



The Rockefeller Foundation Launches Annual "Innovation Forum" to Explore Challenges Facing the World's Poor and Vulnerable

Program to Honor Global Innovators and Commit Resources to Problem Solving

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NEW YORK, July 26, 2011 — [The Innovation Forum](#) convenes some of the most creative and inventive minds from the worlds of business, government, the non-profit sector and journalism to bring innovation to bear on urgent challenges facing poor and vulnerable people around the world. Through a series of interactions, panel discussions and breakout sessions, participants will analyze compelling scenarios of crises in water security, urban economic security and food security. They will be asked to identify the primary causes of these pressing global challenges that must be solved for the benefit of future generations. In exchange for their contributions, the Rockefeller Foundation will commit to leveraging its deep expertise, expansive network and thoughtful grant making process to further explore and address ideas that surface over the coming year as a result of the Forum. The results will then be reviewed at each annual Innovation Forum.

The inaugural [Innovation Forum](#), which will be held on July 27, 2011 in New York, will also honor a number of individuals and organizations whose innovative work exemplifies the mission and vision of the Rockefeller Foundation. This year's award recipients include:

- **President Bill Clinton**, founder of the William J. Clinton Foundation and 42nd President of the United States, who will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award for innovation in philanthropy.
- **Sania Nishtar**, founder and president of the NGO think tank Heartfile and renowned leader in health policy in Pakistan, who will receive an innovation award for her work in the region.
- **Jane Weru**, executive director of The Akiba Mashinani Trust, a non-profit organization working on developing innovative community-led solutions to housing and land tenure problems for the urban poor in Kenya, who will receive an innovation award for her work in the region.
- **Kiva in the Classroom** — represented by students from Wickman Elementary School in Chino Hills, California — will receive a Young Innovators award for using micro-lending as an educational tool and for the program's sustained effort to fight global poverty.

"Identifying, exploring and supporting new and innovative approaches to meeting the needs of the poor and vulnerable has been the heart of the Rockefeller Foundation's mission since our inception, and we are proud to host this unique opportunity to channel insights from a broad range of perspectives," said Dr. Judith Rodin, President of the Rockefeller Foundation. "We expect the Innovation Forum program to identify new global and regional problems for our

Foundation — as well as other institutions — to explore, and in the end lead to groundbreaking initiatives and positive outcomes to help those in need around the world.”

"The issues that will be addressed at this meeting are key to our success and sustainability in the 21st Century," said President Clinton, founder of the William J. Clinton Foundation and 42nd President of the United States. "I am proud that my Foundation works to tackle these challenges across the globe and I look forward to the Rockefeller Foundation's continued involvement in this important work."

The 2011 Innovation Forum will place a particular focus on identifying major challenges facing the poor and vulnerable in the areas of food security, global water security and urban economic security in American cities. The program also aims to pinpoint potential new approaches to solving some of these most pressing issues.

Participants in the 2011 Innovation Forum will include noted global thought leaders such as Andrea Mitchell, Chief Foreign Affairs Correspondent at NBC News; Dr. Paul Farmer, Kolokotronis University Professor at Harvard University; Muhammad Yunus, 2006 Nobel Peace Prize recipient; the Honorable Mary Robinson, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; Mati Kochavi, CEO and Chairman of AGT International and Wim Elfrink, Chief Globalization Officer at Cisco.

The Rockefeller Foundation

The Rockefeller Foundation's mission to promote the well-being of people throughout the world has remained unchanged since its founding in 1913. Today, that mission is applied to an era of rapid globalization. Our vision is that this century will be one in which globalization's benefits are more widely shared and its challenges are more easily weathered. To realize this vision, the Foundation seeks to achieve two fundamental goals in our work. First, we seek to build resilience that enhances individual, community and institutional capacity to survive, adapt, and grow in the face of acute crises and chronic stresses. Second, we seek to promote growth with equity in which the poor and vulnerable have more access to opportunities that improve their lives. In order to achieve these goals, the Foundation constructs its work into time-bound initiatives that have defined objectives and strategies for impact. These initiatives address challenges that lie either within or at the intersections of five issue areas: basic survival safeguards, global health, environment and climate change, urbanization, and social and economic security.

Media Contact:

Svetlana Vaisman
The Rockefeller Foundation
Ph: 212-886-1608

<http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/news/press-releases/rockefeller-foundation-launches-annual>