

WORKING WITH YOUNG DONORS IN EUROPE

What's next for next gens?

Lea Buck

'The group dynamic was amazing. Right from the start there was an atmosphere in which we felt comfortable to share our ideas and concerns with each other.' This comment on Active Philanthropy's latest workshop for next gen donors echoes the feedback from various European events for younger family members and indicates the relevance of dedicated programmes for the next generation. However, there are only a couple of programmes in Europe for young donors that focus explicitly on philanthropy and social investment topics. In fact, most programmes cover a wider range of business topics or family philanthropy as a whole.



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The challenge when working with young donors is to identify both the right content and the right format. Many next gens are reluctant to commit themselves for longer time periods. At Active Philanthropy we therefore discussed different ideas (giving circles, traineeships, journeys) before deciding to go for a rather open design of workshops twice a year in small groups. All participants at the kick-off workshop 'From Charity to Business' in June 2013 in Berlin enjoyed the opportunity to share their experiences, questions and ideas in a group of like-minded young people.

WISE – philanthropy advisors is one of the few European organizations offering services for young donors (in addition to family philanthropy services, which they also have). The aim of WISE's Next Generation field trips is to have a transformational effect. 'We want to help them to go out of their comfort zone while coaching them on this,' says Etienne Eichenberger, co-founder and managing partner of WISE. He also sees a difference between members of families that still run a business and those that have sold. Whereas the latter group might focus on ways to invest their assets (both financially and socially),

the former are often more concerned with ideas to combine social and business expectations and with finding their own future role within the company.

The Institute for Philanthropy runs two-day workshops in partnership with the US-based Redwoods Initiative 'to guide the younger generation of philanthropists as they engage in their personal, business or family philanthropy'. The Institute has offices in London and New York and offers the workshops in various regions in both countries.

Several banks, family business networks and institutes as well as universities offer events for younger family members.¹ Most of these programmes integrate next generation activities into a wider context. 'Engaging the next generation in philanthropy is often a key part of wealth succession and how families think about legacy,' says Lenka Setkova, director at Coutts. In her experience, young family members sometimes take the lead in shaping the strategy of a family foundation. Coutts also hosts educational events exclusively for the younger generation. For example, the week-long Future Leader Programme includes at least half a day focused on philanthropy.

The Family Business Network (FBN), an international network run by family businesses, also integrates philanthropy in its activities for young family members, in particular through its Social Entrepreneurship Day in cooperation with Ashoka. The day was initiated by Julia Hieber, who, as director of the Wendel International Centre for Family Enterprise, also set up the SEPA workshop at the Insead Family Centre Business School. SEPA is designed to help family businesses gain a better understanding of social entrepreneurship and philanthropy and to develop their own strategies in these fields.

All programmes and initiatives with a pan-European reach have a focus on exchange – either among peers or within the family. These approaches should be seen as complementary. While there is a clear desire to have a space for peer exchange, as young family members face special questions and challenges that often can't be addressed in traditional donor education programmes or in the family, the younger generation appreciate opportunities to develop their ideas and aspirations as a family and integrate each individual family dynamic into these processes. @

¹ Due to the limited space this is only a snapshot illustrating various approaches; it does not cover all providers. There are also European families and

family offices that organize programmes for their young family members. These events are usually not open to people outside the family.

A SELECTION OF EUROPEAN ORGANIZATIONS THAT WORK WITH YOUNG DONORS

- ▶ Active Philanthropy, Germany
- ▶ WISE – philanthropy advisors, Switzerland
- ▶ Institute for Philanthropy, London and New York
- ▶ Coutts private bank: Future Leader Programme
- ▶ Family Business Network: Social Entrepreneurship Day
- ▶ Insead Family Centre Business School: SEPA