



SHINKOKO



The DAIJIHI Project House

Impact Report 2026

Changing the World in a Small Community

Where do we want to go as a society? In a globalized world, everything seems too big. The welfare state is overwhelmed by too many refugees, homeless people, people with mental illness, and prisoners. Individuals feel powerless. Many face significant mental challenges not only because of the state of the world but also in their own lives, both professionally and personally.

“Something has to change”—but what, and how?

We believe that true change can only happen in our immediate surroundings. When we invite someone in need of shelter into our own home. When we give someone with a criminal record a job at our own company. And when we join forces with like-minded people — people who serve as role models and act as a strong community capable of overcoming this challenge together. Our foundation is compassion—as we have experienced it in our Buddhist practice.

The Daijihi Project is a Buddhist-led social initiative. “Daijihi” is an ancient Japanese term that translates to “boundless compassion.” This has been our mission since July 2024.

The Founders

Shinko Andreas Hagn and Koryu Susanne Halbeisen are fully ordained Zen priests in the lineage of Shohaku Okumura Roshi. They belong to the Sotoshu Shumicho, Japan’s largest Zen order with over 15,000 temples. Both serve as prison chaplains for the Austrian Buddhist Religious Community and are co-founders of the Spiritual Care Working Group of the German Buddhist Union. Shinko Andreas Hagn contributes his experience as an entrepreneur, and Koryu Susanne Halbeisen brings her great talent for words and organization. They have translated the American standard work on pastoral care, **Contemplative Care** — which the magazine **Buddhismus Aktuell** named a “flagship project”—into German.

The Status Quo – Financially

Part of the project building is made available to the Daijihi Project rent-free; however, the project organizers must cover the costs of maintenance and operation themselves.

Our financial model is based on three pillars: large private and institutional donations, smaller private donations, and revenue from business activities through Plantago Handels GmbH. As an employer for those in need, we offer people on the margins of society a daily structure and an income they earn themselves through regular work. This framework provides stability and purpose, enabling those affected to regain a foothold in society. Meditation and spiritual rituals are equally important.

Daijishi Association

Rooted in Zen Philosophy

The fundamental idea behind the Daijishi project is to build a contemporary Soto Zen Buddhist temple that authentically reflects and interprets the teachings of the Buddha and his successors, particularly Eihei Dogen Zenji, in a modern context. Through this, we aim to contribute to the well-being of all beings — that is, to the well-being of society as a whole.

A noble goal, certainly unattainable, but we want to and must try.

Our foundation is the Zen Buddhist meditation method of zazen, rituals, communal work, and the study of the ancient scriptures.

Zen Buddhist Practice

Life in a temple is always life in a community. We offer Zen practitioners the opportunity to delve deeper into this ancient practice and become members of the Zen community, either permanently or as temporary guests. Currently, our house is home to four people from different countries, all of whom work at the trading company “Plantago.” We place great importance on balancing work, family, friendships, and practice. People who do not live here directly are also welcome at any time. For example, we cook for all Plantago employees and their children from Monday through Friday.

Within the community, practitioners find spiritual support, with ordained monks serving as role models. We pass on the Dharma teachings—which date back over 2,500 years—through the teacher-student relationship handed down by the Buddha himself.

We offer meditation on numerous days and in various formats (including online): in the mornings from Wednesday through Saturday, there is traditional sitting meditation and recitation. On Friday evenings, we read Buddhist texts together and discuss them. Several times a month, on Sunday mornings, we offer a comprehensive practice program featuring meditation, talks, and communal work around the house and in the garden. Multi-day workshops and retreats are also part of our annual program. Upon request, we are happy to provide detailed information about the scientifically proven effects of meditation and rituals.

Currently, about 8–10 people participate in our program every day—we call this community the “Sangha.” The Sangha’s inner circle consists of about 30 people, while the wider circle includes 280 people. 1,800 international followers currently follow our Instagram channel.

In the near future, we plan to create a “Memorial Wall,” a place to honor deceased fellow human beings and animals. It will be accessible not only to Sangha members but to anyone who longs for such a place. Another focus is on strengthening community and team spirit through collaborative work, for example, in our teahouse.

Spiritual Care and Chaplaincy

We believe that boundless compassion can only be experienced and learned through caring for others. That is why chaplaincy holds a special place in our temple.

- Emergency Support – We offer pastoral care for people in crisis situations, including temporary housing. A total of three residential units are available, all of which are in high demand.
- Prison ministry conducted directly in prisons, sometimes through group and individual visits, with follow-up support upon release; in some cases, we provide housing and employment through our affiliated company, Plantago. We’re happy to provide further information upon request.
- Care for the dying and their bereaved families, including pets
- Pastoral training: currently in planning; we’re happy to provide more information upon request.
- Telephone counseling: We are co-founders of the [German Buddhist Union’s](#) telephone counseling service

Tea Ceremony

Once a month, we host a tea ritual open to the public. During this event, we provide an accessible introduction to the basics of meditation and contemplative togetherness.

It’s fascinating to witness how people spend 30 minutes in community without speaking a word for the first time in their lives—and how completely inspired and uplifted they are by the experience.

Our Trading Company Plantago

Plantago Handels GmbH is an independent entity owned by Shinko Andreas Hagn.

With the “Shinkoko” brand, we have become an integral part of the Austrian matcha scene. We are one of the three direct importers of matcha in Austria. Our teahouse serves, so to speak, as a “worldly gateway” to our Buddhist practice. As a source of income, it is currently thriving thanks to the matcha boom; however, due to the high initial investment, it has yielded only modest profits so far.

Thanks to our personal contacts with Japanese tea farmers, we import directly from Japan, without middlemen, and with short transport routes—because freshness is crucial to quality.

We offer tastings and introductions to Japanese tea culture (e.g., the Buddhist tea ritual described above) and tailor these experiences to individual preferences without compromising authenticity—for example, we once facilitated a mindful, silent bachelorette party. For us, respectful coexistence and co-operation between cultures is crucial. That’s why the current matcha boom holds no interest for us. We focus on bringing authentic Japanese tea culture to life in Central Europe, based on Soto Zen.

Through our online shop, we serve customers throughout Europe, primarily in Austria and Germany. Our largest sales come from our B2B customers in high-end cafés. We supply our retail partners with over one hundred kilograms of matcha per month, which translates to more than 50,000 cups of matcha served each month in Austria and Germany.

Green tea in general, and matcha in particular, have significant positive health benefits on many different levels; more information is available upon request or on our [blog](#).

Donations and Contact

Because we're a market-oriented business, our project is structured differently from other Buddhist projects that operate as retreat centers. We're in tune with the times—both online and in person—offering a relevant, modern, yet traditional product that captures the spirit of Zen. We believe this combination has a bright future. Your donation supports this vision; please contact us—we'd be happy to advise you, for example, on sponsoring an employee.

But every purchase at Shinkoko – Fine Goods from Japan www.shinkoko.at also supports us—please spread the word to your friends.

The association is a recognized member of the Austrian Buddhist Religious Community, and therefore all donations are tax-deductible up to the statutory maximum limit.

Daijihi Project House

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Daijihi—Association for the Preservation of the Teachings and Traditions of Soto Zen
Buddhism

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GIBAATWWXXX

Or PayPal



“Nothing good happens unless you make it happen ” – Erich Kästner

Voices of people who have already found refuge here

In an exceptionally difficult situation, both emotionally and financially, Susanne, Andreas, and the Sangha—along with many phone calls—made it possible for me to stay in Vienna on short notice. I was welcomed there very warmly. Practicing and working together gave me strength. I was offered long-term housing. This gave me a sense of hope and a way out of despair. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for this wonderful experience!

- D.S.

I'm so happy for my brother and would like to thank you for the amazing support!

- D.J.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for letting me be with you. It really means a lot to me, and I truly appreciate your kind hospitality. 🙏

- N.D.

Thank you—you've played a key role in my journey to recovery; I'm very happy and grateful.

- V.D.