



NESsT and Citi presented awards to winners of 2011 Social Enterprise Competition in Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia

BUDAPEST (JULY 2, 2011) – NESsT announced the winners of the **2011 NESsT-Citi Social Enterprise Competition** to promote excellence in social enterprise development among local non-profits in Central Europe. Based in Budapest, NESsT provides capital and business development support to enable non-profit organizations to plan for and better manage social enterprises. The awards from NESsT recognize excellence in social enterprise performance, particularly amongst social enterprises that create employment opportunities for marginalized communities across Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia.

Competition applicants included organizations working with people with various disabilities, assisting marginalized social groups in order to gain employment and stimulate rural economic development and community cohesion. Likewise, the social enterprises proposed by the applicants also varied: sheltered workshops employing people with physical or intellectual disabilities in cafes, candle and paper making, and restaurants; ecotourism and community center.

NESsT staff and local business advisors in Bratislava, Budapest and Prague screened applicants using the four key criteria that NESsT considers essential when evaluating potential success: 1) enterprise performance 2) social impact 3) organizational development and 4) financial sustainability. In each of the three countries, a finalist was selected.

Pohoda Association (CZ) for offering a high-quality training program to social workers, government officials and families of people with mental disabilities to improve interaction and communication and ultimately, to enhance integration of people with disabilities into society.

<http://www.pohoda-help.cz/>

Fruit of Care Nonprofit (HU) for designing, producing and marketing a line of high quality, uniquely crafted home decor and gift items created by people with intellectual disabilities. These sheltered workshops enable people with disabilities to achieve their full financial and social potential and to combat the discrimination and prejudice they face on a daily basis.

www.fruitofcare.hu

WellGiving (SK) for their online CharityShop, which sells products and services offered by people with disabilities, NGOs and women entrepreneurs. This new sales platform gives the opportunity to marginalized groups to generate more revenue and improve their quality of life.

<http://www.charityshop.sk/>

Roxana Damaschin, NESsT Enterprise Development Director, Europe and Batara Sianturi, Citi Country Officer Hungary presented the awards to the winners on June 2nd at the [Hungarian Venture Capital Association Forum](#), an annual event that bring together leaders in the emerging markets investment industry operating in the region

“The cooperation with NESsT has exceeded our expectations” said Martina Tvrdonova, Executive Director of Wellgiving. “Not only have we received financial support, but also extremely useful regular trainings, professional and individual advice, networking along with a genuinely friendly interest in strengthening our social enterprise.”

The Social Enterprise Competitions in Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia were made possible thanks to a grant from **The Citi Foundation**, the philanthropic arm of the global financial services company, committed to economic empowerment of individuals and families, in need, in communities around the world. It builds on the results of a particularly successful cooperation in the past 2 years between the leading social enterprise development team in Central Europe and the global financial services company.

Igor Kottman, General Manager of Citi Slovakia said: *“We know through the feedback received from the civil society organizations taking part in the program how much they appreciate the professional advice and support they receive. We wish to provide a good example of engaged and long-term corporate partnership with high impact non-profit organizations, such as NESsT and the social enterprises it supports.”*

The NESsT portfolio in Central Europe now includes 19 unique and pioneering social enterprises across Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia.

###

About NESsT: NESsT develops sustainable social enterprises that solve critical social problems in emerging market economies. Since its founding in Budapest in 1997, NESsT has provided financial and business mentoring support to nearly 1500 social enterprises in over 45 countries. The NESsT Portfolio currently operates in 10 countries across Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Hungary, Peru, Romania and Slovakia. NESsT is a registered nonprofit in the UK and USA. Visit: www.nesst.org.

About Citi

Citi, the leading global financial services company, has approximately 200 million customer accounts and does business in more than 140 countries. Through Citicorp and Citi Holdings, Citi provides consumers, corporations, governments and institutions with a broad range of financial products and services, including consumer banking and credit, corporate and investment banking, securities brokerage, transaction services, and wealth management. Additional information may be found at www.citigroup.com or www.citi.com.

About the Citi Foundation

The Citi Foundation is committed to the economic empowerment of individuals and families, particularly those in need, in the communities where we work so that they can improve their standard of living. Globally, the Citi Foundation targets its strategic giving to priority focus areas: Microfinance and Microenterprise, Small and Growing Businesses, College and Careers, and Financial Capability and Asset Building. The Citi Foundation works with its partners in Microfinance and Microenterprise and Small and Growing Businesses to support environmental programs and innovations. Additional information can be found at www.citifoundation.com.

Kontakt pro média:

Branislav Cehlárik
Public Affairs Officer for Czech and Slovak Republics
Bucharova 2641/14, 158 02 Praha 5, Czech Republic
Mob.: + 420 775 864 444; + 421 905 894 845
Tel.: + 420 233 061 661; + 421 2 58230 472
branslav.cehlarik@citi.com