

PRESS RELEASE

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Announcing the 20th Annual Conference of the European Foundation Centre

FIGHTING POVERTY Creating opportunities

in Rome (Italy) from 14 to 16 May 2009

More than 600 delegates, from at least 60 different countries, will be taking part in the 20th Annual Conference of the European Foundation Centre (EFC) in Rome from 14 to 16 May 2009. The main theme of the Conference is “Fighting Poverty – Creating opportunities”.

The Conference will highlight how foundations are in a unique position to support innovation, to develop effective solutions, and contribute to creating opportunities for fighting poverty – both in Europe and also in other parts of the world. The opening plenary session will be held at the **Auditorium Parco della Musica** on Thursday 14 May, in the morning from 10:00 until 12:00.

The keynote speakers during the opening session will be:

- **Giorgio Napolitano**, President of the Italian Republic
- **Emilio Rui Vilar**, President of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Chair of the EFC
- **Emmanuele Francesco Maria Emanuele**, President of Fondazione Roma

During the three days of the Conference, delegates will be offered a choice of more than 30 sessions and site visits. The main Conference venue will be the Rome Cavalieri Hotel, which was chosen because it is one of the only hotels in Rome capable of hosting such a large Conference.

Looking forward to a successful Conference, **Gerry Salole**, Chief Executive of the European Foundation Centre (EFC), wishes to underline the particular relevance of the chosen theme:

“Foundations throughout Europe and around the world have been working for many years and in a myriad of ways to address the joint issues of poverty and exclusion, and have developed a significant array of actions to support and empower people who would otherwise find themselves shut out or left behind. Sessions at our Rome Conference will explore the role foundations can play in developing solutions to tackle both ‘traditional’ poverty and other forms of inequality.

“I am convinced that this theme is especially important in the context of the global economic downturn. While the impacts of this ongoing crisis are being felt at all levels of society, and in all countries of the world, the consequences are especially severe for the poorest members of our societies, who are now finding that the opportunities open to them are reducing rapidly.”

ENDS

For more information about the **EFC Conference 2009**, including the **Final Programme**, please see the EFC website: <http://www.efc.be/aga/AGA2009/programme.htm>

Invitation to journalists: In case you would like to attend and report on the Conference in Rome, please complete the attached registration form and return it to the EFC office in Brussels.

In case you have any questions about the EFC please contact: Ben Carlin, Communications Officer, European Foundation Centre; Tel.: +32.2.512.8938; email: bcarlin@efc.be

Notes to Editors

- 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 currently has 237 members including community and independent foundations as well as corporate funders spread across 40 countries. A majority (86%) are based in Europe.
- 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 has established a range of Interest Groups and Forums 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.
- 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.
- For more information about the EFC and its members please see: www.efc.be