

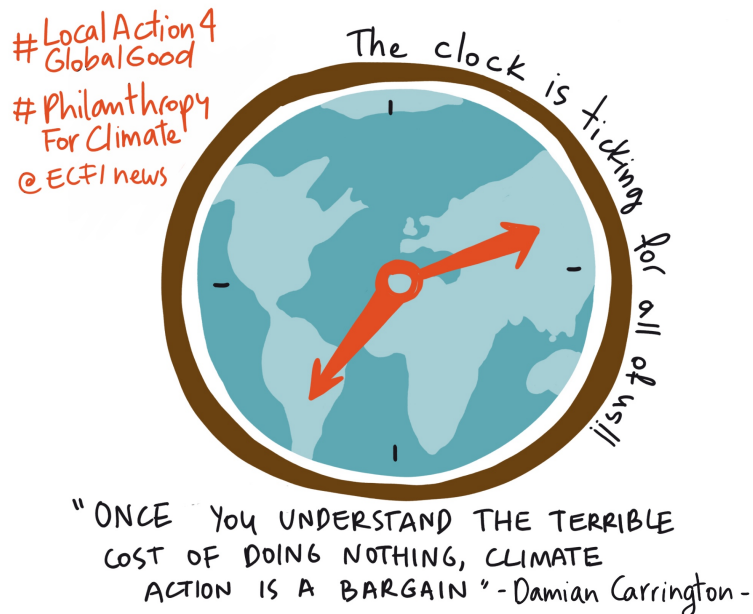


Acting on Climate

How do community foundations act to mitigate the effects of climate change and support sustainable development of the communities they serve?

6th Oct 2021

CLIMATE WORKSHOP



European Community Foundation Climate Workshop. Visuals Marina Roa from SenseTribe

Introduction

COP26 was another sign that we can't leave climate change actions in the hands of politicians and Governments alone. Philanthropy can and should act. Community foundations have put the well-being of the communities they serve at the core of their mission. Now communities everywhere face different challenges related to climate change and issues like health, food security, natural disasters are affecting the daily lives of citizens.

This report presents examples from the field relating to climate action in three broad areas:

Communication, education & advocacy;

Strategy, programming & funding;

Operations, endowments & assets

An example of a methodology for helping determine appropriate action is presented along with resources including the International Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change and the European Philanthropy Coalition on Climate.



Foreword by Carola Carazzone

I have been interested in poverty since I was a child. I have been a human rights activist since I was 16. During university and then practicing as a human rights lawyer, I discovered quite early how difficult it was to overcome with the dichotomies, mental silos, tunnel views between human rights and economic development, economic development and environment, environment, and human rights. Separated backgrounds, different kinds of professionals, stand-alone strategies, tunnelled policies, and self-contained/insulated projects were our enemies in front of social change.

As Edgar Morin pointed out so many times, with each in its own bubble and in an eco-chamber, there won't be advancement for a more equal and sustainable world. For my generation of change-makers, it was mind blowing when Amartya Sen, the economist Nobel prize winner, published *Development as Freedom* in 1999, demonstrating the fundamental role of civil and political rights in the elimination of poverty and the mutually reinforcing nature, the indivisibility and interdependence of civil, cultural economic, environmental, political, and social fundamental rights and freedoms in promoting and achieving social change and a more equal and sustainable world.

Today we see many unequal worlds but one planet. One health: human, plants, animals we are all connected. In sub-Saharan Africa there has been a long-standing philosophical concept about this: *ubuntu* in Bantu language: I am because we are. Local and global dimensions are intertwined. Community foundations and climate change. Community foundations and the Agenda 2030. Where I come from, Italy, climate change is still a polarizing issue, something "lefty", for environmental activists. But climate change is a societal issue, not "only" an environmental one, affecting each and all of us.

In Italy we have glaciers melting in the Alps, Venice at concrete risk of disappearing, desertification in broad areas of Sicily. And yet climate change is somehow perceived as an alien problem, that is responsibility of someone else, either public institutions or activists. Or, on another hand, climate change is perceived as such an enormous challenge

affecting all the dimensions of life and of our lifestyles (consumption and production system, food systems, travelling...) that is so immense that it paralyzes.

My message today is to call for humility and courage.

Humility because change-making does not happen because of an individual hero or genius, but through collective intelligence and collective impact. Everyone is a changemaker. A changemaker takes a step, plants a seed and then someone else will take it from there, it is like in a relay, the baton will be taken by someone else that will start from where the previous one ended. Together we can be the change.

Courage because often the foundations' world is a conservative one and philanthropy support organizations must lead from behind. In November 2019, me and my team proposed to Assifero board of directors, climate as the theme for 2020 and it was refused. We then realized that we had to go the other way around and engage almost one by one our foundations members. We did it building on the shoulders of the ACF UK funders' commitment and CFF French funders' commitment and AEF Spanish funders' commitment. Today Assifero has launched the Italian funders' commitment on September 15th, 2021 and co-organized the Climate Solutions Forum with F20 in Milan on September 29th and 30th. Building on the shoulders of other philanthropy support organizations such as ACF, CFF, AEF, Dafne or F20 and capitalizing their knowledge, expertise and credibility is so efficient and saves you so much time and energy.

The #PhilanthropyForClimate commitments promoted by Dafne and then scaled to a global level through WINGS, are so powerful. The funders' commitments are pledges open to public scrutiny and of course are just a starting point (not an end in itself) to call to action a movement of private foundations and funders committed to use a climate lens in their grant making, in the management of their endowments, in their communications and in their operations. All foundations (not only environmental funders) can engage, regardless of the sector or mission they work or size. Community foundations have such a pivotal role to play in this.

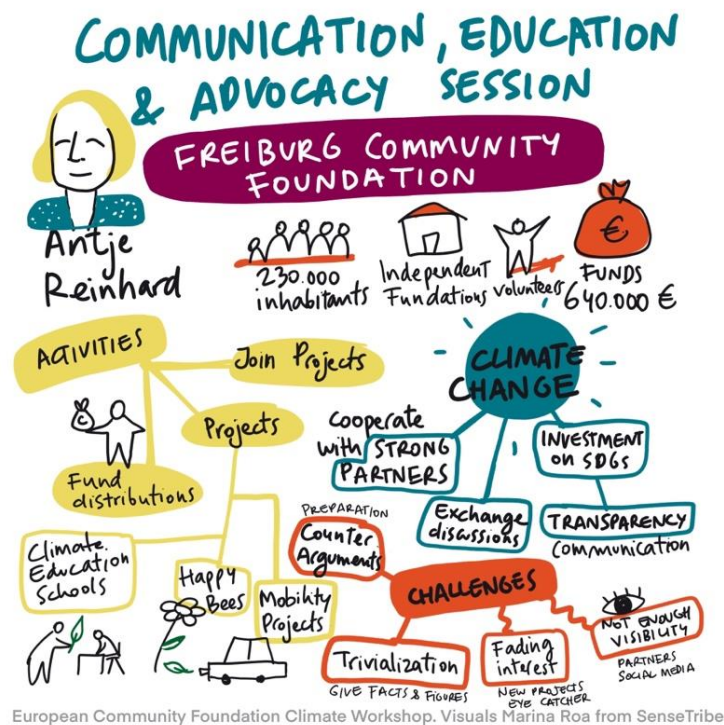
“Integrating a climate lens and SDGs in the daily work and in all the aspects of the life of community foundations is possible and the ECFI whole of organization approach is an extremely useful tool in the toolbox.”

My last call today is about the uniqueness of community foundations distinctive value and role. Community foundations sometimes are still not aware of this. We can untap our potential and make the difference. Community foundations have so much to contribute. Allow me to mention at least 5 unique characteristics/added values that community foundations can bring to climate neutrality and 2030 Agenda:

1. A long-term strategy approach allowing real time response to critical challenges, while maintaining a longer-term strategy view to tackle complex issues.
2. Systemic vision (instead of a single thematic focus).
3. An asset-based (not only needs-based) approach local development.
4. Capacity to capitalize on local social trust and what this entails in terms of credibility, convening power, community engagement.
5. Political autonomy together with independence from a single donor/stakeholders' interests or “blame avoidance” give community foundations freedom to choose more flexible, more engaged modalities of support of local initiatives/civil society organizations beyond traditional project-restricted modalities of funding practice.

Community Foundations Acting on Climate

Below are case studies from community foundations across Europe who are working to address the effects of climate change, through 1) education, raising awareness, and advocacy; 2) strategies and funding for environmental programs; and 3) ethical investment policies of their own assets as well as changes to operations and strategy.



Freiburg Community Foundation

Freiburg Community Foundation was founded in 2006 and it serves a community of approximately 230,000 inhabitants in the southwest of Germany. The foundation's goal is to encourage and enable voluntary support to help in shaping the future of Freiburg. The foundation is independent and is run by nine members in the Foundation Council and four board members in the Advisory board, all serving on a voluntary basis. The foundation has employed a paid part-time staff member only since 2017.

Freiburg Community Foundation looks at climate action in three ways:

1. **Positioning.** The foundation is an advocate for climate and it is a binding element with other stakeholders: support climate activities, SDG activity representative, growing focus on the topic, participation in meetings/workshops, cooperation with selected partners (e.g. FESA, VRD, EWS, City of Freiburg), regional, national and international exchange and discussions.

2. **Investment.** The foundation has ethical, social, and sustainable investments as well as investment guidelines based on the SDGs.
3. **Projects.** The Foundations funds and supports projects in the field of environment protection, green mobility, climate education for youth.

In terms of communication about the importance of acting on climate, Freiburg Community Foundation uses both internal and external tools to better create understanding and raise awareness on the issue.

Internal communication	External Communication
Newsletters	Information on website, social media
Meetings	Articles in local newspapers
Workshops	Funding eye catching projects like the “Cargo Bike”
Including SDGs in the statute and investment rules	Fascinating projects
Transparency	Panel discussions
	Exchanges

The foundation partnered on a video campaign with Professor Doctor Rainer Griesshammer who wrote a book on how to integrate climate activity in our daily life. The video production was done by young people in partnership with Friday for Future Activists and it targets young people and interested citizens alike.

Three examples with English subtitles:

- ▶ Racing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-4EKUuUf58>
- ▶ The big wheel swing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-GFayOoxnYA>
- ▶ Photovoltaic systems: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-RDbkmzteUk>

Freiburg Community Foundation sees community foundations as increasingly popular and connected amongst each other, thus helping them to learn and act as role models and multipliers of best practice.

“Community foundations can actively support the transformation process in their respective region.” Antje Reinhard, Freiburg CF



Community Foundation of Milan

Born in Italy in early 2019, the Community Foundation of Milan completes the Community Foundations project launched by Cariplo Foundation in 1998 to promote philanthropy, the culture of giving, and civil society development within local communities. It plays the role of a philanthropic intermediary, collecting donations, leveraging also non-financial resources and other community assets, and identifying priorities on which to converge resources and skills. The ambition is to create a model in which solidarity, in addition to responding to the social emergency, acts for the collective good and becomes an innovation factor that contributes to improving society.

The foundation addresses over 2 million citizens - living in Milan and 56 municipalities of the South-West, South-East and Adda Martesana areas of the Metropolitan City of Milan - and is based on a logic of proximity to local needs. It supports sustainable local projects - with the contribution of Institutions, Third Sector, companies, and citizens - responding to priorities expressed by the community, paying attention to the most critical and vulnerable context in the following areas: social and welfare, sport and education, enhancement of art and culture and protection of nature and the environment.

In the environment field, the foundation supports different projects on urban biodiversity and educational courses for students. In addition, the Community Foundation of Milan is among the promoters of the Forestami Project, which provides for commitments to reduce climate alteration factors. It is an ambitious project that aims to involve all citizens who live and breathe the Metropolitan City of Milan to mitigate the effects of climate change: individuals, public entities, associations, and private companies, unite in their contribution through actions that have a positive impact on our and the new generations' future as well.

Forestami is promoted by the [Metropolitan City of Milan](#), the [Municipality of Milan](#), [Regione Lombardia-ERSAF](#), [Parco Nord Milano](#), [Parco Agricolo Sud Milano](#) e Fondazione di Comunità Milano Città, Sud Ovest, Sud Est e Adda Martesana Onlus, [Fondazione Comunitaria Nord Milano](#), [Fondazione Comunitaria del Ticino Olona](#), [Università degli Studi di Milano](#) e l' [Università degli Studi Milano Bicocca](#).

At the end of 2019, the Forestami Fund was established on the initiative of the Municipality of Milan at Milan Community Foundation to support the implementation of the Forestami Project. The Fund collects contributions from companies and citizens, who wish to participate in the urban forestation project, and aims to encourage synergies between the public and private sectors to enhance the heritage of metropolitan green, promote inclusion and social cohesion through community projects of plant redevelopment of the suburbs.

The Community Foundation of Milan, together with the Community Foundations of North Milan and Ticino Olona, has made its skills available to contribute to the development of Forestami and improve the quality of life and well-being of our community. The Community Foundation of Milan has also contributed with its own channels to collecting donations on the Forestami Fund, finding participation beyond expectations by citizens and businesses, reflecting their commitment to a greener future: almost 80,000 donations received for a total of over €1 million. In terms of contribution, the impact of the companies that have decided to support Forestami was fundamental (77%) as evidence of their commitment in terms of Corporate Social Responsibility. The Forestami Project is coordinated by a Scientific Committee directed by Stefano Boeri and composed of members appointed by the Board of Directors of the Milan Community Foundation. The Scientific Committee defines the scientific direction, coordinates and manages relationships with institutions and public and private entities involved in the Project for related activities.

The project aims to plant 3 million trees by 2030 in the territory of the Metropolitan City of Milan, but it also wants to involve all citizens, associations, public and private companies to contribute with actions that have a positive impact on their own and the new generations' future. It also raises awareness of the value of trees and urban forestation as an essential contributor to the well-being of the places we live in, in terms of environmental, economic, and social benefits and improved quality of life.

Specifically, Forestami intends to act through the following actions:

- **Increase green areas** - to contribute to the physical and mental well-being of the people, as well as to the cooling of the environment and consequently to the reduction of the "Urban Heat Island" effect.
- **Reduce pollution** - During photosynthesis, trees absorb carbon dioxide from greenhouse gases and air pollutants, releasing oxygen.
- **Increase the tree canopy cover by 5%** - to make the city environment more liveable, green, and welcoming.
- **Reduce energy consumption, valorising property** - Mindfully planting trees around buildings allows for a significant reduction in the energy consumption from air-conditioning and increase the value of property.
- **Connect green areas** - to build ecological connections between various metropolitan area locations, thus increasing the biodiversity of plant and animal species.

- **Redevelop our neighbourhoods** - through the requalification of greenery in neighbourhoods and peri-urban areas, Forestami aims to foster social inclusion and cohesion.
- **Promote public-private dialogue** - Forestami is a great opportunity for dialogue and collaboration between public and private entities.

The collaboration between all the promoters has made it possible to achieve a strategic view on the role of greenery in the metropolitan area of Milan and to start a process of registering, enhancing, and implementing all green infrastructures with trees to promote urban forestry projects and policies as well as the construction of a Metropolitan Park in Milan. One tree after another, to share all environmental, social, and economic benefits to make the Metropolitan City of Milan the “Green Capital of Italy”. *Milena Lazza, Project Manager, Forestami.*



Foundation Scotland

Foundation Scotland is Scotland's Community Foundation. Established in 1996, for 25 years, the foundation has been bringing together communities, funders and finance to support and strengthen communities in every corner of Scotland. To date, Foundation Scotland has distributed over £130 million to communities across Scotland.

According to Climate Central, Scotland will be hit by rising tides in 2050 if dramatic action is not taken to halt climate change. Significant portions of land mass will fall below sea level by 2050 and areas of the Highlands and Islands will be susceptible to irreversible damage.

Climate change is considered not only an environmental issue; it's an economic issue, an educational issue, an equality issue, a cultural issue and a scientific issue. Foundation

Scotland believes it's also a local community issue and is committed to taking action. In 2020, Foundation Scotland became one of 60 UK charitable foundations signing up to the Funder Commitment on Climate Change.

The foundation is placing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the heart of everything it does, and in order to reach the Net-zero goal, SDG13 is taking centre stage. As one of the 17 sustainable development goals developed by the United Nations, SDG13 has targets to be achieved by 2030. The targets cover a wide range of priorities, including capacity building, education and the integration of climate change measures into policy. Whilst these targets have been designed for large-scale implementation, Foundation Scotland recognises its ability to drive these targets forward in its work.

The commitments and actions taken so far are:

To educate and learn

- Foundation staff have attended climate focussed training courses from Zero Waste Scotland and the Association of Charitable Foundations.
- The foundation delivered a 'Greening Community Benefit Funds' presentation to the UK Onshore Wind Energy Conference in 2020, discussing how community funding from the renewable sector could have a more sustainable approach to the future of the communities they serve.

To integrate

- [Foundation Scotland's 2030 Strategy](#) includes an objective to become a sustainable organisation from financial, social justice and environmental viewpoints.
- The foundation partnered with [Zero Waste Scotland Energy Efficiency Business Support](#) to support applicants in making climate-smart choices for their communities.
- Foundation Scotland is working towards integrating climate action into the funding application process and it's introducing new indicators within grant monitoring to report on local measures taken towards climate action and sustainability.

Grant Awarded - Unlock our Future Fund

The Vattenfall Unlock our Future Fund has made two awards to the Fittie Community Development Trust. An award of £15,000 for insulation and glazing and a further £8,536 for the heating system, consisting of an air source heat pump and underfloor heating. Funding is enabling the community to renovate the once disused Gospel Hall.

The Trust sought expert advice Zero Waste Scotland's Energy Efficiency Business Support Service to identify the most efficient and cost-effective options for the building. Work on the building was then phased as funding was secured.

The work of the Fittie Community Development Trust exemplifies how a transition to a low carbon economy can encompass both physical changes to buildings and cultural changes, supported by the creative community.

To steward investments for a post-carbon future

- In February 2021, Foundation Scotland became the first community foundation in the UK to launch an Impact Fund. The new fund is managed by EQ Investors. The revised portfolio invests in well-run companies whose core products and services help address challenges like the climate crisis, healthcare, and access to education or safe water.

To decarbonise operations

Foundation Scotland takes ambitious action to minimise the carbon footprint of its own operations.

- The foundation has adopted an Environmental Policy outlining its commitment to protecting and, where possible, enhancing the environment through its operations. The foundation recognizes its responsibility to reduce its carbon and environmental footprints, including while carrying out the day-to-day work.
- Foundation Scotland has recently undertaken a carbon footprint analysis of its operations (year up to March 2020). It is currently evaluating the best steps to actively reduce or offset this.
- Operationally, the foundation has adopted a flexible working policy. This new model will offer flexibility through a mix of home working and using a range of regional co-working hubs and meeting spaces. Foundation Scotland will no longer have any physical office premises in Scotland. This new blend of agile working and physical gathering offers the staff, donors, grantees and stakeholders the greatest flexibility going forward.

More on Foundation Scotland's commitment can be found here

<https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/our-impact/our-commitment-to-climate-change>

How to get started

The GROW methodology was used to help participants think through strategies and actions on climate. This involved working backwards from defining the intended final Goal, articulating the Realities of the context, consideration of Options that could be taken / Obstacles that need to be overcome, and finally identifying a way forward (Or at least a first step).

Below are three GOAL pathways as they were defined by participants. We hope the case studies have provided inspiration and we encourage you to try this exercise as a first step towards the actions your community foundation can take towards climate. Also see below some guiding questions for the GROW methodology.



European Community Foundation Climate Workshop. Visuals Marina Roa from SenseTribe

GOAL: what are you looking to achieve? What's the bigger picture?

REALITY: What is the current situation? What resources do you have to help you? What are the internal / external obstacles?

OPTIONS: How would you tackle this if resources weren't a factor? What option appeals to you most right now? What else could you do?

WAY FORWARD: What will you do now? When will you do it? How will you know when you've been successful? How committed are you on a scale between 1 and 10?

International Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change



European Community Foundation Climate Workshop. Visuals Marina Roa from SenseTribe

The International Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change is a call to all foundations, regardless of their mission, status or geographic location to come together and signal their commitment to climate action. The Commitment encompasses seven pillars:

1. Education and learning

We will ensure that our boards, investment committees, staff, volunteers, and stakeholders are informed about the systemic causes, impacts and solutions of climate change, and the implications for our work.

2. Commitment of Resources

Recognising the urgency of the situation, we will commit resources to accelerate work that addresses the root causes of climate change or adaptation to its impacts. If our governing document or other factors make it difficult to directly fund such work, we will find other ways to contribute, or consider how such barriers might be overcome.

3. Integration

Within the design and implementation of our programmes, we will seek opportunities to contribute to a fair and lasting transition to a net zero world, and to support adaptation to climate change impacts, especially in the most affected communities.

4. Endowments and assets

We will consider climate change in relation to the source and management of our operational and any endowed funds. We will seek to align our investment strategy and its implementation with a rapid and just transition to a net zero economy.

5. Operations

We will take ambitious action to minimise the climate impact of our own operations, which may include for example travel, buildings, and procurement.

6. Influencing and advocacy

We will seek opportunities to work with others, to amplify the voices of frontline communities, and to encourage and support more ambitious action on climate change by our key stakeholders, partners, and audiences; these may include businesses, local or national governments, multilateral organisations, donors and funders, individuals, or civil society movements.

7. Transparency

We will collect and publish information annually on the actions we have taken against the six pillars listed above to share our progress and identify areas for improvement. We will continue to develop our practice, to collaborate, and to learn from each other.

<https://philanthropyforclimate.org>

#PhilanthropyForClimate

European Philanthropy Coalition for Climate

The Philanthropy Coalition for Climate aims to create a powerful movement for change to mobilise philanthropy across Europe and beyond to address the climate crisis and social inequalities.

It aims to help foundations:

- ▶ **COMMIT** - Foundations sign a national or international philanthropy commitment on climate change and publicly commit to act on climate
- ▶ **ENABLE** - Foundation signatories become part of the Philanthropy Coalition for Climate. Philanthropy support infrastructure is ready to assist Foundations when integrating a climate lens to their work
- ▶ **ACT** - Foundations make measurable progress against the Commitment; Foundations report on their progress and inspire their peers; Collective learning, imagining and acting is in place across the philanthropy field.

Those involved in the coalition do this by:

- ▶ **Encouraging** foundations of all types to integrate a climate lens into their portfolio in order for climate action to become mainstream
- ▶ **Empowering** philanthropy support organisations to drive climate action across the philanthropy sector.
- ▶ **Engaging** partners and allies to shape the climate agenda across Europe.

The European Philanthropy Coalition for Climate hosts a live Knowledge Hub
here

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Rs2qj_OOKU9_Anlp4QeVeEX8c6Lgm9Fr2CxFjb--cg0/edit#heading=h.6nchzbqn34a9

Other helpful resources for organisations interested in working on climate

- Climate Mitigation tool - from Active Philanthropy - an interactive learning experience to tackle rising emissions

<https://www.activephilanthropy.org/climate-mitigation-tool>

- An implementation guide for the climate commitment - from the Canadian Philanthropy commitment on Climate Change

https://philanthropyforclimate.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/implementation_guide_en.pdf?mc_cid=2db3af87ea&mc_eid=370725ff1f

- Acting on the Climate Crisis - Why, How and the Role of Philanthropy - A resource pack for funders

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1S1LxGetoaJ2PMAHvMVSCxM5VbgLodhajGwJlw-g_6E4/edit#heading=h.jxe21wi7950a



European Community Foundation Climate Workshop. Visuals Marina Roa from SenseTribe

Attendees at ECFI's Climate Workshop on October 6th 2021

We kindly thank our presenters for sharing their knowledge and experience:

Antje Reinhard, Freiburg Community Foundation, Germany

Carola Carazzone, Assifero & DAFNE, Italy

Karalyn Gardner, DAFNE, Europe

Kathrin Dombrowski, Worldwide Initiative for Grantmakers Support (WINGS)

Mercedes Green, Foundation Scotland, UK

Milena Lazza, Community Foundation for Milan, Italy

Prof. Rainer Griesshamer, Freiburg Community Foundation, Germany

As well as to the rest of the active participants of the workshop:

Adam Lopardo, Community Foundation Tyne, Wear & Northumberland, UK

Alina Kasprovschi, Bucharest Community Foundation, Romania

Beata Hirt, Healthy City Community Foundation, Slovakia

Beatrice Manole, Federation of Community Foundations, Romania

Caren Moirongo, Stuttgart Community Foundation, Germany

Frances Haworth, Community Foundation for Ireland, Ireland

Francesca Mereta, Assifero, Italy

Giulia Gastaldo, Assifero, Italy

Hanna Lehmann, Freiburg Community Foundation, Germany

Iwona Olkowicz, Federation of Polish Community Foundations, Poland

Luise Klingler, Stuttgart Community Foundation, Germany

Natascha Trutzenberg, Alliance of Community Foundations, Germany

Sophie Hosking, Kent Community Foundation, UK

Organisers:

Anja Bollhoff, European Community Foundation Initiative, Germany

James Magowan, European Community Foundation Initiative, Northern Ireland

Kamil Szlosek, European Community Foundation Initiative, Germany

Mihaela Giurgiu, European Community Foundation Initiative, Netherlands/Romania

About ECFI - European Community Foundation Initiative

The European Community Foundation Initiative (ECFI) is a collaborative initiative committed to strengthening and promoting the community foundation movement in Europe.

ECFI is hosted by the German Association of Foundations (Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen) and is run in partnership with the Centre for Philanthropy (Centrum pre filantropiu) in Slovakia. ECFI works with community foundations (CFs) and community foundation support organisations (CFSOs) primarily through facilitating and stimulating interactions to enable learning, knowledge-building and empowerment. ECFI is also engaged in the mapping and analysis of CF activities and in disseminating information that will facilitate development of the field. ECFI strives to be a central point of contact for wider engagement within the global community foundation movement.

ECFI's THEORY OF CHANGE

ECFI believes that creating spaces and opportunities for cross-national dialogues, relationship-building and sharing experiences and practices of CFs and other philanthropy practitioners (on a variety of themes of global and cross-national importance) at various levels will impact the capacity, capability, connections and credibility within the CF movement. Specifically, ECFI will:

- facilitate individual and organisational learning and expertise;
- inspire individuals and organisations to leadership and joint action;
- produce practice-based knowledge;
- empower CFs in dealing with difficult issues in their communities and own development trajectories;
- grow mutual solidarity and strengthen the CF field overall;
- complement face-to-face interactions with virtual spaces and online tools and resources.

ECFI's STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Facilitate interaction and learning, share new knowledge and fostering collaboration among CFSOs in Europe to strengthen the support infrastructure.
2. Inspire and facilitate growth in the CF field in Europe.
3. Stimulate CFs in Europe to exercise their community leadership role and collaborate on pressing issues, including inequality, migration and climate change.
4. Build and share knowledge about the CF field in Europe.
5. Lever financial resources and other support for the development of the CF field in Europe.
6. Increase awareness and understanding of the SDGs and their relevance to the work of community foundations in Europe.

CONTACT

Anja Böllhoff anja@communityfoundations.eu

James Magowan james@communityfoundations.eu

<https://www.communityfoundations.eu/home.html>