

Z B U D U J M Y T O



by Maciej Kocot

The name of our LUG is Zbudujmy To. It means “let’s build it” in Polish, so it reflects what we do pretty well. An extra advantage is the address of our website in Tonga domain: zbudujmy.to. Once we considered buying the italian domain, “letsbuild.it”, but finally decided to stick to one.

Zbudujmy To was founded in 2013 by a group of AFOLs from the only, at the time, informal AFOL community in Poland. The idea was to register the new group as an official association, recognized by authorities. Thanks to this, Zbudujmy To can have its own bank account, sign agreements etc. This, in turn, makes it a lot easier to organise exhibitions and events or purchase bricks together. Being a court registered legal entity helped us multiple times when we negotiated with local authorities or protected the intellectual or financial interests of AFOLs against shady wanna-be business partners.

Our community started small at 15 formal members, but now has about 50. Our forum (open for everyone, also outside of the official association) has almost 1400 registered users. We keep building better and better MOCs, as well as organise exhibitions and events across the country.

The members of our community are scattered all around the country. We usually hang out together at events we organise. However, in bigger clusters we casually meet from time to time to have a beer, play board games and talk (not only about LEGO, believe it or not!).

Our main goal is to keep the good spirit among our group—to build amazing MOCs and show them to the world. It is inevitable that people become less active after some time, so we need to keep an influx of new builders. This is probably the greatest challenge nowadays. Many young builders use social media to share their creations rather than a forum. We are now searching for new opportunities to attract new

members by increasing our presence on Facebook and Instagram.

Formal members of Zbudujmy To pay a small annual fee. Sometimes we receive some funds from the venues that host our exhibitions. These funds are primarily meant to reimburse the transport and accomodation for those who take part in the event. We strongly believe that everyone deserves some support for contributing to the success of our LUG.

We hope that Zbudujmy To will remain as thriving as it is now. Moreover, we all become more proficient as builders and gain experience in organising events, so that they are entertaining to the public.

COVID definitely made our lives harder. We had planned some events and exhibitions in Poland, but needed to cancel or postpone them. On the other hand, spending more time at home gave some of us a solid creativity boost. Fortunately, everyone in our crew has stayed healthy so far.

In July four brave members of Zbudujmy To were present at MTP Summer Picnic with their models (keeping safe distance and wearing facemasks, of course). We are planning to hold another exhibition at the same venue soon and hope that it will happen in a safe way.

We have always been enthusiastic about being part of the LAN Program. We are also very grateful to LEGO for their support during the events organised by us. Besides the LEGO Group, we have a friendly relationship with LEGO Poland. The most outstanding example is the project that we completed in cooperation with LEGO Poland,





where members of our community built a series of models of famous Polish monuments.

We strongly hope that LEGO continues to actively support our events. We always have plenty of MOCs to show, but visitors also enjoy the possibility to build something or drive remote-controlled cars. We are also looking forward to challenging projects that we could cooperate with LEGO on (building Polish monuments, mentioned above, is a great example).

In 2015 we had an exhibition in Silesian Park in Chorzow. The park has multiple attractions, including a zoo, an amusement park and a planetarium. The venue was kind enough to set up a special show in the planetarium for us. We expected to see the regular stars above our heads, but instead we were shown an illustrated story of Little Prince for kids. Because LEGO implies kids, doesn't it? Since then, we always try to make it clear what A in AFOL stands for...

There is also another anecdote, related to our online forum. We have a section where any thread automatically disappears after three days of inactivity. We use it for ad-hoc discussions about nothing. Naturally, the threads often grow for days, weeks, or even months. And the longer they grow, the more determined we are to keep them alive. The current incarnation of the famous thread has been with us since December and just today it hit 2000 posts. It would be a shame to lose this legacy!

