

# EU Scientology Representative Joins Project SHRINEs for Interfaith Protection of Places of Worship

*The Innovative Project SHRINEs Advocates for Protection of Places of Worship through Interfaith Dialogue and Advanced Technology*

PYRZOWICE, PYRZOWICE, POLAND, October 19, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The protection of places of worship has taken a significant leap forward with the launch of the groundbreaking ISF-funded project "[SHRINEs](#)" (Raising Awareness for the protection of places of worship by promoting interfaith dialogue on the use of advanced technologies). Over the course of 24 months, this ambitious initiative aims to enhance the security and safety of places of worship while fostering an interfaith and multidisciplinary network to address contemporary risks and threats in these sacred spaces.



Sanctuary of Our Lady of Jasna Gora - This photo was taken by Przemysław JahrAutorem zdjęcia jest Przemysław JahrWykorzystując zdjęcie proszę podać jako autora:Przemysław Jahr / Wikimedia Commons, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

## Project Objectives and Partnerships

SHRINEs is a [consortium](#) comprising 10 partners, including 4 religious organizations, representing the Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, and Protestant faiths, along with public and private entities, academic institutions, and Law Enforcement Agencies. This diverse collaboration aims to identify innovative technological solutions and effective mitigation measures to safeguard places of worship from criminal activities, man-made attacks, and natural disasters.

In a unique initiative, religious communities, Law Enforcement Agencies, and Public Authorities have been actively engaged in assessing risk factors, threat perceptions, and cooperation opportunities to protect places of worship effectively. Additionally, technology developers are working to implement innovative solutions that will fortify the safety and security of these sacred

spaces.

## Hackathon Event: "Tech for SHRINES"

To identify the most effective solutions for countering threats and raising awareness, a Hackathon event called "Tech for SHRINES" was organized in Assisi, Italy. A Committee of Experts evaluated various technological solutions to enhance the protection of places of worship and their visitors through the application of cutting-edge technology.

## Key Workshop in Poland

A significant step in the SHRINES project was the 2nd Workshop held in Poland from October 17th to October 18th, 2023, to assess threats and vulnerabilities to places of worship. The workshop's agenda included discussions led by experts and practitioners in the field of security and safety.

On the 17th of October, 2023, the conference room of the Katowice Airport played host to an assembly of experts, scholars, and practitioners dedicated to safeguarding places of worship. This gathering marked the commencement of the 2nd Workshop of the SHRINES project, an initiative that is pioneering the cause of protection and security for these sacred spaces.

The day began with a buzz of anticipation as participants gathered for registration. Among those in attendance were representatives from religious organizations, law enforcement agencies, academic institutions, and other key stakeholders. The event opened with a warm welcome and introductory remarks, setting the tone for an engaging and productive session.

Led by Professor Adrian Siadkowski from the University of Łódź, a series of insightful discussions unfolded. Conclusions drawn from the 1st workshop in Nice, presented by Dr. Marco Dugato of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy, shed light on the defined threats faced by places of worship. These findings were complemented by the experiences shared by Ana Gillem Sanchez from the Elche Local Police in Spain, illustrating successful cooperation between local law enforcement and religious site managers.

The concept of "Security by Design" within the European Union framework was introduced by Dr. Łukasz Szymankiewicz from WSB University in Poland. This approach underlines the significance of preemptive measures in security planning.

The impact of heritage crime on places of worship, as well as its tackling through effective partnerships and best practices, was elucidated by Robin Edwards from ONIS, UK. Meanwhile, the researchers from Politecnico di Torino in Italy, Dr. Fabio Giulio Tonolo, and Dr. Lorenzo Teppati Lose, presented a white paper outlining innovative technologies for safeguarding cultural heritage from various risks.

A unique aspect of this workshop was the active involvement of all participants. Open discussions took place, allowing voices from all backgrounds to be heard, be it from academia, law enforcement, and even the different religious communities like Catholic Church, Jewish Community, Greek Orthodox Church, the Church of [Scientology](#) and others. This created a rich tapestry of perspectives and insights, contributing to a deeper understanding of the challenges facing places of worship.

The event shifted to a study session at the "Katowice" Airport. Here, participants explored the possibilities of implementing security measures that are typically used in protecting critical infrastructure and public spaces to safeguard religious sites.

The evening concluded with a vibrant networking cocktail event, held in the unique setting of the historic Coal Mine "Guido" in Zabrze, 320 meters underground. It was an occasion to build connections, continue discussions, and reflect on the significant progress made during the day.

Ivan Arjona, in representation of the Scientologists said after the workshop "I am happy to having been invited to participate to such a team task joining academia and representatives from different religions. This goes along with what our founder L. Ron Hubbard intended from the beginning of our religion, which is to work hand in hand with other denominations to create a safer place and a better world".

During the 2nd day of the SHRINEs project workshop participants embarked on a meaningful journey to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Jasna Gora. This sacred place is a testament to Poland's spiritual and historical heritage and it has always held great significance for people from all over who come here as pilgrims or visitors.

Before the visit and the first presentations, the workshop's participants were received by the Prior of the Shrine in a true welcoming of all religions and academia. The visit to this revered sanctuary offered participants an experience, where they had the opportunity to delve into its fascinating history and gain insights into how it has shaped Polish culture and identity. One of the highlights was exploring the shrines security measures, which ensure that valuable works of cultural heritage have been protected here for centuries.

This workshop was an essential part of the SHRINEs project, where experts and stakeholders came together to address threats, vulnerabilities, and innovative solutions to ensure the safety and security of places of worship. It underlined the significance of collaboration in creating a safer environment for worshippers and visitors.

The SHRINEs project is a testament to the power of collaboration and innovation in safeguarding places of worship. Through interfaith dialogue and the application of advanced technologies, the project seeks to create a safer and more secure environment for worshippers and visitors.

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