



PRESS RELEASE

Augsburg, June 13, 2022

Fuggerei Next500 pavilion inspires tens of thousands of people and finds new home in the Netherlands

Around 30,000 people visit anniversary pavilion on Augsburg's townhall square / Over 100 events hosted and many prominent guests / Pavilion travels to the Netherlands and is re-opened to the public

The 500-year anniversary of the Fuggerei, the world's oldest social settlement, comes to an end and at the same time marks a new beginning. The popular Fuggerei Next500 Pavilion on Augsburg's townhall square will travel Europe to find a new home at the Fraeylemaborg Foundation in Groningen in the Netherlands. Within five weeks, the strikingly curved wooden exhibition structure has become a popular meeting place and local sight. From May 6 to June 12, around 30,000 people visited the pavilion and discovered the history, concept, and future visions of the world's oldest social housing complex. Among them were prominent guests such as EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Minister of State Claudia Roth, Bavarian Prime Minister Markus Söder and State Secretary Cansel Kziltepe, as well as thought leaders, foundation personalities and celebrities such as Wolfgang Ischinger, Neven Subotic, Felix Neureuther, Jutta Speidel, Anselm Grün, Julian Nida-Rümelin and American foundation presidents Darren Walker and Rip Rapson. People came from across world to the pavilion. Thousands of selfies with the pavilion and views of Augsburg City Hall were taken, shared, or saved as memories. The positive feedback and responses on the exhibition were impressive. Visitors have been moved by the Fuggerei and its ideas for the future. The Fuggerei is way more than a historical idyll with vine-covered houses.

The Fuggerei Next500 Pavilion – a space for ideas and dialog

The Fuggerei Next500 Pavilion hosted over 100 events, including workshops, concerts, readings, guided tours, and panel discussions. Built entirely of wood from the Fugger's forests and designed by the renowned Dutch architectural and urbanism firm MVRDV, the building provided the perfect setting for this with its two exhibition rooms and the wide event space: *"On the one hand, the Fuggerei Pavilion has shown to the public that the Fuggerei enables people to live a self-determined life in dignity for half a millennium, and on the other hand, we opened a big window into the future and have proven that the Fuggerei is also a place of ideas and dialogue. This spirit of openness and exchange will guide us into the future. We are delighted that the pavilion has found a new home in the Netherlands. The idea of the Fuggerei*

is radiating beyond the country's borders," emphasizes **Alexander Erbgraf Fugger-Babenhhausen**, Chairman of the Fugger Family Senate. *"By doing so, we are fulfilling what Jakob Fugger wrote for us in the stone tablets above the gates of the Fuggerei: the Fuggerei was endowed in exemplum. It is intended to be a role model and inspire people to work for the common good and to create livable places that give people a social home."*

New home for the Fuggerei Next500 Pavilion in a Dutch landscape park

The Fuggerei was in talks with a wide variety of interested parties about the subsequent use of the pavilion. Now it has been decided where the architectural treasure will find its new home: The Fuggerei NEXT500 Pavilion will travel to the Dutch North Sea coast and be rebuilt in the Fraeylemaborg Foundation Art and Sculpture Park in Groningen. The open-air museum with its cultural artefacts and architectural sculptures on around 23 hectares is laid out in the form of an English garden landscape and is visited by 100,000 people every year. The Fuggerei Next500 pavilion will continue to provide a space for exciting, cultural, and social content in the coming years with exhibitions and events. This concept and the sustainable re-use of the pavilion convinced the Fuggerei foundations to send the pavilion abroad. *"Designing the NEXT500 Pavilion was a thrilling exercise for us, not only to celebrate the Fuggerei's 500th anniversary, but also because it provided the opportunity for us to take part in the Fuggerei of the Future research, with proposals to bring the Fuggerei formula to communities around the world",* says **MVRDV founding partner Jacob van Rijs**. *"The fact that the pavilion will now find a home in my home country of the Netherlands is emblematic of the success of this endeavour. I am confident that the Fuggerei's message will travel just as easily as the pavilion to this country, placing a spotlight on affordable social housing and creating a long-term impact."*

In 5 years, the pavilion might come back to Augsburg, as the Fraeylemaborg Foundation indicated. This will leave enough time in Augsburg to develop ideas on how the building can continue to inspire and bring people together.

Further information

- **Background information:** The dismantling of the wooden pavilion on Augsburg's town hall square will take from June 13 to June 24, 2022. The homepage of the Dutsch Foundation Fraeylemaborg with its landscape park can be found here: <https://fraeylemaborg.nl/de/>
- **High-resolution images**, including pictures of the Fuggerei Anniversary Pavilion, the opening weekend with Ursula von der Leyen, Markus Söder and all other invited guests, are available at: www.dropbox.com/fuggerei (is updated regularly).
- **You can find the complete program here:** <https://www.fuggerei-next500.de>

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