziska, Marten Kaspar and Sarah Rosenthal develop the concept "Starting friendships between refugees and locals"
- More committed Berliners join in, the team is growing
- Motto: Strangers can be friends

2015

- The non-profit organization "Start with a Friend e.V." is officially founded
- Nationwide winner of the "StartSocial" award in 2015/2016 (awarded in 2016)
- Nationwide Winner in the active competition of the BfDT (Alliance for Democracy and Tolerance)

2016

- Federal funding through the "People Strengthening People" program of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
- Nationwide winner in the competition "Land of Ideas - Excellent Places"
- Further locations are founded: Freiburg (01/16), Cologne (03/16), Oldenburg (05/16), Dresden + Hamburg (06/16), Bonn (08/16), Aachen (09/16), Potsdam (10/16), Frankfurt (11/16)
- Start of the family program "SwaF-Families" (formerly "SwaF-Moms") in Berlin (03/16) as well as in Cologne (06/16) and later Hamburg (07/17), which specifically supports the exchange between local and refugee families

2017

- Start of the "SwaF Academy", a training program for volunteers, and funding from the Deutsche Bank Foundation
- Over 200 voluntary intercultural mediators are trained in the SwaF Academy
- More Start with a Friend locations are founded: Lampertheim + Stuttgart (03/17), Düsseldorf (04/17), Leipzig (05/17), Tübingen (07/17) and Bremen (11/17)
- The study "Mentoring of Refugees" of the socio-economic panel examines how friendly contact through our tandems affects the integration of refugees

2018

- Start of the „SwaF Fellowship“ in March: Social engagement, qualification and part-time job in one

...we came to stay...
To be continued.