



PRESS RELEASE, 02/04/2008

Best Innovation of the Year Prize Awarded to a Latvian NGO

PRAHA/RIGA, 2.4.2008 – The Robin Hood prize for best innovation in fundraising was awarded to Iluta Lace of a Latvian NGO “MARTA” who assists women victims of trafficking. The jury gave the prize to Lace for recording Latvian folk songs with her sister, changing the lyrics to depict women’s issues in Latvia. Recorded in cooperation with a professional musical production house, their CD became so popular they actually began touring with a live performance of it – in Latvia, but also in Sweden. In doing so, they not only raised funding needed to operate their organization, but at the same time raised much public awareness about an issue previously hardly discussed in the Latvian context. “Receiving the Robin Hood award is greatly uplifting for me and for my organization,” stated Iluta Lace.

The Robin Hood prize award for the best 2007 fundraising innovation was organized by the Czech Fundraising Center in partnership with The Resource Alliance from the UK during the very first International Fundraising Festival. Sixteen NGOs from Czech Republic, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Slovakia and other CEE countries applied with their innovations in this competition. The prize included € 1,234 donated by a private corporation Academy of Productivity and Innovation. NGOs can now start competing for the 2009 prize using a web-based form at www.fundraising.cz/iff.

The International Fundraising Festival that took place last week in the historical center of Prague was a first event of its kind in the Czech Republic. “To people who professionally engage in fundraising for philanthropic causes in the CEE region this was a unique opportunity to come together to learn and to share – both with one another and with recognized international experts. And we could afford to invite them only because they were generous enough to speak for free, some of them even paid for their travel,” says Markéta Krausová, the Czech Fundraising Center CEO.

Festival participants appreciated above all the unique format of the event, slipping far beyond a traditional conference. In addition, fundraisers from over 20 countries participated at the Festival, enabling participants to gain a thorough overall picture of what is new in the world of fundraising. The open space session – i.e. the part of the agenda during which participants designed workshop topics and lead workshops and discussions themselves - received very positive feedback.

“The Festival was a great success. You could see that participants gained a great deal of inspiration, while also enjoying themselves. And that is what the organizers wanted,” says Simon Collings, CEO of the Resource Alliance. “This was a really great event with lots of innovative aspects to it. Czech Fundraising Center came with a lot of enthusiasm and showed that events do not have to be boring. They really set a high standard. I hope they will be able to carry this event forward.”

The next years International Fundraising Festival is preliminarily scheduled for April 2009 – again in Prague.

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