

FOUNDATION SUPPORTS SIX PROPOSALS FOR A BETTER TOWN

(February 18, 2019) Prague – **This year, support for those seeking to improve public spaces in their towns and cities is going out to six different corners of the country.** Teams from Vimperk, Olomouc, Týn nad Vltavou, Hodonín, Žďár nad Sazavou and Kladno share not only the fact that they participated in the *Transform Your Town* program, but they also share a similar goal: they want to attract more attention to long-forgotten places in their towns. **The Karel Komárek Proměny Foundation will help them fulfil their plans for this year with financial assistance and technical consultancy services.**

This year, the Foundation will distribute **a total of CZK 500,000 among six projects** that participated in the *Transform Your Town* grant scheme. Each project proposes a solution to a problem, or takes advantage of underutilized opportunities that they have identified in the public space of their town or city.

“As we see it, the primary purpose of our support is to foster the interrelationship between all those involved in shaping the urban environment – town halls, architects, residents. The impetus to improve public spaces can come from any of them – the Transform Your Town program reaches out specifically to local people and active associations,” says **Jitka Přerovská, director of the Karel Komárek Proměny Foundation.** *“The incentives go from the bottom up. But to find a good solution, the people, town hall and professionals must all communicate with one another. The result of the work of the associations that we are helping, therefore, does not necessarily mean the physical transformation of a place. Sometimes, the most important thing is to find a common language. One of the projects even spelt this out in their grant proposal: the journey is the goal.”*

Last year, a **total of 29 projects from across the country** participated in the *Transform Your Town* grant scheme, 18 of which were from Bohemian cities and towns, while the remaining 11 were from Moravia. Applicants could request **a grant of up to CZK 100,000**, and in addition to financial support, they could also receive **professional assistance** in the form of consultations. The Foundation evaluated the projects in two rounds – first on the basis of a written application, and then Foundation representatives met with the shortlisted project teams in person. **The six selected projects will be carried out throughout this year** (an overview is included on the other side of this press release).

In the *Transform Your Town* program, the Karel Komárek Proměny Foundation focuses on supporting smaller projects, initiatives, and events in the public space that contribute to broader cooperation between citizens, public administration and professionals in developing the urban environment. In the previous – the first – grant scheme, the Foundation supported nine projects in Prague and the Central Bohemian Region. One of the projects was chosen again this year. *“The Halda Association in Kladno is continuing with the work it has achieved thus far, and has even inspired other people in the city to take action. They are an example of how the efforts of a few individuals can gradually start to snowball,”* says Přerovská, adding: *“Movers and changers are enthusiasts who devote their free time, expertise and energy to their city, all on a volunteer basis. Following any elections, some of them have to start almost from scratch to regain the confidence of their town hall. We want to support their efforts and to show that local associations represent a tremendous yet underutilized potential for the work of town halls.”*

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Photo: (Halda Association Archive): Kladno 4 Better Living Project, 2017

Transform Your Town 2018: LIST OF SELECTED PROJECTS

Finding Vimperk – open-air cinema and arboretum / proposed by: Vimperk žije!, z.s.

Locals perceive the potential of the area, located near the Vimperk Chateau and close to local schools, as being underutilized. The Vimperk žije! Association, along with school children and residents of the city, is looking for ways to change that. The association will present the vision that they're creating together to town hall and wants to work together on further steps.

Letňák spojuje město (Letňák Brings the City Together) / proposed by: Spolek Letní kino Olomouc, z.s.

This group is searching for ways to get the open-air cinema complex up and running again, despite the reluctance of the town administration. It wants to make the "Cikánská branka" (Gypsy Gate), the historical connection between the city walls, accessible to link the two parts of Olomouc – not just the city itself, but also its people. It aims to increase awareness of the complex, and to improve the association's influence with town council members.

Týn nad Vltavou – město pro život (A City for Living) / proposed by: Spolek pro rozvoj regionu

A group of active citizens in Týn nad Vltavou wants to change the local government's view on the topic of public space. With the help of the public, they are creating an emotion map of the city. Miroslav Vodák and Zdenka Vydrová present examples of good practice. The output will consist of public debate and publications.

Zastav se U Školy (Stop By The School) – Hodonín / proposed by: Sdružení rodičů a přátel ZUŠ Hodonín, z.s.

The purpose of the project is to show the potential of urban public space in the Hodonín city center (between the art school, primary school and medical clinic), and to give momentum to its gradual transformation – to start a debate on what should be done, to find the vision for the change, and to move it closer to reality.

Živá farčata (Living Farčata) / proposed by: Žijeme Žďárem, z. s.

Together with local groups, the association will build a portable pier (9 m²) and a small sandy "beach" by the river with 2-3 benches as part of the Farská humna "park", which is not officially a park. The aim is to show that there is no need to wait for millions in grants and subsidies, and that even small steps and citizen involvement can gradually bring a place back to life.

Living Space for Kladno (aka Kladno 4 Better Living II: Reloaded & Extended) / proposed by: Halda, z.s.

The purpose of the project is to demonstrate the possibility of using public space to bring neighbours together. In one day, the initiators will transform two "dysfunctional" places in Kladno into living spaces and show locals, as well as representatives of the city, that it takes very little to revive them – very often just an idea and the desire to do so.

Read more about the *Transform Your City* program and the projects supported to date at:

<https://www.nadace-promeny.cz/cz/projekty/promen-sve-mesto.html>

Since 2006, the **Karel Komárek Proměny Foundation**, a private non-profit organization, has actively worked towards developing and improving the urban environment in the Czech Republic, and towards a broader awareness and understanding of the importance of architecture, landscaping and the quality of one's environment for urban life. The Foundation provides grants, consulting and professional support to projects aimed at the development of public spaces and school gardens. It also focuses on related education for children and adults. The Foundation and its projects have won numerous awards.