



## VIRTUS

### Corporate Philanthropy Excellence Award 2008

As one of the largest domestic organizations which has supported civic actions and local groups for years, Balkan Community Initiatives Fund (BCIF), in cooperation with USAID/ISC, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, VIA Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF), Executive Group, Ekonomist Media Group (EMG), 'E-kapija', PR Society of Serbia, the City of Belgrade and National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, announces the opening of the **competition for the second annual VIRTUS award** for companies which supported non-profit actions or organizations for the public good in the most efficient and effective way in 2008.

This is the first award of this kind ever conferred in Serbia. The intention is that it becomes a traditional event and a major landmark for investments for the common good. Based on the last year's great accomplishment we continue to award and acknowledge the best examples of the companies.

#### ABOUT US

**Balkan Community Initiatives Fund** is a domestic fund that supports people to take active part in improving life in their communities. We believe that even small positive changes make a big difference. Therefore, by providing financial assistance and learning opportunities we are helping people who are trying to help themselves. We offer them an opportunity to access funds and gain knowledge that might alleviate problem resolution in their communities. In the last couple of years, we supported more than 400 successful projects, to a value of more than 1.000.000 Euros, throughout Serbia and Montenegro.

BCIF has launched a systematic campaign for the revitalization and promotion of philanthropic ideas and attitudes in the society. The campaign includes a series of activities aimed at revitalizing charitable actions and making them a part of everyday routine, and this Award is one of the most important initiatives in that direction.

## **OBJECTIVE OF THE COMPETITION:**

The objective of this prestigious award is to acknowledge and publicly name companies and enterprises that gave financial support for this cause and thus set a pattern for the business world to follow.

Thus we wish to promote and encourage philanthropy in our country in order to increase the participation of companies, enterprises and individuals in charitable actions or programs.

The competition itself offers an opportunity to associations, non-governmental organizations and final beneficiaries of donations to publicly express their gratitude to charity givers. On the other hand, the award makes it possible for companies to get wider public support for the projects to whose implementation they generously contribute.

The award organization and ceremony is an ideal opportunity to promote genuine partnership and cooperation between the business sector and non-governmental organizations and to publicly demonstrate corporate social responsibility which very often remains invisible.

## **WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE<sup>1</sup>:**

Award nominees can be as follows:

- domestic and international companies,
- branches of international companies operating in Serbia,
- private small and medium enterprises,
- public and state-owned companies,
- media houses and
- corporate funds and foundations

which supported a social or non-profit action or organization during 2008.

Non-profit organizations and state institutions are not eligible to apply for the award. They can be quoted in the application form *only as partners* of the leading company/enterprise.

## **WHO CAN NOMINATE:**

Award nominees can be proposed by: all interested citizens, individuals, non-profit organizations, media, PR agencies, marketing agencies, and also companies and enterprises can nominate themselves.

---

<sup>1</sup> Partners, donors and media sponsors are automatically excluded from participation in the competition.

## **AWARD CATEGORIES:**

Companies and enterprises can compete for the following award categories:

- **VIRTUS Main Award for contribution at the national level**
- **VIRTUS Award for contribution to the local community in which the company operates**
- **VIRTUS Award for small and medium-size enterprises**
- **VIRTUS Award for support for the most innovative project of the year**

In addition to these awards, there will be two special awards:

- **Long-term partnership Award between business and civil sector**
- **Special Award for media contribution**

## **AWARD:**

Winners of the competition will get:

- The right to display the official sign of VIRTUS Award for 2008 on all their products, promotional material and documents,
- A purpose-made sculpture i.e. a piece of art symbolizing the idea of giving for the common good
- Significant media promotion by the Fund

## **COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS:**

For this competition, company/enterprise's nominated activities should have been implemented in the period between September 1, 2007 and the moment of sending the application form. The company/enterprise can apply for one or more award categories at the same time.

Only completed applications on the appropriate purpose-made application form that arrive within the given deadline will be taken into consideration.

The deadline for submission of applications and accompanying documents is **October 8, 2008**.

The final winners will be announced during the Awards Ceremony in mid November, in Belgrade.

## **AWARD JURY:**

After a thorough consideration of all nominations, a decision on award recipients will be made by an independent jury (selection committee) in accordance with the unique criteria. The jury will consist of prominent individuals coming from the business sector, the NGO sector, media and marketing.

## **BASIC CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF WINNERS:**

During the decision making process, the jury will take into consideration several criteria:

- The company/enterprise has given a donation to a non-profit organization or an institution of culture, social or health welfare for activities or for a project of the common good (for instance, environmental protection, cultural heritage, human rights promotion, educational development, assistance to vulnerable and marginalized groups, assistance to the local community...)
- The donation recipient, e.g. a non-profit organization, a cultural institution, an organization for social or health welfare, is about to complete, or has already completed a project which produced tangible and measurable results.
- The donation recipient has used the funds for the implementation of a project or a program relevant to the community in which the donation recipient operates, or relevant to the topic in which the organization is well specialized.
- The donor endeavors to perceive his/her investment as 'social investment' or 'community investment' rather than as a marketing tool, PR tool or sponsorship.
- The donor is interested in the outcome of his/her investment and in the results of the supported projects.
- The donor has supported non-profit organizations and socially beneficial projects several times in the past.
- In addition to direct financial assistance, the donor offers the donation recipient other kinds of assistance (for instance, transfer of knowledge and skills, in-kind assistance etc.)
- The donating company/enterprise runs its business in a legal way and in accordance with social and ethical standards respecting standards related to corporate social responsibility of companies, such as ethical behavior towards employees, clients, environment etc.

**Remark:** The above quoted criteria are the basic criteria for the decision making process. When it comes to special categories of awards, more information on eventual additional criteria can be found in the document '*Award Categories*'.

## **HOW TO APPLY:**

Potential applicants can download and fill in the application form:

- from the official website of BCIF [www.bcif.org/virtus](http://www.bcif.org/virtus) or
- have the application form sent to them by email or post

Application forms can be filled in either in Serbian or English. The application form has to be filled in entirely and all relevant documentation (photographs, reports, print and video material) should be enclosed with the application form.

If you need assistance or experience problems related to the competition or the application form, please do not hesitate to contact BCIF staff by email: [filantropija@bcif.org](mailto:filantropija@bcif.org) or by phone 011 26 22 511.

The completed application should be emailed to [filantropija@bcif.org](mailto:filantropija@bcif.org) by **October 8, 2008** and accompanying documentation posted to the following address:

***Balkan Community Initiatives Fund***  
***(For VIRTUS Award)***  
***Gospodar Jevremova 45/III-8***  
***11 000 Belgrade***

More information, as well as the latest news about the award, can be obtained from the official website of VIRTUS Award [www.bcif.org/virtus](http://www.bcif.org/virtus)

#### **ORGANIZERS:**

The entire project, competition and the Awards ceremony is organized by Balkan Community Initiatives Fund in cooperation and under auspices of USAID/ISC, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, VIA Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF), Executive Group, Ekonomist Media Group (EMG), 'E-kapija', PR Society of Serbia, the City of Belgrade and National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia — who recognized the importance and potentials of such an initiative and therefore would like to support it.

***Yours***  
***Balkan community Initiatives Fund***



Public Relations Society of Serbia

