



PRESS RELEASE

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William S. White wins first-ever European Foundation Centre Philanthropy Compass Prize

The EFC has awarded its first-ever Philanthropy Compass Prize to William S. White, Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. The Prize recognises outstanding contributions to the development of the EFC and the European philanthropic sector as a whole. The Prize ceremony took place on 9 November during the Centre's 20th anniversary celebrations in Berlin.

Mr White has worked for the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation in the United States for 40 years, becoming its President in 1976 and its Chairman in 1988. During his tenure, the Mott Foundation has contributed greatly to civil society development in Central and Eastern Europe, and has strongly supported philanthropic infrastructure at local, regional, national and international levels.

Accepting the award, Mr White said, "It is really gripping to get an award for having a lot of fun that was productive. I made a lot of friends, met a lot of new people. I think we accomplished something." He went on to talk about his foundation's funding of civil society in Central and Eastern Europe: "We realised that when the Wall fell in 1989 and the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, there was an historic opportunity. In the States, we never thought this would happen - this was an opportunity and it had to be seized."

The Compass Prize will be given to the navigators that have, and continue to, break the mould of European philanthropy, both through their relationship with the EFC as well as with their peers. This Prize will not be given out annually, or even on a predictable basis, but rather will be awarded in extraordinary circumstances to recognise unique and exemplary contributions to the European foundation community. The EFC Management Committee, Chief Executive, and the past recipients of the award will jointly determine prize winners, as well as the appropriate occasion to offer the prize.

Speaking at the ceremony, Emílio Rui Vilar, EFC Chair and President of Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, said Mr White "was really a leader and he helped very much in steering the European foundation movement during these last 20 years. And coming from a country of travellers, I really feel that a compass is the best way to pay this tribute."

Raymond Georis, EFC Founding Chair, paid tribute to Mr White as well, describing the different projects that Mr White helped him realise in the beginning of their relationship. "I was wearing the European Foundation Centre hat, the European Cooperation Fund hat, the Youth-Empowerment Partnership Programme hat, the East-West Parliamentary Project hat and so on – thanks to you Bill, each hat received its most needed yearly contribution from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. The time has come for me to take off all these hats to you, Bill."

Some 200 representatives of foundations gathered for the 20th anniversary of the EFC at the "Moving European Philanthropy Forward" conference held 9-10 November in Berlin. The conference took place at the Brandenburgische Akademie Der Wissenschaften, supported by EFC members Bertelsmann Stiftung, Körber Stiftung, Robert Bosch Stiftung and Volkswagen Stiftung.

Note to Editors

About the EFC

- The European Foundation Centre (EFC), founded in 1989, is the leading membership association representing public-benefit foundations at European level. It is based in Brussels
- The EFC develops and pursues activities in line with its objectives: creating an enabling legal and fiscal environment for foundations; documenting the foundation landscape; strengthening the infrastructure of the foundation sector; and promoting collaboration, both among foundations and between foundations and other actors, to advance the public good in Europe and beyond.
- The EFC currently has 227 members including community and independent foundations as well as corporate funders spread across 40 countries. A majority (86%) are based in Europe.
- EFC members collectively manage over **€140 billion in assets** and have a total annual expenditure of over **€7.7 billion**.
- The EFC has established a range of Interest Groups and Fora which facilitate cooperation and exchanges of good practice among members across a wide range of fields of activity including: diversity, migration and integration; human rights and disability; protecting the environment; HIV/AIDS; global health challenges; social investment; Central and Eastern Europe.
- The EFC hosts the secretariat of **Donors and Foundations' Networks in Europe (DAFNE)**, which supports cooperation among national networks covering 22 European countries. This network and collaboration with the EFC contributes to strengthening the voice and the representation of the views of this sector at a European level.
- The EFC coordinates the **European Forum on Philanthropy and Research Funding**, which was launched in 2007 with the support of the European Commission and other partners.

About the sector

- The foundation sector is growing dynamically and is gradually achieving a significant economic footprint. There are 110,000 public-benefit foundations (almost 4 foundations per 10,000 people) located in the European Union.
- Some 43% of these foundations were set up as recent as the early 1990s.
- It is estimated that in 2006 one public-benefit foundation was created per day in Spain and two per day in Germany. Foundations spend between €83 billion and €150 billion annually, over twice as much as the US foundation sector.
- Foundations are also big employers, providing direct full-time employment to between 750,000 to 1 million people in the EU.

For more information about the EFC and its members please see: www.efc.be

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