WISDOM FOUNDATION

Fostering Corporate Philanthropy Worldwide

Concept Background

The Wisdom Foundation represents the latest step of a decade long journey establishing several Swiss-based nonprofit initiatives which have achieved a significant track record at delivering multiple philanthropic successes in collaboration with some of the most prestigious institutions in the world.*

Our mission is to make the world pragmatically wiser by helping qualified earlier stage companies accelerate their philanthropic engagement in harmony with their for-profit directives, thus augmenting their potential to make a positive impact with pro-social activities which help them "do well by doing good".

This is achieved by aligning such nonprofit activities with matching budgetary priorities such as R&D, Marketing, Recruitment, etc. and helping them identify funding sources from grant giving organizations which would not dilute their equity because of the measurable philanthropic outcome that they help create.

With a similar ethos, we support curated nonprofits in developing suitable commercial products and services which can help them generate additional funds to enhance the potential of their charitable missions. Whenever warranted, we also support the creation of new nonprofit structures and support them to gain momentum.

All nonprofit initiatives we are involved with must be clearly focused on promoting public good and showing the potential to become independent public benefit foundations in the future.

For more details, please reach out to us via marcelo@wisdomaccelerator.org.

** These are some of the entities involved in the philanthropic activities mentioned in this document: The Explorers Club, SAP, Rolex, Discovery Channel, EPFL, BMW Foundation, Katapult Foundation, City of Davos, plus several other supporters.*

Lady Luck and Lady Wisdom



Blindfolded Fortuna (Luck) holds wheel of destiny, while Sapientia (Wisdom) reflects on self-introspection mirror to learn from the past

Some Words About (Scientific) Wisdom

Wisdom has a remarkably very broad set of definitions worldwide, with the two major categories being Spiritual/Religious ("Sophia" or Transcendental Wisdom) and Pragmatic/Secular ("Phronesis" or Practical Wisdom) – we acknowledge the former, but as an agnostic organization focus solely on the latter. The wisdom we refer to has its roots in Philosophy, but nowadays is strongly based on measurable outcomes studied by Psychological and Neurological studies, such as those listed below based on Stephen S. Hall's excellent book "Wisdom" (2010); tiny.cc/WisdomSHall:

The Eight (Neural) Pillars of Wisdom

- **Emotional Regulation:** The Art of Coping
- **Knowing What's Important:** The Neural Mechanism of Establishing Value and Making a Judgment
- **Moral Reasoning:** The Biology of Judging Right from Wrong
- **Compassion:** The Biology of Loving-Kindness and Empathy
- **Humility:** The Gift of Perspective
- **Altruism:** Social Justice, Fairness, and the Wisdom of Punishment
- **Patience:** Temptation, Delayed Gratification, and the Biology of Learning to Wait for Larger Rewards
- **Dealing with Uncertainty:** Change, "Meta-Wisdom," and the Vulcanization of the Human Brain

Accelerating Philanthropy

After reaching a more mature stage (IPO, consistent profitability levels, etc.) a very significant number of global corporations establish their own charitable structures such as foundations to give back to society, but due to several barriers these initiatives are not typically pursued by earlier stage companies even though the benefits are also evident for them:

- Genuine charitable deeds generate significant amounts of stakeholder goodwill from employees, partners, investors and others — thus being an effective use of Marketing/PR budgets.
- Employees often seek more than just money at work and allowing those interested in getting involved to support the corporate charitable activities (e.g. volunteering a day a month of their time) makes it more likely they feel that they have meaningful roles, increasing retention and attracting top talent while saving on Recruitment expenses.
- Several grant giving structures can provide what is effectively R&D financing without requiring equity if the measured outcomes are aligned with their charitable mission. If a company has qualifying products or services which can be leveraged for social good they could justifiably become grantees.
- Companies demonstrating the societal value they create with charitable initiatives are more likely to get positive media coverage, be invited to speak at prestigious events and receive nominations to impact awards.
- The examples provided above all make sense from a for-profit perspective as well by increasing corporate valuations and may lead them into establishing a classic foundations once they're ready.

The Wisdom Foundation focuses on supporting qualified earlier stage companies to setup their philanthropic activities for 10x less, 10x faster and with 10x more impact — therefore generating a "1000x return" on efforts.

Wisdom Event Series
© 2015-2024

Timeline and Operational Aspects of Swiss Foundation Endowments

Setting up a Swiss Endowment

There are as many nonprofit foundations in Switzerland (around 15'000) as in Germany even though the population is several times smaller. This is due to the longstanding positive reputation they have based on many factors including strict supervision by the Swiss federal government as well as obligatory audit and registration requirements. They are however very expensive to setup, costing up to $100K (legal fees plus proof of operating funds) and it can take several months to get formal supervision approval.

We leverage the lesser-known umbrella foundation legal model — in which the administrative functions such as staffing, accounting, auditing, reporting to all relevant authorities are consolidated with a single entity (the Wisdom Foundation), therefore allowing the endowment to benefit from effectively the same functionality of a classic foundation, but at a fraction of the costs and implementation time as the endowment can be established with a straightforward contractual covenant defining its purpose, while maintaining the highest levels of nonprofit governance.

Endowments under main foundation structure can be further enhanced with additional flexibility by pairing them with Swiss Associations which can open their own bank accounts to help with operations.

Greenwashing Prevention

A major concern to curate stakeholders suitable for the establishment of a Foundation Endowment is of course avoiding "reputation washing" of any color; green, blue, pink, etc.

A Swiss Foundation is by law managed by its council, which defines the regulations to be implemented to make sure that all endowments create significant societal value and how to respond to those which do not correspond to the preestablished rules, such as suspension, radiation, etc.

Powerful Advisory Board(s)

We are actively pursuing the creation of a Board of Advisors comprised of extremely high caliber individuals who will help enhance our outreach, so that value delivered by the endowments under the Wisdom Foundation can be optimized.

WAY — WISDOM ACCELERATOR FOR YOUTH

WISDOM HOUSE DAVOS

WISDOM FILM FESTIVAL

Pilot Wisdom Foundation Initiatives

The Wisdom projects described below served as pilots to help develop the Wisdom Foundation concept:

- Wisdom Accelerator for Youth (WAY) is the original Wisdom project aiming at helping teenagers become wiser faster via a series of experiences and informal lectures. Several WAY events took place live between 2018-23 (Davos, Venice, Interlaken) as well as online with almost 500 podcasts recorded during the pandemic (many already available via tiny.cc/NeoTube).
- Wisdom House Davos (WHD) is the evolution of WAY, helping giving qualified nonprofits a voice during the World Economic Forum. Two WHD editions were held in Davos in '20 and '23 at venues provided by the municipality. These events were covered by the local press with a front-page article during the WEF week, the busiest of the year.
- Wisdom Film Festival (WFF) is the latest development of WAY, providing wisdom related film and lecture sessions open to the public during the World Economic Forum week. Two WFF editions were held in Davos in '20 and '23 at venues provided by the city of Davos. These events served as the inspiration for the Explorers Weekend event held at the EPFL Rolex Center.

To complement the nonprofit relationships above, we are currently engaged with three curated qualified for-profit companies to develop their Swiss Foundation Endowment structure:

- A UK transportation company developing a pioneering air cargo deliver solution which can reach remote or disaster-stricken areas for much less than the costs incurred when using heavy duty helicopters
- A "farm at home" US company that has developed an appliance sized device which allows for produce to be grown indoors, with multiple health/mental care applications being envisaged with selected partners.
- A Dutch plastic replacement company that created a compostable paper-based alternative for the industry while keeping the look and feel of existing bottles.

We are also supporting three pilot non-profits further develop their mission via a Swiss Foundation Structure to help with their fundraising, representation at the UN, WEF, etc.

- Children Wellbeing/Education: AmalAlliance.org (US)
- Social Support: HomelessEntrepreneur.org (Spain)
- A new nonprofit structure to be focused on promoting the understanding and treatment of Rare Diseases

Wisdom Foundation Timeline

The original NGO concept BroadLights.org was developed in **2014-15** and other than being the driving force behind multiple high level speaking engagements currently also has operational emergency telecommunication equipment installed in a war zone running as a proof of concept.

- *"Week as a Refugee" project '16: tiny.cc/BulletsTea*
- *TEDxGeneva on Refugee Connectivity '16: tedxgeneva.net/talks/marcelo-garcia-vivre-semaine-peau-dun-refugie-tedxgeneva; (Equivalent presentation in English: youtu.be/kXiKyextOP0)*
- *Panel with UNHCR Deputy High Commissioner and BBC Anchor '17: youtu.be/y7guNPqgppM*

From **2018** the Wisdom series of initiatives started, usually during the World Economic Forum (WEF) Week:

- *WAY: WisdomAccelerator.org ('19, '20, '23)*
- *WHD: WisdomHouseDavos.org ('20, '23)*
- *WFF: WisdomFilmFestival.org ('20, '23)*

Based on those events, the "Explorers Weekend" concept was developed from **2022** launching a public dialogue between the scientific and exploration communities:

- *Explorers Weekend at Lake Geneva '23: tiny.cc/EW23; '24 edition: tiny.cc/EW24*
- *Aletsch Glacier Traverse weekend '22: tiny.cc/_ExplorersAletsch*

During this whole period, several other activities related to wisdom acceleration also took place such as these lectures:

- *A Life Worth Living lecture to MBA students: tiny.cc/Eudaemonia*
- *Inside Ideas podcast with Marc Buckley: youtu.be/U0QEoiP1zTc*
- *World Information Transfer (WIT) podcast on "Getting Wiser Sooner": tiny.cc/WiserSooner*

We are currently structuring the Wisdom Foundation to have it formally registered and operational by Q1'24. We are looking for companies willing to establish an endowment, members for the advisory board and donors willing to support our mission to accelerate philanthropy across all industries.

Wisdom Foundation (under incorporation)
WisdomAccelerator.org - *Registered Swiss UID: CHE-293.908.661*
BroadLights.org - *Registered Swiss UID: CHE-388.717.127*

Wisdom Foundation (c/o BroadLights)
Impact Hub Geneva
Rue Fendt 1, 1201, Geneva, Switzerland

Wisdom Event Series
© 2015-2024