

FÜRSTLICH UND GRÄFLICH FUGGERSCHE
STIFTUNGS-ADMINISTRATION



PRESS RELEASE

Augsburg, June 13, 2022

**Fuggerei 500-year anniversary ends on a high note:
Prospects for new Fuggerei settlements around the world**

Fuggerei is seen as role model by high rank politicians and non-profit leaders / Fuggerei inspires settlements in Sierra Leone and Lithuania planned / New perspectives in Ukraine and USA and Germany

The celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Fuggerei, the oldest social settlement in the world, finds political as well as foundation support and ends with prospects for new social settlements modeled on the Fuggerei across the world. Voices from the world of politics and foundations, including the Foundation President Darren Walker, EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Federal Government Minister for Culture Claudia Roth, Bavarian Minister President Markus Söder and State Secretary Cansel Kiziltepe paid tribute to the exemplary character of the social settlement during the anniversary celebrations. They all see the Fugger approach, with its individual modular components and the so-called Fuggerei Code, as an answer to the global needs for affordable housing, community, and climate-friendly construction. Around 30,000 people visited the striking Fuggerei Next500 anniversary pavilion on Augsburg's Rathausplatz and saw for themselves the uniqueness of the vision for the future of the world's oldest social housing settlement.

The Fuggerei – a global inspiration

Darren Walker of the American Ford Foundation, visited the world's oldest social settlement and the Jubilee Pavilion at the weekend as president of one of the largest foundations in the world and is *"deeply impressed"* by the Fuggerei's vision of the future. He sees an opportunity for foundations and social settlements in the U.S. to learn from the Fuggerei. *"The Fugger code is global. Individual elements of Fugger's philosophy, design, concept, and execution, depending on local context and needs, could also be applied in the U.S.,"* Darren Walker said, further noting, *"The Fuggerei is a radically innovative idea, especially in the context of its time, and whether in New York City, Sierra Leone or Augsburg, we all want a life of community, dignity and spiritual anchor."* During the panel discussion at the official closing event in the Jubilee Pavilion on Saturday evening, June 11, 2022, Federal Government Minister for Culture Claudia Roth explained that the Fuggerei lives true solidarity and that Jakob Fugger recognized: *"I can't be well if my neighbor is unwell."*

Alexander Erbgraf Fugger-Babenhhausen, chairman of the Fugger Family Senate, is pleased about the interest in the Fuggerei: *"Jakob Fugger donated the social settlement 500 years ago in exemplum, as it is strikingly written on stone tablets above the archways of the Fuggerei. The fact that today, half a millennium later, people from all over the world want to learn from the Fuggerei and see this approach as an inspiration for their own work is extremely gratifying."* The senior council chairman reports that Darren Walker and the Fuggerei have been in exchange for more than a year: *"He has built bridges for us and opened up networks. That's what the Fuggerei anniversary is all about: We want to enter and foster dialogue. Over the last months we have identified the qualities and elements that made the Fuggerei such a success. We brought them together in the so called Fuggerei Code. Now we want to intensify the exchange with other foundations and donors and give them access to our learnings."*

Prospects for Fuggeries of the future on different continents

The Fuggerei idea is making its way around the world. Planning is currently underway for Fugger-inspired new social housing projects in **Sierra Leone and Lithuania**. While the African project wants to focus on a good and secure living environment for women and their families, the project from the Baltic States intends to offer elderly people and caregivers a future without poverty. The Fuggersche Foundations have been in exchange with both projects for more than a year and are supporting the projects, which are both in an early stage of development, with the know-how from the 500-year-old Fuggerei. In Sierra Leone, the first construction work is scheduled to start in the fall. The Fuggerei idea also radiates to Ukraine and the USA.

EU Commission President **Ursula von der Leyen** calls the Fuggerei a *"great success story."* She appeals that *"there should be more Fuggerei in Europe."* And Fuggerei *"could even be a role model in the rebuilding Ukraine after the war with its sustainable and people-centered approach."* The EU Commission President made the proposal for a new partnership program between Ukraine and the EU on May 7. Regions, cities, and professional groups should network to exchange experiences and ideas, and thus cooperate in reconstruction. The Fuggerei can provide important impulses for social and safe homes and a life in self-determination and dignity, she explained.

Potential for Fuggerei of the future in Germany

A social housing settlement based on the model of the Fuggerei could also be built in Germany, because the pressing need for affordable housing and a social home must be met, explained Cansel Kziltepe, Parliamentary State Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Housing, Urban Development and Construction, at her visit to Augsburg on June 9, 2022. During her visit to the Fuggerei and the anniversary pavilion as part of the event organized by the Federal Foundation for Building Culture, she pointed to the exemplary character of the settlement: *"The Fuggerei proves that we can create affordable yet good housing. This is more necessary than ever 500 years later: more and more people are suffering from exploding housing prices."* Kziltepe plans to advocate for social housing settlements modeled after the Fuggerei in Germany and sees Berlin, for example, as a location for this.

The 500th anniversary of the Fuggerei and the broad support from politics and society make it clear that the idea of the Fuggerei is relevant and needed – even half a millennium later. Sticking to the Fuggerei Next500 anniversary idea, the Fugger foundations have set themselves the goal of continuing to provide a social home for the needy and allowing people from all over the world to participate in the successful model over the next 500 years.

The effort of many generations

The fact that the Fuggerei has existed for 500 years is the merit of many generations of the Fugger family. Jakob Fugger did not have children of his own. In his will, he appointed the descendants of his brothers Georg and Ulrich as the persons responsible for the foundations, as long as their family lines exist. Jakob's nephew Anton Fugger already set the course for a successful future of the foundations. Over the course of the centuries, those responsible for the foundations managed to continue the Fuggerei through times of economic and political crisis, to rebuild it after it was destroyed and to adapt the settlement to the requirements of the respective times. The evolution of the Fuggerei never was and never can be completed - otherwise it could not serve its purpose of being a home for people in need "for all eternity". It is this very passage that encapsulates the responsibility of Jakob Fugger's successors to find inventive ways - just like Jakob did - to ensure the continuation of the Fuggerei.

Further information

- **High-resolution images**, including pictures of the Fuggerei Anniversary Pavilion, the opening weekend with Ursula von der Leyen and all other invited guests, are available at: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/2q9mdcq11uo1ifm/AACp3KF-k4uglFAepcfN8ciVa?dl=0>
- **Information on the 500-year anniversary**: <https://www.fuggerei-next500.de/en>
- **Information on the Fuggerei settlement and foundations**: <https://www.fugger.de/en/fuggerei>

Questions and information: Astrid Gabler, Head of Communication and program, gabler@fugger.de,
Tel.: +49 821/ 31 98 81-25, Mobile: +49 170/ 285 1048, weitere Infos unter: www.fuggerei-next500.de