

European philanthropy lays its foundations in Brussels

Brussels, 1 July 2011 - Philanthropy has a new home in Brussels thanks to the foresight and financial commitment of six European foundations. Foundation House will be situated at 94, rue Royale, in the heart of the city, and will welcome visitors to discover - through conferences, debates, trainings and exhibitions - the important work of foundations and the countless ways in which they impact the lives of European citizens.

Due to open in 2013, Foundation House provides a focal point and a public face to a sector whose work until now has remained under the radar. A truly European initiative, Foundation House is conceived and supported by six foundations located across Europe: **King Baudouin Foundation** (Belgium), **Körber-Stiftung** (Germany), **Institusjonen Fritt Ord** (Norway), **Realdania** (Denmark), **Stichting Fonds 1818** (The Netherlands) and the **Van Leer Group Foundation** (The Netherlands). Each foundation has provided one million euros in mission-related funds to develop Foundation House as a green, accessible, state-of-the-art and multi-purposed facility.

A number of philanthropic organisations will reside under the same roof, including the European Foundation Centre (EFC), while the house will also offer a “home away from home” for foundations in need of temporary proximity to the EU institutions, international media or non-profit organisations.

‘Foundation House signals a coming of age for the European philanthropic community as for the first time we will have a common and open space to engage with the general public, as well as our strategic partners, and to illustrate the wealth of good work foundations are undertaking for citizens across Europe,’ says Gerry Salole, EFC Chief Executive Officer. *‘With the European project in the throes of its greatest political and financial crisis, the establishment of Foundation House is a manifest and concrete message from foundations of their faith in Europe’s future.’*

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About foundations in Europe

It is estimated that there are some 110,000 foundations in Europe, collectively spending between 83 and 150 billion euros annually on projects and programmes, and providing employment to up to one million Europeans. Foundations come in many shapes and sizes, with some offering grants while others prefer to operate their own programmes. In towns, cities, regions and countries across Europe, they can be found running or funding hospitals and universities; protecting historic buildings, promoting cultural activities, stimulating economic development and employment, supporting scientific excellence, advancing civil and human rights, engaging in environmental conservation, and much, much more.

About the Foundation House funders



King Baudouin Foundation

Established in 1976 on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of King Baudouin's reign, KBF is an independent and pluralistic foundation that pursues sustainable ways to bring about social justice, democracy and respect for diversity.

www.kbs-frb.be



Körber-Stiftung

Established in 1959 by the industrialist and inventor, Dr Kurt A. Körber, the foundation supports international dialogue, education and science, civic involvement and culture in Hamburg.

www.koerber-stiftung.de



Institusjonen Fritt Ord

Established in 1974 by Narvesens Kioskkompani, a family owned company, the foundation aims to protect and promote the freedom of expression, and the environment for the freedom of expression in Norway; to support other aspects of Norwegian Culture, primarily those dealing with free speech; and, in special cases, to promote the freedom of expression in other countries

www.fritt-ord.no



Realdania

Established in 2000 following the merger of two financial institutions, the foundation aims to initiate and support projects that improve the quality of life for the common good through the built environment.

www.realdania.dk

Fonds 1818

Stichting Fonds 1818

Established in 1992, the Hague-based foundation supports support projects that contribute to the maintenance and improvement of a liveable Dutch society, aimed at a sustainable future.

www.fonds1818.nl



Van Leer Group Foundation

Established in 1969 with the bequeathed fortune of the Dutch industrialist and philanthropist, Bernard Van Leer, the foundation promotes the optimum development of socially and economically disadvantaged children up to the age of eight, with the objective of developing their innate potential to the greatest possible extent; contributes the development and strengthening of a Jewish, democratic national home in Israel committed to a free, equitable and just society for all of its citizens, and contributes the pursuit of regional peace for the benefit of social, cultural and individual lives in Israel.

www.vanleergroupfoundation.nl

About the EFC

The European Foundation Centre (EFC), founded in 1989, is an association representing more than 230 public-benefit foundations and corporate funders active in philanthropy in Europe and beyond. 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.

www.efc.be