With an increasingly globalised economy and growing global challenges, many foundations are reviewing their strategy and approach to international work.

The European Foundation Centre and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation are conducting research into foundations working internationally to better understand how, why and what drives this work.

**How do you work internationally?**

- 38% have offices in more than one country
- 48% have offices in one country only but fund in others
- 14% have offices in one country and do not fund in other countries but work internationally in other ways.

Other ways foundations work internationally include: Partnerships with other funders, organising international events and collaborations; and membership of international networks and peer learning groups.

**Importance of working internationally**

**Global challenges**

Many foundations responded that working internationally was important because of the global nature of challenges facing them. In particular, organisations reported the root cause and solutions to problems they are facing are international so they must reflect this in their work.

**Importance depends on vision, strategy and means**

More than half of respondents highlighted that the importance of international work would also depend on the mission, strategic goals and scale of funds for an organisation.

This was reflected in other respondents who shared how the importance of international work is due to its role in achieving their overall goals and objectives as an organisation. For example, the importance of embedding funding in local communities rather than supplanting local structures for international development grant making.

**Sharing and learning**

“To increase strong partnerships in philanthropic network, spread sustainability and best practice sharing”

Respondents highlighted that while international working may be dependent on your organisation, all organisations should be participating in international peer learning.

The role of exchange and collaboration was highly emphasised, many comments reflecting the importance of seeing how others in a different context tackle the same problem.
GLOBAL TRENDS

84% say that the global context makes working internationally more important

GLOBAL SOLUTIONS

"Many challenges are global ones - there are opportunities to respond globally too, to learn from others, to share good practice, to recognise that systems change works across boundaries".

Survey respondent

Many responded that the complex global challenges being faced required a broader international response. This is due to the interdependent, transnational and scale of the global issues foundations are tackling, such as climate change, poverty, and refugee crises.

Further, responses suggest increased collaboration and best practice sharing was needed to face these challenges by the sector.

TRANSNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

Other respondents raised international frameworks that shaped their work, such as the European Union or United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

"We support the adoption of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity".

Survey respondent

This is a summary of some of the EFC and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's findings on institutional philanthropy working internationally.

Full research or more information, please contact the EFC at www.efc.be