

**Additional info:**

More information + pictures: [www.hof-praedikow.de](http://www.hof-praedikow.de)

More Information on the cooperative: <https://selbstbau-eg.de/engl/>

**Introduction – Trias Model – Selbstbau- Financing****What are the aims and activities of the lab specifically? how does it cooperate with the initiative or has some critical distance to it?**

*Julia Paaß: (already partly answered during the webinar) Our aim is to bring the old manor back to live by implementing contemporary ways of co-living- and working on the site and therefore in the village. Our approach is open source and we're interested in sharing experiences and knowledge. Having this knowledge transfer partly financed is a big deal for our project with such an amount of voluntary work.*

**What are the selection criteria for prospective tenants? i.e. how's the group formed?**

*Julia Paaß: We select along 3 criteria: personal/social compatibility, adding knowledge/skills to the project and diversity. All current members have a say in the process, that we are developing and adapting continuously. Also the applicants are informed about all the financial aspects of the project – of course they have to be able to afford the rent, cooperative contribution and the membership fees.*

**How big are the apartments? Is there a big variety? How do you decide who gets which apartment?**

*Sören Gahrmann: The size of the apartments varies from 30 m<sup>2</sup> to 110 m<sup>2</sup>. But most of the apartments are in the scale from 60-90 m<sup>2</sup>, suitable for couples and families. The project group itself decides which applicants move into the apartments.*

**To get the grant, do you need to get a certain percentage of elderly/disabled persons moving in?**

*Sören Gahrmann: We won't be given a quota by the Ministry of Family Affairs. But of course, it is also our wish that especially the barrier-free apartments are allocated according to need.*

**The subsidies and grants are provided for everyone, who applies, or there is a big competition for them?**

*Sören Gahrmann: The subsidized construction loans are provided for every builder (regardless of whether it is a private person, a commercial building company or a non-profit organization) as long as the building project meets the specified criteria. There is a competition for the non-repayable grants however as these budgets are limited. For example, we were not successful to benefit from*

*funding for the protection of historical monuments or any other funding from the federal state of Brandenburg so far.*

**How long is the bank loan running? 30 years? 25 years?**

*Novy-Huy: Bank loans are usually running for 30 years.*

**Attracting tenants:**

*Novy-Huy: At the Moment there is a very high interest in Living and working there, despite the distance and commuting Problem to Berlin.*

*Julia Paaß: Especially with our aim to not only build up co-living but also a project for coworking, business and crafts. Digitalization helps of course.*

**Are you working with a normal bank or with an ethic bank?**

*Sören Gahrmann: Our two banks of choice are the ethic and ecological banks "GLS" (a cooperative itself and the "Umweltbank". The cooperative has already financed previous projects with both banks.*

**Are the shares and rights inheritable? Why is this a reliable investment for the future inhabitants?**

*Sören Gahrmann: Yes, the shares and the membership are inheritable. The heir can either take over the rental agreement and live in the apartment or can cancel the membership and have the shares paid out. The investment is quite reliable as it is required by law that all cooperatives are regularly and accurately checked by independent economic experts. Also the 25 houses of the SelbstBau have quite a high commercial value.*

**Do you have a mechanism in place to involve lower income people?**

*Sören Gahrmann: Not directly. But most of the project thankfully have been subsidized with public funding which included quota for people with lower income. Therefore, some apartments can only be allocated to people whose income does not exceed a certain limit or who receive social assistance. Compliance with this requirement is regularly checked by the relevant social services.*

**Is there a mechanism to allow subsidised mortgages for potential residents to afford the purchase of coop shares?**

*Sören Gahrmann: Yes, there is a special loan by the state-owned bank "KfW" supporting private households for the purchase of coop shares up to 50.000 € with a low interest rate (0,8%).*

**Would it be possible for people to renovate a part of the building themselves, and then use it for their commercial use? Also for example, artists could do this and then use a space as an artist in residence.**

*Sören Gahrmann: Yes, it's possible. In this case the persons would rent the building as it is from the cooperative and then renovate it at their own expense. We are currently examining this for a silversmith and a joinery. But it depends a lot on the effort needed to make the building part usable. Since the buildings are unfortunately mostly in a very bad condition, the renovation effort is usually high even for low-threshold uses.*

**If people sell their shares, do they get interests on them? How is the sell price calculated?**

*Sören Gahrmann: There is no interest on the shares. If you cancel your membership you will get the nominal value paid out.*

**Was an internal solidarity fund discussed? people with greater means pay higher rents to subsidize people with lower income?**

*Julia Paaß: It was discussed, but unfortunately the great majority already struggles with their own costs for their apartments, so right now it's simply not possible... Strangely people with enough money for that are less interested in our project :-)*

**The new shares cost the same then? So no increase for new entries?**

*Sören Gahrmann: Yes, everyone at Hof Prädikow will have to buy the same amount of cooperative shares per m<sup>2</sup>, regardless of the moment of entry.*

**Do you foresee a periodical adjustment of rents or will the price be fixed?**

*Sören Gahrmann: We may have to adjust the rents when we do the next construction stages – because the building cost per m<sup>2</sup> might differ from the first construction stage, but at the same time we want to maintain the same financial conditions for everyone at the project.*

**If your financial stability shatters, how does it influence Hof Praedikow?**

*Sören Gahrmann: This would have to be answered by the supervisory board of the cooperative, which consists of representatives of all projects. Personally, I suppose that the cooperative members would decide to rise rents in all projects if the financial stability of the overall cooperative shatters. Because the worst – but after 30 years quite unlikely – scenario would be to file insolvency. In this case all members of the cooperative are liable with the shares they have paid in.*

**How do you see the current crisis affecting your cooperative? And the future of the project?**

*Sören Gahrmann: So far, we do not notice a relevant effect of the crisis for the cooperative. But regarding Hof Prädikow we are worried that especially the younger members of the project group will*

*not be able to raise the cooperative shares anymore. It can therefore happen that people leave the project before construction begins and we would have to look for new interested parties. This would slow down the development of the project, but not seriously endanger it.*

**How do you finance the first phase (documentation, evaluation, feasibility studies etc.) before construction? Is this paid by the cooperative shares, which are paid by the future tenants already at this time?**

*Sören Gahrmann: It was partly paid with first cooperative shares the project members had to pay in at the beginning (10.000 € per household). Moreover, we got an additional grant by the German Ministry of Family Affairs to finance the first phase, which was extremely helpful.*

### **Community and region**

**What is the role of heritage values for this project? are there any links between the past and the future, in tangible and intangible heritage, also taking into account the locals around the site?**

*Julia Paaß: There are people involved in the participatory project "Village Barn" that used to work and/or live on the manor. They bring their stories with them and implement them in the concept of the future community space on site.*

**What is, in your opinion, potential of commercial spaces? It seems that the commuting may pose a problem. How do you plan to attract potential tenants? From Praga-LAB point of view, it is also important, how you see the relations between heritage community and commercial tenants. Do they become part of such community? Do you plan to use some criteria to ensure that they also share some values regarding heritage?**

*Julia Paaß: Until now all businesses and crafts planned within the project are initiated by project members. But certainly time will come when we will welcome external people to build up their businesses on Hof Prädikow. For that we will find a common set of values and rules that everyone, also external businesses, will have to agree on. That might also include a solidary fee for the commercial but also social and cultural infrastructure within the project that makes the space attractive to the external commercial tenants.*

**Did the Hof Prädikow group find you, or how did you get involved in this project?**

*Julia Paaß: I live in Prädikow in direct neighborhood of the manor for 7 years now and had been thinking about ways to revive the area when, by incident, I heard of a small group already being interested to build up a project there. I joined them and soon became one of the central protagonists, being on the spot.*

**Will the co-working space be open to non-residents too? what would be the costs (coop fee plus rent) for a working space in the Hof?**

*Julia Paaß: The coworking space will be open for everyone. If at some point the interest in renting a desk rises and the space becomes too small the coworkingspace can expand to another building. Right now – with the coworking not being there yet – we calculate 100 € for a fix desk (that's only yours) and 50€ for a flex desk (where you take a desk that's free at the moment). These costs don't depend on if you're living on the Hof, in the village or the region. Coworking tenants having crowdfunded the space will certainly get a price reduction.*

**What phases are planned for wider community involvement to construct the barn space and create community?**

*Julia Paaß: Next we're going to organize construction camps for future users to help build up their community space. Also we're now looking to define an operating model for village and Hof inhabitants running the space together.*

**Do you have a written strategy for Hof Prädikow project? What are the vision, mission and values behind it? How will you make your community resistant for hostile transformation (against values) and faithful to the values?**

*Julia Paaß: Just now we're working on our new website where these values and goals are formulated: what we stand for and what we oppose. Last year we have conducted a value workshop to decide on the core values of our project that we all share.*

**What online tools can stakeholders use to transparently see what's going on with the hof prädikow**

*Julia Paaß: We're working on our new Hof website as well as a blog for the Village Barn. Both should go online latest this summer. Currently we (unregularly) post articles and news on our current website.*

**How is reporting organized to the stakeholders? Or accountability measures?**

*Julia Paaß: That depends on the stakeholders (see my presentation).*

**Are there archives of the press coverage?**

*Julia Paaß: Unfortunately no complete archive. We're working on that for the relaunch of our website.*

**Very clear presentation of the stakeholders, thank you! Is there also a specific heritage community apart from local community and public administration, people for whom the heritage matters in other ways than being a user of the space or an inhabitant?**

*Julia Paaß: no, not that I know of.*

**Are there any initiative on behalf of those who live in the village?**

*Julia Paaß: In general? There are two associations, one of them being very active in the Village Barn project. Also just now someone who has initiated the process of a village development plan of the municipality has asked me to participate with the Hof project.*

**Have you faced the problem of distrust among community during implementation of Village Barn project?**

*Julia Paaß: Of course. Lots of rumors, skepticism and hostile allegations 😊, especially from citizens living not in, but around Prädikow.*

**Are there any "we" and "us" which is not the Hof Pr. team and the villagers? Are there any (potential) communities which intersect these two groups?**

*Julia Paaß: No, not that I know of. There are some regional organizations and initiatives that see us as competition in a way and who feel that we don't obey the local rules of communication– which is true as we still haven't uncovered all the codes, yet ;-)*

**How will you protect your privacy when you live there from the visitors?**

*Julia Paaß: We have the concept of "coast zones" that protect a certain area near to the inhabited houses. Also we'll define private and public areas –a difficult discussion yet to come.*

**General question to project: I am always a little unclear of the current status of Prädikow. What has already happened; what is happening right now; what will happen soon; what is still going to take time?**

*Julia Paaß: As this is an ongoing process and we have so many tasks to work on (next to home, children, jobs) the documentation and communication of the project is something that is always behind. Right now we're working on the relaunch of our website that will hopefully display the current status of the project. This is our current website: <https://www.hof-praedikow.de> More details you can find in the presentation of Sören Gahrman.*

**Any role played by those people who worked there in the period of agricultural production? do they have a nostalgia for production times and how do they perceive the change into housing and service economy?**

*Julia Paaß: There are people involved in the participatory project "Village Barn" that used to work and/or live on the manor in its time of agricultural production. They and others tell their stories and are nostalgic about "the good old times". They're mostly glad that ANYTHING is happening on the manor now and are happy to help with their knowledge about the site and the former production. There might be also critics that I don't know of.*

**Would you subsidize rents for people that the village would like e.g. craftspeople?**

*Julia Paaß: Until now we still don't have any spaces to rent to external business or craft tenants. When we do the rents, due to the mentioned constructional hurdles, might be too high for local craftsmen. As we would like to make it possible for them to have their businesses on the Hof, we will have to find funding / subsidies for that. Otherwise I don't see how we can make this happen.*

*Sören Gahrmann: The cooperative cannot subsidize individual rents, this would be a decision of the project group (for example paying more to support cheaper rents for others). But because we want to keep the project as diverse as possible (despite the high rent) we are always looking for possible funding programs.*

**How will you relate to the school and kindergarten in the village? I guess the "new" children will add considerably to the size. Do you wish to have some influence on the kindergarten and school?**

*Julia Paaß: It is likely that the Hof-children will split up and go to different schools and kindergartens in the surroundings. We're thinking about building up a new kindergarten on the Hof.*

**How do you deal with social mix in terms of right to privacy? Are applicants obliged to declare their ethnic background, religion, sexual orientation and economic status (wages?) or can they refrain and still "stay in the game"? How do you assess the "personal qualities" you mentioned? Similar problems were encountered in Warsaw within the frame of "social district" (Warszawska Dzielnica Społeczna)**

*Julia Paaß: In our current admission process we select the applicants along 3 criteria: personal/social compatibility, adding knowledge/skills to the project and diversity. As for the diversity aspect we don't ask people to write down their sexual orientation, religious beliefs or wages. We pre-select based on what applicants write about their personal motivation and skills to be part of the project, along with experiences through personal interaction. The pre-selected people we try to get to know more in depth within three months of personal meetings, including them in the project routine. There we hope learn about their level of diversity and compatibility and make our final decisions based on that. With the first 40 people we gave ourselves 6 months of time to get to know everyone. Also we didn't have the diversity criteria, yet. So this is new to us now and we're testing and adjusting in the process.*

### **Heritage aspects**

**Have you been developing an event for exhibiting the shared heritage values and stories of the community and the place (the Living Memory Exhibition)?**

*Julia Paaß: No, not yet. We're working on making a video documentary of the project. Also there is the idea of a virtual reality documentation of the whole manor with former workers talking about the history and stories of the single buildings. But for that we still have to find funding.*

**How do you foresee a broader sharing of this heritage? Will it be accessible and usable for a larger public coming from neighboring towns and/or Berlin?**

*Julia Paaß: The mentioned virtual reality documentation would be great for that: interested people from the region and Berlin could visit the space and experience the heritage of the manor with VR glasses (in a cheap version like this: [https://store.google.com/de/product/google\\_cardboard](https://store.google.com/de/product/google_cardboard)), listening to stories by former inhabitants and workers of the manor.*

**Can you imagine having an exhibition on the topic on site?**

*Julia Paaß: Yes, we've already talked about making an exhibition on the Prädikow heritage in the village barn. We'll have to find someone to do this in this spare time, though, or find funding for this.*