

Würdesache

listen. understand. act.

“Human dignity shall be inviolable.”

Turning Germany’s first promise into a living responsibility

Würdesache at a glance

What is Würdesache? A newly founded German nonprofit association that turns the constitutional promise of inviolable human dignity into education, encounter, and responsibility. It will address antisemitism, prejudice, and dehumanization through remembrance, teacher education, youth programs, and personal exchange.

What is the first project? Würdesache will bring Holocaust survivor Avigdor Neumann’s 45-minute immersive testimony into German schools, surrounded by historical preparation, guided reflection, follow-up, and teacher support.

Why act now? The eyewitness generation is disappearing while antisemitism remains present and historical distance grows. Young people of every family background who call Germany home must be able to understand this shared history and the responsibility it creates.

What will the pilot do? Ten Bavarian schools, grades 9-13, will participate without a fee. A mobile set of 50 Meta Quest 3 headsets will support a classroom journey from preparation through testimony to reflection and evaluation.

What is required? The first-year plan value is €250,000. If the headsets are donated, the expected cash need is approximately €215,000. This includes equipment, localization, educators, project leadership, travel, evaluation, communications, and organizational development.

What will a founding gift make possible? It opens the first classrooms and builds what remains: trained teams, reference schools, educational materials, evidence, partnerships, and the capacity to expand across Germany and later Europe.

THE INVITATION Help launch the ten-school pilot and build the lasting organization that will carry human dignity forward.

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How does a constitutional promise become a way of life?

“Human dignity shall be inviolable. To respect and protect it shall be the duty of all state authority.”

These are the first words of the first article of Germany's Basic Law. They were placed there after the Holocaust not as an ornament, but as the foundation of a different Germany. Yet every generation must learn what those words require. Dignity is protected not only in constitutions and courts, but in the way people see one another, speak about one another, and act when another person is demeaned or excluded.

Würdesache - literally, “a matter of dignity” - exists to make that promise tangible for young people. It will bring together remembrance, education, personal encounter, and democratic responsibility. Over time, Würdesache intends to develop and connect survivor testimony, programs for teachers, youth encounters and exchanges, and further educational initiatives that help young people recognize, reject, and resist antisemitism and every form of dehumanization.

Why begin with Avigdor?

Because the first responsibility is urgent. More than eighty years after the end of the Nazi regime, the generation that can say “I was there” is disappearing. If those voices become only dates, photographs, and black-and-white history, something irreplaceable will be lost: the moment when a young person recognizes that history happened to another human being - and that memory carries a responsibility into the present.

THE FIRST PROJECT Würdesache will begin by bringing Holocaust survivor Avigdor Neumann's immersive testimony into German secondary schools. Founding support will make a ten-school pilot in Bavaria possible - and create the first working model through which Würdesache can grow.

Students will prepare with their teachers, hear Avigdor tell his story in the places where it unfolded, reflect together, and return to one question: What does this ask of me? This is not primarily a technology project. It is the first expression of Würdesache's wider mission: turning remembrance into responsibility and responsibility into action.

Can a history be well taught—and still feel far away?

The Holocaust is extensively documented and formally taught. Yet information can be present without reaching a young person personally or emotionally. Chronological distance, fragmented attention, misinformation, and the disappearance of living witnesses all make it easier for the Holocaust to be understood as a completed chapter rather than as a human history with consequences for the present.

In an August 2026 German-language interview, former German Ambassador to Israel Steffen Seibert described the challenge as follows (all quotations in this passage translated from German by Würdesache):

“It is an enormous task to prevent the Holocaust from becoming completely historicized.”

Seibert argued that this responsibility applies equally to young people whose families have lived in Germany for generations and to those whose families arrived more recently, whether from Aleppo or elsewhere. Anyone who wants to call Germany home, he maintained, must embrace this history as part of the heritage of their shared country—and the responsibility that grows from it. On that responsibility, he insisted, “there can be no discount.”

This is not inherited guilt. It is a common civic duty: to understand what happened here, to recognize the early language and habits of dehumanization, and to refuse them.

Why does Germany’s responsibility reach beyond its past?

Germany’s responsibility begins with the Holocaust, but it does not end with remembrance. Germany’s size, central place in Europe, and economic and political influence give the choices of each generation consequences far beyond its borders. A Germany whose young people understand where contempt for human beings can lead strengthens Jewish life, democratic culture, and peace across Europe. A Germany that forgets weakens all three.

What does this promise require now?

The protection of Jewish life and the rejection of antisemitism are not optional policy preferences. They belong to Germany’s historical and constitutional self-understanding. German leaders have also described Israel’s security as part of Germany’s Staatsräson. Würdesache brings this responsibility into the places where a democratic future is formed - beginning in the classroom, but reaching beyond it into teacher education, youth encounters, and public life.

Antisemitism is not historical

RIAS documented 8,725 antisemitic incidents across Germany in 2025, including 178 assaults and 257 threats. The total was more than three times the average recorded between 2020 and 2022. These figures do not prove that one educational intervention can reverse antisemitism. They do establish the urgency of sustained, serious education that connects historical knowledge, empathy, critical reflection, and civic agency.

WHAT IS AT STAKE When the last survivors can no longer enter a classroom, will their testimony remain a living encounter - or become another chapter students learn and forget?

Who is Avigdor—and why must his voice endure?

Avigdor Neumann was born in 1931. At twelve and a half, he was deported with his family to Auschwitz-Birkenau. He survived selection, forced labor, Mauthausen, death marches, and Gunskirchen. He later rebuilt his life in Israel and has lived to see five generations of his family. In 2026, he was selected as one of the torchlighters for Israel's official Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony at Yad Vashem.

Avigdor's testimony is particular, not generic. It gives history a face, a voice, locations, decisions, losses, and a life rebuilt. Its power lies in preserving his personhood rather than reducing him to an illustration of a historical event.



Avigdor Neumann with President Isaac Herzog at the launch of the Avigdor VR testimony, 26 March 2026 (8 Nisan 5786), Jerusalem. Photograph: Yossi Zelig.

How can an encounter outlive the eyewitness?

The Israeli “Triumph of the Spirit” initiative has created a 360-degree journey with Avigdor, filmed with him at locations connected to his persecution and survival. The published experience is approximately 45 minutes. Archival material, spatial sound, and visual context support his first-person account.

No technology can replace Avigdor. But it can preserve something a textbook cannot: his voice, his presence, the turn of his head, the landscape around him, and the sense that a human being is speaking to you rather than appearing as an example in a lesson.

Why can this reach students differently?

A conventional lesson gives students essential knowledge. An encounter gives that knowledge a human address. Personal testimony organizes dates and places around a life; emotion directs attention; and context gives memory more ways to be recalled. Research on emotional memory shows that emotionally significant information can be prioritized through interactions between the amygdala and hippocampus. Research on immersive learning also finds that a headset can create a stronger sense of presence than the same material on a flat screen. The research sources are listed in the addendum.

That does not mean that stronger emotion automatically produces deeper learning. It means that VR can open a door. The teacher, the historical preparation, the guided conversation, and the return to evidence are what help students walk through it. Würdesache therefore treats the headset not as the lesson, but as the center of a carefully prepared encounter.

What does it look like when a generation listens?



An audience experiencing the Avigdor VR testimony in Jerusalem. Photograph: Yossi Zeliger.

THE POSSIBILITY A room full of young people, each alone with Avigdor's voice - and then brought back together to ask what memory requires of them.

Why Würdesache—and why Maxi?

Can one encounter change the direction of a life?

At fifteen, Maximilian “Maxi” Frommer attended a school talk with little interest and sat in the back row expecting not to engage. Avigdor Neumann (may he live a long life) and Max Volpert (may his memory be a blessing) spoke about what had happened to them and their families - including persecution connected to the region in which Maxi had grown up. An abstract chapter of history became personal. The encounter changed the direction of his life.

Over the nine years that followed, Maxi developed a close relationship with Avigdor and his daughter, Bila. Before COVID-19, he helped bring three survivors to approximately 30-45 schools during intensive school-visit programs. Since the pandemic, he has organized about five school events each year, sometimes connecting several schools and reaching an estimated 200 to 1,000 students at a single event. He has led two youth trips to Israel, organized a teacher seminar on antisemitism with the German-Israeli Society in Augsburg, and worked with the Augsburg District Office toward a long-term youth exchange with Israel.

He also served for two years as treasurer and executive board member of an earlier remembrance association. Würdesache now gives his work a dedicated home and a larger horizon: connecting survivor testimony, educational expertise, teachers, schools, youth encounters, and institutional partners. Avigdor's testimony is the first project - not the limit of the organization's ambition.

“My motivation has remained rooted in the same moment: when I first heard Avigdor speak about what had happened to him as a child in the very place where I grew up. Since then, I have not questioned whether I should do this work. I use every opportunity I have to address the forces that keep people from living together peacefully and leave others at a disadvantage.”

THE PROMISE AT THE HEART OF WÜRDESACHE Maxi's story is evidence of the project's deepest hope: one carefully held encounter can move a young person from distance to responsibility - and responsibility can become a life's work.

What is ready to move forward?

Würdesache's founding circle combines heart with practical experience. Tatjana Frommer brings more than 15 years of international HR experience and training as a tax clerk; Jochen Gladishefski is an HR manager and licensed business coach; Harald Goos is a former Treasurer of the City of Königsbrunn and an experienced association board member; and tax adviser and auditor Nikolas Bühler will support financial oversight. Together with an emerging advisory circle from education, remembrance work, and public life, they provide a strong foundation for the association and for its first project, whose central elements are already in place:

- Avigdor's 45-minute VR testimony is complete and has already been shown at military bases, schools, and public institutions in Israel.
- The delivery model combines a fixed software fee for the headset system with a per-student license, connecting future funding directly to the number of young people reached.
- The film can be subtitled for German students and is designed for Meta Quest 3, the quality standard Würdesache intends to use.
- Prof. Zehavit Gross has developed the educational framework, endorsed the project, and offered to accompany it as academic adviser.

What can one encounter set in motion?

Würdesache will begin in Bavaria, close to Maxi's home and to the places where Avigdor's story first changed his life. The first year will bring the experience to ten secondary schools. No school should have to choose between remembrance and an already stretched budget; founding donors will open the door.

How will a school experience unfold?

Before the headsets arrive, teachers introduce Avigdor, the historical setting, and the questions students will carry into the experience. During the VR journey, students listen to Avigdor in a focused, immersive setting. Afterwards, Maxi and the teacher guide a conversation that makes room for emotion without losing historical precision. A follow-up lesson invites students to connect memory with the language, choices, and responsibilities of their own lives.

The educational framework has been developed with Prof. Zehavit Gross, former Dean of the Faculty of Education at Bar-Ilan University and UNESCO Chair in Human Values, Tolerance, Democracy, and Peace Education. Her support helps connect a powerful testimony with the demands of serious education.

How can an encounter create change?

Würdesache begins with a simple conviction. When students enter prepared, meet Avigdor as a person rather than a chapter, and are given time to reflect, history can become personally relevant. Relevance can deepen attention and memory. Reflection can help students recognize how people are stripped of dignity - first in words and categories, then in rights and safety. Recognition can become agency: the readiness to question a stereotype, refuse a degrading joke, defend a classmate, or speak when silence would be easier.

When teachers are equipped to continue the conversation, the effect need not end when the headsets are packed away. Each school becomes part of a growing practice of remembrance that is historically grounded, emotionally intelligent, and connected to democratic life. Würdesache will listen carefully to students and teachers, learn from every visit, and share what the pilot makes possible.

THE CHANGE WE SEEK Not a moment of shock that fades, but a memory that remains available when a young person must choose how to see, speak about, or stand beside another human being.

How can ten schools become the beginning of something lasting?

The first ten schools are not the end of Würdesache's ambition. They are where a lasting organization begins.

Through this pilot, Würdesache will do more than bring Avigdor Neumann's testimony into classrooms. It will develop and test a complete educational model: preparation for teachers and students, a powerful encounter with testimony, guided reflection, thoughtful follow-up, and careful evaluation. It will train the first facilitators, establish reference schools, build trusted partnerships, and learn what is needed to carry this work into many more communities.

Avigdor's story is Würdesache's first and most urgent project - but it is not its final horizon. In time, Würdesache will bring together teacher education, youth encounters and exchanges, journeys to Israel, conversations with survivors, their families, and experts, and practical projects through which young people themselves assume responsibility. These programs will create further opportunities to receive knowledge first-hand and to carry it into daily life.

How can memory continue through the generations?

Würdesache also intends to invite the children, grandchildren, and other descendants of Holocaust survivors to Germany for personal encounters with students. They can speak not only about what their parents or grandparents endured, but about how those experiences were carried within families: through stories told and withheld, identities rebuilt, losses that remained present, and choices about how memory should be passed on.

These encounters will not replace eyewitness testimony. They will show how testimony lives on, changes form, and continues to ask something of those who inherit it. They can help young people understand that the Holocaust did not cease to have human consequences in 1945 - and that remembrance is a relationship between generations, carrying responsibility from the past into the present and future.

This work must also begin earlier. Long before young people encounter history in an examination syllabus, they encounter language, loyalties, and prejudices within families, friendship groups, classrooms, and digital spaces. Würdesache's longer-term vision is therefore an age-appropriate system of values and education for students - potentially beginning in primary school with human dignity, belonging, language, and moral courage, and progressing toward the historical knowledge and civic responsibility that Germany's past demands.

What should exist five years from now?

Within five years, Würdesache intends to have established a permanent, pedagogically grounded school program: first proven in Bavaria and then used across Germany. Several trained teams will visit schools regularly. Teachers will receive professional development and materials that allow the themes to remain present in the classroom. Young people will be able to participate in encounters, exchanges, Israel programs, expert conversations, and practical initiatives in which remembrance becomes personal responsibility.

Fixed partnerships with schools, education providers, districts, memorial sites, and other organizations will give the program local roots and wider reach. Continuous evaluation will show what students and teachers experience, guide the further development of every program, and make its contribution visible. Once this school-based model is working reliably at scale in Germany, Würdesache intends to adapt and extend it with partners in Austria and other European countries.

What will make Würdesache endure?

Durability will come from structures that allow the work to be repeated, trusted, and carried by many people. Würdesache will document its educational methods, train several delivery teams, and build a network of reference schools and regional partners. A growing executive board and an advisory circle drawn from education, remembrance work, public life, finance, and organizational leadership will strengthen its direction. A professional core team will protect educational quality and coordinate delivery, while trained facilitators and partner institutions will allow the work to reach new regions without losing its human character.

Its financial foundation will broaden over time. Founding philanthropy will be joined by multi-year gifts, public and foundation funding, long-term partnerships, corporate and in-kind support, and, where appropriate, reasonable participation fees for later programs. Clear learning reports, careful financial stewardship, and a gradually established operating reserve will help ensure that Würdesache is not dependent on one donor, one grant, or one moment of public attention.

Growth will be measured not only by the number of schools reached, but by what remains: trained people, trusted partnerships, proven educational materials, stronger teachers, and a generation better prepared to defend the dignity of others. A founding gift therefore supports both the first young people who will encounter Avigdor and the durable institution that will carry this responsibility forward.

WHAT THE PILOT BUILDS The first ten schools will create the tested model, trained people, reference schools, evidence, and partnerships from which a nationwide - and eventually European - educational program can grow.

What will be different because you helped?

Your support will allow ten schools to participate without diverting scarce school budgets. It will provide the headsets, subtitles, educational materials, teacher preparation, facilitation, travel, and evaluation that turn a powerful film into a responsible learning experience. You can open that experience to one classroom, one school, five schools, or the entire pilot - while giving Würdesache the relationships, experience, and capacity from which further remembrance, teacher-education, and youth-encounter projects can grow.

Because you helped...

- A school can say yes without taking money from another educational need.
- Students can meet Avigdor as a person, not only encounter the Holocaust as a subject.
- Teachers can continue a thoughtful conversation about antisemitism, dignity, and democratic responsibility.
- Würdesache can learn from the first ten schools and build toward further encounters, exchanges, and a nationwide educational program.
- Avigdor's voice can remain close to generations who will never meet him in person.

A FOUNDING GIFT DOES MORE THAN FUND A VISIT It launches Würdesache through a powerful first project - carrying one survivor's testimony to one student, one classroom culture, and from there into the democratic life of a country.

Addendum: What will the first year require?

The ten-school pilot combines a traveling VR classroom with educational preparation, facilitation, follow-up, and learning. The figures below are planning estimates for discussion with founding donors and will be refined as the delivery calendar and supplier quotations are completed.

Pilot at a glance

- First region: Bavaria, followed by expansion across Germany.
- First cohort: ten secondary schools, grades 9-13.
- Classroom capacity: 50 Meta Quest 3 headsets, including reserve units, sufficient for one full class.
- Educational journey: teacher preparation, 45-minute VR testimony, guided reflection, and a follow-up lesson.
- Schools participate without a program fee during the pilot.
- Film license planning basis: €3–€5 per student reached.
- Headset software and program fee: €2,400 for the 50-device system.
The first-year planning allowance for VR film licenses and headset software is €20,000 in total, including the fixed €2,400 fee for the 50-device system and usage-based licenses at €3–€5 per student.

Preliminary budget

Cost area	Working range	Planning basis
50 Meta Quest 3 headsets, including reserve units	€31,000	A complete classroom set, using Meta Quest 3 as the quality standard.
Professional charging and transport cases, technical accessories, hygiene and spares	€17,000–€24,000	A secure and mobile classroom system.
VR film licenses and headset software	€20,000	Includes the fixed €2,400 fee for the 50-device system and usage-based licenses at €3–€5 per student.
German localization and pedagogical adaptation	€8,000–€15,000	Translation and adaptation of the accompanying educational materials.
Twelve months of project leadership	Approx. €75,000	Total employer cost for full-time project leadership.
Two pedagogical specialists on a freelance basis	€15,000–€25,000	Educational support, facilitation, and teacher development.
Vehicle rental, fuel, parking, school travel, load security and equipment insurance	€11,000–€17,000	Flexible transport and delivery throughout the pilot region.
Evaluation and final report	€3,000–€8,000	Student and teacher feedback, learning review, and donor reporting.
Association development, legal and tax advice, accounting and donation infrastructure	€6,000–€10,000	The professional foundation needed to sustain the work.
Website, design, media production, communications and school outreach	€18,000–€22,000	One-year communications lead; social media management; newsletters; landing page and donation function; visual and media production; materials; hosting and digital tools.
Contingency	10%	Reserve for a mobile first-year program and organizational launch.

PLANNING TARGET The calculated first-year planning range is €224,400–€271,700, with €250,000 as the rounded working plan value. If all VR headsets are donated, the corresponding cash requirement, including the reduced contingency, is approximately €215,000; the €31,000 equipment value will still be recognized as an in-kind contribution to the full project value.

Communications and outreach allowance

The €20,000 first-year plan value is composed of the following preliminary allocations, all included within the €18,000–€22,000 budget line:

- Communications lead, including social media, newsletters and content coordination: €12,000.
- Landing page and donation-ready website implementation: €4,000.
- Visual templates, photo and video editing, and subtitles: €2,000.
- Communications materials and digital outreach: €1,000.
- Hosting, newsletter software, maintenance, and digital tools: €1,000.

Will you help carry this story forward?

Würdesache was founded in Germany on 4 September 2026. Würdesache intends to explore a US giving pathway through Myriad USA, subject to German charitable recognition and Myriad USA's approval. Maxi's September conversations in New York are an invitation to become part of the founding circle: to advise, connect, and prepare the first commitments that can move when the giving route opens.

“If Avigdor’s story speaks to you, I invite you to help us carry it into the classrooms that need to hear it.”

You can help now

- Join the founding circle for one classroom, one school, five schools, or the full pilot.
- Introduce Würdesache to philanthropic, educational, remembrance, or technology partners.
- Help place Avigdor’s testimony in front of the young people who will carry Germany’s responsibility forward.

NEXT STEP Begin a conversation with Maximilian Frommer about the part of this first chapter you would like to make possible.

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Addendum: Organization and sources

Würdesache: A German association founded on 4 September 2026, with its seat in Klosterlechfeld, Bavaria. Its mission is remembrance, education, human dignity, and democratic cohesion.

First project: The German educational implementation of Avigdor Neumann's existing immersive testimony, created by the Israeli Triumph of the Spirit initiative.

First-year focus: Ten schools in Bavaria; grades 9-13; a complete classroom set; schools participate without a program fee.

Learning and reporting: Würdesache will gather student and teacher feedback, review learning and delivery, and report to founding donors on the schools and young people reached.

US donors: Würdesache intends to explore a US giving pathway through Myriad USA, subject to German charitable recognition and Myriad USA's approval.

Selected sources: [Bundesverband RIAS, Antisemitic Incidents in Germany 2025 - Annual Report](#) | [ZEITmagazin No. 35/2026, interview with Steffen Seibert](#) | [Yad Vashem, Avigdor Neumann - 2026 torchlighter biography](#) | [Triumph of the Spirit / JVR360, Avigdor experience](#) | [Federal Ministry of Justice, Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, Article 1](#) | [Qasim, Mohan, Stein & Jacobs \(2023\), Neuronal activity in the human amygdala and hippocampus enhances emotional memory encoding, Nature Human Behaviour 7, 754-764](#) | [Lønne, Karlsen, Langvik & Saksvik-Lehouillier \(2023\), The effect of immersion on sense of presence and affect when experiencing an educational scenario in virtual reality: A randomized controlled study, Heliyon 9\(6\), e17196](#) | [Makransky, Terkildsen & Mayer \(2019\), Adding immersive virtual reality to a science lab simulation causes more presence but less learning, Learning and Instruction 60, 225-236](#) | [Parong & Mayer \(2018\), Learning Science in Immersive Virtual Reality, Journal of Educational Psychology 110\(6\), 785-797](#) | [Yad Vashem, Using Testimony in Holocaust Education](#) | [Myriad USA, American Friends Funds](#) | [Meta Germany, Quest 3](#)

What founding donors will receive

Würdesache will report on the schools, classes, students, and teachers reached; share selected participant voices and school stories; describe what educators observed; and show how lessons from the pilot shape the next stage of expansion. Donors supporting a school or group of schools will be able to see the human and educational journey their gift helped make possible.