



PHOTO BY HELLE ARENSBAK

TØNDER FESTIVAL

Tønder Festival is an international music festival in Tønder, a small town in Southern Denmark. Since 1975 folk music fans have gathered annually in late August. Today with a capacity of around 15,000 participants, the festival is organised by a volunteer-based non-profit organisation, which donates its profits to local cultural initiatives and social organisations. During the festival, large parts of town become part of the festival community, as musicians, guests, and locals participate in creating Tønder Festival by interacting and making music together.

CASE: TASTE THE WORLD

Taste the World is a food stall at Tønder Festival run by residents and employees of the local refugee asylum centres. The asylum seekers join the festival community as volunteers constructing and running the food stall and become an integral part of the festival and the local community.

Taste the World is a street-food concept offering dishes inspired by and representing the volunteers' different cultures. The volunteers build the stall, learn about food safety, and develop the stall's dishes. During the festival, they prepare the food and serve customers. All profits go towards social activities at the asylum centres.





PHOTO BY RANDI ARAMI MAACH

BECOMING LOCAL CITIZENS

By volunteering at Tønder Festival, the asylum seekers activate and develop their skills meaningfully while experiencing a sense of belonging and self-efficacy. Being part of the festival community creates a connection to the local host community.

The festival's participants interact with the asylum seekers, a group usually marginalised without much opportunity to interact positively with their host community. At Tønder Festival, they can present themselves differently, as they share their food and culture and become engaged citizens through volunteerism. Randi Arami Maach, project manager for Taste The World and communications consultant for Asyl Syd, elaborates:

“We [Asyl Syd] have an obligation to give asylum seekers insights into the Danish society, and we find volunteer culture to be a part of the Danish society, which they [asylum seekers] should know about.”

– Randi Arami Maach, project manager, Taste The World

Randi Maach also comments on the food stall's outreach: “The festival promotes our users [asylum seekers] as a part of Danish society and as people who are not dangerous to be around. (...) There was a lot of press coverage, and our residents usually get very negative publicity, but in this case, it was very positive.”

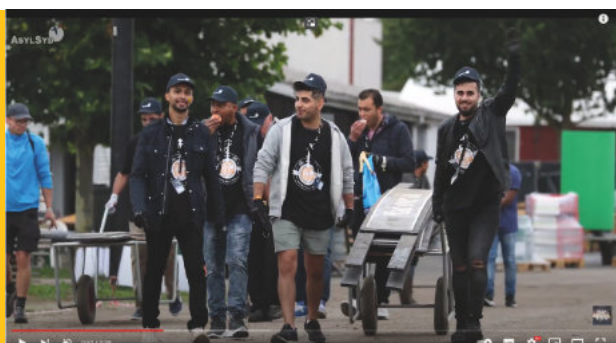




PHOTO BY RANDI ARAMI MAACH

DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

After the festival, all volunteers receive a certificate for their work. Issuing certificates address innovatively the critical challenge faced by young refugees and migrants. During their migration process, their education and professional skills development are put on hold for an uncertain period. The certificate lessens the negative impact and supplements their CVs. It shows their motivation and willingness to participate in civil society and demonstrates core skills and values, such as collaboration, engagement, and responsibility, to potential employers.

Name: *Tønder Festival*

City & country: *Tønder, Denmark*

Capacity: *15,000*

Site: *Tønder Dyrskueplads*

Camping: *Yes*

Number of days: *4*

Established in: *1974*

