

The Association of Liechtenstein Charitable Foundations and Trusts

Within Europe, Liechtenstein foundation law is considered “state of the art”. In recent years, Liechtenstein has developed into a philanthropy centre at the heart of Europe.

The strategic objectives of the Liechtenstein Government have identified the promotion of philanthropy as an important pillar. They see this not just as an element of the financial centre, but also as a societal need with a long-term impact.

Liechtenstein is at the top of the Global Philanthropy Environment Index (GPEI) in 2022, making it the world’s best location for common-benefit measures and philanthropic commitments.

Thanks to the internationally competitive conditions, the number of common-benefit foundations in Liechtenstein has risen steadily in recent years. At the end of 2023 there were 1,391 common-benefit foundations in the Principality. The supported sectors are wide-ranging and include education and training, development cooperation, research and science, health and medicine, art and culture, social affairs as well as environment and climate protection. The survey underscores the positive contribution made by common-benefit foundations towards social solidarity and the country’s international reputation.

Today, philanthropy offers room for innovation and commitment. Common-benefit foundations often contribute new impulses and new ideas to society. Liechtenstein has a liberal foundation law. This creates ideal conditions for philanthropic activities. Liechtenstein foundation law establishes impressively clear definitions and delimitations, especially with regard to the determination of foundation governance and enjoys an excellent international reputation.

During the course of the amendment of foundation law, an effective supervisory instrument was also established in the form of the Liechtenstein Foundation Supervisory Authority (STIFA).

In addition, the University of Liechtenstein has a professorship specialising in foundation law. This consequently helps to disseminate and develop the relevant know-how across the Liechtenstein financial centre.

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As the umbrella association of common-benefit foundations and trusts, the Association of Liechtenstein Charitable Foundations and Trusts (VLGST) promotes the interests of the philanthropy sector in Liechtenstein, supports the positioning of the centre and advocates standards and professional expertise. It promotes common-benefit causes in general through the cooperation between various common-benefit foundations and trusts. The association offers and arranges services for common-benefit foundations and trusts while nurturing cooperation with other organisations in the field of common-benefit foundations. Interests are to be safeguarded vis-à-vis public authorities and supported by public relations work. The Association is a member of Philea, the Philanthropy Europe Association.