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## Alliance of Two Major Philanthropic Organizations Announced

**Washington, DC, October 6, 2008** – The Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers and the Council on Foundations, two of the largest membership organizations in philanthropy, today announced a breakthrough strategic alliance to better serve the nation’s foundations and other philanthropic donors.

The alliance brings together the Council, with 2,000+ members nationwide, and the Forum, which serves 4,000+ grantmakers through 32 regional or local hubs.

“This alliance builds on the complementary strengths of both organizations – the sector-wide leadership of the Council and the unique local knowledge, credibility and reach of the regional associations,” said the Council’s Board Chair, Ralph Smith of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. “This is a promising next step toward building a more coherent, effective, efficient, networked approach to supporting philanthropy.”

“This is the right time to launch this alliance,” noted Colin Lacon, Chair of the Forum’s Board and president of Northern California Grantmakers. “The need and desire for increased cooperation drives our commitment. As the Forum worked to put together a new strategic plan for its network, we realized it was time to work from a bigger and more collaborative vision.” Lacon continued, “The alliance reflects the work of a joint Forum-Council task force, and has the enthusiastic support of both organizations’ boards of directors and executive staff.”

As the first collaborative initiative, the Council and the Forum will work together to design and deliver a comprehensive education system to meet the learning needs of their members and other donors. Formal action on the education initiative, as outlined by Smith and Lacon, begins October 21 with a joint meeting of Forum and Council leadership volunteers who serve on the two organizations’ committees for education and professional development.

Under the alliance, both organizations will continue to provide education programs, but through a much expanded common framework that draws on the knowledge of both, eliminates competitive and overlapping offerings, and reaches into new areas of learning. To facilitate the close working relationship that both organizations envision, the Forum will move its offices to co-locate with the Council on Foundations in Crystal City, Virginia, in January 2009.

In addition to its initial focus on meeting education and learning needs of grantmakers and other donors, the alliance will continue the joint government relations activities of both organizations – notably the successful “Foundations on the Hill” and “District Days” events where foundation representatives reach out to federal government officials – and will explore efficiencies in knowledge management.

Established in 1949, the Council on Foundations is an Arlington, Virginia-based nonprofit membership association of more than 2,100 grantmaking foundations and corporations, with assets totaling more than \$307 billion. The Council on Foundations is a voice of philanthropy at the national level and a valued partner globally. The Council provides the opportunity, leadership, and tools needed by philanthropic organizations to expand, enhance, and sustain their ability to advance the common good. For more information about the Council, visit its website at [www.cof.org](http://www.cof.org).

The Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers is a national philanthropic leader and a network of 32 regional associations representing more than 4,000 grantmakers. The mission of the Forum network is to connect and support regional associations – in ways that expand their capacity to lead, add value to their members and strengthen philanthropy in their regions – and to bring the knowledge and experience of the regional foundations into the national conversation on philanthropy. For more information, visit [www.givingforum.org](http://www.givingforum.org).