

Information sheet

July 2017

The VLGS unites the charitable grant-making foundations of Liechtenstein and safeguards the interests of the philanthropic sector. It promotes Liechtenstein as a location, supports the exchange of experience, and campaigns for standards and professionalism. The association was formed on 15 December 2010 and currently holds 62 member foundations and 2 associated partners.

Purpose

The purpose of the association is to promote and increase awareness of the concept of foundations, in particular the possibilities and benefits of non-profit foundations in Liechtenstein.

As means to achieving this purpose, there are plans to build a network of non-profit foundations, exercise political influence to promote the concept of the foundation as a whole and promote the issue of charitable causes in general via collaboration between various nonprofit foundations. Interests will also be represented towards the authorities and supported in general by public relations work.

The association fosters collaboration with other organisations in the foundation system and can provide or broker services for non-profit foundations.

Support of philanthropy as an important pillar of the financial centre

The formation of the association by a number of Liechtenstein charitable foundations was motivated by the objective of supporting philanthropy in general and the concept of foundations in particular. In this, emphasis is placed on improving framework conditions and awareness and on compliance with the recognized standards of charitable foundations.

The Liechtenstein government strives to develop philanthropy as an important pillar of location policy and to use it as a chance to strengthen Liechtenstein as an economic and financial centre. These efforts are expressly welcomed and supported by the VLGS. Even today, charitable foundations make a substantial contribution to the reputation of Liechtenstein as a financial centre.

National and international networking

Through intensive cooperation among foundations on the one hand and with public authorities and organisations on the other, the VLGS wants to support stronger national and international networking between charitable foundations in Liechtenstein.

The VLGS places special emphasis on international networking both on a bilateral and on a multilateral scale. For example, there is close cooperation with SwissFoundations, the organisation of Swiss grant-making foundations. There are also contacts with ProFonds, the umbrella organisation of charitable foundations in Switzerland, and with the *Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen*, the Federal Association of German Foundations.

On a European level, VLGS is a member of DAFNE (Donors and Foundations Networks in Europe), the federation of national associations of charitable foundations. Thus, the VLGS - and with it, Liechtenstein - is represented in the relevant European organisation.

There are also good contacts to the European Foundation Center (EFC), the leading European association of charitable foundations, which also has a Liechtenstein foundation (Medicor Foundation) as a member. Good connections also exist with the CEPS (Center for Philanthropy Studies) of the University of Basel, one of the leading think tanks in the field of philanthropy.

An important partner for the association is the Chair of Company, Foundation and Trust Law of the University of Liechtenstein, with which there is permanent and good cooperation.

Professional and systematic communication

The VLGS has the aim of close cooperation with the Government, the competent offices, trade associations, and other partners such as the University of Liechtenstein. This applies in particular to coordinated communication abroad concerning Liechtenstein as a location for foundations.

The international contacts of the VLGS clearly show that charitable foundations make significant contributions to the way Liechtenstein is perceived abroad as a location. In spring 2013, the first overview of Liechtenstein charitable foundations was given in the *Stiftungsreport* published by SwissFoundations, and a comprehensive article was published in the *Stiftungswelt* magazine of the Federal Association of German Foundations. Under the leadership of Prof. Schurr (University of Liechtenstein), the European Foundation Center (EFC) published its first *EFC Country Profile* on Liechtenstein. The publications created in spring 2015 at the initiative of the VLGS warrant special attention; these are the special issue of the *Stiftung&Sponsoring* magazine titled "Das Fürstentum Liechtenstein – Philanthropie-Hub im Herzen Europas" and the brochure "Die gemeinnützige Stiftung in Liechtenstein" published by PWC. With the brochure "Nachhaltig investieren - Einführung für Stiftungsräte gemeinnütziger Stiftungen" published in 2016, the VLGS facilitates access to this important topic.

Training and further education

Based on analyses in the matter, the VLGS sees good conditions for the development of Liechtenstein as a location for philanthropy. Modern foundation law, good know-how in banks and trust companies, and the chair at the University of Liechtenstein are important pillars. For the future, the VLGS believes that there is a requirement for systematic training and further education of the people acting in this field. In cooperation with the CEPS in Basel, an education tool for foundation management has been developed for Liechtenstein for the first time. The one-day seminars are offered twice a year as from 2016, focussing on a variety of key areas.

Membership and associated partners

The articles of association of the Association of Liechtenstein Charitable Foundations provide for the membership of foundations that meet the requirements of the articles in full. However, there is also the option of making use of the association's services as an associated partner. Membership of the association is open to non-profit foundations under Liechtenstein law that are based in Liechtenstein, are exclusively and irrevocably non-profit, have their own assets, use these assets and any income earned on them for non-profit purposes, have appointed an auditing body in accordance with foundation law, and are not fundamentally dependent on donations or collections for their activities.

The general meeting decides, at the request of the committee, on the admission of members and associated partners.

Non-profit foundations under Liechtenstein law that do not meet the requirements for membership or for other reasons do not wish to become a member can still benefit by becoming an associated partner.

This status will enable them to attend events and benefit from services and training. They have no active or passive voting rights, and are not considered members of the association from a legal perspective.

Subscription fees were defined as follows at the inaugural general meeting on 15 December 2010:

- One-off joining fee for members and associated partners: CHF 5'000.00
- Annual subscription fee for members and associated partners: CHF 1'000.00

Committee

The number of committee members was increased from three to five at the general meeting on 20 September 2011.

The committee of Association of Liechtenstein Charitable Foundations e.V. comprises the following individuals: Hans Brunhart (Chairman), Egbert Appel, Dr. Peter Goop, Angelika Moosleithner-Batliner and Christian Verling.

Administrative Office

The committee of Association of Liechtenstein Charitable Foundations e.V. has appointed Mrs. Dagmar Buehler-Nigsch as its Managing Director. She started her work on 1 October 2013 and manages the operative activities of the association. In August 2016, Maria Bieberschulte joined the Administrative Office as an employee.

Contact details of the association

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