

Highlights from EFC Conference 2018 “Culture Matters: connecting citizens, uniting communities”

Brussels, 8 June 2018 – Right in the middle of the European Year of Culture, over 600 philanthropy professionals from 37 countries, representing some 316 different organisations came together to debate, listen to, and get inspired by the theme of this year’s European Foundation Centre annual conference: [Culture Matters: connecting citizens, uniting communities](#).

“Perhaps the great challenge of Europe, or of the Europe in which we want to live, consists in reconciling two things that seem not reconcilable in principle: cultural diversity and political unity,” stated **Massimo Lapucci**, EFC Chair and Secretary General of Fondazione CRT. *“Without cultural diversity, Europe will be impoverished... At the same time, as history taught us, without political unity Europe is condemned to destruction. Europe must be politically ONE and culturally plural.”* ([Click here for full speech](#)).

The conference held on 29-31 May in Brussels was one of the many diverse events, activities and cultural happenings which took place during Philanthropy Week. These included:

- a [high-level meeting with policymakers](#), foundations and other stakeholders to explore ways of working together to create a single market for philanthropy in Europe,
- three exciting conference [plenaries](#) with passionate, outspoken keynote speakers – **Jan Goossens**, Director, Festival de Marseille / **Cem Mansur**, Conductor, Music Director and Founder of the Turkish National Youth Philharmonic Orchestra / **Nina Obuljen Koržinek**, Croatian Minister of Culture / **Martine Reicherts**, Member of the Board of Directors of the Central Bank of Luxembourg and former Director General for Education and Culture (DG EAC) / **Jenny Sealey**, Artistic Director, Graeae Theatre / **Lemn Sissay**, author, poet and broadcaster,
- over thirty sessions addressing different aspects of society, culture, today’s challenges and opportunities,
- [“Walk and Talk”](#) networking sessions,
- a private visit to [“From Tiepolo to Richter, dialogue in Europe”](#) an exhibition organised by the King Baudouin Foundation featuring 100 great works from its collections and those of 14 other foundations across Europe (Musée du Cinquantenaire, 24 May – 30 September),

- an [EFC-hosted exhibition](#) in Philanthropy House, showcasing a wide range of its members' projects on improving social spaces and the restoration of buildings, parks, museums etc. (Philanthropy House, 10 May – 5 September)

At the Annual General Assembly which took place during the conference, EFC members voted on and approved the new composition of the EFC's [Management Committee and Governing Council](#), and the new [Annual Review](#), presenting the key milestones of the EFC's 2017 journey towards its Strategic Framework, was launched.

Looking ahead, **Lapucci** said that *“the main challenges for the philanthropic sector include the creation of a Single Market for philanthropy - perhaps beginning with a European Year for Philanthropy - the introduction of guarantee funds for projects with a social impact, and the use of Big Data for the non-profit sector.”*

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Conference

The EFC's Conference is the largest international conference in philanthropy, engaging the European and global philanthropy sector to grapple with deep 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. This year the theme is **Culture Matters: connecting citizens & uniting communities**".

Each year the conference offers a unique opportunity for over 600 heads and senior managers of major philanthropic organisations from across Europe and the world 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 keynote speakers who frame current topics and trends, and open up debate on institutional philanthropy's role in these issues.

For further information please visit:

- www.efc.be/aga
- [Photos of the conference](#)
- [#PhilanthropyWorks](#)

The Conference Committee of the EFC's 2018 Annual Conference

The success of the conference depends on the vital contribution of the EFC's members and other foundations in the host country. The Committee comprises representatives from Europe's most prominent foundations and philanthropic organisations: Luc Luyten (Conference Chair) – Belgian Federation of Philanthropic Foundations, Dawn Austwick – Big Lottery Fund, Stefania Coni – Fondazione CRT, Rui Esgaio – Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Adriana Esmeijer – Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, Corinna Hörst – German Marshall Fund of the United States, Seçil Kınay – Vehbi Koç Foundation, Ignasi Miró Borràs– Fundació Bancaria "la Caixa", Stefan Schäfers – King Baudouin Foundation, Michael Schwarz– Stiftung Mercator, Anna Talasniemi – Kone Foundation, Frédéric Théret – Fondation de France and Max von Abendroth – DAFNE.

About the European Foundation Centre

The European Foundation Centre (EFC) is the platform of institutional philanthropy with a focus on Europe, but also with an eye to the global philanthropic landscape. It is a network of foundations and philanthropic institutions committed to the development and promotion of institutional philanthropy in Europe and globally.

With the aim of being the voice of institutional philanthropy in Europe, the EFC promotes and communicates the value of institutional philanthropy to society thus contributing to an environment in which philanthropy can flourish. It serves as a hub of sector exchange and intelligence, to help its members increase the impact of their added value in society. www.efc.be

Press contact

Catherine Lennon | EFC | tel.: +32.2.512.8938 | email: clennon@efc.be

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