



2024

THE CITY OF LIGHT VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE

An Overview

www.cityoflightnigeria.org

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ABOUT THE CITY OF LIGHT AND LIBERATION FOUNDATION

The City of Light is a beacon of hope in Nigeria, dedicated to empowering vulnerable individuals and combating human trafficking through education, skills development, and faith-driven initiatives. Founded on the belief that every person deserves the chance to realize their potential and contribute meaningfully to society, we strive to illuminate pathways of opportunity for those most in need.

Our mission is rooted in a holistic approach to addressing the root causes of poverty and exploitation. Through comprehensive vocational training programs in sewing, tailoring, fashion design, hairdressing, barbing, shoe making, IT skills, and solar energy PV installation, we equip individuals with practical skills for sustainable livelihoods. Additionally, our character-building curriculum instills values of integrity, resilience, and self-confidence, empowering our students to navigate life's challenges with dignity and purpose.

At City of Light, we recognize the interconnectedness of social justice and economic empowerment. By actively engaging in anti-human trafficking initiatives and providing alternative opportunities to vulnerable populations, we work tirelessly to break the cycle of exploitation and create a society where every individual can thrive. Our faith-based approach underscores our commitment to fostering compassion, empathy, and solidarity among all members of our community.

Since our inception, we have been driven by a vision of a brighter, more equitable Nigeria, where vulnerability is replaced with resilience and where the light of education and opportunity dispels the darkness of poverty and exploitation. As we continue to grow and expand our reach, we invite you to join us in our mission to ignite change and build a future where every individual has the chance to shine. Together, we can make a difference—one life, one opportunity at a time. Welcome to City of Light.



BACKGROUND

The City of Light and Liberation Foundation, established to combat human trafficking and empower marginalized communities, emerged from a deep commitment to human rights and ethical principles. Originally incubated in Vienna, Austria, the foundation was conceived to address the pressing issue of human trafficking and exploitation, particularly within Nigerian communities across Europe.

Though the foundation's origins may be traced back to its parent organization in Austria, its mission focuses on a universal commitment to human dignity and empowerment.

In collaboration with diverse partners in Europe, the United Kingdom, the USA and Nigeria, the foundation has spearheaded initiatives to empower Nigerian youth, expand awareness, and provide tangible support to vulnerable populations. From grassroots workshops to strategic partnerships, its efforts have extended across Austria and Nigeria, touching the lives of countless individuals. Private donors, foundations, and public officials have rallied behind the cause, recognizing the importance of investing in youth empowerment and social justice.

While the foundation is registered in both Austria and Nigeria, its training centre is located in Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria, and stands as a testament to its commitment to the empowerment of disenfranchised and underprivileged Nigerian women youth. With a focus on vocational training in areas such as fashion design, hairdressing, barbing, shoe making, and solar panel installation courses, alongside future plans for agricultural courses, the City of Light equips individuals with practical skills for sustainable livelihoods.

Additionally, youth empowerment workshops and awareness campaigns serve to nurture essential soft skills and promote ethical values, fostering a community of resilience and integrity.

The center's facilities, including sports amenities and hostel accommodation, are designed to provide a nurturing environment where trainees can thrive both academically and personally. Through a combination of education, mentorship, and community engagement, the foundation aims to illuminate pathways of opportunity for the less privileged.



VISION AND MISSION

What drives us?



Vision

Our vision at City of Light is to cultivate a society where every individual is empowered with the tools and resources to thrive. We envision a future where the light of education, skills, and faith dispels the darkness of exploitation and poverty. Through our holistic approach, we aspire to build a community where vulnerability is replaced with resilience, where every person's dignity is upheld, and where the cycle of poverty and human trafficking is broken.



Mission

- **Provide Comprehensive Vocational Training:** Offering tailored vocational training programs.
- **Foster Skill Development and Character Building:** Implement holistic programs that not only equip individuals with practical skills but also focus on character development, instilling values of integrity, resilience, and self-confidence.
- **Combat Human Trafficking and Alleviate Poverty:** Actively engage in anti-human trafficking initiatives, raising awareness, providing resources, and offering alternative opportunities to vulnerable populations.



MEET OUR TEAM



**Mr Alexander &
Mrs Margaret
Makinwa**

Founders



**Mr Chris
Ekhatior**

CEO



**Mrs Olayinka
Makinwa**

Admin, PR



**Mr Wande
Akindojutimi**

Manager



**Dr. Vincent
Ikuomola**

Senior Accountant

THE PAST



TIMELINE

2019 - 2023

The City of Light finds pride in the milestones achieved and lives touched through its presence in Nigeria for almost 15 years. In the initial decade of operation, our focus was on raising awareness about the scourge of human trafficking and providing support to vulnerable women and teenagers facing economic hardship through awareness campaigns, character-building workshops, and the concept of "paying it forward" with small grants.

During this formative period, the tireless efforts of the founders and a dedicated circle of friends fueled the organization's activities, with expenses solely borne by their personal savings and pensions. Trainings and workshops were conducted in makeshift settings, often held in founders' homes or within the broader community, reflecting a grassroots approach to addressing pressing social issues.

Over the past five years, the organization has undergone significant growth and evolution. With the establishment of a dedicated project manager and a growing demand for structured programs, we embarked on the ambitious journey of creating a facility that could serve as a hub for training, accommodation, and community development. Thanks to the generosity of its donors, who had foresightedly contributed towards land acquisition many years prior, this vision became a reality with the construction and opening of the facility in July 2021- 2022.

Since its inauguration, the facility has become a beacon of hope and opportunity within the community and providing vulnerable and disenfranchised Nigerians with an opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.

Phase 1

Community Outreach Events and Small Grants

Phase 2

Training and Skills Development

Phase 3

Laying of the Foundation

Phase 4

Opening of Training Halls

Phase 5

Training



OUR ACHIEVEMENTS THUS FAR

Embodying the spirit of Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden," the City of Light and Liberation Foundation stands as a beacon of hope, offering not only training and resources but also a vision of empowerment and transformation for generations to come.

343,000.00
Euro

Money raised thus far

30% of the money raised has gone into the building project itself

5300
individuals

People impacted

The total number of individuals the City of Light has reached within Nigeria thus far through trainings, community outreach events, and its training programs.

2000

Beneficiaries (grants)

The total number of elderly women who have received small grants through the City of Light over the past decade

250

Students

50% have already graduated
75% women (achieved target)

5

Institutional Partners

We are tremendously grateful for the unwavering support of Chapel of Life (UK), The Above Difference Foundation (UK), FCC Wels (AT), Wimberger (AT), and L-PEM (AT and NG).



TESTIMONIALS

RONKE (FASHION DESIGN)

Anthony Ronke, a mother of four, faced early marriage due to the loss of her parents. Struggling with depression and unemployment, she found hope and opportunity through City of Light. Accepted into our program, she received training in fashion designing, leading to her successful establishment in the field. Her tears of joy are a testament to the transformative impact of our vocational training.



COMFORT (FASHION DESIGN)



Comfort, a single mother of one, faced significant challenges after her marriage ended, leaving her to raise her daughter alone. Struggling with depression and the weight of her responsibilities, she contemplated drastic measures. However, her life took a positive turn when she was introduced to City of Light. Through our vocational training program, Comfort learned valuable skills in fashion design and found success in establishing herself in the industry. Today, she triumphs both as a mother and a women in charge of her own destiny.

OLALEKAN (FASHION DESIGN)

Olailekan's early life was marked by hardship and abandonment: rejected from his father at birth and deserted by his mother at the age of four, he has never known love or acceptance. By the age of eight, Lekan found himself embarking on an arduous 80-kilometer journey in search of a better life. Forced to beg for alms and take on petty jobs to survive, he endured the harsh realities of life on the streets. However, Lekan's fortunes changed when he was introduced to City of Light, where he found both acceptance as well as an opportunity to learn a skill and hope for a better future.



SARDAUNNA (BEAUTY)

Sardaunna's journey has been marked by the challenges of a broken family. With her father residing in the North alongside a stepmother who mistreated her, she made the courageous decision to relocate to her mother in the West, embarking on a grueling 24-hour journey by road. However, her struggles persisted as she found herself under the guardianship of a stepfather who provided little support. Despite these obstacles, Sardaunna's story took a positive turn when City of Light extended its support to her. Under our care, she began learning the art of hairdressing, offering her a new sense of purpose and hope for the future.



FAVOUR (FASHION DESIGN)



Favour's life took a challenging turn when she became an orphan at the tender age of eleven. With no parents to care for her, her aunt took custody, but Favour's education was abruptly halted.

Instead, she found herself working alongside her uncle in the bustling market, struggling to make ends meet. However, Favour's fortunes changed when her sister introduced her to City of Light.

With our support, Favour embarked on a new path, learning the art of fashion designing and paving the way for a brighter future filled with opportunity and possibility.

FAITH (PRODUCTION)

Faith's story is one of resilience in the face of adversity. Following the tragic loss of her parents, she settled for a partner who could provide for her basic needs and became a mother of three at the young age of 23. Enduring the heartache of losing two children, Faith continued to care for her remaining three with unwavering strength. However, her hardships persisted as she was relegated to a life of servitude by her husband, forced to toil on his farm and undertake menial jobs to earn a living. Yet, amidst the darkness, Faith found a glimmer of hope when she learned about City of Light. Determined to create a better future for herself and her family, she made the brave decision to learn a skill, setting herself on a path towards empowerment and self-sufficiency.



THE PRESENT



GOALS FOR 2024

What we are presently focusing on



Goal #1: Establishing all graduates

Ensuring that every graduate can access the funds and mentoring necessary to start their small enterprise.



Goal #2: Doubling the number of intakes

Each year, the foundation receives dozens of applications, with an average of 100 eligible applicants on the waiting list at any given moment.



Goal #3: Expansion of Hostel

In order to meet ongoing demands, there is a dire need to significantly increase our capacity to accommodate (house) vulnerable students.

100

Goal #4: Corporate Sponsors and Partners

In order to meet our strategic plans (2025-2029) we are seeking 100 corporate sponsors to join hands with us in lighting up Nigeria: our initiative "100 for 3000"



VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT



How we operate..



VOCATIONAL TRAINING AT OUR TRAINING CENTRE

At City of Light, our vocational training programs are tailored to address the specific needs of Nigerian youths amidst rising unemployment rates. Through courses such as tailoring, fashion design, hairdressing, IT skills, and more, we equip individuals with practical expertise aligned with market demands.

Our comprehensive curriculum ensures that students undergo rigorous initial and final assessments before graduation, validating their skills and preparing them for the workforce or entrepreneurship.

Beyond graduation, successful students at City of Light have the opportunity to access additional support. Those who complete the program are eligible to receive a small start-up grant, providing vital resources to kickstart their entrepreneurial ventures. Furthermore, graduates can apply for continuous business mentorship, offering ongoing guidance and support as they navigate the challenges of starting and sustaining their own businesses.

Through targeted training, rigorous assessment, and ongoing support, City of Light is committed to empowering Nigerian youths to transform their skills into sustainable livelihoods.

Integral to our training curriculum at City of Light is the emphasis on social skills and ethics. We believe that ethical conduct and interpersonal proficiency are crucial components of success in any endeavor. Therefore, alongside technical skills, students receive instruction in integrity, teamwork, communication, and social responsibility. By instilling these values, we cultivate not only skilled professionals but also conscientious citizens who contribute positively to their communities.

By investing in vocational education and entrepreneurship, we not only combat youth unemployment but also nurture a generation of ethical business leaders poised to drive economic growth and social change in their communities.

THE COST OF TRAINING WITH US

Every single student who enrolls in our programs is fully sponsored. While the calculated costs outlined in our materials help donors understand the expenses involved, it's crucial to clarify that students or their families bear no financial burden whatsoever. At City of Light, training is offered completely free of charge, alongside complimentary meals served three times a day and accommodation for those who require it. Our classes run for an entire year (August - July) on a full-time basis (Mon- Fri). We firmly believe that by removing financial barriers, we're creating equal opportunities for all, fostering a community where everyone can thrive and succeed.



OUR FACILITIES

THE BUILDING



CLASS ROOMS



CLASS ROOMS



OUR CLASSES

1. FASHION DESIGN AND TAILORING BASICS

Class Description: In our Fashion Design and Tailoring Basics course, students acquire fundamental skills and knowledge essential to the craft of fashion design and tailoring.

Modules:

- Introduction to basics of fashion design (i.e. measurement, peddling)
- Introduction to drafting
- Introduction to various types of skirt making (i.e. circle skirt, pencil skirts)
- Introduction to bodies, shapes and sizes
- Princess contouring
- Introduction to male wears
- Trousers (male & female)
- Female gowns

Max. participants per annum: 25 students

Costs/ student per annum: EUR 840

MEET SOME OF OUR STUDENTS:



RONKE



KEHINDE



JOY ISAAC



IFEOLUWA



GREAT



VERONICA



ESTHER



LEKAN

OUR CLASSES

2. BEAUTY (HAIR AND MAKE-UP)

Class Description: In the Beauty Class, students concentrate on four distinct activities aligned within the art of beautification.

Modules:

- Introduction to Hair Dressing
 - Retouching
 - Weave making
 - Braiding
- Introduction to Make-up
 - Identification of make up equipment
 - Half/Full make up
- Gele
- Introduction to Barbing
 - Styles
 - Friction
 - Hair treatment

Max. participants per annum: 25 students

Costs/ student per annum: EUR 600

MEET SOME OF OUR STUDENTS:



ANGELLA



JOSEPHINE



BLESSING



DESTINY



SARDAUNNA



ROSEMARY



AGNES



OPEYEMI

OUR CLASSES

3. PRODUCTION (BAGS AND SHOES)

Class Description: In the Production Class (Shoes and Bags), students delve into the intricacies of crafting various leather products and related items. Through a comprehensive curriculum encompassing both shoe and bag production, students gain proficiency in working with different types of leather and fabric.

Modules:

- Introduction to Bag-making
- Techniques/ Process of Bag-making
- Sewing of bags (i.e cross bag, tote bag, school bags, lunch boxes)
- Introduction to Shoe-making
- Tools
- Making of soles, sandals and lippers

Max. participants per annum: 25 students

Costs/ student per annum: EUR 840

MEET SOME OF OUR STUDENTS:



HAPPY



ABRAHAM



AKINOLA



FAITH



AYOMIDE



WILLIAMS



OLAKUNLE



TIMILEHIN



PRECIOUS



KEHINDE

OUR CLASSES

4. SOLAR

Class Description: Solar training focuses on equipping students with knowledge on generating energy. At the end of the training, students are not only equipped on solar PV installations skills but with additional skills that involve low current.

Modules:

- Introduction to Solar Installation
- Wiring/Cable Installation
- Panel Installation
- Security Fence Installation
- CCTV Installation

Max. participants per annum: 6

Costs/ student per annum: EUR 600

MEET SOME OF OUR STUDENTS:



OPEYEMI



ISAAC



SEYI



HAPPINESS



DAMILARE



GODWIN

OUR ONLINE SHOP

Discover our online shop, where you can explore a diverse range of products skillfully crafted by our talented students. From stylish clothing and trendy bags to handcrafted shoes and unique household items, our collection offers something for everyone.



OUR TOP-SELLING PRODUCTS



THE FUTURE



STRATEGIC PLAN 2025 - 2029

In our **strategic plan** for the next five years, the City of Light aims to enact several key initiatives to further enhance our impact and reach within the community:

1. **Expansion of Staff:** We plan to double our number of permanent staff members to effectively manage our growing operations and provide enhanced support to our students and programs.
2. **Accommodation Enhancement:** Doubling our accommodation capacity will ensure that we can accommodate a larger number of students, providing them with comfortable and conducive living arrangements during their training.
3. **Increased Student Intake:** With the goal of doubling our student intake, we aim to extend our reach to a greater number of individuals, empowering more members of the community with valuable vocational training and skills development opportunities.
4. **Training of Trainers Programs:** Investment in training programs for our staff will focus on enhancing their skills and expertise, ensuring that our instructors are equipped to deliver high-quality training to our students.
5. **National Recognition:** We aspire to attain national recognition as a Training Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), solidifying our position as a leading institution in skills development and vocational training.
6. **Expansion of Course Offerings:** The addition of Solar PV Installation to our in-house courses will allow us to provide comprehensive training in renewable energy technologies, fully equipping our training center with state-of-the-art facilities and resources. This will eliminate the need for our enrolled students to travel to Benin City for this aspect of their training, as they currently do.
7. **Global Volunteer Experts Program:** We aim to establish a global volunteer experts program, welcoming foreign trainers to collaborate with our team and impart their skills and expertise to our students. This initiative will enrich our programs and provide students with exposure to diverse perspectives and best practices from around the world.

Through these strategic initiatives, City of Light is poised to continue its mission of empowering individuals, transforming communities, and creating sustainable change.



PROPOSED BUDGET

For our Strategic Plan 2025-2029

PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES	VALUE	PERCENTAGE
Facility expansion	€ 110,000.00	34%
Course expansions (incl. equipment)	€ 50,000.00	15%
Staff expansion and training	€ 20,000.00	7%
Operational Costs	€ 120,000.00	37%
Travel expenses for experts	€ 25,000.00	7%
TOTAL	€ 325,000.00	100%

By bolstering our infrastructure and expertise, we are positioning ourselves to better serve our students and the wider community, paving the way for economic empowerment and sustainable change. This strategic approach not only ensures the longevity and stability of our operations but also allows us to focus on supporting our graduates in building

sustainable businesses and securing brighter futures for themselves and their families.

We firmly believe that economic empowerment is the cornerstone of our mission, and with the support of our community, we can continue to make a meaningful impact for years to come.



FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

Financial Targets

€ 20,000.00

Private Donors

€ 300,000.00

Corporate Donors

€ 10,000.00

Donations from Board Members

Additional Sources of Revenue



Sales: Books and Products



Fundraising Events

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

How to get involved

At City of Light, we understand the profound impact that financial support can have on the futures of vulnerable individuals. With just approximately 600 euros, we can provide comprehensive training for one student over the course of a year, equipping them with essential skills and empowering them to break free from the cycle of poverty and exploitation. Currently, our capacity to transform lives is limited by our reliance on individual donors, as we have yet to secure corporate sponsors. However, we are determined to expand our reach and double the number of students we can support, ensuring that more individuals have access to life-changing opportunities.

Expanding our capacity means more than just increasing enrollment numbers. It means opening our doors wider to welcome in more aspiring students, especially those who may need accommodation and sustenance during their training journey. Currently, only one-third of our students reside on-site, and we aim to increase this percentage to ensure that all who seek our assistance can access it without barriers. Additionally, financial support is crucial for keeping our full-time staff, part-time staff, and trainers employed, as well as providing materials and resources for all courses and students, guaranteeing that each individual receives the tools they need to succeed.



WAYS TO PARTNER WITH US

Financial Support

Your financial contributions are vital in sustaining our programs and expanding our reach to more communities across Nigeria. Every donation, no matter the size, directly impacts the lives of individuals seeking a pathway out of poverty and exploitation.

Expertise and Volunteering

We welcome partnerships with experts in various fields who can offer their skills and knowledge to enhance our vocational training programs. Additionally, volunteers play a crucial role in supporting our initiatives on the ground, whether through teaching, mentoring, or administrative assistance.

Equipment and Resources

From PCs for our IT room to additional tools and materials for our vocational courses, your donations of equipment and resources enable us to provide quality training and create sustainable solutions. Specifically, we are seeking support in fully equipping our Solar PV Installations training facilities.



SPONSOR A STUDENT

PRIVATE SPONSORS INITIATE 2024

For funding and donation opportunities, we are pleased to introduce the **SPONSOR A STUDENT** initiative to private donors, launching in 2024. With a commitment to ensuring every student receives support, this initiative allows individuals to sow a seed of empowerment by sponsoring a student's education. Each student requires an annual investment of ca. **€ 600** for training, along with an additional **€ 500** to facilitate their business setup with a small grant upon successful graduation. We ask private donors to commit to **either** the training **or** the business start-up costs of a student.

Private donors will receive quarterly progress reports on their sponsored student's journey.

100 FOR 3000

CORPORATE SPONSORS INITIATIVE

For our Strategic Plan (2025-2029) we are seeking **100** corporate sponsors who will each contribute **€3000** to our foundation.

For corporate sponsors, partnering with City of Light presents a unique opportunity for extensive visibility and recognition across various platforms. Corporate sponsors will receive prominent acknowledgments on all our public channels, including our website and social media platforms. Additionally, sponsors will enjoy heightened visibility and recognition through branding and marketing initiatives showcased throughout our events during the sponsorship period.

Furthermore, as a token of appreciation for your support, we are pleased to offer corporate sponsors access to our pool of graduates who have undergone training in areas of interest to the sponsor.



EVENTS



A look at our events
over the last years



GRADUATION 2023

July 2023

Our most recent graduation ceremony was a momentous occasion, where students were honoured for their dedication and accomplishments with prestigious achievement awards, celebrating their journey towards empowerment and success.



OPENING CEREMONY

July 2022

The Opening Ceremony of the training and building complex comprised a week-long series of events, including sports competitions and community outreach initiatives. Attendees included members of the local community, public officials, and esteemed leaders.



CHRISTMAS PARTY

December 2022

The Community Outreach event in Akure was a heartwarming celebration of Christmas, uniting students and the local community in joyous festivities. Graciously supported by The Above Difference Foundation, it exemplified the spirit of giving and solidarity in spreading cheer and goodwill during the Christmas season.



DINNER WITH FRIENDS

March 2022

This fundraising event held in London served as a platform to raise awareness about the foundation's crucial mission in combating human trafficking. Supported by The Above Difference Foundation, the event brought together advocates and allies dedicated to addressing this pressing issue and creating positive change.



LAYING OF FOUNDATION

July 2021

The organization laid its foundation with a historic ceremony, symbolically setting the first cornerstone for the building, marking the beginning of its mission to empower communities and combat human trafficking.



For inquiries, contact us.



THE CITY OF LIGHT AND
LIBERATION FOUNDATION

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We extend our sincerest gratitude to all our partners for their unwavering support thus far. It is your dedication and collaboration that have been instrumental in our continued growth and success. Your belief in our mission has enabled us to overcome challenges and achieve significant milestones. As we move forward together, we are grateful for the opportunity to continue our work, creating positive change and empowering individuals and communities. We thank you for your invaluable partnership and for sharing in our vision of a brighter, more inclusive future.



WIMBERGER

