I. Starting position

„ZusammenHelfen in Oberösterreich“ was founded in 2015, launched by the upper austrian Integrations-Landesrat Rudi Anschober. „ZusammenHelfen in Oberösterreich“ is the place to go when it comes to „together for refugees“ and volunteering in the refugee sector. The initiative is part of the „Unabhängiges LandesFreiwilligenzentrum (ULF) and two employees are working at it.

Since the end of 2015 a more and more unfriendly and negative media coverage in the context of refugees was recognized. (s. u.a.: https://www.integrationsfonds.at/publikationen/medienanalyse-zur-fluechtlingsthematik/) Additionally, from the beginning of 2016 we were reminded by the many volunteers in the refugee sector again and again, that somebody has to do something against the negative news coverage about refugees. They told us about their almost always positive experiences with the people they cared for – contrary to those reports they read in the news – and they felt turned down by the media and the public.

Due to those studies and the feedback of our volunteers, private experiences of internet incitement and fake-news and the absolute wish to gain public attention for the positive stories, the project „SHARE YOUR STORY – Erzähl uns deine Geschichte“ was born.

II. Innovation in project idea – Novelty

The project „SHARE YOUR STORY – Erzähl uns deine Geschichte“ wants to contribute to a positive and authentic news coverage in context of refugees.

In times of increasing „fake news“ and internet incitement, good news should be published more often in the internet, to show the other side to all those negatively connoted reports.

In contrast to other approaches, the project doesn’t focus on perfect success-stories, but on simple, every-day moments and experiences.
III. Innovation in accessing target groups – Involvement

Volunteers benefit from this project because the “good news” make them feel more cherished again and they don’t only feel turned down by a sometimes seemingly overwhelming news coverage. Also, they are able to share their experiences with others and get positive feedback for what they’ve experienced.

Refugees can also be part of the project and tell their own stories. So they are enabled to give an independent contribution to their public recognition.

By the public recognition of our project, via various channels, new experiences and images are gained by various readers.

IV. Innovation in the realisation of the project – Effectiveness

We gain slowly but steadily more and more attention for „SHARE YOUR STORY – Erzähle uns deine Geschichte“: By distributing our project-flyers to our partners and to the public, mentioning the project at every opportunity we get and gaining new stories at all of our events.

Each story comes with a private picture or a graphics (suitable to the story) – to meet the needs of civil attention in social media.

For now we are happy to say, that we only got one really negative comment on one of our stories – apart from that all our feedback is very positive, cherishing and grateful.

Here are two translated ratings of our project on Facebook:

„What a wonderful idea to establish that page. Lots of small and great stories. Thank you <3“

„Great Idea. There are so many great and small affecting stories...“

V. Innovation in public perception – Serving as an example

The stories we get can be published anonymous but not be sent in in anonymously. So we try to prevent accusations of „fake-news“. We only publish stories, when we have all the contact information of the story-teller.

Our partners are helping us again and again to gain more attention for this project. We also have experienced getting a nice story, right after it happened at work.
For our events, we designed posters with some of the stories and exhibit it there. So they’re always talked about and read at the event-breaks and also seen by people, who are not attending our event but somewhere near or at our event-location.