

Policy Plan Outline – Stolpersteine (Stumbling Stones) Amsterdam 2026

The purpose of the Foundation is to preserve the memory of the victims of National Socialism in Amsterdam during the Second World War.

To this end, the Foundation participates in the Stolpersteine ("Stumbling Stones") project initiated by the German artist Gunter Demnig and his Stiftung Spuren. With the support of volunteers and the Municipality of Amsterdam, the Foundation arranges for Stolpersteine to be installed in the pavement outside the last known residences of victims of Nazi persecution, based on applications submitted by surviving relatives.

The Foundation purchases the stones from Stiftung Spuren, whose workshop is located at the Goethe-Institut Amsterdam. More than 50 Stolpersteine are installed each month. By mid-2026, more than 4,500 Stolpersteine had been placed throughout all neighbourhoods of Amsterdam.

By their very nature, Stolpersteine are memorials that evoke strong emotions. Conceived by Gunter Demnig as works of art, they are regarded by many as monuments to family members murdered during the war, many of whom have no grave or other place of remembrance. Every stage of the process, from application to installation, can therefore be emotionally charged. While contributing to the Stolpersteine project is meaningful and often deeply rewarding, it also requires everyone involved to show respect for differing opinions and emotions.

Strictly speaking, the Stichting Stolpersteine Amsterdam functions as a local agency of Gunter Demnig's Stiftung Spuren. Given the exceptionally large number of Jews deported from Amsterdam, the Foundation occupies a unique position within the international Stolpersteine project and deals with a different profile of applicants than foundations in smaller towns and villages. This has a direct impact on the order in which applications can be processed and approved.

Amsterdam seeks to give priority to applications submitted by surviving relatives of victims, with additional priority given based on the applicant's age. These considerations inevitably lead to complex decisions that require understanding and respect for the emotional significance of the dilemmas involved.

The new Board, which took office at the beginning of 2026, has established a number of pragmatic objectives for the coming year. These objectives reflect the need to address organisational shortcomings, as well as a substantial backlog of applications and a temporary suspension of new requests for Stolpersteine.

The Foundation's main priorities are:

- Restoring normal working relationships within the Foundation.
- Rebuilding working relationships with external partners, including Stiftung Spuren, the Municipality of Amsterdam, and the Amsterdam workshop at the Goethe-Institut.
- Expanding the volunteer organisation.
- Improving administrative procedures and strengthening internal controls.
- Renovating the Foundation's website and database.
- Taking initiatives to eliminate the backlog of applications as quickly as possible.
- Establishing the affiliated organisation in Utrecht as an independent entity.
- Long-term objective: board renewal and generational succession.