

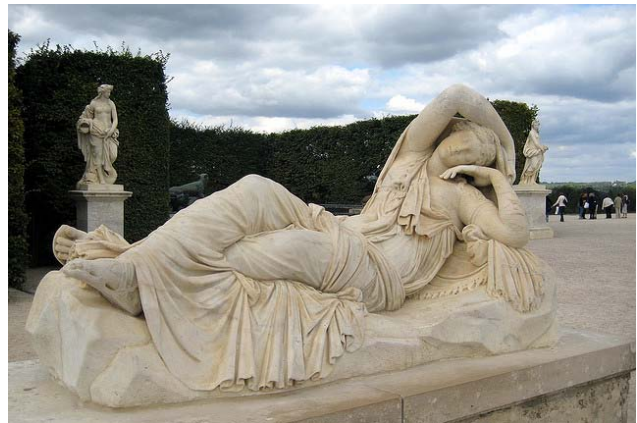
IN FOCUS

The Human Rights Funding Landscape in Europe

Interview with Jo Andrews, Director, Ariadne
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1. How would you describe the landscape of human rights funding in Europe?

The human rights funding landscape in Europe is almost the reverse of that in the United States. In Europe, we have extensive human rights architecture with human rights principles embedded into the domestic conduct of states and institutions throughout the European Union. We also have a functioning human rights court with jurisdiction that extends across wider Europe, and also includes Turkey. However, the use of this architecture is fractured and intermittent, which is a great loss locally and globally. One of the main reasons for this is that the pot of human rights funding is small and uncertain.



In Versailles, Ariadne, solver of labyrinths

A Danish funder, in discussion with a London-based funder, recently asked: "Why do you use the words "human rights?" In my country these have become like dirty words." That says it all, and it is the reason why Ariadne has been created, to reclaim the words and give courage to funders to approach this field.

2. How do European grantmakers characterize human rights funding in Europe *vis-a-vis* the United States and other regions of the world?

In Europe, human rights funding is much less prevalent and much less organized. One reason is that we are dealing with more than twenty different languages, cultures of giving, and systems of governance. We also find it difficult to define human rights philanthropy. The result is that few funders know of each other's work within national borders, let alone across boundaries. We have paid for this in having a significantly weaker and less vocal civil society. For example, there is only one organization in Europe that I know of that has a remit like that of the American Civil Liberties Union in the United States. It focuses only on the United Kingdom and its annual budget is less than US\$2 million.

3. What are some areas of collaboration that can be identified amongst European funders and funders from the U.S. and/or other regions in the world?

Where do we start? Here are some of the areas where we have to work together if we are going to make significant progress: surveillance and security, migration and integration issues, women's human rights, human rights and environment, information and communication technology, and torture and rendition. We can also exchange strategies, models and ideas.

4. Are there other issues you would like to point out or address?

Some U.S.-based human rights funders tend to believe that Europe is big enough and sophisticated enough to look after itself. The result has been that many funders will fund "anywhere but Europe." I think this strategy misses an important point: support European groups to build capacity and it will pay huge dividends. Encourage us to build human rights philanthropy and communication in Europe and it will enlarge the global pot of human rights funding and make us all more effective, in Europe, in the United States, and globally.

For more information:

- Contact Jo Andrews, coordinator of Ariadne at jo.andrews@ariadne-network.eu or visit Ariadne's website at www.ariadne-network.eu.
- Discuss more with Jo Andrews during IHRFG's Funder Telebriefing, *The Human Rights Funding Landscape in Europe*, on October 20, 2010. More information can be found on our website: www.ihrfg.org.