On this page you will find continuously updated information concerning the restoration of academic life at Charles University after the tragedy of 21 December 2023 at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University.

*Please note most of the external links and articles are only available in Czech.*

Recovery of Academic Life at the Faculty of Arts

The website of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University provides regularly updated information on teaching, studying, psychosocial support, security, memorial sites, etc.

More information can be found here.

Safety at the university

The Central Crisis Staff of Charles University has been working on improving safety strategy and specific measures.

Find more information in English here.

Psychological and spiritual support

Professional psychological and spiritual help and support in connection with the tragic events at the Faculty of Arts for students and employees was provided from the first hours and days after the tragedy. Professional help was offered by the relevant units of the IRS, the Charles University counselling centres, individual faculty departments and spiritual guidance was also offered by the Centre for Mental Health Care.

Already in the first week after the tragedy, more than 190 psychologists and interventionists provided help at the Faculty of Arts. In the first eight weeks after the tragedy alone, more than 4,000 people sought some form of help, and more than 6,500 psychological and crisis interventions were treated by experts.

From the first hours after the tragedy until the end of January 2024, the Charles University Psychological Support Chat for students and employees was also operational, where anyone could contact and seek support. A dedicated email address was also available for students and employees to contact. Key information was also available in sign language.

Charles University was also immediately supported by the professional community. Crisis assistance was offered by a number of organisations such as the National Institute of Mental Health, the Czech Red Cross, the White Circle of Safety, the Czech Institute for Psychotraumatology and EMDR, the Probation and Mediation Service, and organisations such as Remedium, Inlustitia, Dlouhá cesta and Vigvam.

The student initiatives that emerged after the December events were also a great help. The Peerko student association, founded by psychology students, has been providing short support meetings for the last six months to share feelings, provide basic psychological help and pass on useful resources and contacts. The members of the society have been actively providing support right in the corridors of the Faculty of Arts. The students of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport also set up a charity initiative, Hrzeje me movement, which raised funds through sport activities specifically for the functioning of the Peerko association.

Students also engaged in volunteer activities directly at their faculties or through the Charles University Volunteer Centre. In the first days, the Volunteer Centre of Charles University asked for volunteers through a simple form. Dozens of individuals willing to help volunteered immediately. Their help was needed in preparing the EMDR groups (navigation, room setup, etc.), which started in the following days and is still ongoing. The UK Volunteer Centre also facilitated the help of volunteers for activities organized by, for example, the Student Council of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana.

All forms of psychological and social support and counseling available in English can be found on the FoA website, in the section “Psychosocial counselling”.

Information safety

Charles University actively and regularly informed students and employees about current events and available sources of assistance. It immediately launched a website with complete and up-to-date information, set up a Crisis Staff line the very next day after the tragedy, and set up an extraordinary toll-free information line for students, employees and the public to offer their help. It also strengthened the provision of standard communication channels (Charles University Information
Line, Charles University Information Email) and provided psychological chat support. Key information continued to be communicated through regular newsletters sent by the University to Czech and international students and staff. It also actively communicated on the University's social media.

Events to support coping with the tragedy, where information was shared and therefore needed to be well communicated, played a major role, such as community events for international students staying in Prague over the Christmas holidays (and not only for them), “Month for Faculty” events, lectures, workshops and open groups. The University also provided spaces for meeting opportunities only without a specific goal.

Communication with the injured and survivors was also an important and special informational aspect, which was undertaken by the management of Charles University.

Financial support from the CU Endowment Fund
The CU Endowment Fund has so far collected 86 million Czech crowns to help those affected by the tragedy at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University (as of 27 May 2024). The Board of Trustees of the CU Endowment Fund has approved an allocation of 37 million for the families of the survivors until that date. As of 27 May 2024, 18 million had been transferred to the surviving families. For the remaining amount, the specification of terms and conditions and the conclusion of contracts with the families are in progress. It is expected that the approval of the next grant will be made to the surviving families in the third phase. 2.25 million has been distributed among the injured under the first rapid financial support, while the second phase of financial support is provided according to the individual needs of the injured.

Financial assistance has been provided to all 14 families of the shooting victims and a total of 20 families of the injured at this time, but the university is actively communicating with all 24 families. Cooperation continues.

How to cope with the tragedy? Experiences from abroad
Representatives of Charles University and Charles University Faculty of Arts gained experience in working with the aftermath of the tragedy during a meeting with representatives of the Norwegian Center for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies in April. The Norwegian Centre was represented by Synne ?ien Stensland and Grete Anita Dyb.

Remembrance site

We will never forget...

Fourteen lives were tragically cut short on December 21, 2023, in the mass shooting at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University. Such a senseless and brutal act is incomprehensible and shocked both the university and the country to the core. We will never forget. We want to remember the students and teachers as they were and their closest family members kindly shared some of their most cherished memories.

Profiles of the victims of the shooting at the Faculty of Arts of CU (only in Czech)

Quiet Place
A Quiet Place has been established on the 4th floor of the main building of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University. This temporary site of remembrance provides a quiet space for all those who wish to commemorate those who died in this tragic event.

More information can be found here.

Memorial site on Jan Palach Square
Half a year after the tragic event at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University, a temporary memorial site dedicated to the victims of the December attack will be raised at Jan Palach Square. Its focal point will be a three-metre high stone object. "We do not want to commemorate the act that hit us six months ago, we are remembering those we lost then. Their passing affected our faculty, our colleagues at Charles University and other institutions, and a large part of the public. We want to offer them and ourselves a place where we can pay tribute to the victims," says Eva Lehečková, Dean of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University. With this public place of remembrance, FF UK is responding to a fundamental need that is now being expressed by the families of the victims and others affected.

More information can be found here (only in Czech)

Other memorial sites and processing of memorial items

Please note most of the external links and articles are only available in Czech.

- Memorial flame | On January 4 2024, a memorial flame was lit on Jan Palach Square, and remained lit for the whole month of January.
- Artistic processing of memorial objects | On the morning of January 5, the removal of candles and objects left behind from the existing memorial sites began. The material will be stored at CU and the plan is to use it to create a memorial object. This plan will be consulted by CU with the academic community and the concept will be developed as part of the Month for Faculty activities.

Memorial events
- Charles University and the Faculty of Arts of Charles University thanked for the cohesion and support |On 23 May, in the Great Hall of the Carolinum, thanks were given to all the people from Charles University who are trying to improve the atmosphere in the university community after the tragic event. Read more in the article here.
The Academic Community is Hurt, But Not Broken

The Academic Community is hurt, but not broken. The tragic events that occurred on December 21, 2023, at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University had a profound impact on the entire academic community. The Faculty was closed for the month of January, and a series of events were held to support and honor the victims of the shooting.

More in the article here.

Recording of the lecture 5. 3. 2024 (only in Czech)

Student activities

Peerko | Student psychological help

Peerko, a group of psychology students from Charles University, was founded in response to the tragic events of 21 December 2023. It targets its help primarily at fellow students, lecturers and other university staff, but also at everyone affected by the event. Mutual help, support, building resilience and creating a welcoming atmosphere are the cornerstones for getting the Faculty of Arts up and running again and returning to as normal a life as possible.

More information can be found here.
Volunteering

Volunteers have played and continue to play a major role in the renewal of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University. To find out more about volunteering at the University and how to get involved, visit the Volunteering Centre website.

Volunteering Centre at CU