Tolocar / Playbook / Truskavets

Truskavets in Lviv Oblast is a renowned spa and rehabilitation town in the Carpathian mountains, which has become a place of healing and support for veterans seeking treatment for their physical and psychological traumas. The Tolocar Project conducted a transformative workshop here in November 2022 that brought together veterans and school children, setting a chain of activities in motion.

Transforming Truskavets Together

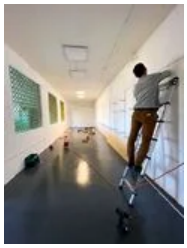
Through innovative solutions, international partnerships, and the establishment of a Fab Lab at School No. 3, the Tolocar project has left a profound mark on the lives of the participants and the spirit of Truskavets.

Many veterans who are facing limb loss and psychological trauma after fighting at the frontlines in the war, come to Truskavets to heal and recover. Being cognisant of the transformative power of making for people with disabilities and the advances in open source designs for assistive technologies, which projects like Careables have brought about in the last decade, the Tolocar team organized a workshop for veterans and school children. They did this in consultation with international partners Saad Chinoy from Salvage Garden in Singapore and Enrico Bassi from Opendot Milan and Fabcare, the Tolocar team organized a workshop for veterans and school children. The children, equipped with basic 3D design skills learned as part of their curriculum, were guided to embrace a user-centric design approach, understanding the needs and challenges faced by the veterans. While the tangible outcome of the workshop was just a personalized phone holder to assist veterans using crutches, the interaction between the children and veterans proved to be a powerful therapeutic tool, facilitating healing through empathy and understanding.

> “The workshop is a different space, and the kids are so normal and straightforward that I forgot about my medical routine and all those procedures for a while.” Serhiy, veteran workshop participant

The resounding success of the initial workshop and the potential of the Fab Lab concept resonated with the teachers of School No.3. This workshop was made possible through the efforts of Denis Shilenkko, a local activist and IDP, and school principal Igor Letsiuk who joined forces to campaign for a Fab Lab to be added to the school. Letsiuk had previously spent a long time advocating for the establishment of a Fab Lab in Truskavets, building up a local network of supporters and raising financial and material support (including laptops through USAID). Their efforts and vision became a reality when the Tolocar project provided the crucial equipment for the Fab Lab in addition to assisting with several building interventions, running a replication workshop for 3D printers, holding strategic consulting sessions, and providing hands on tips for equipping and running a Fab Lab.

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Before the transformation of a room into the Fab Lab at School No.3



After the transformation of a room into the Fab Lab at School No.3

On February 22, 2023, the Fab Lab at School No. 3 was officially inaugurated, a testament to the collaborative effort between Tolocar, the local authorities, and the business community in Truskavets. Equipped with cutting-edge technology, including two 3D printers, a laser cutter, a plotter, and three desktop computers, the Fab Lab now serves as a hub of creativity and exploration for the school and the entire community.

While all of these activities are happening on the ground, Aziz Wadi from the GIG Support Project is working on developing a Maker Academy course to teach the assembly and creation of such low-cost prosthetic limbs, which the Tolocars will be able to implement all over Ukraine. Aziz' work has only been made possible through the potential of distributed design, which has allowed access to WeArm O (https://wearm.netlify.app/), the open source version of the WeArm invented by Nigerian-American student Okezue Bell. Aziz is currently diligently working on testing and updating the innovative WeArm design with the goal of verifying its effectiveness with an up-to-date bill of materials (BOM) to ensure optimal functionality and accessibility, and designing a workshop format for its replication. A comprehensive and easily replicable open source workshop for a prosthetic which costs less than 1,000 € holds the promise of transforming the lives of people with disabilities everywhere, in Ukraine and beyond. Learn more about the WeArm O on Appropedia.

In Truskavets, we experienced the transformative power of a single workshop. The bringing together of veterans and school children, fostered healing, empathy, and learning - qualities which are now embodied in the Fab Lab at School No. 3. By providing tools and training, it will nurture a generation of compassionate innovators. Empowered with knowledge and inspired by their experiences, these young minds have the potential to drive further advancements in (assistive) technology and engineering in the future. We are really proud to be a part of the efforts that will continue to transform lives and uplift communities, embracing a future where no one is left behind.

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