



Charter

Inclusive Social Development on an Anthroposophic Basis

Preamble

With this Charter, the Anthroposophic Council for Inclusive Social Development describes the shared values of the worldwide network of anthroposophic organizations working towards an increasingly inclusive society.

Our core values in relation to the social and spiritual development of the human being are based on the acknowledgement of the dignity of each person and their unique qualities. We see each human being in their social, physical, and spiritual development as an individuality supported by community. Everyone lives from the recognition and respect of the people around them and thus shapes their unique contribution to humanity.

We strive to facilitate steps towards healing, growth and social renewal for individuals and communities worldwide. Taking cultural and ethnic diversity seriously as a background to individual biographies and valuing it is central to the quality and diversity of our work. Each of our member organizations, communities and initiatives around the world strives for diversity through true inclusion of all people, regardless of their abilities, disabilities, and social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. We recognize the unique perspectives, abilities and values of each individual country and culture in which such social initiatives are founded.

We expect all individuals and initiatives who have or want to be associated with this movement to uphold the vision of an inclusive and culturally diverse society; one which recognizes a free and democratic social order, as currently reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Our work takes its orientation on the basis of anthroposophy, as initiated in the beginning of the last century by Rudolf Steiner and developed further since then. Since its founding, anthroposophy has led to the emergence of a wide range of efforts to create forms of living that support and facilitate a healthy human and social spaces, especially under conditions where this cannot be taken for granted.

We work for a deep mutual understanding of all people, for a unity in society as well as for a mindful attitude towards the Earth and its natural resources.

Any prejudice, racism, or act of discrimination, explicit or implicit, are in contradiction to our values and norms. Where they occur, they shall be openly addressed and eliminated.

We are ready to engage in conversation and seek constructive solutions to conflicts when they arise. We support the development of a healthy organizational culture. This requires the development of specific skills and capacities.

Inclusive social development based on an anthroposophical understanding isn't tied to a specific country or culture. Each initiative is established according to the local context, guidelines, environment, and culture. Through our international network, we can acknowledge this diversity and see it as an added value in our exchange of views and perspectives.

The organizations in the Council's international network support each other above all in professional questions, but also humanly, socially as well as economically and financially.

In the following text, we explain the shared principles that guide us towards our goals, and the means and methods that are used within our network.

Guiding Principles

In an inclusive society, all people are equal citizens. We stand for a diversity of lifestyles. We aim to create social environments in which every person is perceived and accepted in his or her own way of being. We see diversity as a way to truly express human nature. This also includes a continuous transformation and further development of social spaces through the involvement of all participants. By facilitating such processes, we aim to contribute to a healthy social development.

We see ourselves as companions. We support people of all ages in finding living conditions that enable them to lead a self-determined and resilient life as much as possible within a context that offers an experience of belonging.

Individual support is developed through dialogue with people seeking support, through which we seek to understand their needs and their current situation. We create spaces for encounter and conversation between one human being and another. We support the discovery of individual life paths and the formation and shaping of communities.

Artistic and cultural activities are of great importance because they offer opportunities for individual development and expression.

Our professional mission is to stimulate developmental processes based on theoretical and experiential concepts. To this end, we draw on perspectives from the anthroposophical understanding of the human being and the world, as well as current professional discourse. We want to contribute to the further development of these approaches.

Values

The basis for our work is the anthroposophical understanding of the human being, which perceives the human being as a unity of body, soul and spirit, with a reality encompasses the time before birth and after death.

The human individuality is the inner core that is always healthy, in each and every person, and includes one's talents and initiatives. It develops throughout life in encounters with other people. This development takes place in the field of tension between its embodied conditions, the nature of its environment as well as its striving for freedom and self-efficacy. Against this background, encounters take place in mutual understanding and respect, regardless of the abilities and disabilities of the individual. This implies that all social work has to begin with self-education.

The anthroposophical understanding of the human being encompasses a world view which can be applied to all areas of life, including biodynamic agriculture, anthroposophical medicine and therapies, pedagogy and special education, and associative economics in the sense of social threefolding. Research, artistic, cultural, and festival practices are developed and carried out with this holistic understanding of the human being in mind.

These foundations can be found in different forms in all communities and organizations that are active worldwide on an anthroposophic basis in accompanying people with support needs.

With this work, we are contributing to the implementation of the goals of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which has been ratified by many countries. It sets us the task of working constructively and actively cooperating with other partners in society for the development of an inclusive community in our work for and with people with support needs.

Inclusive Social Development

The anthroposophical understanding of human beings results in a central developmental task for each individual and the community in which they work.

People who are active in our movement are called upon to work on themselves in such a way that their attitude promotes and respects individual development. Ways of communicating and developing a common language to connect with each individual are central to this. If a person is not sufficiently able to communicate their needs, external decisions must be made. This asks for a high degree of consciousness for the fact that such action interferes in the other person's destiny.

The aim is that the accompanied fellow human being finds an individually fulfilled way of life, in which the starting point, the individuality – the 'I am' – of the person, can be expressed; this in the knowledge that each individual contributes something to the community.

Here, exchange with others, artistic work, and an attitude of lifelong learning, as well as spiritual development, are helpful. These lead to a greater awareness in relation to the individual and the community and thus open up new spaces for action and social renewal.

Anthroposophically-oriented work in accompanying people with support needs unfolds in many different forms, settings, and spaces. There are residential and life-sharing communities, meaningful vocational work, social agriculture and artistic activities, individual support, therapeutic activities, crisis intervention work, educational support, early intervention, rehabilitation for substance abuse, and more. Although these settings, communities, and initiatives may differ or serve different ages and needs, the fundamental elements often include:

- Honoring the unfolding potential of each human being
- The right of each individual to contribute actively to the present and future of society
- Valuing lifelong learning
- Working on cultural connections together with others
- Connecting to the rhythms of life and to the year (day/ week/seasons) in accordance with the local and cultural context, and with respect for the individual's freedom of religion
- Working sustainably with nature (biodynamic agriculture, gardening, etc.)
- Re-enlivening craftwork as a therapeutic, but also cultural treasure
- Holistic health, nutrition and wellness
- Developing artistic work and/or therapies
- Offering a diversity of social support services (housing, work, education, leisure, health...) – finding out what the context and what the individual needs
- Interdisciplinary cooperation with physicians and therapists from different fields
- Exchange and cooperation with relatives and legal representatives

This charter was developed by the delegates of the Anthroposophic Council for Inclusive Social Development and approved on October 10, 2022, as an expression of shared foundations, principles, attitudes, and values. As it describes the work of a developing movement, this document will be updated regularly in the future to reflect the changing reality.