

## **CSR Europe and Business in the Community to coordinate First-Ever European CSR Awards**

Europe to inspire CSR excellence through pan-European CSR Awards Scheme

2013 will be the first year that Europe will celebrate CSR excellence through a pan-European CSR Awards Scheme - an EU funded CSR Awards Programme aimed at giving higher visibility to best practice in the field of CSR in Europe. In this context, we are delighted to inform you that the European Commission has announced that CSR Europe and Business in the Community (BITC) have won the bid to lead this first ever European CSR Awards scheme.

CSR Europe and Business in the Community will lead a unique consortium of 29 National CSR Organisations to deliver an impactful and far reaching European CSR Award Scheme for Partnerships, Innovation and Impact. The European CSR Award Scheme will have a particular focus on successful partnerships between an enterprise and at least one non-business stakeholder. This is an innovative concept in the European CSR Award marketplace, which typically focuses on CSR Awards for individual enterprises on their own.

The overall aim of the CSR Award Scheme is for the best European CSR multistakeholder projects to be brought into focus and thus enhance the exchange of best practices. National Award Schemes should have at least two categories, one for partnerships involving small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), and one for partnerships involving larger companies. The Award Scheme will put particular emphasis on innovation with the hope of accelerating business to create innovative solutions to tackle sustainability issues. National Awards Schemes will also include an award criterion related to the positive impacts of the partnership on society and on the enterprise in question. This is consistent with the modern understanding of CSR put forward in the European Commission's recent policy on Corporate Social Responsibility, which mirrors CSR Europe's Enterprise 2020 aspirations.

"At Business in the Community (BITC) we are excited to be working together with CSR Europe and the consortium of 29 National Award Partners," said Stephen Howard, CEO at BITC, "we hope to inspire, engage and support companies and their stakeholders across Europe and beyond to collaborate and replicate high impactful, innovative partnerships and really make a difference."

Each partner in the consortium is the national CSR expert in their country and will already work with, and have connections with, business, NGOs and governmental networks to take forward the identification of the two winners to represent the best of each country's CSR multistakeholder partnerships. Consortium partners include: Austria (respACT) Belgium (Business and Society Belgium), Bulgaria (UNGC Bulgaria), Croatia (HR BCSD), Czech Republic (Business for Society) Denmark (VirksomhedsNetværket), Estonia (RBF Estonia), Finland (FiBS), France (IMS France), Greece (The Hellenic Network for CSR), Hungary (Követ), Ireland (BITC Ireland), Italy (Sodalitas), Kosovo (CSR Kosovo), Luxembourg (IMS Luxembourg), Macedonia (Zenith Macedonia), Montenegro (Association for Democratic Prosperity-Zid), Norway (CSR Norway), Poland (RBF Poland), Romania (CSR Romania), Serbia (SMart Kolektiv), Slovakia (Pontis Foundation), Slovenia (Ekvilib Institute), Spain (Forética),

Switzerland (Philiias), Turkey (CSR Turkey), UK (BITC and Scottish Business in the Community), Ukraine (Centre for CSR Development).

“CSR Europe is delighted to have the opportunity to co-lead this pioneering European Awards Programme with BITC,” announces Stefan Crets, Executive Director of CSR Europe “it is important for companies and stakeholders to recognise that they cannot address today’s complex social and environmental challenges in isolation. Collaboration is vital for CSR to reach the next level and CSR Europe strongly believes that this European Award Scheme will further enhance Europe’s multistakeholder approach to tackling local and regional sustainability issues. Having an award scheme that celebrates companies who are implementing sustainable, forward-looking partnerships has never been more important!”

The European Award Scheme will run from the 3rd of December 2012 until the 31st of July 2013. If you would like to find out how to enter the Award Scheme in one of the participating Award countries, please contact Eva Tabernig at [et@csreurope.org](mailto:et@csreurope.org)

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