

# weserholz

is a workshop for design development and furniture construction, as well as an experimentation and thinking space for new life plans. Young adults who only recently came to Germany design and build modern furniture with designers and carpenters from Bremen. The cultural origin of each participant becomes a valuable element in the creation process. Design principles from European, African and Arab countries are combined.

## PROJECT

At weserholz, the young adults (trainees) go through a specific curriculum which is formed by three main areas:

### CREATION

At the beginning, the team explores cultures and everyday rituals in the workshop. The goal is to translate the gained knowledge into (furniture) designs. Designing furniture is a dynamic process. It includes research as well as the development from the prototype to the finished product. The trainees bring their own ideas as well as specific knowledge into the creative process, including e.g. craftsmanship from their home countries.

### CRAFT

During the creation process, there will be courses in the basics of craftsmanship and design (e.g. surface treatment, woodworking basics, material knowledge, theory of colours, perspective drawing). Also, the handling of various machines is learned. Workshop hours will be around 20 per week.

### TEACHING

The trainees take 15 hours a week of German language courses in addition to courses in mathematics, computer science, natural sciences and technology. These are carried out by our cooperation partners.

After the successful completion of the curriculum, the trainees have a clear profile (professional basic skills, creativity techniques, etc.) with individual mastery. Together, we are pushing forward each individual's path, which can be an initial qualification, a dual vocational training, and even work in a company in Bremen. The goal is that the time at weserholz ends with a contractual relationship.

## MOTIVE

The initiator Paula Eickmann and her colleagues would like to present a solution-oriented example within the (current) political discourse about refugees. In many cases, the deficits regarding qualification and education are emphasized and thus the young people are indirectly accused of being "hard to integrate" into the German training and work system. New perspectives should instead be taken including alternative forms of learning. Work and cooperation should be practiced together, which go beyond the classical approach of measures and instruments. This is where the work of wesenholz begins:

In the holistic approach of an artistic and aesthetic debate, the young people experience the alternation of mental and physical activity, including linguistic and nonverbal interaction, as well as sensory impressions and analytical comprehension.

In particular, young adults who are not granted a right to asylum are denied access to the labor and training market. Reasons for this are: missing or non-certifiable qualifications and uncertain prospects of their residence permit and structural framework in general. Many of the tolerated young adults are only entitled under certain conditions to benefits under SGB II and SGB III. The imposed lack of perspective and dependence on the welfare state leads to frustration and resignation. With low-threshold access and a resource-oriented approach, wesenholz offers a path to the development of sustainable action perspectives.

## IMPACT

The young adults learn self-efficacy through craft and creative processes. By being developers and designers, they are active members of society and oppose the stigma of the "refugee" that is only a passive victim. The methods used and the learned skills can be applied to many areas of work and training.

At wesenholz, businesses and companies can find new trainees with a clear profile. On request, we support them / the companies with formal requirements (eg. applications for apprenticeship support).

As part of a larger network, wesenholz creates political and public awareness for specific problems and provides answers to questions by offering a positive, solution-oriented example.

## TEAM

Idea / Management of Conception & Implementation / Cooperations

Paula Eickmann

Conception & Strategies / Organisation / Finances

Tanja Engel

Assistance Organisation / Language professional

Pape Samba Ndiaye

Designer / Carpenter / Workshop Management

Anselm Stählin

Designer

Marthe Trottnow

Press / Public Relations / Fundraising

Nina Kathmann & Claudio Thamm

Others

Trainees | Coordination Courses + Volunteers

## PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

Fluchtraum Bremen e.V.

Gambian German Charity Organisation e.V.

Bremer & Bremerhavener IntegrationsNetz (bin)

Bremer Rat für Integration | AG „Berufliche Qualifizierung und Arbeitsmarkt“

ZwischenZeitZenrale Bremen (ZZZ)

Handwerkskammer Bremen

Heldenrat – Beratung für soziale Bewegungen e.V.

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## ORGANISATION

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## DONATIONS ACCOUNT

Käpt'n Kurt e.V.

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