

MEDIA RELEASE

Zurich, 23. April 2018

Education and humanitarian sectors as key areas to benefit from innovation and the enhanced impact of philanthropic endeavours

At its ‘Rethink Philanthropy’ symposium held in Zurich on April 18, Lombard Odier gathered humanitarian, educational and investment leaders to discuss how leveraging the power of science, innovative forms of financing, and data can bring about new solutions to significant social and environmental challenges, and how philanthropy can make the catalytic difference.

ETH President **Lino Guzzella** delivered a keynote speech on the future of education, noting that technology and global reach are now putting education on the cusp of a new paradigm of education for all. **Yves Daccord**, Director-General, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Switzerland and **Tina Wüstemann**, Head of Private Clients and Partner at the law firm Bär & Karrer took part in discussions on how innovative financing can bring new impulses to humanitarian projects, and the dos and don’ts philanthropists should consider when setting up their own charity.

Patrick Odier, Senior Managing Partner of the Lombard Odier Group, in his introduction speech recapped to the audience the essentiality of philanthropy, and of its power to transform. He stated how *“technology is reshaping how we live, work and think. By leveraging the power of science, innovative forms of financing, and data, philanthropists are responding to challenges with new solutions, which have a greater impact.”*

Education remains by far the most popular philanthropic cause for wealthy individuals. Lino Guzzella highlighted how strategic philanthropy is core to finding ways to enhance the quality of education and re-define the transfer of academic research and expertise into practical solutions that are beneficial for society.

With the “Programme for Humanitarian Impact Investment” (PHII, also known as “Humanitarian Impact Bond”) the ICRC broke new ground in 2017, launching the largest-ever impact bond in the humanitarian space with support from Lombard Odier. Yves Daccord pointed out how *“Innovation in this sector can enlarge the capital pool for change, and increase the efficiency of humanitarian projects.”*

Since 1990, the number of Swiss foundations has more than doubled from just over 5’000 to over 13’000. To successfully translate a philanthropic passion into action and achieve impact, one has to understand the operating and opportunity context including the legal framework, and set clear measurable objectives. Tina Wüstemann noted that *“each family and its philanthropic approach is different, which requires tailor-made legal advice and solutions.”*

Hannes Schmid, founder of the humanitarian project Smiling Gecko, spoke of the importance of sustainability in philanthropic endeavors and the power of a “social business” approach. He stated: *“projects should be financially sustainable because that enables families to create a life for themselves, earn a living and gain independence.”*

Dr. Maximilian Martin, Global Head of Philanthropy at Lombard Odier stated: *“we see a new all-time high in philanthropy around the globe, and urgent social and environmental challenges that need addressing. Yet in development for example, philanthropic funding stands at only 5% of official development assistance. This relative scarcity is an invitation to take a strategic perspective, partner with others, and act as a catalyst. The millennial generation’s fresh perspective on philanthropy and newer developments such as impact investing help us to keep reinventing traditional philanthropic ventures.”*

“Philanthropists greatly benefit from seamless access to the know-how to sustainably drive projects that have a strong impact and provide returns for tomorrow’s society. At Lombard Odier we work closely with clients and leverage our long-standing expertise in this field,” said Patrick Odier.

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