

2025 SNAPSHOT OF PHILANTHROPY RESEARCH CENTERS IN EUROPE

This factsheet provides an overview of philanthropy research centers and chairs in Europe that are institutional members of ERNOP, their main academic disciplines, philanthropy-related focus, and the most important research questions (RQs) they aim to answer.

ERNOP members study philanthropy, which is understood as private, mainly voluntary, contributions to public causes. Research on philanthropy is scattered among different academic disciplines. Research centers studying philanthropy are often multidisciplinary, thereby integrating several academic disciplines when studying philanthropy. ERNOP perceives all these different perspectives as a strength and aims to include them all in the study of philanthropy. For more information, visit www.ernop.eu



WU VIENNA

– Institute for Nonprofit Management & Governance; NPO Competence Center; Social Entrepreneurship Center

EST.: 1997

HQ: Vienna, Austria

Academic disciplines:

Business Administration, Management, Nonprofit Management

Philanthropy keywords:

Individual philanthropic engagement (donations, volunteering), Foundations, Cross-sector collaborations (e.g. social impact bonds, corporate volunteering), Impact Investment

Key RQs:

- How do nonprofit organizations/foundations contribute to society, and what do they need to fulfil their pivotal societal functions?
- Why and how is philanthropic engagement related to socio-economic inequality?
- What are the rationales, practices, and consequences of cross-sectoral collaboration between nonprofits and business or public organisations (e.g. social impact bonds, corporate volunteering)?
- What are the support needs of social entrepreneurs/of immigrant entrepreneurs?

KU LEUVEN

– Department of Marketing

EST.: 2014

HQ: Brussels, Belgium

Academic disciplines:

Nonprofit marketing, Sustainable marketing, Consumer behavior, Service marketing, Marketing strategy, Retailing, Sports marketing

Philanthropy keywords:

Fundraising (ethics), Donor psychology, Face-to-face fundraising, Charity checkouts, Beneficiaries, Ethical storytelling

Key RQs:

- What aspects of fundraising make beneficiaries particularly vulnerable?
- How can giving incentivize pro-environmental behavior?
- How do various stakeholders' ethical beliefs about (face-to-face) fundraising shape perceptions and practices?
- What is the impact of fundraising ethics on effectiveness?
- What makes charity checkouts effective, and what are their potential downsides?

UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES GHENT

– Research Centre for Sustainable Organisations

EST.: 1995

HQ: Ghent, Belgium

Academic disciplines:

Marketing, Fundraising, Management, Business Administration

Philanthropy keywords:

Fundraising, legacies, corporate partnerships, donor communication, personas

Key RQs:

- How can organisations communicate effectively with their donors?
- How can organisations effectively build corporate partnerships?
- How is private fundraising by organisations in Belgium organised?
- What is does legacy giving in Belgium look like?

MASARYK UNIVERSITY

– Centre for Nonprofit Sector Research

EST.: 2003

HQ: Brno, Czech Republic

Academic disciplines:

Economics, Law, Management, Public Administration

Philanthropy keywords:

Financial management, Sustainability, Charitable giving, Public-nonprofit partnership, Civil society transformation

Key RQs:

- What factors affect the financial sustainability and vulnerability of nonprofit organizations?
- What is the impact of public policies and regulation on the behaviour of the nonprofit organizations?
- What are the specifics of the provision of public services by nonprofit organizations?
- What are the ways of effective internal capacity building of nonprofit organizations in relation to their readiness for crisis situations?
- Conflict and cooperation between civil sector organisations and public administration in a post-communist society

COLLEGE OF POLYTECHNICS JIHLAVA – Department of Economic Studies

EST.: 2004

HQ: Jihlava, Czech Republic

Academic disciplines:

Public economics, Nonprofit management, Nonprofit finance, Tourism studies, Social work

Philanthropy keywords:

Impact of Volunteering, Giving to vulnerable communities, Demographic trends, Giving in overseas territories, Faith-based philanthropy

Key RQs:

- Which factors influence the demand and supply of volunteering against loneliness?
- How do the recent polycrisis affect the management and financing of nonprofits?
- Does the empirical evidence support the claims that estimating the monetary value of volunteering is beneficial or harmful?
- What is the role of the nonprofit sector in opening tourism to people with special needs?
- What is the role of the nonprofit sector in overseas countries and outermost regions of the European countries?

COPENHAGEN BUSINESS SCHOOL – Center for Civil Society Studies

EST.: 2013

HQ: Copenhagen, Denmark

Academic disciplines:

History, Sociology, Organizational science, Philosophy, Political economy, Law

Philanthropy keywords:

Foundations as society builders, Civic Governance, Civilizing Business, Civil Society Elites, Moral Economy

Key RQs:

- How has philanthropic gift-giving practices (conceptualizing, categorizing & organizing) influenced the development of the welfare state?
- How has the historical changing definitions of “the common good” simultaneously effected philanthropic practices and societal organization?
- How has, from a comparative perspective, private philanthropy’s gift-giving been regulated and organized over time?
- What role do elites of and in civil society play in governance structures?
- Which role does civil society play in civilizing the economy (e.g. through foundations, democratic business, associative governance, etc.)?

ESSEC BUSINESS SCHOOL – Philanthropy Chair

EST.: 2011

HQ: Cergy, France

Academic disciplines

Organization Theory, Management, History, Sociology, Social psychology

Philanthropy keywords

Impact, Institutionalization, History, Hybridity, Strategy

Key RQs:

- What are the different strategies that philanthropic organizations can adopt?
- How do philanthropic ideas & practices evolve over time?
- How do foundations collectively tackle climate change?
- How do foundations construct their decisions to support grantees?
- What does systems change mean for philanthropy?
- What is the role of philanthropy in cross-sector partnerships?

FREIBURG UNIVERSITY – Institute for Economics, Public & Nonprofit Management

EST.: 2013

HQ: Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany

Academic disciplines:

Economics, Sociology, Psychology

Philanthropy keywords:

Corporate governance, Corporate social responsibility, Ethics, Nonprofit marketing, Volunteering, Human resource management, Organizational behavior, Change management.

Key RQs:

- Why do individuals want to work for nonprofit organizations?
- How can nonprofit organizations retain their paid and unpaid workers?
- What are the factors that drive prosocial and sustainable behavior?
- How do consumers, citizens, volunteers etc. react to instances of unethical organizational behavior?
- How should nonprofit organization design their marketing programs to increase prosocial and sustainable behavior?

HAMBURG UNIVERSITY – Chair for management of public, private, and non-profit organizations

EST.: 2008

HQ: Hamburg, Germany

Academic disciplines:

Business administration/Management, Economics, Sociology, Law

Philanthropy keywords:

Donor Relationship Marketing, Fundraising, Blood Donation, Inclusive Volunteering, Refugee Integration, Civil society

Key RQs:

- How do nonprofit organizations build long-term relationships with the next generation of donors?
- What are effective fundraising actions?
- How to acquire and retain blood donors best?
- What are the service needs of refugees and barriers to integration?
- What are best strategies and concepts for succession management in NPOs?

HEIDELBERG UNIVERSITY – Centre for Social Investment

EST.: 2006

HQ: Heidelberg, Germany

Academic disciplines:

Sociology, Political science, Economics, Law, Protestant theology, Social geography

Philanthropy keywords:

Roles of philanthropy, Impact measurement, Theory and methodological aspects of social innovation, Fostering social innovation, Civil society and social infrastructures, Foundations concepts and historical forms in Europe

Key RQs:

- How can we better understand social investments, civil society and namely philanthropy in an international, cross-cultural and inter-temporal perspective?
- What is the contribution of civil society towards social innovation and social problem-solving?
- How can philanthropic organizations assess their impact?
- How can we conceptualize social sustainability?
- What are empirical approaches to assess social sustainability?

TEL-AVIV UNIVERSITY – Institute for Law and Philanthropy

EST.: 2014

HQ: Tel-Aviv, Israel

Academic disciplines:

Economics, Law, Organizational Theory, Philosophy, Sociology and Anthropology

Philanthropy keywords:

Data on giving and nonprofits, Cross-sector collaboration, Institutional philanthropy and foundations, Gender, Justice and democracy

Key RQs:

- How to map and follow donations from varied resources to non-profits in Israel?
- How do tax regulations effect giving and non-profit sector in Israel?
- What is the role for philanthropic foundations in Israel?
- How do foundations and government collaborate and to what effect?
- How does philanthropy relate to democracy and justice?

UNIVERSITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN – Center for Philanthropy

EST.: 2018

HQ: Vaduz, Liechtenstein

Academic disciplines:

Law, Empirical studies

Philanthropy keywords:

Charitable foundations, Volunteering, Donations

Key RQs:

- What does the philanthropic landscape in Liechtenstein look like?
- Which are the major global developments in philanthropy with relevance for the civic sector in Liechtenstein?
- How can charitable foundations maximise their impact?
- To which extent and for what purposes do citizens in Liechtenstein volunteer?
- How does the legal, fiscal, and societal environment for philanthropy in Liechtenstein compare to other countries?

VU AMSTERDAM – Center for Philanthropic Studies

EST.: 1995

HQ: Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Academic disciplines:

Sociology, Public Administration, Social Psychology, Demography, Economics, Communication Science

Philanthropy keywords:

Giving, Volunteering, Foundations, Donation of bodily material, Grantmaking, Crowdfunding

Key RQs:

- Who gives what, when, where, and why, and to what effect?
- What are the effects of restrictions on funding practices by grantmaking organizations on the effectiveness of grantee organizations?
- How do civil society organizations affect the size, composition and effectiveness of philanthropy?
- How can we understand and explain the donation of bodily material?
- What is the impact of institutions and regulation on philanthropy and on its impact in society?
- How does volunteering contribute to health, well-being, and social productivity?

RADBOD UNIVERSITY NIJMEGEN – Department of Anthropology and Development Studies

EST.: 2000

HQ: Nijmegen, the Netherlands

Academic disciplines:

Anthropology, Development studies

Philanthropy keywords:

Sustainability, Impact, Partnerships, Public support, Donor preferences

Key RQs:

- What determines the role and identity of (global north based) citizen led development organisations?
- How and why does the role and identity of these organisations changes over time?
- How do characteristics of citizen led development organisations affect the impact of their work in the global south?
- What are trends in terms of citizen engagement for development cooperation/international solidarity in countries in the global north?
- How do processes of decolonisation and shifting power affect the work of citizen led development organisations and their counterparts in the global north?

ERASMUS UNIVERSITY – Rotterdam School of Management

EST.: 2003 (Chair on Volunteering and Strategic Philanthropy)
HQ: Rotterdam, the Netherlands

Academic disciplines:
Business Administration, Business Society Management

Philanthropy keywords:
Corporate Philanthropy, Volunteer Management, Civil Society, Diaspora and Bi-cultural philanthropy and volunteering, Volunteering

- Key RQs:**
- How to sustain voluntary & philanthropic energy?
 - How can volunteers be managed?
 - What is the position of diaspora philanthropy and volunteering in the global civil field?
 - How can we understand the (intercultural) civil society as a concept and in relation to the government and business?
 - How important is the researcher's positionality to nonprofit studies?

UTRECHT UNIVERSITY – Patronage Studies

EST.: 2020
HQ: Utrecht, the Netherlands

Academic disciplines:
Patronage Studies, Cultural Studies, Cultural History, Cultural Policy Research, Sociology

Philanthropy keywords:
History of philanthropy, Socio-cultural roles, Norms and expressions of philanthropy, Individual philanthropic engagement of both recipients and donors

- Key RQs:**
- How (through which choices, strategies and motivations) do patron and artist or cultural institution choose to position themselves vis-à-vis each other, and how do they perceive of their role in the exchange?
 - What impact does the exchange between patron and recipient have on the form, content and value of the work of art supported by the patron, and created by the artist or cultural institution?
 - (How) do patrons and artists or cultural institutions perceive of their exchange as reciprocal?
 - How do artist and cultural institutions put forward their requests for backing and protection of private patrons, and help shape the 'culture of asking' of their times and cultures?
 - Through which (societal) discourses does the concept of arts patronage acquire meaning?

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH – Centre for Research On Civil Society and Voluntary Sector

EST.: 2008
HQ: Oslo, Norway

Academic disciplines:
Political science, Sociology, Economics

Philanthropy keywords:
Volunteering, Voluntary organization, Voluntary sector, Civic engagement, Social change

- Key RQs:**
- What are the antecedents, characteristics, forms and effects of volunteering and civic engagement and how do they change over time?
 - How do societal, technological and political factors contribute to the transformation of the size, scope of the third sector and its components?
 - What are the main income sources of the third sector and how do they evolve over time?
 - How do public policies impact on the economy of the third sector and vice versa?
 - How do third sector organizations contribute to democracy?

UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE – Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory

EST.: 1992
HQ: Belgrade, Serbia

Academic disciplines:
Philosophy, Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, Legal studies

Philanthropy keywords:
Philanthropy, Systems of care, Common good, Local civic initiatives, Discrimination

- Key RQs:**
- What are the expressions and driving forces behind philanthropy, solidarity, and care?
 - Who defines individuals or groups in need of care and support, and how is this determined?
 - Is caring for others an act of goodwill or a question of justice?
 - What would an ethically and socially sensitive, effective crowd-funding framework for medical expenses look like in Serbia, and how might it contribute to systemic healthcare reforms?
 - How do institutional frameworks, social norms, and political strategies shape the recognition, treatment, and legitimization of pain, suffering, and discrimination?

ESADE BUSINESS SCHOOL – ESADE Center for Social Impact

EST.: 2021

HQ: Barcelona, Spain

Academic disciplines:

Social Entrepreneurship, Organization Theory, Strategic Management

Philanthropy keywords

Venture Philanthropy, Social Impact Investment, Social Entrepreneurship, Impact Measurement and Management

Key RQs:

- How can foundations collaborate and learn to generate greater impact?
- How can philanthropy unleash the potential of catalytic capital?
- How can place-based organizations measure and manage systemic impact?
- How to assess the value-add of non-financial support in venture philanthropy?
- How can Gender-Lens Investing contribute to the growth and relevance of impact investing?

MARIE CEDERSCHIÖLD UNIVERSITY – Centre for Civil Society Research

EST.: 1992

HQ: Stockholm, Sweden

Academic disciplines:

Political Science, Social Work, Sociology, Business Administration, History

Philanthropy keywords:

Charitable giving, Volunteering, Welfare services, Voluntary social work, History of philanthropy

Key RQs:

- Who gives to what and how do patterns in giving change over time?
- How are different types of civic engagement combined cumulatively in an active citizenship?
- What is the significance of giving and volunteering in relation to a universal welfare state, historically, today and in the future?
- What are the emerging trends in the philanthropic sector in Sweden and what are their significance in a broader perspective?

UNIVERSITY OF BASEL – Center for Philanthropy Studies (CEPS)

EST.: 2008

HQ: Basel, Switzerland

Academic disciplines:

Business Administration, Economics, Law, Sociology, Psychology, Regional studies

Philanthropy keywords:

NPO-Management, Cross-sector collaboration, Individual philanthropy, NPO Law & Economics, Data on Philanthropy, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Global Philanthropy

Key RQs:

- How can NPOs and foundations/philanthropists improve their effectiveness and efficiency?
- How can NPOs and foundations be better managed?
- How does the nonprofit of the future look like?
- How do philanthropic organizations function in various jurisdictions?
- What are the factors influencing philanthropy of individuals and what changes their strength?
- What are the key challenges and opportunities for philanthropy in addressing the SDGs, and how can data-driven insights guide more effective interventions?

UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA – Geneva Centre for Philanthropy

EST.: 2017

HQ: Geneva, Switzerland

Academic disciplines:

Economics and Management, Affective sciences, Sociology, Psychology, Law, Political Science

Philanthropy keywords:

Social entrepreneurship, Hybrid entities, Artificial intelligence, Governance of foundations, Democracy, Climate Philanthropy

Key RQs:

- How does the relationship between philanthropy and democracy play out?
- Why Social entrepreneurship and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) could be the key drivers to achieve the Agenda 2030?
- Why do people give?
- How can foundations governance be more efficient?
- What are the use and impact of AI on philanthropy and what can philanthropy do to promote ethical and inclusive AI?

IMD BUSINESS SCHOOL – Debiopharm Chair for Family Philanthropy

EST.: 2017
HQ: Lausanne, Switzerland

Academic disciplines:
Philanthropy, Family Business, Entrepreneurship, Management, Governance

Philanthropy keywords:
Family Philanthropy, Family Business, Family Foundation, Family Mission, Family Governance

- Key RQs:**
- What motivates enterprising families to engage in philanthropic giving?
 - How can enterprising families use existing governance structures to enhance the impact of their giving?
 - What strategies can enterprising families adopt to make their giving more effective and efficient?
 - How can families involve the next generation in philanthropy while passing on core family values?
 - How can family offices support and amplify the impact of family philanthropy?

UNIVERSITY OF KENT – Centre for Philanthropy

EST.: 2008
HQ: Canterbury, United Kingdom

Academic disciplines:
Philanthropic Studies, Social Policy, Sociology

Philanthropy keywords:
Major donors, Charitable giving, Fundraising, Voluntary action, Philanthropic citizenship with Student philanthropy

- Key RQs:**
- What is the role and purpose of philanthropy?
 - Who gives, to what causes, and why?
 - What qualities and skills underlie successful fundraising?
 - How do children and young people learn to give?
 - Understanding the nature, challenges and opportunities of a Moonshot Philanthropy approach.

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD – Gradel Institute of Charity, New College

EST.: 2023
HQ: Oxford, United Kingdom

Academic disciplines:
Management, Strategy, Sociology, Economics, Public policy

Philanthropy keywords:
Charity management, Social impact, Effectiveness, Performance, Governance

- Key RQs:**
- How can charity effectiveness and impact be measured?
 - How can board governance be transformed?
 - Do charities that rely on earned income grow faster than those that depend on contributions?
 - Do volunteers allow charities to deliver services more efficiently?
 - How can charity transparency and accountability be improved?

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS – Centre for the Study of Philanthropy and Public Good

EST.: 2016
HQ: St. Andrews, United Kingdom

Academic disciplines:
Public Policy, Social Policy, Management, Sociology

Philanthropy keywords:
Foundations, Institutions of philanthropy, Community/engaged philanthropy, History of philanthropy, Socio-cultural roles, Norms and expressions of philanthropy

- Key RQs:**
- What is the relationship between philanthropy and contemporary versions of capitalism, and how do they co-evolve, collaborate, or conflict?
 - What are alternative imaginations, practices, and narratives of philanthropy that challenge dominant paradigms?
 - How do social, political, economic, and cultural histories shape and influence philanthropy across different contexts, particularly in Scotland?
 - What theories, concepts, and frameworks are most useful for understanding philanthropy?
 - What are the diverse facets of the public good, and how do accompanying policies, programs, and regulatory environments influence its achievement?

ABOUT ERNOP

The European Research Network On Philanthropy aims to advance, coordinate and promote research on philanthropy in Europe. We eagerly invite you to join our community of philanthropy researchers and practitioners with in a research interest. To date, around 250 members from almost 30 (mostly) European countries have joined ERNOP.

At the biennial ERNOP conference, researchers studying philanthropy present their state-of-art research, exchange ideas and meet colleagues and practitioners. The conference aims to contribute to a European philanthropy researcher identity. ERNOP is proud that this conference is considered to be the leading conference on European philanthropy research. We are pleased that ERNOP members represent European philanthropy research in other international conferences as ISTR and ARNOVA, and are part of the editorial board of major journals as NVSQ, Voluntas, JPM and VSR.

ERNOP represents the study of philanthropy in Europe in discussions among European policymakers in the public and philanthropy sector and has developed warm working relationships with European professional associations as Philea, Impact Europe, EFA and CEV.

As research community we want to contribute to society. Every year, members of ERNOP publish their work in a broad range of academic journals and present their work on conferences. ERNOP members make their work available for all working in, with and for philanthropy through the ERNOP Science and Society Series and through the ERNOP Research Notes.

More information can be found at www.ernop.eu.