

PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN EVPA AND EUROPEAN COMMISSION

2014-2017

In January of 2014 EVPA and the European Commission entered into a four year Partnership Agreement. The Partnership was awarded under the financial **Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)**, as the European Union intended to foster cooperation with pan-European networks active in promoting access to social finance.

The Partnership aims to increase access to finance Venture Philanthropy/Social Investment (VP/SI) practitioners in emerging and developing European markets.

The Partnership is aimed at encouraging further development of social finance in Europe and recognises the role EVPA plays as a network promoting societal impact through venture philanthropy and social investment.

Establishing this Partnership has increased EVPA's ability to work closely with EU institutions and better represent the interest of its members. It strengthens the links between the European Institutions and practitioners, giving them the possibility to voice their concerns and expectations to EU policy makers.

As part of the Partnership agreement EVPA focuses on four priorities:

- Support the Commission in its outreach activities at EU, national and local level with the aim of ensuring the implementation of European policies in the relevant area (e.g. Programme for Employment and Social Innovation, European Social Fund, Social Business Initiative etc.).
- Reinforcing the capacity of the network's members, including through offering a platform for the exchange of good practices in the relevant field, and raising awareness about relevant EU policies.
- Voicing the concerns and expectations of organisations facilitating access to finance to (potential) entrepreneurs from disadvantaged and underrepresented groups / social enterprises.
- Providing data / research on developments in the field and on priority topics.

As part of these four priorities, we have conducted research and organised events throughout 2017.

From January to December, the following activities were undertaken by EVPA:



PRIORITY 1

EXCHANGES WITH EU AND MULTILATERAL AUTHORITIES

Throughout 2017, EVPA's Policy Team was regularly in contact with various DGs of the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Investment Bank & Fund. Since July 2016, EVPA is also an official observer of the Global Social Impact Investment Steering Group and it is continuously collaborating with the OECD.

EVPA POLICY SESSION

In 2017, EVPA organised a policy session with 33 high level practitioners focused on European Union funding for social enterprises. The session, titled "Understanding how EU Funding for social enterprises works: a masterclass" took place at EVPA's 13th Annual Conference in Oslo, on 10 November 2017.

EU WEBINARS

In 2017, EVPA continued the "EU Webinar Series" which was initiated in 2014 to address European topics of interest to the VP/SI community. In 2017 alone, the series attracted 246 "live" participants while the sessions' recordings were viewed 255 times online.

The three sessions organised in 2017 covered the following topics:

- EU Webinar #9 | Foundations & Social Impact Investing - Going beyond grant-making – 22 March 2017;
- EU Webinar #10 | The Sustainable Development Goals & VP/SI - 14 June 2017;
- EU Webinar #11 | Fostering public private collaboration to address social issues - 12 December 2017.

EU NEWS

In order to better inform its members of EU developments, EVPA published short articles on EU related topics in its monthly newsletter and on its website.

In 2017, the most important topics were:

- GECES "Improving access to funding" subject paper.
- DG EMPL call for proposals aimed at supporting the transaction costs of financial intermediaries.
- EU Funding opportunities.
- Horizon Prize for Social Innovation.

PRIORITY 2

EXCHANGES BETWEEN PRACTITIONERS

For the first time in 2017, EVPA organised sessions specifically targeted at expert members during its Annual Conference. The topics covered by these sessions are:

- Investing with a Gender Lens in 2017, who is doing the most advanced work, what is needed and how the EVPA can collaborate more effectively?
- Corporate Masterclass – creating social impact that is also good for business.
- How can private funders build impactful relationship with publicly funded social services?

COUNTRY MEETINGS

EVPA organised 6 country meetings (Spain, The Netherlands, Belgium, UK, Germany, and France). These meetings gave a chance for EVPA members to learn more about what is happening in the sector from top practitioners in other parts of Europe, as well as connecting with the local EVPA community. Overall, 123 participants attended the events.

TRAINING ACADEMY LEARNING OFFER

The EVPA Training Academy offers a unique range of venture philanthropy and social investment learning opportunities, both online and offline, designed to help practitioners at each stage of their learning journey. A total of 116 participants took part in the 4 trainings organised by EVPA, out of which 25 participants benefited from a full or partial scholarship. The trainings developed by EVPA and sponsored by the European Commission in 2017 are the following:

- Social Impact Management Workshop – two editions;
- Crash Course on Venture Philanthropy;
- The Fundamental Course on Venture Philanthropy and Impact Investing.

BUILDING THE EVPA COMMUNITY

In 2017, EVPA acquired 46 members primarily from European regions. This year, the EVPA achieved a net growth of 21 members as compared to a net growth of 5 members in 2016. This demonstrates EVPA's ability to broaden the size and scope of VP/SI experiences within the network. In particular, EVPA saw strong net growth in these markets: DACH (+8), The Netherlands (+4) and France (+5). It is also worthy to note the addition of 3 new member countries in the CEE (Central Eastern Europe) region: Georgia, Slovakia and Slovenia. Our work in the CEE region has been resonating farther east with member inquiries from Ukraine and Eurasia.

Finally, 83% of the 2017 new members acquired, are either partially practising or practising VP/SI or Full Members, which means EVPA is acquiring members who are most relevant to EVPA's value proposition/service offering.

EVPA WEBSITE

The EVPA website is one of the most important channels in our communication towards members and other stakeholders interested in VP/SI. In 2017, the EVPA have had an increase in the number of new visitors, and also in the number of total visits due to the fact that we concentrated our efforts to make the EVPA website the first "stop" in terms information for members and other interested parties in VP/SI.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Results of the 2017 membership survey show that existing and ongoing EVPA service offerings to our members continue to meet their needs and EVPA continues to be the most relevant network for its members. Both the EVPA Annual Conference and research on best practices remains its highest priority offerings. With respect to policy, EVPA remains a legitimate space to collect and facilitate access to relevant information in the policy landscape.

PRIORITY 3

NATIONAL POLICY NEXUS

The National Policy Nexus focused on best policy sharing and showcased 13 policy 'nugget' summaries. The National Policy Nexus focused on best-policy sharing between EVPA members & the VP/SI community at large. It showcased examples of noteworthy policy measures & initiatives across Europe, focusing on the Benelux, CEE and Nordic regions. In addition, the Policy team regularly advised members on any policy-related matters they might have. In 2017 we had 15 exchanges with our members on policy-related requests.

POLICY UPDATE

The Policy Update is a newsletter targeted to EVPA members interested in policy related topics. Via the Policy Update, we promoted European initiatives related to policy, gathered input from our members/stakeholders on policy related issues, and showcased best practices.

MEMBERS STORIES AND NEWS

EVPA has published and disseminated a series of blogs and interviews, reaching over 1000 unique views, to promote member initiatives and their contribution to enrich the venture philanthropy/social investment space.

EVPA CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

EVPA staff represented the experiences and concerns of social investors at 37 conferences in 15 different countries all over Europe. These included events in the Nordics, CEE and Western Europe.

CONSULTATIONS

This year, EVPA produced three important pieces to improve awareness of concerns and expectations of social enterprise funders among EU and national authorities.

- **Response to the public consultation** for the mid-term evaluation of the EaSI programme;
- **Position paper** on the role of EVPA in the ecosystem, to stimulate traditional innovation by considering its social side and to use a VP approach;
- **Members' consultation paper** with the purpose of collecting feedback from previous and current beneficiaries on the use of EU funding. The paper provided a clear description and overview of the different funding opportunities for social sector funders, which were made available by the European Commission and the EIF. It also enabled members to learn and identify the needs of market players across the EU.

PRIORITY 4

FINANCING FOR SOCIAL IMPACT – THE ROLE OF TAILORED FINANCING AND HYBRID FINANCE REPORT

In 2017 EVPA focused on the topic of tailored financing and hybrid finance. It published the report “Financing for social impact – the role of tailored financing and hybrid finance”. The report was launched at the 13th EVPA Annual Conference in Oslo, in front of an audience of 520 practitioners and experts.

LITTLE FUNDING STORIES, BIG SOCIAL IMPACT

In terms of dissemination, the big work of this year was to start building a database of successful social purpose organisations financed by EVPA members. The EVPA produced 7 leaflets as part of the collection. The stories were presented during a very successful session at the EVPA Annual Conference in Oslo. The organisation also developed three videos for three of the success stories.

NEW MEDIA FORMATS

In 2017, EVPA worked extensively to make research work even more accessible for practitioners. It developed a mini-site stories.evpa.eu.com to showcase the success stories, encouraging members to submit more examples and cases of successful SPOs financed through the VP/SI approach. The organisation also developed seven posters summarising the case studies, used at the EVPA Annual Conference. The posters will be re-used at other sector events, promoting both the VP/SI approach and the work of the KC in highlighting successful business models of SPOs. In addition, the EVPA have shot a number of videos in Oslo, during its Annual Conference, to promote the report “Financing for Social Impact – the key role of tailored financing and hybrid finance”.

WEBINAR

In order to raise awareness on the evolution of the VP/SI sector, EVPA organised a webinar about trends and developments in VP/SI in January 2017. EVPA presented an overview of the results of the 5th EVPA Industry Survey, and 4 speakers (VP/SI practitioners and academics) commented on specific trends. The webinar was followed by 94 attendees, and the recording had 78 visualisations on EVPA’s YouTube channel.

DATA REPOSITORY

EVPA has started aggregating data in an interactive format, available on the website, to help practitioners/academics/the public understand how VP/SI has evolved. So far, the following interactive graphs are available: Organisation Type & Country, Sectors, Final Beneficiaries, Continents, Focus on Western Europe, Focus on Central Eastern Europe. Non-financial support, Financial instruments, Tailored financing, Impact measurement will be available in 2018.

INTERNAL DATABASE OF RESEARCH TOPICS DEVELOPED BY OUR MEMBERS AND OTHER EXTERNAL REPORTS

In order to gather and increase knowledge on the current research activities about VP/SI, EVPA regularly screens, shares and disseminates members’ (and non-members) research reports which are relevant in each sector. Additionally, to contribute to the development of the knowledge about the VP/SI sector, EVPA has regular exchanges with organisations conducting research (e.g. universities, research centres and business schools).