



SHIELD OF FREEDOM

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



www.shieldoffreedom.org

Shield of Freedom

Who We Are



Shield of Freedom (SOF) is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to providing **direct humanitarian aid** to **defenders, first responders, and civilians in Ukraine** who continue to protect and support their communities in the face of Russia's ongoing war of aggression.

SOF focuses on filling critical gaps where government assistance often falls short. The organization supplies urgently needed non-lethal aid, including:

- Emergency medical supplies
- Surveillance drones for early warning and reconnaissance
- Medical evacuation and transport vehicles, including remotely guided land vehicles or drones (uncrewed ground vehicles or UGVs)
- Personal protective equipment
- Emergency power generators and large powerbanks
- Counter-drone detection equipment
- Cold-weather clothing
- Communications equipment
- Other essential humanitarian and protective items

Recipients of this aid have consistently reported that these donations **helped save lives and protect defenders, first responders, and civilians** living and operating in dangerous conditions.

Advocacy, Education, & Community Engagement

In addition to direct humanitarian support, SOF volunteers lead **educational initiatives** to raise awareness about the dire conditions faced by Ukrainians as a consequence of Russian aggression.

SOF co-organizes rallies and hosts other educational and cultural events throughout Southern California. In partnership with other organizations, SOF helps coordinate:

- Documentary film screenings
- Virtual reality tours of war zones in Ukraine
- Refugee sponsorship efforts
- Veteran support initiatives
- Memorial and remembrance events



Advocacy, Education, & Community Engagement



Advocacy in Action

Shield of Freedom is also a member of the **American Coalition for Ukraine**, a nationwide 501(c)(3) coalition coordinating grassroots initiatives in support of Ukraine across all 50 states.

SOF members and volunteers self-fund travel to Washington, D.C. twice per year to **raise awareness on Capitol Hill** about efforts to respond to Russia's unprovoked aggression in Ukraine.



Shield of Freedom

Board of Directors



Mira Rubin, President

Iulia Puchko Wilson, Vice President

Winnie Huang, Treasurer

Josh Levine, COO

Craig Gresbrink, CDO

Nadia Haywas, Board member

Oksana Bardygula, Board member



Volunteer-Driven Impact

Because SOF is an entirely **volunteer-run organization**, nearly 100 percent of donations directly support humanitarian programs and mission-related activities (see Financial Summary).

SOF's Board of Directors consists of dedicated volunteers who maintain strong relationships with local volunteers in Ukraine, first responders, medical personnel, and members of the Ukrainian military. These trusted partnerships provide frequent updates regarding the most urgent humanitarian needs on the ground.

SOF board members **regularly travel to Ukraine** to deliver supplies, meet with local partners, assist with procurement efforts, and ensure aid is distributed **efficiently and responsibly**. Feedback from these field visits helps guide purchasing priorities and maximize the effectiveness of donor support.

The organization relies entirely on the **generosity of the public** through both financial and in-kind donations to respond to urgent requests received almost daily from individuals and communities impacted by the war.



Organizational Growth & Financial Stewardship

Since its formation on August 22, 2023, Shield of Freedom has grown into a **powerful grassroots humanitarian organization** sustained by an extraordinary **community of donors, volunteers, advocates, and partners**.

Thanks to this support, SOF more than **doubled its total support and revenue from calendar year 2024 to 2025** — reflecting both growing public trust in the organization and the increasing urgency of humanitarian needs in Ukraine.

This growth has allowed SOF to significantly expand its direct humanitarian impact by:

- Delivering life-saving aid and equipment
- Supporting medical evacuations and rehabilitation efforts
- Assisting veterans and civilians affected by war
- Expanding programs focused on long-term recovery and resilience

Every contribution has helped SOF respond quickly and effectively to rapidly evolving conditions on the ground.



Organizational Growth & Financial Stewardship

One of the organization's greatest strengths is its **highly efficient volunteer-based operating model**. General and administrative expenses — including insurance costs — remained exceptionally low at:

- 1.1% of total support and revenue in 2024
- 0.4% of total support and revenue in 2025

Because overhead costs are kept extremely low, **over 90% of every dollar** supports program services and humanitarian initiatives

This efficiency allows donor contributions to **create maximum impact** — from delivering critical supplies and evacuation vehicles to supporting rehabilitation and recovery efforts for individuals wounded by war.



Shield of Freedom Statements of Activities

Years ended December 31, 2025 and December 31, 2024

Support and Revenue	2025	%	2024	%
Contributions	\$ 687,587		\$ 379,247	
Grants	187,152		9,477	
Program Service Revenue	24,906		17,001	
Other Revenue	3,079		789	
Total Support and Revenue	902,724	100.0%	406,514	100.0%
Expenses				
Program Services				
Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response	814,216	90.2%	415,360	102.2%
Cultural Activities Program	14,771	1.6%	2,670	0.7%
Veterans and Refugees Rehabilitation	921	0.1%	1,597	0.4%
Raising Awareness and Education	202	0.0%	2,083	0.5%
Total Program Services	830,110	92.0%	421,710	103.7%
Supporting Services				
Third Party Platform Fees and Bank Charges	9,733	1.1%	5,147	1.3%
General and Administrative	3,605	0.4%	4,424	1.1%
Total Supporting Services	13,338	1.5%	9,571	2.4%
Total Expenses	843,448	93.4%	431,281	106.1%
Change in Net Assets	59,276		(24,767)	
Net Assets				
Beginning of year	73,493		98,260	
End of year	\$ 132,769		\$ 73,493	

2025 Operations and Donations

In 2025, Shield of Freedom continued its core mission of delivering humanitarian and non-lethal aid to soldiers, first responders, and civilians on the front lines in Ukraine. Throughout the year, life-saving assistance was delivered to more than **dozens of brigades, battalions and various non-profit entities**, reaching thousands of defenders as well as civilian populations in affected regions.

These donations were made in direct response to specific field requests and included critical equipment and supplies such as emergency medical kits, early warning systems, landmine and drone detection devices, and other essential non-lethal protective tools. Collectively, these contributions **helped save hundreds of lives** by improving response time, situational awareness, and medical readiness in high-risk environments.



Field Verification and Accountability

SOF volunteers conducted **regular field visits** throughout 2025 to verify deliveries, document impact, meet with recipient units, and assess ongoing needs. All donations are **carefully documented** through video records (publicly shared online), invoices, and official acknowledgment letters from recipient organizations.

The majority of donation items ranged from \$50 to \$2,500, with select larger deployments reaching \$5,000 or more (such as cars), depending on operational need and urgency.

Innovation and Evolving Field Needs

In 2025, SOF **expanded its support** to include, for the first time, ground drones used for supply transport and casualty evacuation in active front-line areas under constant threat from aerial attacks. This innovation reflects the **evolving nature of battlefield conditions** and the increasing need for autonomous and remote logistics solutions.

In response to growing technical requirements from field units, SOF also provided advanced equipment including:

- Thermal imaging reconnaissance drones
- Electronic signal jammers
- Various drone detection systems

In particular, drone detection devices played a critical role in saving lives by identifying signals from incoming drones, providing early warning and enabling personnel to take immediate protective action.

Operational Efficiency and Localization



Throughout 2025, SOF continued a strategic shift toward **sourcing supplies locally within Ukraine** whenever possible. By working with trusted Ukrainian suppliers and local volunteer networks, the organization **reduced costs** associated with international shipping, customs, and handling, while also significantly improving delivery speed and responsiveness.

This localized procurement model also strengthened Ukraine's internal supply chains and supported local businesses during wartime conditions.

Additionally, SOF collaborated with other international and Ukrainian NGOs to coordinate bulk purchasing and consolidated logistics. These partnerships further improved efficiency, reduced duplication of effort, and ensured that resources were deployed where they were most urgently needed.

Through a combination of direct field engagement, operational innovation, and increased collaboration, Shield of Freedom continued to adapt its delivery model in 2025 to meet rapidly changing frontline needs while maximizing impact and accountability.

2025 Highlights

In winter of 2025 SOF's donation of sophisticated ground drones saved multiple soldiers' lives within just a few days after delivery. Ground drones are now essential to minimize casualties in areas heavily mined and under constant Russian drone surveillance. The donated ground drone was equipped with video cameras, transmitters, communications and speakers, so operators could talk to wounded soldiers being evacuated.

In November, as winter set in, SOF helped sustain a few dozen soldiers surrounded for several months by Russians and under daily attack by enemy drones. Their brave decision to remain in their positions was vital to holding off Russian advances long enough for Ukrainian forces to build up strong defensive lines to the rear. Unable to get basic supplies since late summer, they appealed to SOF, which funded supplies and a couple of delivery drones to drop off water, food, medical supplies, power banks and warm clothing. These lifesaving items helped the unit to survive and eventually they were able to withdraw intact under cover of a large snowstorm.



Power bank helped this unit to get through the winter with constant black outs

2025 Highlights

Over the last year SOF's donation of night vision goggles also **saved lives and reduced casualties** from Russian drone strikes. One brigade's commanders reported that, before receiving the donation, they were suffering up to 20 casualties per week because soldiers had to transport supplies to the front lines using flashlights to find their way in darkness. With the help of the night vision equipment, **casualties on supply runs were reduced to zero.**

Another brigade appealed for thermal (heat) detecting drones to warn against nightly incursions by small teams of Russian commandos. SOF responded quickly by delivering locally purchased reconnaissance drones. As a result, the **attacks ceased** because of the effective overwatch to detect approaching infiltrators at night.

Several brigades received laser equipped range finding optics to detect and illuminate Russian Shahed drones as they approached Ukrainian positions and allowed them to bring those drones down which **saved many civilian lives.**

SOF donations have also aided civilians in areas exposed to Russian attacks. SOF donations of thermal (heat-detecting) drones **prevented numerous deaths and injuries** by revealing small anti-personnel mines, which Russian drones have seeded indiscriminately across farm fields and other areas frequented by civilians. SOF's hand-held mine detection equipment has likewise been **essential to reducing casualties.** To add protection, SOF financed and delivered materials to harden evacuation vehicles. Likewise, SOF provided civilian police and first responders body armor plus safety goggles (eye protection). One first responder reported that she survived a Russian double-tap strike on a civilian building thanks to donated body armor.

2025 Highlights

Other donations included vehicles to transport supplies, or evacuate families from combat zones, as well as patients for medical treatment. SOF medical supplies and equipment helped treat soldiers and civilians alike, for example, a portable ultra-sound device essential for assessing injuries and other medical conditions.

Donations of simple but essential materials made a big difference. Many injured soldiers and civilians suffered complications from blood poisoning for lack of tourniquets. Hundreds of tourniquets donated by SOF ensured that each soldier and first responder had multiple tourniquets to effect rapid conversions, thereby saving lives and limbs.

Winter of 2025 has been the hardest winter so far for Ukraine with energy infrastructure mostly destroyed. People were left without heat and electricity for days. SOF responded quickly by providing generators and emergency power banks for local clinics and front-line medical stabilization centers. These were essential not only to provide power for medical equipment, but also to maintain uninterrupted communications and sustain front-line personnel.



Vehicle delivery to the 42nd
unit handed over in Dnipro in
August 2025

2025 Highlights

In addition to supporting civilians affected by the war who are receiving medical treatment in San Diego, Shield of Freedom launched a veteran support program in 2025 to coordinate volunteers providing social and practical support for veterans undergoing treatment in the area.

One of the first participants in the program was a triple-amputee veteran Andrij, who was welcomed and supported by local Shield of Freedom volunteers throughout his entire stay in San Diego. Volunteers advocated for his medical needs and helped ensure that he and his family received comprehensive support services, contributing to a successful course of treatment and smoother integration into the local community.



Padres Experience for Andrij
provided by a local donor

On the Horizon for Shield of Freedom

As the war continues and humanitarian needs grow, ongoing community support remains essential.

Shield of Freedom remains committed to expanding its programs, strengthening partnerships, and increasing its impact both in Ukraine and within communities supporting recovery efforts abroad. With ongoing public support, SOF will continue standing alongside those whose lives have been forever changed by war — delivering aid, restoring hope, and helping save lives.

Looking toward the future, SOF is actively developing new initiatives focused on long-term recovery, rehabilitation, and sustainable community support.

Inspired by the resilience and strength of veterans recovering from war-related injuries, Shield of Freedom has begun developing the **Ukraine Healing Hub** — a safe, community-centered space dedicated to the continued physical and emotional recovery of veterans and civilians impacted by war. The vision for the Hub includes a nonprofit community fitness facility that will also serve as SOF's storefront and gathering space. The organization is currently finalizing its business plan and pursuing grant funding to bring this project to life.

SOF also continues to **expand opportunities for direct community engagement** through customized volunteer trips to Ukraine. These trips allow supporters to meet local partners, experience Ukrainian culture, and participate firsthand in humanitarian and recovery efforts.

On the Horizon for Shield of Freedom

In 2026, SOF's volunteer initiatives will further expand through the launch of **Mechanics Without Borders** — a program designed to bring international volunteer mechanics together with employed Ukrainian veterans to repair and maintain civilian vehicles donated by NGOs and humanitarian organizations.

As thousands of humanitarian and civilian vehicles remain in constant use under demanding wartime conditions, reliable maintenance has become increasingly critical. Ukraine is currently facing a severe shortage of skilled mechanics, as many have been deployed for military service. This initiative aims not only to help address that urgent need, but also to create meaningful employment opportunities for veterans.

Through these growing initiatives, Shield of Freedom hopes to continue building **sustainable, community-driven programs** that support recovery, resilience, and hope for years to come.



Total Aid

May 2025–May 2026



of
Units

Reconnaissance Drones and Accessories	520
Communication and Connectivity Equipment	152
Evacuation Vehicles & Repairs	71
Drone Detectors & Anti-Drone Shields	29
Optics	49
Computer Equipment and Accessories	10
Energy Generators and Power Stations	110
Medical Supplies (tourniquets, chest seals & other supplies)	1684
Protective Gear	298
Mine Detectors, Mechanical Equipment, and Misc.	589

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