

Follow-Up Questions for Open Cages Part One (2017)

Please provide a list of board members (or prospective board members) and brief descriptions of their occupations or backgrounds (job titles/industries or links to LinkedIn are sufficient).

- [Dobrosława Gogłóza](#)
 - Co-founder and president
 - Responsible for our international operations (Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, U.K.)
- [Paweł Rawicki](#)
 - Co-founder and vice president, master of arts in sociology
 - Responsible for managing the investigations, video production, communication, political work, and media
- Ilona Rabizo
 - Co-founder and vice president
 - Master of Arts in sociology
 - Responsible for HR and our work with local communities opposing factory farming
 - Did research on workers in factory farms and slaughterhouses
 - Starting next year she will give classes at a local university on the topics of sociology and animal protection
- [Jakub Stencel](#)
 - Board member responsible for development and growth of the organization
 - Helps with communication and volunteer management
 - Active in animal rights movement for 7 years, now trying to make Effective Altruism a bigger movement in Poland
- [Krzysztof Witalewski](#)
 - Master of Science in computer science
 - Currently responsible for media communication and video production
- Bogna Domagalska
 - Board member responsible for accountancy and legal aspects of organization
 - Also involved in promotion and our grassroots outreach coordinating our biggest events, as well as streetwork actions that are necessary for our campaigning goals
- [Marta Cendrowicz](#)
 - Board member responsible for corporate and institutional campaigns
 - Uses her experience in the private sector to talk with businesses and use their language when pressuring them for change in their policies

It is also important to clarify that all members of the board participate in shaping the strategy of the organization and planning future campaigns. All members of the board take part in the activities related to the most important campaigns of the organization.

In situations where we feel we might lack enough knowledge, we consult with specialists in the field. We have a number of university professors or successful business owners help us when needed. My husband is a law professor and specializes in economic analysis of law and theory of organization and he advises us on all issues connected with decisions about structural improvements in our organization or possible consequences of campaigns (using economic analysis).

Does Open Cages have any processes in place to learn about their staff morale? If so, please describe them.

We feel strongly about having a healthy culture that empowers everyone to voice opinions and concerns.

- We are polling all our activists (staff included) on the level of their motivation and satisfaction with Open Cages and encouraging them to suggest improvements
- We are having regular online meetings and day-long staff retreats (our work is 100% remote, there is no office) to discuss all possible plans and concerns
- One of our board members is directly responsible for HR (she has previous experience from an independent workers union)
- Members of the board try to be active in the daily activities organized by volunteers, like streetwork, local events, info stalls—we put a lot of effort into trying not to have a gap between experienced members and new volunteers
- Staff members are invited to voting members' meetings so that they are involved in the decision-making process (voting members make most important decisions in the organization)

Can you give an example (or examples) of how Open Cages benefited from diversity programs, or from having diverse members in their work community?

As an organization that tries to influence behavior we firmly believe it's our duty to represent many different demographics in our structure. We maintain a healthy gender ratio in our organization. Currently 4 of 7 board members are women. We incorporate people of many ages in our decision making. We communicate with Polish people of many ages; having a diverse group allows us to have better insight.

When it comes to ethnic diversity, Polish society is quite homogeneous: 97.7% of the population is Polish. The biggest minority is Silesian, which technically is also Polish, and there is no discrimination against Silesian people in our country (it's mostly a language minority—people from this region speak both standard Polish and the Silesian dialect, which has a lot of German vocabulary). We actually got mentioned by Silesian media by publishing a booklet with veganized Silesian dishes. The booklet is bilingual, and local media were really excited about seeing vegan materials in a minority language. We have two activist groups in the Silesian region of Poland, and many activists from this region play important roles in our organization (one of the coordinators of our cage-free egg campaign speaks Silesian, for example).

Most of the other minorities come from other European countries, like Germany, Ukraine, and Belarus. Recently there has been a significant growth in the number of Ukrainian immigrants in Poland, and we also have several Ukrainian activists at Open Cages. They are very helpful in our process of establishing Open Cages in Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia—we consider them experts in this field and they are involved in all the decisions about plans in the Russian-speaking region.

Can you tell us about Open Cages' 2016 fundraising goals?

When we think of our fundraising we prefer to think in terms of sustainability and capacity of the organization first, and then about set numbers. When we set our development strategy we investigate key gaps in funding that could push the whole organization forward and give the biggest returns on investment in our campaigning. We are also cautious to not get too dependent on grants or single funding sources. In practice this means every position within the organization should also build organizational capacity to grow, especially if room for more funding is present.

At the end of 2015 we decided that hiring one person as a dedicated fundraiser was the best investment. Because fundraising in eastern countries is very limited, we pooled 12 people who offered to pledge about 10% of their monthly income to fund this very position. This proved to be a strategic move that enabled us to fundraise more effectively in 2016.

Therefore, we started 2016 with the following clear goals:

- Increasing fundraising capacity by hiring a dedicated fundraiser
- Investing in a healthy and well-organized structure by securing funds to hire volunteer and grassroots coordinators
- Elevating pressure on corporate change by securing resources required for our corporate campaigning in late 2016 and throughout 2017
- Expanding our international presence and fundraising capacities by workshops and training for eastern countries on how to fundraise effectively

We managed to reach our 2016 fundraising goals by the third quarter. We noted rapid growth of 145.45%. We established 3 paid positions within the organization, increased our outreach budget, and prepared for additional sustainable hiring in 2017. We filled our biggest gaps of 2016: fundraising, volunteer coordination, corporate outreach, and international coordination. Finally, by sharing knowledge and funds we prepared eastern groups to launch their organizations.

As of 2017 we still have significant room for more funding, especially given that we are significantly more funding constrained than talent constrained. We have a lot of highly competent professionals available, but still lack funds to hire them full time—although we are progressively incorporating them into our staff with organizational growth.

Our present fundraising activities are focused on:

- Filling hired staff gaps present in most eastern countries to reinforce the organization and create a healthy work culture that is sustainable
- Expanding internationally to neglected areas (investing in our outreach in Ukrainian and Russian speaking areas)
- Investing in corporate campaigns, especially broiler chicken campaigns
- Investing more resources in our meat reduction and plant-based program, which focuses on institutional outreach
- Increasing resources in corporate outreach
- Education (in-person and online educational outreach focused mostly on the Russian-speaking population—especially on Russian social media channels)

We are aiming to fill these gaps in about 2–3 year period.

We are also confident we will be able to achieve corporate changes both for caged hens and broiler chickens. We started our corporate work on caged hens in March 2017 and we already forced 7 companies to introduce a policy of phasing out caged eggs. Among them is the biggest retailer in Poland (they own around 40% of the food retail market in our country, and have a presence in Portugal and Colombia). Our campaign in Poland made them introduce a policy including all those countries. We cooperate with The Humane League and the Open Wing Alliance in cage-free campaigns and now also participate in the planning for a European corporate broiler campaign.