



TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

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PHILANTHROPY AWARD 2011

Partners Albania organizes for the first time in Albania, the **PHILANTHROPY AWARD 2011!**

The goal is to keep this old and valuable tradition alive by expressing our gratitude to individuals, families and businesses who contribute to improving the quality of life in our society. The appreciation and stimulation of this activity is important considering the human and economic dimension it represents.

Philanthropy is known as the practice of application of assets: knowledge, passion and wealth, to bring about constructive and sustainable change. In Albania, as in many other countries philanthropic activity has taken various forms depending on the society development needs. Philanthropy is a private initiative of individuals, families or businesses who have the means, time and motivation to support an issue or need which contributes toward a common social good.

In the framework of PA initiative to promote philanthropy in Albania we open the call for nominations for the Philanthropy Award.

This Award is made possible through the generous support of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

We invite all social actors in and outside Albania to submit their nominations for individuals or entities who have and continue to give their contribution in supporting the development of public good in Albania.

The nomination may be presented by the individuals or entities performing philanthropic activities (self- nomination) or the beneficiary groups or entities.

The three categories for nominations for the Philanthropy Award are:

- o Award for entities Contributing at the National Level**
- o Award for entities Contributing at the Local Level**
- o Award for the Individual Contribution**

Nominations will be reviewed by a representative panel of civil society sector, media and institutions supporting the economic and social development in Albania.

Awards will be announced at a public event Partners Albania will organize in 7 December 2011.

To submit your nomination please fill in the Philanthropy Award Nomination Form and send it by email to **partners@partnersalbania.org**, Fax: +355 4 2254883, or mail: Partners Albania, Center for Change and Conflict Management, Rruga Muhamet Gjollësia, Pallati 16/1, Shkalla 1, Ap. 9, Tirana, Albania

The form can be downloaded from PA website in the following link: http://www.partnersalbania.org/philanthropy_award_nomination_form.doc

Deadline for submitting nominations is November 4, 2011!

Partners Albania associated with the Department of Public Information of UN

Partners Albania, Center for Change and Conflict Management was recently associated with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations.

This association constitutes the commitment of Partners Albania to disseminate and exchange information, and raise public awareness about the purposes and activities of the United Nations and issues of global concern.

Besides receiving emails of relevant United Nations materials and information on United Nations conferences, seminars, briefings and other events, representatives of associated NGOs are provided annual grounds passes for access to the United Nations facilities and open meetings which they can attend as observers.

Strengthening Democratic Practices of Active Citizen Participation in Electoral Processes

In framework of the project “Strengthening democratic practices of active citizen participation in electoral processes” Partners Albania assisted local coalitions of civil society organizations and interest groups in Berat, Elbasan, Pogradec and Korça, in preparing monitoring plans related to candidate mayors electoral pledges taken in the last local election of 2011.

Besides facilitating meetings to develop monitoring plans, Partners Albania offered in September two training sessions in Korça and Pogradeci on *Local Government Monitoring Techniques*, aiming to increase knowledge and capacity of local coalition members to use some of these techniques in their monitoring work.

In line with the electoral pledges taken in

the respective cities, the local coalition in Korça is working to draft the local youth strategy which will be reviewed in cooperation with municipality experts; the local group in Berat is lobbying to restructure and give more authority to the Office of tourism development at the Municipality, while in Elbasan the local coalition is continuing its work to increase the recreational space for children. Meanwhile, Pogradeci marks the first achievement of these local campaigns with the employment of 27 head of family women in the public and private sector during summer.

Local coalitions will continue their monitoring work to follow the developments in the four districts.



During training with local coalition in Pogradec

This project is financially supported by the United States Embassy in Tirana and Balkan Trust for Democracy, a project of the German Marshall Fund.

Promoting business women enterprises in the cross border area

Partners Albania in partnership with Macedonian Enterprise Development Foundation (MEDF), and with financial support from European Union are implementing the project **Promoting business women enterprises in the cross border area Struga-Pogradeci**, under IPA Component 2, Cross Border Cooperation.



Training with women entrepreneurs in Pogradec

A series of activities were conducted during these months in Pogradeci and Struga, aiming to promote businesses run by women, strengthen their capacities and help them to exchange experiences in the business field.

Partners Albania and MEDF organized in July a cross border round table bringing together about 40 businesswomen, representatives of Pogradeci and Struga municipalities and other local stakeholder institutions.

The round table organized in Pogradeci discussed the prospects of women entrepreneurship development, problems and challenges and development opportunities at cross-border level.

PA and MEDF presented in the round table the findings of a survey report conducted with local actors in Pogradec and Struga around these issues, and discussed about the needs identified by the project beneficiaries during a needs assessment.

To assist women and their entrepreneurship initiatives in concrete ways, PA and MEDF held respectively in Pogradec and Struga capacity building programs in topics related to *customer care and increased service quality, effective sales and promotion*.

Other local and cross border activities will be organized shortly in Struga and Pogradec including exchange visits, workshops and business fairs in both countries.

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Training in Conflict Management for NGO-s

Partners-Albania delivered in July a three – days training in “Conflict Management” for the members of the National Coalition of Anti-trafficking shelters.

This training program commissioned by IOM aimed to build capacities of the participants on conflict management strategies and to enable them to better manage conflict situations at organizational level and with the third parties (beneficiaries, partners, public institutions, etc.)

Gender Equality Policy for Tax Administration in Albania

In frame of the assistance provided to the Albanian Tax Administration through the project “Gender Equality for Tax Administration in Albania”, Partners Albania’ gender expert has continued to assist the Working Group established at the General Directorate of Taxation. Until now, the working group has finalized the mapping process and has started to work for the development of the gender policy and its plan for implementation.

This project is financially supported by SIDA and is assisting the Albanian Tax Administration towards a gender mainstreaming process.

PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

The International Social Innovation Competition, Naples

Juliana Hoxha, Director of Partners Albania participated in the **International Social Innovation Competition** Conference, organized in Naples, on 21st-23rd September 2011.



As we have announced in the earlier edition of our newsletter, this innovative project launched by Euclid Network, Project Ahead and the UniCredit Foundation (the corporate foundation of one of the two largest Italian banks with branches in 22 European countries) consisted in creating a competition that called on innovators from around the world to bring their innovative ideas to tackle one of the six challenges identified in Naples. The challenges ranged from turning a confiscated villa from the mafia into a financially sustainable Social Business, to creating innovative new method for recycling textiles.

Euclid chose Naples because that is the city where social innovation more than anywhere else provide solutions where the traditional remedies have failed.

The competition which lasted May through August 2011, was opened to all innovators including public and private, profit and not for profit institutions, organizations and enterprises from across the world.

An international jury including the U.S. consul general in Naples and a vice-president of the European Parliament evaluated the record number of applications from 37 countries. The finalists presented their ideas at the international conference in Naples. The ideas were impressive and innovative, inspiring the jury to select seven winners instead of six as it was previously announced.

The winners were granted 10.000 Euro each winner as seed funding to transform the idea into a project working in partnership with local partners. The total fund for the winning projects is 200,000 euro.

By January, Euclid will assess participants’ progress to determine whether to continue supporting them.

More on the winners and their projects you may find in this link <http://www.euclidnetwork.eu/pages/en/international-social-innovation-competition-finalists.html>



Regional Working Group Meeting of Partners For Democratic Change International Network (PDCI)

Juliana Hoxha, PA Director and Elona Kapexhiu, Communication Manager participated in the Regional Working Group Meeting of the Partners for Democratic Change International Network, organized in Belgrade on September 5 – 7, 2011.

PDCI with support of GE foundation organized regional meetings with member centers in the framework of an evaluation process to capture and improve the aspects of Partners work.

PDCI members from Albania, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Serbia also participated in a public event organized by Partners Serbia and led by FPLD-Partners Romania presenting an innovative approach focusing on reducing the vulnerability to corruption of public institutions and especially of local governments.

International Youth Conference on European Values for the Future of Southeastern European Countries

Kostandina Keruti, Project Manager at Partners Albania participated in an international conference on European Values for the Future of Southeastern European Countries, which took place in Macedonia, from 1 – 5th of September.

The conference organized by Youth Alliance of Krusevo, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation - office Skopje and Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe was attended by around 55 active youngsters from Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Germany, Kosovo, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey.

The goal was to develop and maintain communication and cooperation among youth in the region in support of the process of European and Euro Atlantic Integration. The discussion focused on common problems concerning young people, good practices on actual multicultural EU models, Balkan cooperation for EU integration, and future ideas and follow up plans to establish a higher level of dialogue between youth and decision - makers.

The participants prepared the “Youth Appeal for Action”, a document containing three proposals on how to enhance youth employment opportunities in the future.

News from the region

Call for Proposals for Support from the Slovak - Balkan Public Policy Fund

The Pontis Foundation and the Balkan Civil Society Development Network announce the first Call for Proposal for individuals and organizations from Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro to undertake research projects on the topic of:

1. Mechanisms and practice of consultation, coordination and cooperation between state and non-state actors (civil society, public and private interests groups etc.) in the design and implementation (monitoring & assessment) of EU driven reforms in different areas (preferably those in fight against corruption and environment);
2. Progress, challenges and policy advice to create appropriate administrative and judicial structures in order to apply Community rules and procedures;
3. Policy recommendations towards closer alignment of the country's social policy to the acquis (including social dialogue and fighting gray economy); or
4. Regional policies in the context of EU accession.

The aim of the project is to strengthen civil society by developing the advocacy skills its involvement in reform processes and the public debate on the accession process through providing grants to local organizations and individuals with civil society background.

You can download the Call for Proposals, the Application Form, the Cover Page and the Budget Template in the following link: <http://balkancsd.net/bcsdn-news/843-call-for-proposals-for-support-from-the-slovak-balkan-public-policy-fund.html>

The deadline for submitting applications is 30th of November 2011.

Drafting of the Strategy for Development of Sustainable Civil Society in BiH Starts

Establishment of Supportive Environment for Development of Sustainable Civil Society in Bosnia and Herzegovina has started through organizing the first consultative meeting in development of the Strategy for Development of Civil Society in BiH. This comprehensive strategy should create legal and institutional framework for further development of civil society in the country. The document will serve as a basis for programming the future support of the European Commission to the development of civil society in BiH. The Strategy should provide the basic guidelines to all levels of government for the improvement of legal, financial and institutional system of support to the development of civil society. The aim is to ensure independence and pluralism of civil society and national institutions and political processes open to the public. More information is available here <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/en/str.asp?id=479>

The Administrative Court Upholds CNVOS – the Evaluation of the Allocation of Public Funds Should Be Transparent and Explanatory

CNVOS from Slovenia won a lawsuit against the Ministry of Public Administration about the way in which the Ministry decides and justifies allocation of grants and tenders. According to the procedure by the Ministry, the applicants were not explained why they were assigned a certain number of points. In the ruling delivered on 15th September, the court concluded that the Ministry as well as other state institutions and municipal authorities are obliged to explain in their decisions on the allocation of public funds why each applicant has been assigned a certain number of points. The indication of the number of points received for each criteria, and their total is not sufficient. In doing so, the justification of selected and awarded against rejected proposals and thus, a more transparent and accountable way of spending public funds will be assured.

Read more at: <http://www.cnvos.si/article/id/4373/cid/23>

SOCIAL INNOVATION

Social Innovation Exchange and the **Young Foundation** prepared a report 'Study on Social Innovation' for the Bureau of European Policy Advisors (BEPA) about social innovation in Europe.

Partially in response to this report, the European Commission's Department of Enterprise and Industry launched Social Innovation Europe in May 2011. It is part of their industrial innovation policy, which is about helping companies to perform better and contribute to sustainability, growth and jobs in Europe.

Partners Albania as a country partner of the Social Innovation Europe is involved with highlighting the most exciting innovators and events in our region.

Below we are presenting some parts from the report 'Study on Social Innovation'. The full report can be found at <http://www.goodpaper.sg/study-on-social-innovation/>

The six grand challenges facing Europe are economic growth, unemployment, climate change, ageing population, social exclusion and public sector innovations. A swarm of think tanks, panels and papers have called for resources and efforts to be invested into solving these challenges and many of them found that innovation is the key.

What Is Social Innovation

Social Innovations are innovations that are both social in their ends and in their means. Another way of putting it is that social innovations are new ideas that meet social needs and create new relationships or collaborations.

Previously social innovation was considered to be the province of the social sector. Nowadays, social innovations are recognized as coming from all sectors; the government; the marketplace; the social sector and households, which are people like you and me. Often the true power of social innovation is unleashed when ideas cross sectors. For example, Homeshare International is a charity that facilitate home sharing arrangements between older homeowners who need low level physical assistance and younger tenants who want cheaper accommodations.

Recognizing social innovations in its own right allows it to be studied, developed, and nurtured with commonly accepted tools and methods.

How Social Innovations work

In an ever-changing environment, systems and ideas become less efficient over time. People will feel the pain of inefficiency, especially during crises. The young, the marginalized and the ambitious will advocate changes. Artists, writers and poets can create stories, images and metaphors that will help to redefine mental models and assumptions. When changes are imminent some will resist and others will embrace, will strain relationships or even break them.

For social innovations to work, there must be effective demand and supply, and way to connect the two sides with the space to learn and adapt, The most common and cost effective connector is via internet.

Social innovations can be small, however when they spread and come into contact with power and money, they can become large scale systemic innovations. Such widespread change releases tremendous amounts of new energy which creates many opportunities. Consider the impact of the internet or even the results of the industrial revolution. A key purpose creating networks and incubation is to accelerate its spread and the reach of social innovations.

Partners-Albania is an Albanian NPO committed to advancing civil society and a culture of change and conflict management in Albania.

Partners-Albania is a member of the Partners for Democratic Change International, a network of Centers in 20 countries, which provide conflict resolution training and services to the civic, NPO, municipal and national government, and business sectors in their countries and worldwide.

PDCI website address is: <http://www.pdci-network.org/>

PARTNERS-ALBANIA, CENTER FOR CHANGE AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Address: Muhamet Gjollësja str, 7 floor building in front of Diplomat Hotel, nr.16/1, entrance 1, ap.9, PO BOX 2418/1, Tirana

Tel: +355 42 254881 Fax: 2254883

Email: partners@partnersalbania.org

Http: [//www.partnersalbania.org](http://www.partnersalbania.org)