



WINGS

**WORLDWIDE
INITIATIVES
FOR
GRANTMAKER
SUPPORT**

WINGS *Forum* 2002

**10-13 March 2002
Sydney, Australia**

Prepared by Jane Sandilands, Freelance Writer, Australia

Preface

This report is written to capture a sense of both the spirit and the substance of the Forum. Over four days, delegates talked, listened and shared knowledge, ideas and visions. This report aims to be of interest and use to those delegates who attended, to other network members unable to be in Sydney for the Forum, and to those in the wider world interested in the global work of philanthropy.

The predecessor to WINGS was the 1998 International Meeting of Associations Serving Grantmakers (IMAG) in Oaxaca, Mexico, attended by 82 delegates.

Contents

WHAT IS WINGS?

THE FORUM BEGINS

A SENSE OF PLACE

INSPIRATION

Ambassador James Joseph and Delegates

COMMUNICATION

Reports of Practical Workshops on Communicating

COLLABORATION

Exchanges and Discussions

Breakfast Roundtables:

International Network on Strategic Philanthropy

Community Philanthropy

Responding to Disasters

Grantmaking in Indigenous Communities

Corporate Philanthropy

EDUCATION

Financial Sustainability

Promoting Philanthropy

Supporting Corporate Philanthropy

Governance and Board Development

Legal and Regulatory Reform

Membership Development, Services and Retention

Emerging Associations and Support Organizations

Support Organizations and Associations Adding Value

Codes and Standards

THE WORLD VIEW

Regional Meetings

IN CLOSING

Excerpts from Closing Plenary

Possible Future Directions

Ongoing Issues

The Wrap Up

Notetakers

Scott Anderson, Gina Estipona, Grant Hooper, Vanessa Meachen, Jane Sandilands, Bill Walker

What is WINGS?

Worldwide INitatives For Grantmaker Support (WINGS) is a global network of more than 85 membership associations serving grantmakers and support organizations serving philanthropy.

WINGS' beginnings go back four years to 1998 and Oaxaca, Mexico, the location of the International Meeting of Associations Serving Grantmakers (IMAG). IMAG was the first attempt to offer professional skills development and networking opportunities to those working for grantmaker associations worldwide.

Discussions at IMAG led to the formation of two groups in January 2000: WINGS and WINGS-CF. WINGS evolved from the recognized need of grantmaker support organizations for a forum to discuss issues common to them all. As part of the WINGS network, WINGS-CF includes organizations supporting community foundations around the world.

With its membership consisting of national associations, part of WINGS' mandate is to support groups serving grantmakers, ensuring they do not work in isolation. WINGSForum 2002 was designed to give delegates maximum opportunities to meet, to discuss and exchange ideas and experiences.

The WINGS Secretariat is hosted by the Council on Foundations in Washington, DC, USA, until the end of 2002. In 2003, The European Foundation Centre in Brussels, Belgium, will host the WINGS and WINGS-CF Secretariats following WINGS commitment to rotate the Secretariat among network participants.

The Forum Begins

On a warm autumn day, with a spirit of goodwill, seeking knowledge and to share their experiences about philanthropy, more than one hundred representatives of grantmaker associations and support organizations from around the world met in Sydney, Australia's Olympic city. WINGSForum offered delegates four days of learning from one another, opportunities to further their skills, refresh old networks and develop new ones in a combined goal to support philanthropy regionally and globally. Forum participants traveled great distances to attend what Philanthropy Australia President Lady Southey, representing the host organization, called "Australia's coming of age in philanthropy."

Countries from which participants came included Argentina, Philippines, Russia, Belgium, Mexico, Australia, United States, Turkey, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Ecuador, Bangladesh, India, South Africa, Canada, Slovak Republic, Estonia, Czech Republic, Brazil, Germany, Kenya, Ireland, Romania, Nigeria, Finland, Thailand and Japan.

*The workshops will give us skills.
The plenary sessions lets us soar.
Visioning will tell what we may
look like in the future.*

Barry Gaberman
Senior Vice President, Ford Foundation,
and Chair, WINGS' Coordinating Committee

A Sense of Place

Reflecting respect for all Indigenous peoples, Melbourne University's Professor Stuart Macintyre gave delegates a brief introduction to set Australia's social, historical and political framework in context, first acknowledging the traditional Indigenous owners of the land on which the Forum was held. His acknowledgment of the Gadigal people was the first of many at WINGSForum 2002, setting a scene for respect, thoughtfulness and honesty to flourish.

Indigenous Australian Leigh Madden gave the Welcome to Country. Mr. Madden is a member of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation: the place where Sydney, a city of four million people, now stands.

*Thank you for crossing frontiers
with the messages of tolerance
and vision to try to change
the face of the globe through
philanthropy.*

**The Honourable Bob Carr
Premier of New South Wales
officially opening WINGSForum 2002**

Inspiration

Those making a keynote address, particularly when delegates come from many countries and varying backgrounds, have a significant responsibility. Their role is variously to inspire delegates to look ahead, to give permission for them to step outside the square, to reflect fearlessly on where they can improve their work and above all, to lay the groundwork for an atmosphere of trust and a safe haven for ideas and issues to be debated among equals. Delegates were unanimous in their agreement that the keynote address of Ambassador James A. Joseph, who was introduced by Barry Gaberman, Chair of WINGS' Coordinating Committee, as "a remarkable citizen of the world," achieved all these aims.

There were countless inspiring moments during the Forum which touched delegates on many levels: the inspiration of their peers, the freedom to meet in honesty and friendship and the ability to express opinions freely.

If there was one message which defined the time, the place and the people, it was the "soft power" of philanthropy referred to by Ambassador Joseph in his address entitled "A Common Purpose." "Soft power" became a touchstone for the Forum, referred to by delegates many times throughout their discussions.

A brief excerpt from Ambassador Joseph's address explains the message:

Soft power refers to the ability to attract and influence through the flow of information, the appeal of social, moral and cultural messages and the relationships established through acts of generosity. Hard power is the ability to get others to do what we want. Soft power is the ability to get others to want the same things we do. The former is based on coercion. The latter is based on attraction and affinity.

Philanthropy as soft power can provide hope and healing to those broken and battered by economic systems. It can provide purpose and promise to those intentionally underdeveloped by political and educational systems. It can provide creativity and innovation for those seeking resources to facilitate research or to unlock the mysteries of new ideas struggling to be born.

Ambassador Joseph's address ranged widely over issues including the changing context of philanthropy and the need for greater cooperation, for new partnerships and to recognize that globalization brings with it new challenges for the foundation sector. He also spoke of the "new romance" with civil society and the fact that it includes more than the non-governmental organizations serving a public good. While acknowledging that civil society has the potential to reshape and unite a divided world, he reminded delegates that "those of us in organized philanthropy must not oversell its strength or over-idealize its intentions."

Acknowledging the "long and difficult agenda for regional associations, support groups, donors and the professionals

who manage foundations and corporate giving programs," Ambassador Joseph said he remained convinced that those at the Forum had "a great opportunity to change the face of philanthropy."

In the final analysis, he said, "it may be that the most important role of philanthropy in a badly divided world is to provide hope for the many that remain hopeless."

Ambassador Joseph's closing words to delegates were, "I hope you will remember in all that you say and do after this forum is over that the gift of hope is as big a gift as the gift of life itself."

We all recognize the strength of the relationship between philanthropy and the well-being of the community. We look forward to being able to contribute to a kinder, more just community and society.

**Lady Marigold Southey AM
President, Philanthropy Australia**

Communication

One of the strongest lessons from the several Forum sessions based around the communications issue is that no matter how large or how small the association or organization, how long it has been in existence, or how apparently well known, constant attention to both internal and external communication programs is essential.

For the efficient servicing of members, effective communication is, naturally, one of the most important aspects of the work of associations and organizations. A vast range of people need to be reached, from those working internally to ensure the smooth running of the organization, to those outside the organization, where the need is to increase public education and develop awareness among diverse audiences. Technology is of particular value to organizations working in a global setting, but also brings its own challenges.

Technology has undoubtedly caused a revolution in ways of working, and this is true regardless of some being at different technological levels from others. While technology and its benefits have been widely embraced, the Forum pointed to clear warning signals that technology needs to fit the requirements and abilities of the membership, to be part of an overall communication strategy and that its implementation requires commitment from all members in an organization.

Among ways discussed by those in membership organizations to establish the best ways of communication was firstly to find out from members themselves what they think about new

aspects of technology. A survey of members was regarded as an essential – and democratic – first step. Members resistant to technology should be strongly encouraged to take advantage of what it offers. And once technology is in place, it is important that technical support is available to members and that technology is used to increase the quality of communication.

Communicating publicly with the world of donors, grant recipients and business requires constant attention together with innovative and clear ways to restate and clarify the key reasons which encourage the growth of philanthropy. The message from experienced media and foundation practitioners was that there are always new audiences out there, hearing the story for the first time. The danger, especially for long established organizations, is complacency and relying on an established history. The key is to keep the message fresh and to keep it constant.

Collaboration

Among the strengths of WINGSForum 2002 was its ability to gather delegates together and enable them to exchange knowledge and learn from their richness of diversity. From the way in which these opportunities were embraced at the Forum, it was evident that collaboration and cooperation among delegates is both an essential and regular part of their professional life.

Forum exchanges took place in corridors, over breakfast and lunch, in workshops, at breakfast roundtables and in plenaries such as the panels **Issues in Australian Philanthropy** and **A View from the South**. While giving opportunities for panelists to present their views, these presentations encouraged questions and discussion, exploring often difficult and testing issues. The collaborative nature of the Forum was seen especially in delegates taking up particular issues from these panels and offering possible solutions or approaches, without being confined to the specifics of particular countries or organizations.

In what became one of the most talked-about sessions of the Forum, the main topic of discussion in **Issues in Australian**

Philanthropy was Australia's Indigenous people and by affinity, Indigenous people and minorities worldwide. The Forum participants most clearly showed the way in which they answered the call of Ambassador Joseph for the foundation sector to support and affirm the principle "I want to be me

without making it difficult for you to be you." Referring to African American mystic, poet and theologian Howard Thurman, Ambassador Joseph said, "In today's world, it is for me to be able to say I want to be an American without making it difficult for Africans to be Africans, Asians to be Asians, Arabs to be Arabs or Australians to be Australians. It is for others to be able to say I want to be a Buddhist without making it difficult for Muslims to be Muslims, Christians to be Christians or Jews to be Jews."

This session showed the foundation sector at its best: facing difficult issues with honest

*Reconciliation is about relationships
between people.*

Darren Godwell

CEO, Lumbu Indigenous Community Foundation

*We are committed to
working with, not doing for.*

Charles Lane

CEO, The Myer Foundation

questions, co-operation and an awareness that without taking risks, philanthropy runs the danger of becoming institutionalized.

There was acknowledgment by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous speakers of the failure of successive Australian governments to enter into a mutually successful relationship with Indigenous people. It had tried, one speaker said, “exclusion, control, extermination” and numerous policies, all of which failed to address one of the burning questions for Australia’s people, to ensure equal opportunities especially in the areas of health, education and potential to carve

their own futures. For many Australians, this is more difficult to bear by the contrast referred to of living in a country most often thought of as “a land of freedom with prosperity for most.”

Until the establishment of the first Indigenous community foundation in 1999, between 80 percent and 90 percent of Indigenous Australian activity has been government funded. Some Australian philanthropic foundations, among them The Myer Foundation, have developed directions to enable them to work in a more focussed way with Indigenous Australians.

The relationship between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians was described by one speaker as the country’s “most testing moral issue” with strong similarities between Indigenous Australians and those in developing nations throughout the world. Unlike the United States, Australia has no treaty with its Indigenous peoples, which is regarded by some as a good thing, because a treaty “shifts the ground from a moral to a legal issue.”

Among the recognized challenges for Indigenous foundations are making strategic investments, building networks and a sound infrastructure and welcoming funders.

Challenges for grantmakers to Indigenous foundations include the important “leap of faith,” making a three- to four-year commitment and, over time, to be prepared for a change of role from grantmaker to mentor.

In the panel **A View from the South**, one challenge common to the experience of all three panelists was the lack of financial resources, often coupled with a lack of human and advisory resources. Kenya is currently working with Uganda and Tanzania to decide upon the kind of association that works best, its membership and the issues in most need of attention.

Among common issues discussed were cultural differences and ways to address the move from traditional philanthropy and one closely linked with Christian charity to a broader view that sees

In Europe, there is not this problem of labeling. I have a black mother and white father. What about “mixture” as a term for mixed identities? If you deconstruct it, there are no identity problems.

European Delegate

Australia needs powerful conversations around truth because racism diminishes us all.

Lillian Holt

**Director, Centre for Indigenous Education,
University of Melbourne**

philanthropy working for a better world. This is especially true for young democracies seeking to acknowledge the legitimacy of philanthropy with new models and new technology and are issues very much at the forefront for emerging associations. By contrast, India's tradition of philanthropy goes back 4,500 years in different forms, and here the challenge is to connect to its traditions and rebalance reliance on foreign sources.

Breakfast Roundtables

Held over two mornings of the Forum, the breakfast roundtables gave delegates the opportunity to meet in a relaxed setting to discuss areas of particular interest. In 2001, the Bertelsmann Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the German Marshall Fund of the US, the Compagnia di San Paolo and the King Baudouin Foundation joined forces to form the **International Network on Strategic Philanthropy**. This roundtable reviewed and discussed the Network.

The **Community Philanthropy** roundtable attracted participants from the United States, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Mexico to review and compare the needs and operations of community foundations at various stages of development. Many of the matters followed from those discussed at the WINGS-CF 2002 Peer Meeting held the day before WINGSForum 2002 began.

While the roundtable which discussed **Responding to Disasters** took a global view, it had added topicality because of the events of September 11. Among matters raised for discussion were how best to fulfil the expectations of the community at times of disaster.

The roundtable dedicated to **Grantmaking in Indigenous Communities** discussed matters including corporate partnerships, fisheries rights, mentors, economic issues and parallels among countries. Two warning notes were sounded: one about the dangers of political correctness, especially when it has the effect of dampening interest and curiosity in projects and the other concerning "band-aid" remedies, with their potential to worsen underlying issues.

The enthusiastic response to the **Corporate Philanthropy** workshop led to this additional breakfast roundtable, reflecting the interest and different levels of involvement in corporate philanthropy in several countries. A good deal of information was exchanged in this informal setting, which benefited greatly from the experience of Skip Rhodes of the ChevronTexaco Corporation, who gave generously of his knowledge and practical working experience of corporate philanthropy. The key message was that each business or corporation will have a different motivation for its involvement in corporate philanthropy. In the words of one participant, "There is no single magic bullet." Rather, the challenge is to pursue the meeting point that suits both parties, found through building relationships and mutual interests.

Education

While all aspects of the Forum program were planned to enhance the professional development of delegates, a particular focus on exchange of knowledge was seen in the workshops where the emerging collegiality taking place throughout the Forum was evident at the many working

I didn't feel there were teachers and pupils – whether emerging or mature, we have something to learn. I learnt from Africa, India, Australia.

Polish Delegate

sessions each day. Many delegates were seeking practical and tested strategies from those with longer experience in the field. The structure of the workshops, with an expert panel and ample time for question and discussion, enabled this to happen. The sessions saw a generosity of spirit, a useful exchange of knowledge, the raising of questions of common interest and a link between the experience of those working with long-established organizations and others more recently arrived in the area.

The workshop discussing successful strategies for **financial sustainability** focussed on several areas, including innovative ways to become sustainable and the widely held opinion that the breadth of responsibility for financial sustainability is shared by all in the organization and that to achieve this aim, both short and long term strategic planning is required. Another key message was avoiding overdependence on one donor.

While the entire Forum explored and discussed ways to **promote philanthropy**, the workshop session dedicated to this topic cast light on some of the challenges in countries which have experienced changes in their political systems and where, as a result, the community has become jaded or cynical. A further difficulty is experienced in countries where wealth was not acquired cleanly, raising a moral question. The challenge now is to rebuild trust in the power of philanthropy. The establishment of community foundations has proven successful in working with communities in many countries to develop this trust and is enabling “community” to be appreciated in its widest sense with smaller marginalized and minority groups able to have a voice.

Several of the countries now grappling with building community trust have a strong tradition of philanthropy in which the community formed its own ways of giving, despite political oppression. However, there is potential for tension between governments and philanthropic organizations, where the latter can be seen as competitors, especially when working with social issues. A key message from this workshop was the need to work at a local level, build from there, to embrace existing cultural frameworks and work within them.

Both corporations and foundations are aware that involvement in **corporate philanthropy** can be a mutually beneficial partnership and there is great interest on both sides to take steps to encourage this. However, those who have successfully developed these relationships do not underestimate the amount of work that needs to be done before this can happen. Because the corporate culture and the culture of philanthropy are so different, it requires more than a leap of faith on both sides to get to the stage of even considering a partnership. According to those who are successful in their relationships with corporations and businesses, clear benchmarks and standards for philanthropic organizations and associations create a more confident climate for both.

Companies get involved in philanthropy because it is good for business and it's expected of them and they are looking for a return. This is an investment of our shareholder dollars so it's an investment in the future of the company and the communities where our employees live.

**Skip Rhodes
ChevronTexaco
The Australian Financial Review
13 March 2002**

The experience of ChevronTexaco, a corporation involved in corporate philanthropy in individual communities in 185 countries, shared some practical history, which was particularly useful because some delegates had first-hand experience of the corporation's giving strategy. Among tested methods that produce results when approaching corporations is the ability to establish what the corporation hopes to achieve from the relationship. While NGOs undoubtedly have needs, so do corporations, a fact which can get lost in the urgency of a cause. A winning combination is to aim for a result in which the community, the NGO and the corporation all achieve their particular goals.

Governance and board development are front burner issues for foundations and there was general recognition that any governance structure depends on the mission and goals of an organization. This session had a focus on practical advice, especially in the choice of board members and the ongoing assessment of the success of the board. Keys to a successful board included ensuring that it contains a healthy diversity, for board members to have a clear understanding why they have been recruited and setting a finite term for board membership.

Constantly updated information and education is regarded as essential for organizations and associations involved in the area of **legal and regulatory reform**. Organizations use a variety of methods to keep members informed, including publications, online education and information, training programs and working with organizations whose learning is through specific workshops. Common issues discussed at this session included the increasing complexity of legislation and the increasing difficulty of achieving tax deductibility.

Membership development, services and retention are of prime importance to all organizations and associations and the session had a focus on the changing needs and expectations of members as organizations grow. Among common themes discussed was the lack of accurately researched information on the sector. While there are many advantages to membership in an association, delegates discussed the need to reiterate these benefits, to encourage new members and to harness ongoing support from existing members. The Forum itself was a prime example of what can be achieved through a strong organizational membership base, with regional bodies gaining a global status and consequently a stronger voice for advocacy in their own regions with the backing of an organization with worldwide recognition.

Delegates from Africa shared their experiences in the session devoted to **emerging associations and support organizations**. Among key questions raised were how to serve new constituencies and to serve the multiplicity of stakeholders, ensuring that all had a voice. While there was a willingness for emerging organizations to exchange ideas and give each other support, pressures were evident because of the need for emerging associations and support organizations to teach while they were still learning.

New and interesting opportunities to promote philanthropy were shared in the session on **support organizations and associations adding value**. Community Foundations of Canada, the Connecticut Council for Philanthropy and the Southern African Grantmakers' Association all gave working examples of ways of adding to the delivery of direct services. Among successful strategies to achieve the goals of adding value were partnering with non-traditional partners, becoming known as the repository of knowledge about philanthropy in one's region and building a reputation as an experienced and credible advocate, willing and able to make a worthwhile contribution to the development of public policy.

The question of the adoption of **codes and standards** provided the basis for a wide-ranging discussion which had a focus on the increasing pressures on civil society organizations to be more transparent, accountable and self-regulating. The feeling that if grantmakers do not undertake

self-regulation, governments will surely do so, was widespread. While it was recognized that codes and standards can contribute to the sector becoming regarded more widely as professional and accountable, there was also concern that such adoption has the potential to impact on the independence of organizations and runs the danger of becoming bureaucratic.

The World View

Throughout the Forum, the emphasis was on the global nature of philanthropy, reflected by the many nations from which delegates came. In his opening address, Ambassador Joseph referred to the globalization debate and that, despite the many issues raised around this topic, how little attention has been given “to what it means to live in an interdependent world that is integrating and fragmenting at the same time.” The more interdependent we become, he said, “the more people are turning inward to smaller communities of meaning and memory.” Focusing on the changing context of philanthropy, Ambassador Joseph said that while small local units can be less bureaucratic and more personal, there is an increasingly obvious need for coalitions, collaborations, alliances and partnerships.

The **regional meetings** at the Forum provided delegates with many opportunities to compare ways to appreciate what happens at a local level and examine the benefits of working on a larger scale, as part of the global network provided by WINGS.

In **Africa**, data is being collected to enable informed decisions to be made about the next steps to be taken and there is wide support for bodies that build on regional strengths, including the Africa Foundations Learning Group and the Africa Affinity Group. The need was expressed for technical assistance, resource materials – particularly those that give practical hands-on information – and the opportunity to share the global experiences of others. For their part, African delegates offer the actual experience of what happens in the country and offer WINGS the opportunity for “completeness” in the global context.

Among issues discussed among the countries of the **Asia Pacific** were the emergence of community foundations, the role of advocacy, the tracking of giving, education of the public about the sector, the promotion of philanthropy and good working relationships with government. Research into the sector was a particular need common to all the countries in the region and particularly to one seeking the involvement and assistance of WINGS.

The regional meeting for **Europe** concentrated on the role of the European Foundation Centre as a new home for WINGS beginning January 2003. Discussions included providing and extending services to new and emerging associations of grantmakers, training initiatives and the development of partnerships among associations with corporations and governments.

The major goal of delegates from **Latin America and the Caribbean** is to take the opportunity provided by WINGS to create a regional group with a common language and common culture to promote philanthropy in Latin America and strengthen relationships between institutions. Among possible lines of collaboration discussed were research, lobby and advocacy and the sharing of resources.

We have been given a sense of place, of where we are and a profound understanding and knowledge of Australia.

North American Delegate

With the existence of more than 40 regional infrastructure organizations currently in existence, delegates from **North America** recognized that the value of WINGS lies in the ability to work at a global rather than at a regional level. Ambassador Joseph said in his keynote address, “The older regional associations have been able to demonstrate the value of grantmakers working together in professional development as the art of giving takes on the characteristics of a professional guild; in research as the sector accumulates and analyzes data useful and necessary for its health and vitality; in communication as it becomes important to tell our story and project the face of philanthropy as an important contributor to the public good; and, of course, in discharging public responsibilities in those countries where there is some form of public incentive involved.”

In Closing

While the title of her closing address was **Philanthropy in the Asia Pacific: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities**, Rory Francisco-Tolentino addressed many issues common to philanthropy worldwide. These included the areas of legal and regulatory framework, trends in education and challenges. While celebrating that “philanthropy is alive and growing in the Asia Pacific region,” she also spoke of the opportunities that exist to further promote philanthropy.

Among these, and common to the experience of most Forum delegates, is the opportunity to undertake long-term public awareness and public education campaigns, working to enable the media to understand the causes and the value of nonprofit work. Work with volunteers, Ms. Francisco-Tolentino said, helps deepen the philanthropic culture.

Echoing an ongoing issue throughout the Forum, she highlighted the opportunities inherent in building the capacity of NGOs to use information technology for fundraising. Another important opportunity, she said, is the development of more innovative ways to encourage greater corporate support for NGOs. “Working with business in trisectoral or multisectoral concerns and social problems, in public fundraising campaigns, and with business around venture philanthropy initiatives, are all very good ways to get business to know the nonprofit sector better, and to be able to mutually enrich the process of dialogue.”

In the discussion which followed her address, delegates further explored the issues around relationships with large funders and some of the challenges these bring in the areas of choice of projects to fund, auditing and reporting. While one long-term solution, delegates agreed, is to raise funds from within the grantseeking country, another, more immediately accessible, is to ensure donors have regular and detailed feedback.

The Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium, which Ms. Francisco-Tolentino chairs, is an informal network of like-minded organizations dedicated to promoting the flow and effectiveness of philanthropy in the region. It acts as a catalyst, convenor and network builder to fulfil its mission to increase the quality and quantity of philanthropic giving within and to Asia by strengthening the institutional infrastructure and improving the operating environment for philanthropy and the nonprofit sector.

Possible Future Directions

During the closing stages of the Forum, many hours were spent by delegates discussing possible strategic directions for WINGS. With a focus on both policy directions and practical issues, members called for strong leadership in the sector from WINGS. Requests for ongoing education, support for research, technical assistance, membership servicing, particular attention to the needs of emerging organizations and the establishment of a bank of best practice all foreshadowed

a crucially important role for WINGS in the global future of philanthropy.

Ongoing Issues

Throughout the Forum, several issues were raised which remain a challenge for WINGS and for all involved in global philanthropy. Among these are what delegates defined as the language of philanthropy, which, because of cultural, historical or sector differences, is not universally understood. Another issue requiring thought and work was that of Indigenous peoples and philanthropy and how this relationship can work with mutual success. The question of how philanthropy from wealthy countries can do its best work for other countries at different stages was a further issue, as was the need to develop a meeting point for cultures where philanthropy has existed for several thousand years with those for whom it is a relatively new concept. Throughout the Forum, delegates engaged with the question raised by Ambassador Joseph in his opening address of how to balance the individualism inherent in much philanthropy with the benefits to be gained from partnerships. These issues, and others, will continue to be discussed by members in their own organizations and networks.

The Wrap Up

Wrapping up the Forum, Barry Gaberman, Chair of the WINGS Coordinating Committee, said one of its triumphs was the attendance of more than 100 people, despite the difficulties

As I participated in the discussions and activities of the Forum, I was struck by the level of energy and interest and commitment all the participants had. It was obvious that this work is taken seriously by all of us. And yet, perhaps the most touching session for me was the Panel on Current Issues in Australian Philanthropy. The presence and perspectives of the Indigenous Peoples reminded me of how many urgent and critical issues we are all facing – within our countries, in our regions and throughout the world – issues of inclusion, of social justice and of human rights -and it came home to me that this is what we are all working for – as we develop ways to improve the environment for giving, what we are ultimately looking for is solutions that come from all of us, working in community and as communities, and guided by the vision of all peoples, living together in equality, and with equity.

Rory Francisco-Tolentino
Chair, Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium

following September 11. Among many memorable aspects of the Forum were “the buzz of constant enthusiasm and discussions, workshops of high interest and quality and ownership of the meeting by participants who moved with ease between local and global issues.”

Relationships were respectful and there was constant interaction between participants, facilitated through discussions “marked by candor and courage,” with no shying away from difficult issues, including comments about Western models of philanthropy. Among the concepts raised at the Forum, Mr. Gaberman said that Ambassador Joseph’s description of “soft power” most clearly captures the spirit of what it is that delegates are doing. However, traditional models of philanthropy were not romanticized and there was recognition that some of these institutions did not build social capital. There is a role, he said, for the “leap of faith” which must be taken when all the auditing and reporting has finished. Through all, he said the profession of enhancing philanthropy, whether from a community or corporate standpoint, relies on energy, education, accountability and cross-sector collaborations. The goal, he said, is not just to grow philanthropy, but to grow philanthropy better.

In her final message, Monica Patten, Vice Chair of the WINGS Coordinating Committee, spoke of the future of WINGS and WINGS-CF and its move from the Council on Foundations to its new host organization, the European Foundation Centre. There are both challenges and benefits in rotating WINGS and WINGS-CF, she said. The European Foundation Centre works in 36 countries, has an important mission and mandate and was recommended to be the host for WINGS and WINGS-CF, giving them a physical space and an administrative home. The Coordinating Committee and the WINGS network will provide input and a transition team will guide and develop the rotation.

Among the benefits anticipated from this rotation include the opportunity to share responsibility for the network’s development with different associations and

organizations, to provide visibility for different regional perspectives on philanthropy, to model new ways of working globally and to strengthen the independence of the network.

Ms. Patten’s closing words to delegates were, “Be assured, the WINGS you know today will be the WINGS you know tomorrow.”

*A role for WINGS:
to celebrate philanthropy
on an ongoing basis.*
Delegates discussing WINGS’ future

*In a badly divided world,
philanthropy can bring
people together. People
everywhere are beginning to
realize that a great society
depends on the goodness of
individuals as much as the
government or laws.*

Ambassador James Joseph
The Australian Financial Review
13 March 2002