About the European Foundation Centre

The European Foundation Centre (EFC) is a network of foundations and philanthropic institutions committed to the development and promotion of institutional philanthropy in Europe and globally.

The EFC was established in 1989, the year that marked the end of a divided East-West Europe. It was created by 7 European foundations with a vision to engage in the development of this new Europe by setting up a platform for collaboration, peer-learning and exchange to promote philanthropic engagement in Europe and beyond. Today EFC’s diverse membership includes some of the most influential foundations and corporate funders from around the world that are dedicated to contributing to the well-being and advancement of society, the alleviation of social ills, and the promotion of social progress.

The EFC serves as the centre of intelligence on the philanthropic sector in Europe, monitoring trends in global philanthropy and the developments in the legal and political environment affecting its members. It is also a convener of debates and exchanges between its members and other relevant stakeholders, including regulatory authorities across Europe and around the world, on issues important for the sector. It offers members the point of entry for engagement with high-level policy makers to make the case for institutional philanthropy; encourages and facilitates networking and peer-learning; provides opportunities for enhancing and amplifying the impact of members’ work and outreach through collaboration, partnership, and the incubation of joint projects and campaigns. By collecting and disseminating data on the sector, success stories and best practices in philanthropy, it promotes and communicates the value of institutional philanthropy to society thus contributing to an environment in which philanthropy can flourish.

For more detailed information about the EFC’s work, programmes, peer-learning and exchange, policy engagement, networks etc. please click here.

For more information: www.efc.be

About the EFC Annual General Assembly (AGA) & Conference

The EFC’s AGA and Conference is the largest international conference in philanthropy, engaging the European and global philanthropy sector to grapple with deep societal issues. It offers a unique opportunity for philanthropic actors with an international outlook to meet with their peers, exchange know-how and experience, test new ideas, and form partnerships. Delegates benefit from the experience and insights of top-level speakers, politicians, thinkers, social innovators and peers in the field, who frame current topics and trends, and open up debate on institutional philanthropy’s role in these issues.

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1 * The seven founding members: Charities Aid Foundation (UK), European Cultural Foundation (NL), Fondation de France (FR), Fundação Oriente (PT), King Baudouin Foundation (BE), Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft (GER), and Stichting Koningin Juliana Fonds (now Oranje Fonds) (NL)
Who attends?
EFC conferences attract the heads and senior management of major philanthropic organisations from across Europe and the world, as well as representatives of smaller philanthropic institutions and private funders with a European or international outreach. Each year, over 500 delegates attend the conference. This diverse group of participants representing either funding and operating foundations or hybrids of the two, corporate funders, INGOs, academia and policymakers are committed to developing sustainable and inclusive societies.

What is the thematic content of the conference?
The conference addresses societal issues that are relevant to the future of Europe and the world at large, such as inequality, social injustice, and inclusive and participatory societies. Each year an overarching theme is chosen that provides a lens through which to view current issues as well as the various areas that philanthropy works in – from gender to ageing to urban development to research, migration, climate change, good governance and democracy development. The interactive debates and discussions aim to expose best practices on proven solutions and innovative approaches.

This year the theme is “Courage to re-embrace solidarity in Europe – Can philanthropy take the lead?”

The conference will feature over 20 sessions including three plenaries the first of which will feature a keynote speech by Professor Jerzy Buzek, Solidarity activist in the 1980s, Prime Minister of Poland (1997-2001) and President of the European Parliament (2009-2012). He and other inspiring speakers from a range of sectors will lay out the broad questions around solidarity, philanthropy’s role and ways forward in facing the complex and shifting challenges our societies are facing.

The three plenaries are:
31 May: The Polish journey: Finding solid(arity) ground in times of shifting sands
1 June: Reviving and re-embracing the spirit of solidarity
2 June: Building bridges not walls: philanthropy’s contribution to solidarity around the world

Click here for the full programme.

Who are the keynote speakers?
The latest confirmed keynote speakers can be found online.

- Opening plenary:
  Keynote speech: Professor Jerzy Buzek, MEP, former Prime Minister of Poland, former president of the European Parliament
  Panel discussion:
  Katarzyna Batko, Watchdog Poland
  Elżbieta Korolczuk, Akcja Demokracja
  Karolina Stubińska - Center for Support and Integration of Immigrants
  Katarzyna Szymielewicz, Panoptykon Foundation
  Karolina Wigura, Kultura Liberalna
  Moderator: Dorota Warakomska, Journalist and President, Congress of Women

- Middle plenary:
  Speakers:
  Brendan Cox, The Jo Cox Foundation
  Janis A. Emmanouilidis, Director of Studies, European Policy Centre (EPC)
Catherine Fieschi, Executive Director, Counterpoint
Alberto Masetti-Zannini, Strategy Director, Impact Hub
Moderator: Lisa Jordan, Senior Director of Strategy and Learning, Porticus

- Closing plenary:
  Speakers:
  Bolor Legjeem, Programme Director, The Mongolian Women’s Fund – MONES
  Felecia Lucky, Executive Director, Black Belt Community Foundation
  Amitabh Behar, Executive Director, National Foundation for India
  Irüngü Houghton, Chair, Kilimani Project Foundation, Kenya.
  Moderator: Jenny Hodgson, Global Fund for Community Foundations

Why Poland?
After a very successful annual Conference Krakow in 2000, we are now very excited to return to Poland and hold the event in Warsaw for the first time. Our current Chair, Ewa Kulik-Bielinska (Executive Director Stefan Batory Foundation in Poland), who was elected in 2014 is heading the organisation of the conference and also represents two other important firsts for the EFC – the first female chair and the first from the central and eastern Europe region.

Nowhere symbolises the 2017 theme quite like Poland – the cradle of the post-war solidarity movement in Europe. The roundtable talks which took place in the presidential palace next to the Bristol Hotel led to free elections in June 1989 and provided a catalyst for anti-communist transitions in all other CEE countries (including the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Velvet Revolution in Prague).

Decades later, we see a clear and urgent need for such solidarity once more. The biggest challenges institutional philanthropy faces, from climate change to migration to social justice, inequality and exclusion, no matter how unique they appear on the surface, all have one key element in common – they affect each and every one of us. Solidarity – working together to find solutions and forging a strong community of responsibility for these aforementioned issues – is therefore of paramount importance if we are to get from where we are to where we want to be.

The Host Committee: How local foundations and corporate funders in the host country contribute to the conference
Hosting an EFC AGA and Conference is an excellent opportunity to give visibility to local philanthropy while strengthening connections with the broader European and global philanthropic landscape. The conference brings European and global philanthropy to Warsaw, and opens new pathways for thinking, operating and collaborating for philanthropic organisations based in the host country. The networking, peer exchange, and partnering potential of this conference is unparalleled.

Who are the members of the Host Committee
- BGŻ PNB Paribas Foundation
- City Handlowy - Kronenberg Foundation
- Evens Foundation
- Foundation for Polish Science
- Orange Foundation
- Polish-American Freedom Foundation
- Stefan Batory Foundation
- TechSoup Global
The partner of the Conference is the City of Warsaw.

More information is available [here](#).

**A sample of past AGA & Conferences – Themes and participant numbers**

- **2016 Amsterdam** – Imagining and investing in our future (666 participants)
- **2015 Milan** - Philanthropy: Visions and Energy for Change (631 participants)
- **2014 Sarajevo** - Rethinking Europe: Solidarity, Civil Society and Political Governance (478 participants)
- **2013 Copenhagen** - Sustainable cities: Foundations and our urban future (641 participants)
- **2012 Belfast** – Peace through Social Justice: A Role for Foundations? (551 participants)
- **2011 Cascais** – Resources and Sustainability - The Ocean (595 participants)

**A united voice – foundations standing together in solidarity**

At every EFC annual conference, the world of institutional philanthropy comes together and works in solidarity on the current pressing issues. Below are some recent examples.

- **Joint Statement on ‘Tackling forced migration’**
  666 representatives from the world of philanthropy, gathered at the European Foundation Centre’s Annual Conference on 26-28 May in Amsterdam, issued a call to action to their peers urging them to join forces to tackle forced migration, one of today’s greatest challenges. The statement called for a united response to addressing the human tragedy and challenges presented by the millions of people being forced to leave their homes and countries, due to violence, persecution, war, the effects of climate change and economic inequality.

- **Joint Statement on ‘Unaccompanied minors’**
  During the 2015 EFC AGA and Conference which gathered 631 participants, Fondazione Cariplo and Compagnia di San Paolo joined forces with a group of several EFC members to support unaccompanied minors arriving in Europe, looking beyond emergency measures to their long-term welfare and inclusion. Unaccompanied minors who make it to Europe find themselves exposed to countless potential dangers including trafficking, hunger, health issues, and denial of their human rights when placed in detention. These minors have a valuable part to play in their new communities, an opportunity often overlooked.

- **Flood relief campaign, Sarajevo**
  From 15th to 17th of May 2014 in Sarajevo, Mozaik Foundation hosted the European Foundation Centre's AGA and Conference. Over 500 participants talked about solidarity, civil society and political governance. At the same time, 70 kilometres from the conference venue, the Rivers Bosna, Drina, Sana, Sava, Vrbas and others burst their banks and caused terrible damage and loss of human lives, homes, livestock, and even to entire villages. 270,000 euros were raised by delegates towards the rebuilding projects in the aftermath.

- **Joint Statement on ‘European Foundations express their solidarity with Ukraine’**
  Over 500 foundations and other philanthropic actors gathered in Sarajevo during the aforementioned AGA and Conference in 2014 to reflect on the theme of Rethinking Europe: Solidarity, Civil Society and Political Governance. While debating the
challenges and needs of the European community, the EFC and conference
deleagtes released a joint statement expressing solidarity with the Ukrainian people
and civil society and called for an urgent resolution to the current crisis through
dialogue and reconciliation.

Quick links

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- Conference video
- Report and video of highlights of 2016 conference

About the EFC
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- EFC Annual Review 2015
- Strategic Framework
- Social media links
  - Facebook: EuropeanFoundationCentre
  - LinkedIn: european-foundation-centre
  - Twitter: The_EFC
  - YouTube: EuroFoundationCentre
  - Conference hashtag: #Courage4Solidarity