Impact Report 2021

HACK YOUR FUTURE

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*HackYourFuture will be abbreviated as HYF throughout the report

Message from HackYourFuture team

2021 was a rollercoaster ride for us just like it was for many others. It's also been the most successful year in the history of HYF Denmark.

We helped 42 people to land developer roles - that's almost 50% beyond what we set as a goal for a hard-to-predict year. We've also kept quite busy. Over the course of the year we hosted 5 Masterclasses - React Native, Python, Serverless, Elastic, Inviso. We graduated 4 classes - 15, 16, 17 & 18.

A big breakthrough has been the establishment of a pilot project in Aarhus, making HYF a nationwide initiative, accessible for everyone, for the first time in our existence.

When it was possible this year, we enjoyed time together face-to-face, returning to fully onsite classes and picking a pretty rainy day for a summer BBQ (not that it deterred anyone).

Too many memories to list them all, but one feeling stands above the rest - a huge gratitude for our new and old volunteers who've kept delivering highest-quality mentorship and support throughout yet another strange year.

About HackYourFuture

HYF is a non profit coding school teaching computer programming to disadvantaged groups with limited access to higher education and the Danish labor market.

Origins

The origins of HYF can be traced back to 2015, when Europe experienced a migration crisis for which it wasn't ready – the Netherlands was no exception. Awaiting their asylum decision, people usually waited up to 18 months in a refugee camp often located in remote areas. HackYourFuture founder Gijs Corstens saw this as an opportunity to turn the passive waiting time into a proactive one.

HYF Denmark opened its doors in March 2017 and teaches refugees, asylum seekers and other disadvantaged groups with interest in tech to become web-developers. It aims to help closing the employment gap while building cultural bridges, aiding integration, promoting diversity and creating positive role models for future generations as inspiration to enter the Danish tech industry with confidence.

There are many different types of migrants in Denmark besides refugees that are unable to unfold their full potential in their new home country due to a lack of professional network, relevant work experience and language skills amongst other factors, therefore the concept of HYF is relevant in Denmark as well.

Additionally, there is a high demand for web developers in the Danish labor market where job vacancies exceed the number of homegrown talent.

We saw an opportunity to intervene and create a win-win situation for the newcomers and their host country.

At the moment the program is active in the Netherlands, Denmark, UK, Belgium and Canada.

Mentors

Our teachers and mentors are IT-professionals with a passion for technology and a wish to share their knowledge and skill.

Success stories of our students are their accomplishment as our 150 mentors have great importance for HYF's results.

Students

Our students are determined to achieve professional success in the Danish IT-industry and push through adversities they are faced with on a daily basis. HYF supports students along the way and takes pride in their professional success.

Thus far we have taught 21 classes with 171 graduates and 136 employed students.

Community

As a non-profit charitable organization, we place high value on our community, which is constituted by our students (active students and alumni), partners, donors, mentors and HYF staff. We are referred to as an inclusive, supportive and engaged community with an individual and personal approach to each of our members.

Volunteer

Partners

Our partners are a crucial part of HYF as our organisation could not exist without them. We are grateful for continuous support from our 15 valued partners and sponsors:

Zendesk, Novicell, Planday, Elastic, CodeArt, Umbraco, Inviso by Devoteam, Novorésumé, Pandora, Munin Data, Karnov Group, Destination AARhus, Skybox and Prosa.

My time at HYF future has made me a better person in both my personal and professional life.

Sharing your knowledge and experiences with others can be very gratifying and is a fulfilling way to support others in their learning. Teaching also represents a new opportunity to improve your communication skills while gaining a deeper understanding of the tools and frameworks you use every day. It's been a very enriching experience seeing my time and effort in Sunday classes translate directly to a positive learning experience for the students.

Students at HYF are very engaged, motivated, and come from extremely diverse backgrounds. I often find myself learning something new every Sunday with the students.

Breadon Gough
Mentor at HYF

A professional journey needs knowledge and support and I got both at HYF.

Studying at HYF was the first step and a strong base for setting out as a web developer. After graduating everything changed for me for the better. Not only did I get strong technical knowledge, but also a culturally rich community. I found people's stories, backgrounds, paths and technical levels very inspiring and motivating.

Networking is simple at HYF, because everyone is happy to share and help, which is beneficial for the future career. If you have a passion for tech and want to make your first steps into the industry then HYF has definitely gathered a great community and structured a curriculum you can benefit from. I have always said that HYF in one word is Hope.

Dlnya Mazhari
Former student and mentor at HYF

I can only recommend other companies to enhance creativity through diversity.

At Karnov, we are often looking for front-end developers for our tech department, and they can be difficult to find. Through our sponsorship of HackYourFuture we get the opportunity to support a good cause, help skilled and willing people into the Danish labor market – and at the same time we get access to skilled candidates in an early stage of a hiring process.

HackYourFuture does more than retraining and help finding jobs - they also help creating social relationships between people, across gender, culture, social background, and religion.

Peter Riise
Director Software Engineering at Karnov Group

Study program

HYF offers an entirely free eight months long educational program in web development. The application rate generally is very high. In 2021 out of 590 applicants only 80 (14%) got admitted to the program. The course is specifically designed for people with limited access to further education or the job market in Denmark. While it is not a requirement for a student to have a technical background, it is expected that one is able to dedicate 30 hours of work each week (classes and homework), to understand English and to be able to attend classes on Sundays.

As one of our objectives is to create gender balance in the Danish IT industry, we have achieved an equal gender distribution in our program and are committed to maintaining this 50/50 balance.

The program is ever-evolving and adapts to demands of the labor market quickly by using cutting-edge teaching methods that make our coding school equally attractive to students, mentors and potential employers.

HYF's motto is - "what you put in is what you get out", therefore it is important to us that each student shows commitment, dedication and is ready to put in hard work while being supported by the HYF community on each step of the way.

At HYF coding school the students will learn HTML/CSS, Git, Javascript, Databases, Node.js, ReactJS and complete a final project at the end of the course. Find our curriculum and apply here.

Alongside knowledge in different coding languages, we bring positive encouragement, a supportive environment, continuous feedback via our IT-professional volunteers and professional connections, which are a must-have when setting foot into the labor market.

LENGTH OF THE STUDY PROGRAM	8 months
STUDY TIME ALLOCATION	30h per week
CURRICULUM	HTML/CSS, Git, Javascript, Databases, Node.js, ReactJS

2021 Highlights

NETWORKING AND KNOWLEDGE BUILDING

To expand expertise and professional network, HYF community visited GOTOPIA (Online Software Developer Conference), GOTO Aarhus, GOTO Copenhagen and TechhBBQ and organized 5-week Masterclasses: React Native, Intro to Python and Data Science Tools, Elastic Bootcamp, Serverless and Data Analytics: PowerBI.

PANEL DISCUSSION

HYF organized an online panel discussion Women in Technology to discuss & promote gender balance in the Danish IT industry.

NEW CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

Several new partners joined the HYF community – CodeArt, Munin Data, Karnov Group, ReD Associates, Destination AARhus, Novorésumé, Umbraco, IT Kartellet, Basecamp, Novicell, Inviso by Devoteam and Prosa.

SOCIAL EVENTS

HYF held several large scale social gatherings (BBQ Summer meeting, Christmas party et.al.) that helped to bind the community after a full year of remote working.

CONTINUOUS COLLABORATIONS

HYF actively collaborated with existing supporters via Corporate Volunteering Programs with Zendesk & Elastic, knowledge sharing through workshops hosted by Visma e-conomic, Elastic, Penni.io and support (laptops donated by Revolt, Novorésumé and A.P. Møller Mærsk A/S).

HYF AARHUS LAUNCH

In November 2021, HYF opened a coding school in Aarhus giving access to our free tech education for people based in the Jutland region. A huge milestone.

STUDENTS IN 2021

49 students (3 classes) were onboarded, 132 people were active in our activities throughout the year (in 8 classes), 61 students (4 classes) graduated from HYF coding school in 2021.

Impact

In the following section HYF's impact will be discussed focusing on the year 2021. The categories of this section are selected in accordance with HYF's general aims, mission and objectives, which are:

(1) employment of our students; (2) diversity and inclusivity both in our coding school and, in turn, the Danish IT industry; (3) volunteer engagement.

Employment

HYF's main success criterion is not graduation, but employment of students. Therefore, it is important to give them an all-encompassing toolkit for a successful head start as web-developers. For HYF an internship is also considered a success as it frequently leads to further employment.

However, most of the time professional paths of our students do not follow a straight line, therefore it can be challenging to measure where HYF's impact begins and ends. Nevertheless, we have onboarded 21 classes thus far and graduated 171 students from which 136 are now employed in the Danish tech industry (79,5%).

2021 was an active year for our students. Despite challenges and restrictions brought by the pandemic, almost 50% of the students found employement and actively participated in our IT-related and community building activities. A few students landed a web developer role or an internship while still being in the program.

Our alumni now work for some of Denmark's top employers in the IT industry, such as Umbraco, Siteimprove, Bestseller, Dixa, Mærsk, Elsevier, Twentythree & DFDS amongst others.

Students who found employment actively participated in the study program and graduated it. 75% of these students took additional training (ReDi School, Umbraco training, Azure Fundamentals), attended masterclasses (Python, Data Analytics, DotNet, Serverless), did 1:1 mentorship and expanded their professional network continuously through IT related events and internships.

It is clear that continuous learning efforts and proactive approach leads to a higher chance of employment.

"What you put in is what you get out

42 out of **61** graduates found employment within 3 - 6 months

75% of employed students took additional training, courses, masterclasses, 1:1 mentorship and actively participated in IT related events

Diversity

HYF sees diversity as a strength and equal opportunities as a right, therefore it is important to continuously build a community consisting of people with different backgrounds, experiences and characteristics.

The same principle applies to our students, hence forming a manifold study group (different age, residence status, nationality, level of experience, educational background etc.) is a significant factor in the application and selection process. As our goal is employment of the students, this in turn brings more diversity to tech industry.

Although HYF prioritizes refugees and asylum seekers, other disadvantaged groups who are facing difficult circumstances are encouraged to apply and start a career in web development.

Amongst 2021 students most held accompanying spouse residence status (46%), followed by refugee (24%) and green card holder (15%). Other residence statuses were migrant, EU/EEA, family reunification, establishment card and au pair.

While it is not a requirement for the students to have a technical background, candidates must be unable to either access free education in Denmark or have a degree which isn't recognized here. We believe that anyone with a strong motivation and determination can be successful at web development, therefore we see diversity in educational backgrounds as advantageous assuming that it offers unique perspectives and encourages knowledge exchange.

In 2021 52% had a non-technical background while the rest (48%) had existing technical knowledge. The educational degrees and backgrounds of the students are diverse - some are acquired via university or other educational institution while others are self taught. Amongst non-technical backgrounds are degrees in “Social Sciences, Business Management, Marketing, Engineering, Architecture, Arts, Pharmacy, Chemistry, Geology, Linguistics and High school education. Technical backgrounds include Software Engineering, Computer Science, Information and Network Engineering, Electronics and Communications, Information Technology” et.al.

HYF has managed to ensure diversity on different levels (residence status, educational background, age, gender, nationality, religion etc.), reaching its objective and bringing more diversity to the Danish tech industry via manifold study groups.

2021 alumni represented 30 different countries:

Lebanon, Japan, Kenya, Cameroon, Nepal, India, Ethiopia, Ghana, Syria, Iraq, Eritrea, Rwanda, Iran, Columbia, Ivory Coast, Lithuania, Pakistan, Mexico, Croatia, Ukraine, Bangladesh, Spain, New Zealand, Argentina, Armenia, Turkey, Guatemala, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Somalia.

Gender Balance

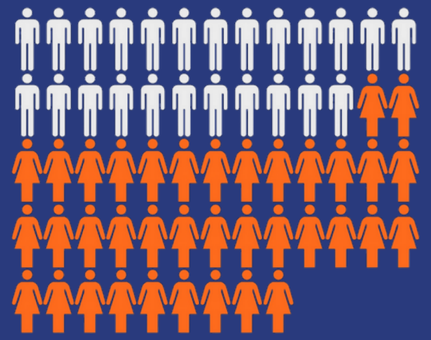
In Denmark only 30% women are employed in the Danish IT industry[1] and 38% are doing IT related education.[2] Our objective is to diversify the labor market, therefore women are strongly encouraged to apply for the study program and become web developers

We send messages of encouragement not only through words, but also images on hackyourfuture.dk that portray female students, we share their success stories on different social media channels and organize discussions regarding the issue.

Our general aim this year is to have at least 33% female students in a study class, however usually this goal is overachieved, because of high interest and application rate, which lets us assume that our methods of communication are encouraging.

[1] IT-Branchen, Branchen i tal – Beskæftigelse (accessed on 14.10.2022.)
[2] IT-Universitetet i København, ITU's Indsats for Flere Kvinder På IT-Uddannelserne (accessed on 14.10.2022.)

54,5%



Gender distribution in the program

In 2021 61 students graduated from the HYF coding school - 37 (54,5%) were women and 24 (45,5%) - men. It is clear that HYF has outperformed the initial objective and managed to bring a solid gender balance into their program.

Moreover, 24 women found employment after or before graduation. For 12 women it took under 3 months, for 6 - under 6 months and for 3 - half a year. 6 female students got employed while studying at HYF coding school.

Female web developers are successful in the study process and find employment fast, which correspondingly diversifies and balances the Danish tech industry.

Volunteer engagement

As a non-profit organization, HYF relies largely on volunteer work, therefore mentors and teachers are a crucial part of the community.

Volunteers share their time, knowledge, skill and network with our students, which they can use to their professional advantage. As all of our mentors are full-time web developers working in top Danish companies such as Zendesk, Danske Bank, Mærsk, Elastic, Karnov Group, Nordea they are able to give the latest insights and knowledge in the tech industry.

At the moment, HYF leans on a pool of 150+ mentors, who participate in HYF's activities according to their time and interest.

The core mentoring activities include weekly homework reviewing, preparation and teaching Sunday classes (3024 hours yearly). Additionally, they participate in study groups, teach masterclasses, organize and coordinate workshops and allocate additional time on volunteering (1778,5 hours yearly).

If mentors would be compensated for the time they devote to volunteering at HYF, the annual salary would be approximately 1,516,725.00 kr. assuming a median hourly salary of ~300-350 kr.

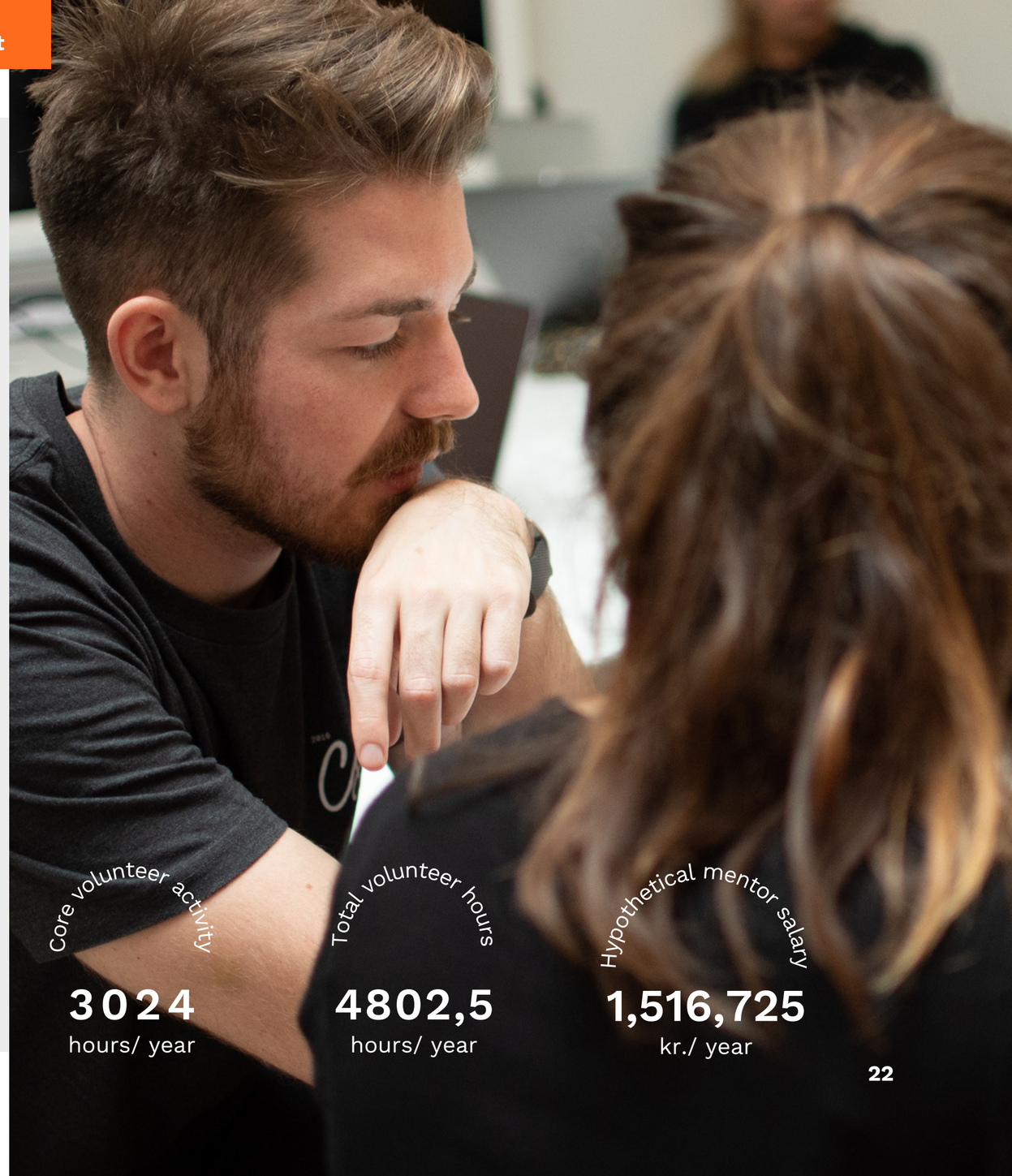
“

I think everyone deserves an opportunity especially when they need it to turn their lives around, I for one had it when I needed it. That's why I think it's only fair that I also gave it to someone else.

In the very beginning, I was a student in HYF so I enjoyed a learning community on my way to success. Along the way, you find friends and connections, and it then becomes part of your identity because you feel like you belong.

Teaching is fulfilling and you can feel the accomplishment, which is very motivating. When the students actually engage in the class, and they learn a few things from you, it gives meaning to the time and effort you put into it.

Zoey Zou,
Software Developer at Karnov Group



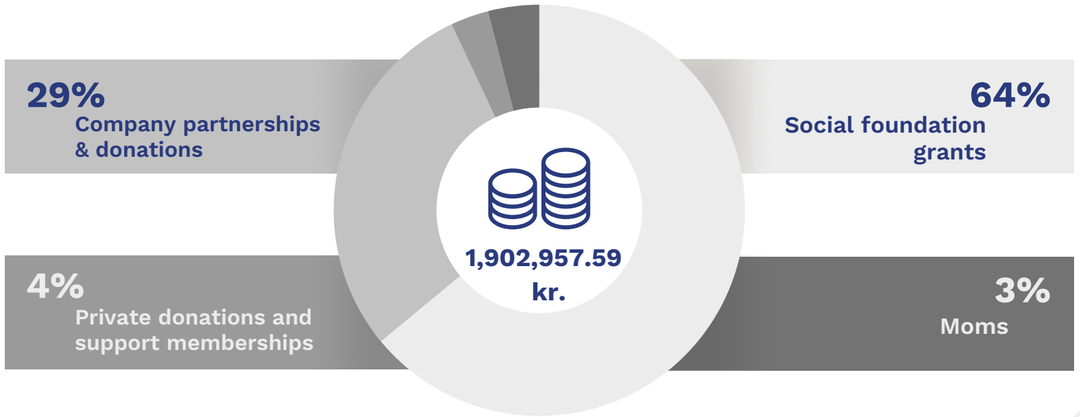
Budget

HYF's operating budget for 2021 was 1,902,957.59 kr. Throughout 2021, 1,300,708.84 kr. were spent on:

HYF Denmark

Employee salaries	Office and teaching rooms	Teaching materials, licenses, subscriptions	Food, transport & accommodation
1,181,192.73 kr.	56,266.10 kr.	33,785.96 kr.	29,464.05 kr.

Expenses differ each year due to several factors. In 2021 the number of employees (full and part time) fluctuated, rent for the office space was lower than expected as well as food and transport costs were higher due to opening a new coding school in Aarhus.



As a non-profit charitable organization we depend on donations and grants to keep HYF running. All of our budget is re-invested into our operations and execution of our mission and goals.

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