



# WINGS

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**WORLDWIDE INITIATIVES  
FOR GRANTMAKER  
SUPPORT**

**STRATEGIC PLAN – 2003-2006**

*April 2003, revised April 2004*

## **CONNECTIONS FOR GLOBAL PHILANTHROPY**

**WINGS** provides opportunities for the staff and board members of grantmaker associations and support organisations to learn from each other, support each other and develop, through regional and global networks, different modes of collaboration to strengthen philanthropy worldwide.

The idea of a network of grantmaker associations and support organizations first started at the International Meeting of Associations serving Grantmakers (IMAG) in Oaxaca, Mexico in 1998. At that meeting, the importance of creating opportunities for all organisations supporting grantmakers to share experience and expertise across countries, regions and environments surfaced and effort went into finding ways to build on IMAG. Later that year, a group of organisations, some present at the Oaxaca meeting, met in Miami, USA to develop an action plan to promote community philanthropy, and develop a global community foundation support network. Over the next couple of years, IMAG developed into **WINGS - Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmaker Support** and the community foundation support network evolved into **WINGS-CF**.

**WINGS** and **WINGS-CF**, while closely aligned, initially carried out their work through separate secretariats, with the **WINGS** secretariat based at the Council on Foundations in Washington DC and **WINGS-CF** serviced by Community Foundations of Canada in Ottawa, Canada.

The two linked networks operated from these bases until the end of 2002. During this period, **WINGS** undertook a variety of initiatives in the areas of information and communication, including the establishment of a website, [www.wingsweb.org](http://www.wingsweb.org), and organisational development, including peer learning meetings and an internship programme. It also convened several international meetings, including a global meeting, **WINGSForum** in Sydney, Australia, in March 2002. During the same period, **WINGS-CF** also developed a website, [www.wings-cf.org](http://www.wings-cf.org), and undertook programmes and activities to strengthen the capability of organisations supporting community foundations including research and publications, a series of global meetings and peer exchanges.

In January 2003, both networks were merged under the **WINGS** secretariat, which is based at the European Foundation Centre in Brussels, Belgium for at least four years. Currently, **network** participants are 100 grantmaker associations and support organisations that seek to strengthen the philanthropy sector of civil society in over 60 countries.

## **OUR VISION**

A strong, global philanthropic community, sensitive to the needs of their societies and able to respond in effective and efficient ways.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**WINGS** seeks to strengthen the institutional infrastructure of philanthropy worldwide by building a strong, interconnected and collaborative global network of grantmaker associations and support organisations, which, in turn, help grantmaking institutions that support civil society to build a more equitable and just global community.

## **OUR VALUES AND METHODS**

**WINGS** seeks to be:

- participant focused - continually aware of the issues of greatest importance to network participants and to maintain active lines of communication between the secretariat and each participant organisation.
- supportive of interdependency - encouraging interaction between participants so that WINGS genuinely functions as a network and achieves effectiveness through the dissemination of ideas, sharing of experience and written material and collegial support between people in these organisations. Participation levels and preferred modes for communication and involvement will be monitored and analysed so that WINGS can continuously improve the amount and quality of interaction throughout the network.
- transnational - in order to be truly a global network, WINGS will relocate its secretariat every few years, avoiding being institutionalised in any one country or system. A careful process for selection of host institutions will be followed.
- collaborative - wherever possible and appropriate, WINGS will work with other external organisations and foster opportunities for network participants to collaborate in addressing their needs and goals.
- truly global and representative - in all its work, WINGS will try to be attentive to the specific needs and interests of different regions.

## **SPECIAL FOCUS**

Although WINGS' services are offered to all network participants, some work is dedicated to certain groups of participants. Throughout the life of this Strategic Plan, these will include:

- a resource base for **community-based philanthropy** and the development of community foundations, including shared and regularly updated information on the worldwide growth of this field. This work is already well developed.
- a new resource base and programmes for **emerging associations and support organisations**
- development of resources to support those working on the **support of corporate philanthropy**
- support and strengthening, as necessary, of **regional groupings** of network participants for mutual support. Work has begun in the Latin American and Caribbean Region.

## **OUR OBJECTIVES**

1. to increase **knowledge** of the sector, primarily through collating and disseminating information on national, regional and global issues and trends in philanthropy;
2. to ensure **continuing development and delivery of services** to support learning within the network;
3. to strengthen and increase **communication** among network participants;
4. to strengthen and increase **collaboration** among network participants;
5. to build the **institutional capacity** of WINGS to manage its work effectively and to develop relationships and alliances that contribute to the work of network participants.

## **MEANS/ACTIVITIES**

### **Objective 1: increasing knowledge of the sector**

The primary focus within this objective will be on helping network participants to maximise learning about their structures, style, activities and funding base. This will be done by:

1. developing and maintaining profiles on grantmaker associations and support organisations worldwide;
2. developing and disseminating representative case studies from the network;
3. research and commissioning of publications which will strengthen the field.

Beyond this, WINGS will, mainly in collaboration with other institutions, develop and maintain national and regional profiles on philanthropy and document major trends in the field.

Opportunities will be taken to use this knowledge base to promote philanthropy, and especially to promote the role of support agencies and associations, to donors, especially to multilateral and international donors.

### **Objective 2: development and delivery of services**

WINGS will seek to maintain and build on services already in operation and to evaluate these. These services are:

1. occasional conferences and meetings (regional or global) and peer events where WINGS convenes, facilitates or assists others. This will include plans for a major, global gathering, WINGSForum 2, currently planned for 2006 and the facilitation as wanted of gatherings for network participants in specific regions. This will begin in 2003 with an event for Latin America and the Caribbean;
2. training and development (primarily for staff of network participants) via internships, peer matching/exchanges and mentoring programmes;
3. technical assistance to network participants via material available on the websites and consultancy.

Network participants have identified new services where WINGS has a role to play in addition to other national and international organisations and groups:

1. facilitating regional meetings, discussion, information-sharing and problem-solving;
2. improving legal and regulatory environments, especially assisting in introducing/explaining one country's or region's good practice in less enabling environments;
3. improving accountability and transparency in grantmaking (therefore increasing public and government trust and confidence in philanthropy).

Collaborative work in these areas will be developed during the period.

### **Objective 3: communication**

This objective is embedded in the essential concept and structure of this network. Methods and mechanisms for communication and information sharing will be offered to all participants, with encouragement for all to be actively involved in WINGS activities.

Specific activities will include:

1. maintenance of websites including a calendar of events, international glossary, directories of network participants;
2. development, maintenance and promotion of resource material, in electronic and other formats, appropriate for grantmaker associations and support organisations;
3. encouragement of occasional face-to-face contact through training and peer learning events, regional gatherings, etc;
4. maintenance of translation fund for resource material, website and meetings;
5. development and use of participation criteria for the network and means of evaluating the effectiveness of methods used to create communication and involvement.

### **Objective 4: collaboration**

WINGS will encourage joint working and supportive activity throughout the network and between network participants and other relevant organisations, including.

1. development and use of IT mechanisms for network participants to share information;
2. development and support of mechanisms to facilitate collaboration among network participants;
3. development of active links with international support agencies (including ICNL, USIG, UNDP, World Bank, etc) to explore issues of common concern and to encourage awareness of and support for grantmaker support organisations and the foundations they work to foster. Such links may be at network participant level or network-wide.
4. Facilitation, in collaboration with ISTR and others, of an international practitioner and research symposium on community foundations (Symposium on a Global Movement) to take place in December 2004.

### **Objective 5: institutional capacity**

WINGS will give attention to its own development and management, aiming for effectiveness in its activities to meet objectives and serve its member base. Priorities relate to:

1. creating and maintaining an adequate funding base;
2. ensuring a core staff group sufficient to provide high quality and timely services to network participants;
3. ensuring an appropriate focusing of services on specialised groupings within the network, eg WINGS-CF;
4. developing and implementing Coordinating Committee renewal policies and procedures (beginning in April 2003 and reviewed annually) and maintaining a culture of active involvement of participants in committees and working groups;
5. documenting the experience of transition in 2003. Beginning in 2004 to plan timely relocation of the WINGS Secretariat for the next phase of work from 2007-10, using experience of the first transition process to protect the network's knowledge base and relationships through change;
6. building strategic alliances with relevant networks and organisations.

## **MONITORING THE PLAN**

WINGS' Coordinating Committee will review objectives against the Plan at its twice-yearly meetings and in early 2005 will undertake a thorough review of the Plan and set new priorities as necessary. The Committee has agreed the details of a work plan which operationalises the Strategic Plan and this will also be reviewed at each meeting, with detailed reporting from the Secretariat on each item.

## **FULFILLING THE NEEDS OF CONSTITUENT GROUPS**

The special attention promised to specific areas of philanthropy support is integrated into the Plan. In particular:

**Support of community philanthropy:** through continuing development of the website, regular research into the growth of community foundations around the world, the continuation of a programme of peer exchanges which has proved very effective, technical assistance via material available on the websites, and use of the translation fund. Opportunities will be sought for regional and global gatherings of WINGS-CF participants and considerable effort will be going into the organisation of the December 2004 Symposium on community foundations - and its follow-up.

**Emerging associations and support organisations:** work will begin through a peer learning event for some 15 people and thereafter by planning a programme of work to help fulfil the needs and demands expressed there, perhaps including research and publications. The event will focus on fledgling organisations but there is also a growing group of associations at an even earlier stage of development which may also need some opportunities to meet face-to-face and have tailored assistance.

**Support of corporate philanthropy:** there is strong demand for work that identifies the special needs of those supporting corporate philanthropy and for exploration of ways of assisting network participants that are seeking to promote corporate philanthropy from a low base in their particular countries. This will begin with an exploratory meeting of interested parties, and at that meeting a programme of work based on electronic communications, links with other relevant networks and agencies and further meetings, publications and research will be explored.

**Regional groupings** of network participants for mutual support. Explicit reference is made in this Plan to the Latin America and Caribbean region where WINGS has been asked to co-host meetings for the time being. The loosely developed grouping of associations of grantmakers in Europe convened annually for some years by the European Foundation Centre is also looking to WINGS for support in meeting more frequently and developing its own agenda as well as active policy links with EFC. At present no other needs are known but WINGS will remain open to ideas coming from the network on this.

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