



Donors and Foundations Networks in Europe

DAFNE vision and Strategic Priorities

The Need

It is recognised that foundations and donors operate in a dynamic and challenging environment, and that the philanthropy sector is at different stages of development across Europe. Increasing complexity is arising from more public and political scrutiny; reducing public expenditure; and the closing space for civil society – all set in a context of persistent societal needs as well as the emergence of new socio-economic, environmental and political issues. This will require further evolution of both the operating environment and the practice of philanthropy - ranging from collaboration, to the development of progressive approaches and the application of new ways of using private assets for public good.

National associations and donors forums are critical components in the support infrastructure for philanthropy. They bring benefits to foundations and donors (of all types and sizes, and with diverse interests) at national level, that range from promoting and developing a culture of giving and creating a favourable enabling environment across the philanthropy sector, through to convening and facilitating sharing of knowledge and professional development. They play an important role in the evolution of practice and in the development and implementation of new approaches. The development of national associations and donors forums, and their individual and collective effectiveness, can be enhanced through their membership and participation in DAFNE (Annex 1) - by sharing knowledge among peers across Europe and leveraging synergies within the network and with strategic partners, in particular EFC.

The Vision

Where will DAFNE be in 5 years ?

DAFNE's **inspiration** is derived from the shared desire for more, and more effective philanthropy in Europe. DAFNE's **energy** is activated by a connected circuit (network) of national associations and their foundation and donor members. DAFNE's **impact** arises from leveraging synergy in respect of the knowledge, expertise, and experience that lies within its membership and their 7,500 foundation and donor members.

The vision for DAFNE is that it will create a dynamic, effective and sustainable mechanism as a connector between national associations and donors forums across Europe. The medium term challenge for DAFNE is to 'hard-wire' the circuit and to energize activity within it.

The difference DAFNE will make

DAFNE will add value and make a difference through four areas of work that are relevant to national associations – Capacity, Capability, Connections, and Credibility.

Capacity - Building Resources

DAFNE will support its members to work to maintain a favourable legal and fiscal environment for philanthropy at national level, thus maximizing the resources available for donors and foundations, and ultimately their impact on society. In addition DAFNE will facilitate sharing of knowledge and experience among associations and donors forums in respect of their role (where appropriate) to promote a culture of giving and to help their members generate money and other resources.

Capability - Building skills, knowledge and expertise

National associations play a critical role in developing the professional capability of their member organizations in order that they develop their practice in a way that uses their resources effectively. DAFNE will help national associations to learn from each other how best to provide such services to members, through learning exchanges; thematic and issue-based interest groups; and the building of a knowledge hub of resources and intelligence on the philanthropy sector across Europe.

Connection - Building relationships

As a European network of peers, DAFNE will provide platforms for communication, collaboration, and connection which reinforces efforts to build capacity and capability. Trusted relationships have been built across Europe which will be used to facilitate exchange of information and know-how through organized engagement among members and with strategic partners.

Credibility - Building reputation, recognition and influence

DAFNE will strengthen representation at national level, thus raising the profile and contributing to the reputation, recognition and influence of foundations and donors among governments and civil society across Europe. DAFNE will bring national reach and the diverse voices of members to relevant policy informers and influencers at European and Global levels. Cross border exchange around thematic issues will help inform policy and practice and improve the effectiveness of foundations.

Strategic Priorities

DAFNE will work across four strategic priority areas. These are relevant to the network as a whole but the importance of each one will vary from country to country. In order to foster synergies and to use its resources most effectively DAFNE will actively cooperate with various philanthropy infrastructure organizations, mainly with the European Foundation Centre and others as appropriate.

1. Membership Network and Synergies

Associations of Foundations and Donors Forums need to continue to develop their capacity in order to play an effective role in:

- helping build a favourable enabling and operating environment;
- developing philanthropic practice (generic and issue-based) as facilitators or leaders

Associations need to be alerted to relevant trends and challenges, and then to be able to create initial momentum around building the capacity required to address these as appropriate.

DAFNE will add value to respective and collective national capacity through peer learning; sharing and exchanging experience; transferring knowledge; and identifying and leveraging synergies.

2. Data and Research

A sound evidence and knowledge base is critical to informing policy and practice. DAFNE plays an important role in collating data from members (on the European Foundation sector and associations) in order to share this across the network and to make available as appropriate to wider audiences.

DAFNE will continue to build a robust evidence and knowledge base and seek to maximize and utilize its pool of knowledge.

3. Advocacy

DAFNE brings a range of diverse and influential voices to relevant policy informers and influencers (at national, European and global levels). It is recognised that DAFNE cannot do this alone and it is important that strong strategic and mutually supportive relationships with relevant organisations are developed as appropriate. DAFNE can bring the value of its national reach and the breadth of their membership base to the work of relevant European organisations, notably EFC.

DAFNE will provide a mechanism ensuring that their members can both hear and have their voices heard in order to enhance the effectiveness of advocacy work at European and national levels, in co-operation with EFC.

4. Communications

No foundation or donor operates in isolation – they function in an ecosystem and address issues that are shaped by policy, legislation, and practice, beyond their nation state. This ecosystem is complex and dynamic. It is necessary to have a broad field of vision and to observe the big picture but also to have pin-point focus on relevant issues and organisations, thus providing a connection with wider sources of information and fields of influence and between the highest policy level (at European and national levels) and grass-roots philanthropy. This is of particular value in respect of ‘early warning’ and identifying emerging issues.

DAFNE will offer a smart adjustable lens through which national associations and their members can scan and gain a perspective on the European ecosystem and vice versa and facilitate communication via relevant channels.

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Annex 1

DAFNE Membership June 2016

Austria: Association Funding for Public Benefit
Belgium: Belgian Network of Foundations
Bulgaria: Bulgarian Donors Forum
Croatia: Croatian Foundations Forum
Czech Republic: Czech Donors Forum
Finland: Council of Finnish Foundations
France: Centre Français des Fonds et Fondations
Germany: Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen
Hungary: Hungarian Donors Forum
Ireland: Philanthropy Ireland
Italy: Associazione di Fondazioni e di Casse di Risparmio (ACRI)
Italy: Associazione Italiana delle Fondazioni ed Enti di Erogazione (Assifero)
Liechtenstein: Association of Liechtenstein Charitable Foundations
The Netherlands: Vereniging van Fondsen in Nederland
Norway: Stiftelsesforeningen
Poland: Polish Donors Forum
Portugal: Portuguese Foundation Centre
Russia: Russia Donors Forum
Slovak Republic: Slovak Donors Forum
Spain: Asociación Española de Fundaciones
Sweden: Föreningen Stiftelser i Samverkan
Switzerland: Swiss Foundations
Turkey: Third Sector Foundation of Turkey (TUSEV)
UK: Association of Charitable Foundations
Ukraine: Ukrainian Philanthropists Forum