One of our former grantees once said:

„Imagine putting brilliant dots on the Latvian map – and each dot would mark every hardworking, committed, altruistic, good deeds –only lifestyle personality: all of the map would shine! But it is not happening like this. One needs both advice and money for his or her ideas and aspirations to come true. It is true especially for the beginnings when wise and sensitive support from someone more experienced will encourage you to believe that your dream will come true and; your idea will flourish and bear beautiful fruits. “

**Latvian Community Initiatives Foundation (LCIF)** was founded in June 2005. It represents the case of successful exit strategy of Co-operating Netherlands Foundations for Central and Eastern Europe and Oranje Fonds, present in Latvia in 1995-2004, who acted as a powerful donor and consultant of the first grassroots’ initiatives in post – communist Latvia.

Latvian Community Initiatives Foundation (LCIF) is at the moment one of a few civil society actors in Latvia, persistently working for and with rural and urban communities to make democracy work on the local scale: where people can and will foster social change for community welfare. Working alone and with an ever-expanding network of partners, LCIF develops and strengthens vigorous, trustworthy and trusting, civil society on the ground, caring for those underprivileged among population of Latvia. It emerges and develops by common efforts of grassroots, local municipalities, and local businesses.

In this visionary context, LCIF’s **mission** is smart use of its professional competencies, financial resources, and experience supporting those NGOs that aim to implement local population needs - based projects to foster social support, public health, and lifelong education services.

**Our grantees are our partners:** we learn from them, inspire them, consult them, and grow with them. Only together we are able to create flourishing communities, providing access to work, play, health care, education and so on, for each of their members.
LCIF aims to promote community initiatives, financially supporting and educating non-governmental organizations working in the fields of social welfare, health care and education. For this purpose we are raising funds from diverse sources: individual donors, businesses, and EU structural funds.

LCIF builds its strategy in line with the needs of our target audience - community activists and their beneficiaries. LCIF responds flexibly, innovatively and rapidly to new emerging issues. Our new initiatives reflect needs assessment of our stakeholders, and are based on new evidence brought by social studies on rural and urban development.

In partnerships with former grantees and education institutions from Denmark and United States LCIF will promote community organization and community work. In addition, the field of social innovation and social entrepreneurship will be one of our top priorities for the next three years.

LCIF is using diverse methods and instruments to achieve its goals, including grant-giving, co-financing, proactive projects, networking, and public education. LCIF will endeavor to broaden support for its work by expanding network of cooperation partners.

Applicants
Funding and intellectual support for community initiatives is available for NGOs, registered and operating in Latvia. Besides, LCIF encourages and supports “bridging”. In order to succeed at the grant competition, it is essential that the applicant NGO is involved in sustainable cooperation with local authorities and involves the local population.

LCIF is known for its
- Positive attitude to applicants,
- Consulting and assistance during the preparation process of the project proposal as well as during project’s implementation,
- Perceptible OR: Transparency regarding project documentation,
- Availability of funding for acquisition of capital assets, including renovation, furniture, office equipment.

Statistics
Predecessors of LCIF Co-operating Netherlands Foundations for Central and Eastern Europe and Oranje Fonds, acting 12 years in Latvia, have supported more than 300 NGOs, awarding grants in total of 5 million EUR. Acting in Latvia since 2005, LCIF has supported 230 diverse community initiative projects, including youth and senior population engagement, lifelong education, health and child care initiatives among others. Total funds raised by LCIF in 2005-2013 constitutes 1 213 886 EUR or 1 593 201 USD.
**Little LCIF Vocabulary**

*Community* is a group of people living in particular local area, and /or united by shared values, experiences, customs, and behavioral patterns. We distinguish between territorial and functional communities (Hermansen, O.), but tend to support both kinds.

Social scientist and community organizer from US John McKnight describes community as living in togetherness, where each ones’ creative skills contribute to common welfare and development.

*Community Initiative* – activity or set of activities aimed at the improvement of quality of life of local people, implemented in the cooperation between NGOs, municipality and businesses. Common striving for better life makes the overall life in the community better and proves the effectiveness of involvement of local people in solving their own problems, as well as promotes local development in general.

**The functions of LCIF**

- Raise and distribute funds for the implementation of local NGO projects, aimed at community development;
- Consult grantees on project proposal drafting, project implementation and impact evaluation;
- Mediate between local NGOs and grant givers and ensure high quality of program administration and oversight.

**Public benefit**

LCIF has the status of public benefit organization.

According to the law "On the business income tax", businesses donating to associations, foundations and religious organizations or institutions established in Latvia and having public benefit organization status under the Public Benefit Organizations Act, are entitled to receive the income tax deduction: income tax is reduced by 85% of the amount donated, but total deduction may not exceed 20% of the total amount of the tax.

Financial donations can be made by a bank transfer for the following purposes:

- initiatives aimed at wellbeing of seniors, children, families and youth, persons with disabilities,
- community building activities (empowerment of minority groups),
- particular field of activity (social welfare, integration, health care or education) – programs or NGOs,
- projects in a particular place: village, city or region of Latvia,
• New programs or actions.

In kind donations – computers, furniture, and household equipment or renovation materials- would help NGOs to build up their initial capacity.

LCIF is open to cooperate with people who would like to donate their time, skills and work to support NGOs which are often in need for professional help in legal issues or accountancy.

All donations can be transferred to the LCIF bank account:

Nodibinājums „Latvijas Kopienu iniciatīvu fonds”
Reg.No. 40008090267
Address: Kr.Valdemāra str. 149-507, Riga, LV-1013
Bank: SEB Bank,
Address: Meistaru iela 1, Valdlauci, Kekavas pagasts, Kekavas novads, LV-1076
Registration number: 40003151743
SWIFT: UNLALV2X
IBAN for transfers in LVL and UDS : LV16UNLA0050006407607
IBAN for transfers in EUR: LV47UNLA0050006573016

LCIF Competencies

For greater effectiveness in actual grant-making and coordination, LCIF has developed in-house expertise, i.e. it has recruited/found a professional expert responsible for grant-making and public relations, a financial director with a deep understanding of public interest and corporate social responsibility, and a Chairperson, with a good overview of what is happening in national public policy, international charity work, and civil society both nationally and locally; who works closely with the key players, and who herself is a public high-profile player in the field of social integration.

The Board of Directors has been created, consisting of professionals from the fields of economics, public health, management, project management, and financial management.
Together we can ensure our donors and sponsors a high level of quality regarding assessment of project proposals submitted, consultations and education, as well as advice on project implementation.

- LCIF Board of Directors: Irina Kulitâne, Inga Zdanovska, Maria Pekala, Viktorija Lismane, Kārlis Freibergs, Vilnis Sosârs;
- Honorary Advisers: Ronald van der Giessen ( Oranje Fonds, Netherlands), Maria Pekala ( USA)
- Chair of the Board: Liesma Ose;
- Project and communications manager: Elita Uzulêna;
Financial director: Jeļena Barkāne.

Besides, working together with our partners – grantees – LCIF operates as a community resource broker: we willingly inform enterprises and potential donors on best practices of community initiatives and on emerging initiatives.

LCIF is responsible both to donors/sponsors as well as to partners – grantees. We ensure transparent use of resources and help our grantees meet all the goals set. Our long term partners and donors, including AS SEB Bank, SIA „Philips Latvia”, SIA „Unilever Baltic”, SIA „Microsoft Latvia”, SIA „Kurši”, Oranje fund could confirm that.

**Our grantees – our partners**

**Agita Hauka**, Chair of The Board of Iecava Women’s club”Liepas” shares her opinion of LCIF’s work:

„This foundation is a significant asset for rural associations. It is a friendly and understanding organization. Thanks to LCIF’s welcoming staff, small and young rural associations can draft small grant proposals, receive consultations and make corrections, if necessary. Regarding us, „Liepas”, the foundation has played a role of crucial support: in 2003 our facilities have been renovated and furnished by the support given by LCIF predecessor Oranje Fonds. LCIF has supported our informative function – in 2007, a brochure and book on „Liepas” deeds were published. We were present in LCIF foundation event, and it made us proud – having such a fruitful collaboration between us. LCIF has wonderful practice to go and see how associations are doing, how project implementation is going: those site visits are complemented by consultations, networking involving local municipalities. Besides, LCIF functions as a kind of „glue” – it „sticks together” different local organizations striving for the same goals."
Association „Parents for Rožupe school“ (Līvāni district)

Association of pensioners „Understanding“ (Rencēni district)

Association „Aizpute Samaritan“