

ASOCIAȚIA ASCENDIS



Activity Report

From Potential to Performance!

2024



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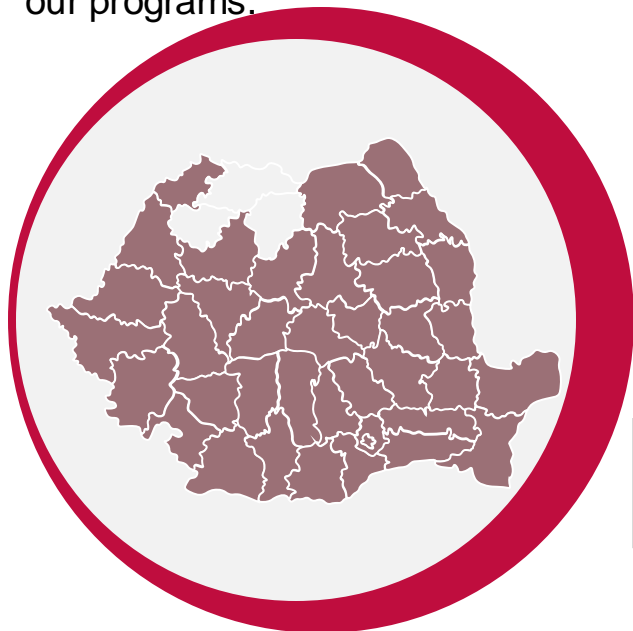


Ascendis NGO

ASOCIAȚIA ASCENDIS



A seven-year track record of delivering training sessions, coaching and counseling programs, as well as organizing events for school and NGO teams. We have assessed our educational impact through the number of participants and beneficiaries reached by our programs.



60

Career
counselling
sessions

1400

Volunteers and
members from over 90
NGOs

5500
Students and pupils



3250
teachers and
school principals

300
Schools from **39**
counties

450+

days of training
and online
sessions

100
Ascendis trainers





Our Achievements by the End of 2024

Thank you for standing with us throughout this year!

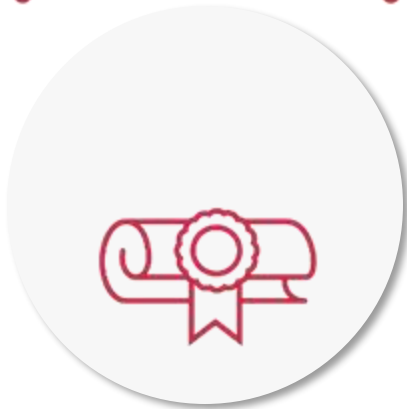
With your support and the contribution of the community you are part of, we have continued our mission to strengthen education in Romania.

We have engaged with diverse school communities — students, teachers, parents — as well as with companies and NGOs committed to quality education.

In the following pages, you will find a summary of our activities. These achievements are also yours: the trainer who developed new programs, the teacher who enrolled their school in our initiatives, the professional behind the desk who wanted to make a real contribution to the community.

Together, from potential to performance!

2024 in Numbers



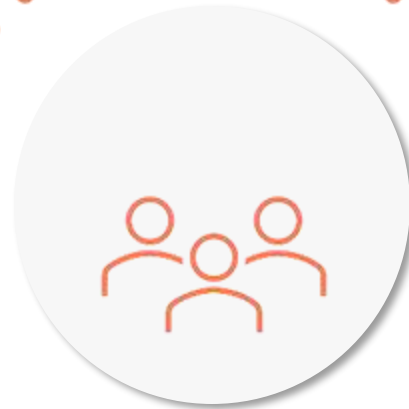
Beneficiaries

1250+ teachers
3000+ students & pupils
260+ teachers & parents,
together
120+ corporate volunteers &
NGO staff



Partners

10 NGOs
80 schools
1 university



Human resources

33 Ascendis consultants
involved
195+ sessions și events



Financial support

2 scholarships
6 supported NGOs & events



2. Educational programs

WHAT and WHY

GROW A SCHOOL – Pilot Program

- ✓ Five schools and high schools from **Bucharest, Iași, Oradea, Malu Mare, and Sibiu** joined the *GROW A SCHOOL* pilot program, which includes four main modules:
 - 1. Digitalizing Learning through the Code of Talent platform** – 42 teachers designed and delivered over **60 digital programs**, reaching more than **500 enrolled students**.
 - 2. Psychological Safety in Schools** – 60 teachers from three schools attended sessions on communication, emotional intelligence, and the Pygmalion effect, aimed at creating a safer and more supportive learning environment.
 - 3. Grow Your Career** – 25 students from Iași now have a personal career action plan, a CV, and insights on how to prepare for job interviews. Another group of 20 students from Oradea successfully completed the first stage of the program.
 - 4. InnoGrow** – Three Innovation Incubators (a mix of workshops, hackathons, mentoring sessions, and a final pitching event) engaged students from Iași, Bucharest, and Sibiu. Around **25 students in each school** worked on projects designed to address real needs within their communities.

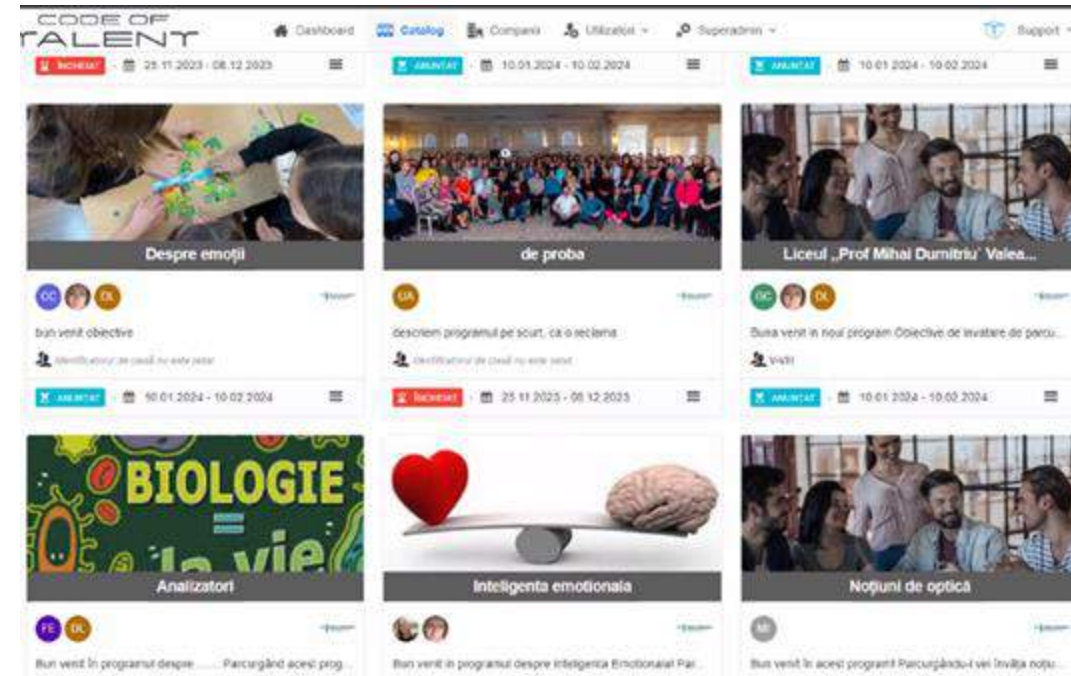
2.1 GROW a SCHOOL

What participants are saying

“I learned about the importance of a growth mindset and maintaining a positive attitude in achieving our goals. I will use these concepts to encourage my students to build self-confidence and persevere when facing challenges – both in class and in their personal lives – supporting them to reach their full potential.” (Valentina C., teacher)



CoT Programs Developed by Teachers



Psychological Safety in Schools



“During the course, I understood that a growth mindset means turning any challenge into an opportunity and any mistake into a way of learning, making the most of every effort and every piece of feedback. I believe that any moment wisely used in your continuous development is the key to progress.” (Irina I.)

“Participating in InnoGrow was a very beautiful experience. I learned new strategies that helped me improve my communication skills. In addition, I had the opportunity to collaborate with my classmates from other classes. What I felt was that I have more self-confidence.” – high school student, Bucharest

Innogrow

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Grow your career

“I believe this module was extremely useful for our future, offering us both practical knowledge and a well-structured introduction to theoretical aspects. The most valuable thing I learned, in my opinion, was how to structure a CV adapted to the field we’re applying for, and also how a hiring process unfolds. I think such an experience would have a positive impact on any student and I highly recommend it!” – student, Valea Lupului

“Even though I already had a rough idea of what I want to do in the future, I still learned new things, such as how to create a good CV, what steps to take if I want to get a job, or even what to do if one day I want to hire someone.

Overall, it was an awesome experience that helped me prepare better for the future.” – high school student, Valea Lupului





2.2 KATA in classroom

WHAT and WHY

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Kata in the Classroom is an experiential learning exercise adapted for schools, originally developed by Mike Rother (*Toyota KATA*, credit: katatogrow.com). By applying Kata, teachers and students transform the educational process into an effective practice that develops:

1. **Scientific thinking** – generating ideas, experimenting with different solutions to overcome obstacles, and organizing and analyzing results.
2. **Collaboration and communication** – negotiating and selecting ideas, implementing them, and drawing conclusions together
3. **Growth mindset** – setting and reaching increasingly challenging goals, while learning from setbacks along the way

Our Reach and Impact

- ✓ Over **1,140 participants** (420 students and 720 teachers) have experienced Kata in the Classroom
- ✓ **30 schools** received their own Kata kits with materials to apply the method directly in class
- ✓ More than **80 teachers** joined online sessions (introductions to the method or Kata Café support sessions)

During teachers' meetings, the Kata exercise sparked idea-generation on how the method's steps could be integrated into different school subjects, personal development programs, summer camps, or even teachers' own lesson planning. Students identified ways to apply Kata to prepare for exams and diversify their learning strategies

While not the primary goal, **teamwork emerged as an important learning outcome** for both students and teachers.

What participants are saying

"It was a fantastic experience where we discovered how to apply the Kata method – a practical way to train skills through hands-on practice – in our daily work. We are ready to bring these methods into the classroom and help all preschoolers and students reach their true potential!" (Transylvanian Education Institute)

"You reminded us how important it is to let children laugh while they learn!" (Teacher, Little London High School, Bucharest)



KATA in classroom for students and teachers



2.3

SustainEdu

WHAT and WHY

SustainEdu, the educational program, consists of organizing school workshops to help students and teachers learn the basics of sustainability. This first edition was funded by **Raiffeisen Bank Romania**, an active partner in supporting quality education and building sustainable communities.

Over **1,700 students from 36 schools** learned through play about the **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. The workshops took place in **Bucharest, Cluj, Iași, Prahova, Timiș, and Brașov**.

The educational activities were designed to spark discussions and active participation among students. We used the **GoGoals game** developed by the UN, adapted with Romania-specific questions and practical challenges such as designing school initiatives, identifying local partners, and using different communication channels to promote the 17 SDGs.

Through the **Lego® Serious Play® methodology**, students and teachers explored sustainability at both personal and community level, co-creating a Lego model of a sustainable school.

As a result, students broadened their understanding of sustainability — moving beyond environmental protection to also include social and economic dimensions.

What participants are saying

“We believe this interactive activity succeeded in engaging students and teaching them sustainability and development concepts in an enjoyable way. We plan to make these resources available to all classes in our school, so the impact can be even greater.” — Prof. Denisa Vasiliță, ‘Ion Creangă’ Secondary School, Iași

Students feedback:

“This activity is very interesting and helps you see the world differently.”

“Everything we learned in this workshop makes us more aware of what is happening in today’s world.”

“This activity helps us take better care of ourselves and of the planet.”

SustainEdu in schools





2.4 Educational Partnerships

WHAT and WHY

We are proud to serve as educational partners for NGOs that share our mission in education. Together, we have designed and delivered impactful programs tailored to diverse communities:

- ✓ **Nouă Ne Pasă Foundation** – 60 teachers from rural and disadvantaged schools took part in training sessions on adapting teaching methods to today’s students and on developing emotional intelligence.
- ✓ **Don Bosco Association** – staff members and volunteers participated in a workshop on redefining organizational values and aligning them with daily actions.
- ✓ **ROI Association – “Yes, It’s Possible” Program** – launched in Harghita with a complex team exercise. In the ROME simulation, 70 teachers, parents, and students from 11 schools in Romania developed strategies, faced crises, collaborated to overcome them, and contributed to the “success of the empire.” The dynamics of the game reminded them of their shared purpose in education.
- ✓ **Edu Act Association – “Educational Compass” Program** included:
 1. A launch event with **130 students**, where a sports hall was transformed into a “Base Camp for Conquering Everest” – a team exercise focused on strategic planning, achieving objectives, adaptability, and collaboration.
 2. A launch session for accompanying teachers, designed to support them in creating a growth-oriented environment. The experiential workshop centered around *trust* and the *Pygmalion effect*.
 3. Monthly classroom workshops on **personal values, creativity, communication, and relationship-building**.
- ✓ **Ploiești – National Youth Capital** – we marked the closing year through an event dedicated to volunteers, teachers, parents, NGO and corporate staff. Participants explored local resources and practiced planning, collaboration, and adaptability through the ROME simulation, aligning around their shared goal of creating an attractive environment for young people.
- ✓ **Multiple Sclerosis Community** – for the past **eight years**, our colleague **Anca Barbu** has been supporting the annual summer camp and conference of MS patients through workshops and consultancy, alongside other volunteer colleagues.



**Sessions with
teachers**



**„Conquering Everest”
– launch event**



**ROME – business
simulation for
communities**



WHAT and WHY

We took part in the conference “*Emotional Intelligence for Preventing and Combating Bullying*” organized by the **Prietenii Școlii Valea Lupului Association** and “**Professor Mihai Dumitriu**” High School in Iași.

Over **200 parents and teachers** joined the session delivered by our colleague, **Carmen Ciuraru**, on the topic of **psychological safety**. Participants reflected on how we perceive and build psychological safety around us.

Some of the key questions and tools explored in the presentation included:

- ✓ How does psychological safety influence the quality of relationships and the educational process?
- ✓ How can we act as ambassadors of such an environment, and how does it benefit both adults and children in schools and other groups?
- ✓ What role does **emotional intelligence** play in this equation?

What participants are saying

“Bravo! This topic is so sensitive and important for children! It can change their entire journey through life.”

“Thank you, Carmen! It was a wonderful experience for us too!”



2.5 Anti-bullying Conference

Conference “Emotional Intelligence for Preventing and Combating Bullying”





3. We support reading



WHAT and WHY

- ✓ This year, we continued to financially support **Cărturești's initiative to create libraries in rural areas**. Two new libraries were set up at the **Faraoanele Cultural Center in Vârteșcoiu commune** and at the **school in Homocea, Vrancea County**.
- ✓ Each library now hosts **100 new books** across subjects such as history, literature, science, and geography, primarily serving middle school students.

About Cărturești Rural Libraries

"I want a Cărturești in my village!" is a project developed in partnership with the Cărturești bookstore chain. The idea came from **Amalia Neacșu**, a 6th-grade student at *Regina Maria Middle School in Vintileasca (Vrancea County)*, who wrote in her essay for the creative writing contest *"A Hero in My Village"*:

"Maybe when I was little, I would have wished for a huge Jumbo store or a horse farm in front of my house — a bit unrealistic, but justified at that age. Now, I would wish for a giant Cărturești. In the city, they have Cărturești, but not in my village. It's unfair..."

Her dream inspired the creation of Cărturești libraries in rural communities through the *"Books in Villages"* project, organized by the NGO *Eu, Tu și Ei* in Focșani.

3.1
We support reading
[1]
Cărturești Libraries

Rewarding reading in public spaces

Through our initiative *"Ai carte, ai parte"* we surprise readers in public spaces. Every week, we offer books to people reading in **public transport or public spaces in Bucharest and Cluj** — a simple way to encourage and celebrate the joy of reading.

Two libraries in villages from Vrancea county



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We offer books to people reading in public spaces



ASOCIAȚIA ASCENDIS





3.1

We support reading [2] BOOVIE Festival

WHAT and WHY

This year we continued our collaboration with **Boovie Festival**, a project very close to our hearts.

As an **educational partner**, we supported the festival by offering the **grand prizes of this edition** to over **2,000 students and teachers** who participated.

In addition, around **350 students and teachers** joined the workshops facilitated by our trainers:
For students: *Your Superpower – Self-Confidence, Public Speaking, Acting Games*
For teachers: *Growth Mindset – From Potential to Performance, Psychological Safety & Assertive Communication, Communication & Leadership*

About BOOVIE festival

Boovie started nine years ago as a **creative educational experiment** designed to inspire students to read – free from the pressure of grades or academic rewards.

The challenge? Students must create a **book-trailer** – a short film that captures the essence of a novel in cinematic language. But a simple “video summary” is not enough. To succeed, students need to:

read carefully, paying attention to details,
identify the deeper meanings of the book, and
translate them into a short trailer that sparks curiosity and convinces others to read the novel.

Through this innovative format, **reading becomes a team effort, a creative journey, and a meaningful discovery process.**

BOOVIE 2024





4. Career counselling and scholarships



5. The Ascendis Nest



WHAT and WHY

- ✓ We created and ran the first edition of the „Ascendis Nest” – an accelerated learning program in the format of a Summer School, designed and delivered by Ascendis trainers using their experience and top-tier tools (world-class business simulations, experiential learning, psychometric tools, and more), all adapted for teenagers aged 14–18. This edition brought together 20 children of our colleagues from across the country.
- ✓ Between 2023 and 2024, Romania declined in only one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals – quality education. The Nest aims to complement the school education of our teens with an accelerated learning program that offers a different vision on building skills. This way, teenagers no longer need to go abroad to attend high-quality summer schools – they can experience this in Romania, with the help of the Ascendis team.
- ✓ Here’s what this year’s agenda included:
 - Entrepreneurial and financial education
 - Communication and collaboration
 - Leadership
 - Growth Mindset
 - Project management and innovation
 - Emotional intelligence and stress management
 - Career management – using the Harrison Assessments Career Enjoyment Test
 - Training for scientific thinking

5. The Ascendis Nest

What participants say

“Dad, what a cool job you have!”

“Can I sign up now for the next year’s camp?”

The Ascendis Nest – summer bootcamp





6. The Cariere Magazine

În culisele carierii de Creative Director

de ADELINA MIHAI

Care sunt secretele din spatele unei cariere? Ce îi motivează pe oameni să profeseze și să-și dorească să avanseze într-un anumit domeniu?

6. "Carriere" Magazine



WHAT and WHY

- ✓ CARIERE magazine is a premium publication dedicated to leaders and professionals in Romania, offering valuable perspectives on leadership, career, innovation, and sustainability.
- ✓ Through articles, interviews with public figures and analyses, the magazine explores topics relevant to personal and professional development.
- ✓ In the online environment, the content is complemented by news, podcasts, and multimedia materials.
- ✓ CARIERE organizes events such as conferences, galas, and workshops that bring together communities of leaders for idea exchange and recognition of excellence in various fields.
- ✓ CARIERE represents an ecosystem of publications that includes HR Manager magazine, a benchmark for human resources professionals, focused on trends, strategies, and best practices in talent management and organizational development.
- ✓ CARIERE's development plans include expanding editorial content through new sections (Sports Leadership, Cultural Leadership, Behind the Career of..., Teacher of the Month, Leadership in NGOs, Interviews with Leaders from the Republic of Moldova, etc.), creating supplements and catalogues (100 Inspiring Leaders, 100 Expats We Are Proud Of, Top Team Building Destinations, etc.), and territorial expansion through distribution of publications and event organization throughout the country and the Republic of Moldova.

Editorial team's message

With a history of 22 years, CARIERE is a communication and inspiration platform for people and organizations that seek growth.

"Our ambition is to create the largest communication platform for the community of leaders and HR professionals in Romania, the Republic of Moldova, and the diaspora."

"Carriere" Magazine events





7. Renovation work in schools



7. Schools renovation

WHAT and WHY

- ✓ The modernization project for the “Dimitrie Filipescu” Technological High School in Buzău was carried out over two months, from July 1st to August 31st, 2024. The interventions included the rehabilitation of the educational infrastructure, the modernization of learning spaces, and the provision of essential equipment.
- ✓ In the first phase, we analysed and identified the school’s renovation needs, including repairs and upgrades for various buildings, such as the kindergarten, activity rooms, workshops, and the construction of a pergola.
- ✓ Subsequently, during the practical implementation stage, the expert team of the Ascendis Association – composed of engineers, architects, and craftsmen – coordinated the works. Energy-efficient lighting fixtures, air conditioning, new and decorative furniture were installed. A key feature was the creation of an outdoor summer classroom, a space dedicated to learning and socialising.
- ✓ In the final stage of the project, mixed teams of 100 Ductil company employees acting as volunteers, students who chose to participate even during their vacation, and members of the Ascendis Association, were involved in various workshops, such as assembling furniture made from recycled pallets, decorative painting, and arranging social areas.

Through this project, the “Dimitrie Filipescu” Technological High School benefits from significant improvements to its infrastructure and learning conditions. The modernized spaces offer a much friendlier educational environment, and students enjoy new amenities such as adapted furniture and energy-efficient lighting that reduces energy consumption by 40%. Additionally, through employee involvement in social activities, Ductil strengthened its image as a responsible brand and established a strong connection with the local community. This initiative demonstrated that investments in education and infrastructure directly contribute to community development and the training of the company’s future employees.

Results

The modernized spaces offer a friendlier educational environment, and students enjoy new amenities such as adapted furniture and energy-efficient lighting that reduces energy consumption by 40%. Additionally, through employee involvement in social activities, Ductil strengthened its image as a responsible brand and established a strong connection with the local community.

Modernization works at "Dimitrie Filipescu" Technical High School in Buzău with the support of DUCTIL and volunteers





8. Financial support for NGOs



WHAT and WHY

- ✓ We continue to support organizations that are supporting education, as a shared mission. In 2024, in addition to the previously mentioned projects alongside Cărturești Foundation, Boovie, and CARIERE Publishing House, we also supported through sponsorship:
 - “Presa pe bune” Association – who brings media education workshops in schools, delivered by professional journalists, training young people to identify fake news.
 - The “Informart” Association – through which we supported the participation of a student beneficiary in an international mathematics camp.
 - Alexandru-Adrian Cârlan – missions dedicated to oncology patients.

- ✓ We joined forces to support the NGO sector with Ascendis Consulting SRL, which offered sponsorships worth 210,000 lei in 2024 to the following organizations:
 - **Asociația “Țara faină”**
 - **Asociația Presa pe Bune**
 - **Asociația Casa Bună**
 - **Asociația Media DOR**
 - **Asociația Fabrica de bine**
 - **Fundația Regală**

Additionally, Ascendis became a sponsor of the TV shows “Garantat 100%” and “Timpul prezent”.

8

Financial support for NGOs



9. Media appearances

„ROME” – event in Ploiești – National Capital of Youth



GROW A SCHOOL – digital learning and training for teachers



SustainEdu – sustainability through games in schools and high schools





10. Financial report

Financial report



REVENUE	Amounts	EXPENSES	Amounts
Revenue from sponsorships	3.068.831	Expenses for projects/human resource delivery	1.400.124
Revenue from 3.5%	-	Expenses associated with projects	104.210
Revenue from individual donations	-	Other operational expenses	437.876
Revenue from services rendered	73.225	Sponsorships and donations	129.276
Other revenue	0		
Total Revenue 2024	3.142.057	Total Expenses 2024	2.071.488



11. Team Ascendis

In schools or high schools, in NGO headquarters or hubs, in warehouses or workshops, conference rooms and online, our team is alongside beneficiaries in various contexts. Over 30 colleagues from across the country delivered programs this year within the Ascendis Association, and many others contributed in support areas, fundraising, ideation, etc. We thank them all!

Core Team

ASOCIAȚIA ASCENDIS



Andrei Goșu

President



Sorin Păun

Vice President



Marius Opreș

Vice President



Carmen Ciuraru

**Educational
programs
coordinator**



Marina Marcu

**Educational
programs
designer**

Trainers at work

ASOCIAȚIA ASCENDIS



Carmen Ciuraru



Naomi Chira



Marina Marcu



Ovidiu Dan



Bogdan Dirjan



Vlad Pascu



Oana Trucă



Cristi Ciontea



**Cristina
Năstăsescu**



Andreea Popa

Traineri at work



Alexa Gliga



Cristian Șandru



Cătălin Lupu



Ștefan Ferent



Ciprian Ouatu



Vlad Basarabescu



Lavinia Eftimie



Alexandra Enescu



Elena Munteanu



Andrei Iacobaie

Traineri at work



Sabina Sava



Sorin Oprea



Dani Felegan



Mădălina Sava



Maria Ion



Loredana Vâlcianu



Cosmin Moței



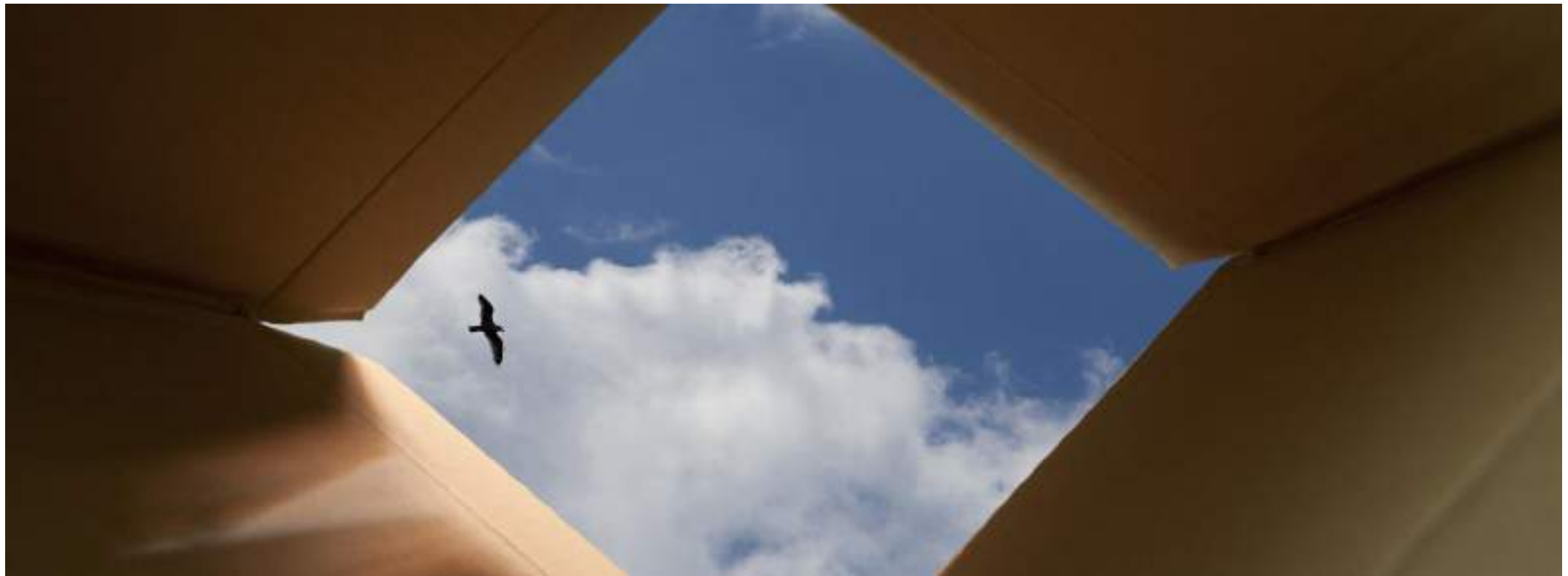
Anca Barbu



Alina Șerban



Bogdan Costache



12. Future perspectives

Our priorities for 2025

In the new year, our journey continues under the motto *“From potential to performance.”*

We will keep building on four strategic directions:

1. **Psychological safety in schools** – training sessions and events for teachers
2. **Career guiding for youth** – counseling and career planning tools
3. **Skills for the future** – practical tools and training for the educational ecosystem
4. **Community support tailored to real needs** – renovations, events, counseling, and more

With you and our sponsors by our side, we are ready to design and deliver new programs that support both education and performance – together!





How can you help us?



Tell others about us
Connect us with a school in your community
Support our projects through sponsorships or donations.



From potential to performance,
together.