

Project concept: “United Light”



An evening of Courage, Care, and Connection

Problem / Context

As a result of the ongoing war, many Ukrainian servicemen and servicewomen are currently undergoing treatment and rehabilitation in the Netherlands. Most of them live with not only physical injuries but also psychological consequences - post-traumatic stress, a sense of isolation, and emotional exhaustion. At the same time, Dutch veterans face similar challenges: finding inner balance, coping with post-war trauma, and rebuilding social engagement. Both groups need support, understanding, and genuine human connection.



Over the past year, the HeroCareNL project has implemented several initiatives aimed at bringing Ukrainian and Dutch veterans together - joint meetings, cultural visits, and social events.

These experiences have shown clear benefits for both sides:

- Ukrainian servicemen reported feeling supported and “brought back to life”;
- Dutch veterans expressed a desire to participate in such initiatives more often;
- Psychologists noted a positive impact of shared communication and empathy on emotional recovery.



Project goal

To create a space where Ukrainian and Dutch veterans can support each other, share experiences, and find emotional balance through communication, culture, and music. The aim of the event is to strengthen participants’ psychological resilience and create an atmosphere of trust, friendship, and mutual respect.

Idea / Solution

In December, following the Day of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and on the eve of the winter holidays, a charity evening “United Light” will take place at the War Museum in Medemblik.

This event will bring together Ukrainian servicemen undergoing rehabilitation in the Netherlands, Dutch veterans, representatives of the Ministry of Defence, the diplomatic corps, volunteers, media, and local residents. In addition to invited guests, the event will be open to everyone. Admission will be free, with a symbolic condition - to bring a dish of Ukrainian or Dutch cuisine to share. This concept will help involve the local community in an important volunteer and social initiative, promote integration and cultural exchange, and create a space where veterans and civilians can meet, communicate, and support each other.

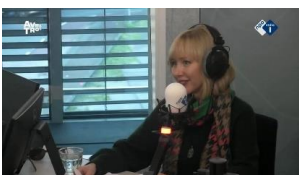
The evening program includes:

- A festive dinner featuring Ukrainian and Dutch dishes, prepared with the help of volunteers and partners;
- A short documentary film about Ukrainian marines - a story of strength and humanity;
- Live music - Ukrainian and Dutch performers;
- A warm and informal space for conversation and experience sharing, where everyone can tell their story and listen to others.

Expected results

- Psychological support for participants through communication, music, and shared creativity.
- Strengthened trust and mutual understanding between Ukrainian and Dutch veteran communities.
- Increased public awareness of the importance of mental health and how cultural initiatives can aid recovery.
- Establishment of a lasting tradition of annual events uniting veterans of both nations in the spirit of friendship, solidarity, and respect.

Partnership and Support



To implement this project, we are seeking partners willing to provide organizational, informational, or financial support. Your participation will help us create not just a festive event, but an evening that restores faith, strength, and inner light. Project partners will have the opportunity for logo placement on posters, banners, and other event materials, as well as mentions in media coverage and HeroCareNL's social media. In addition, all partners and representatives of supporting organizations will be invited to attend the evening and future HeroCareNL events, helping to strengthen cooperation and long-term partnership.



We believe that initiatives like this are especially meaningful today, when the world faces complex challenges and that supporting such projects helps build not only stronger individuals, but also stronger connections between our nations.

About HeroCareNL



HeroCareNL is a volunteer initiative founded by Eugenia Melnik, a Ukrainian war correspondent, volunteer, and practicing psychologist specializing in PTSD recovery. The project provides comprehensive support to Ukrainian servicemen undergoing treatment and rehabilitation in the Netherlands and promotes cooperation with Dutch veterans through cultural, social, and psychological programs.