


Get to know businesses that do more than just make money

by  **Ivana Vagaská,**
Senior Program
Manager,
Pontis Foundation



They are everywhere. Events about zero-waste lifestyle, sustainable fashion, healthy toys, slow food, and a slower way of life have become very popular in Bratislava recently. A lot of them revolve around the topic of responsibility in one way or another – responsibility towards the planet, your community, and even ourselves.

When the Pontis Foundation organized its first CSR conference 16 years ago, CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) was seen mainly only as a fad and was only undertaken by international corporations. Back then, my colleagues patiently explained that CSR is about mutually beneficial long-term relationships that everyone in your company should come into contact with. Today, we no longer need to do as much explaining. Companies and their customers know and expect more from businesses. Having a high-quality product or service simply isn't enough anymore – companies need to provide added social value. According to a public opinion survey we conducted with the Focus agency last year, 92% of people living in Slovakia think that in addition to focusing on making a profit, companies should also have CSR goals.

That's why we're back with our CEE CSR Summit and topics such as co-creation, CSR in retail, strategic philanthropy, diversity and how to be happier at home and at work. The program is designed for those who are starting out with CSR, but also for those of you who want to improve their performance in the field even further. We have invited experts from Slovakia and abroad to come and share their experience with you.

Maarten Pieters (NL) from Signify (ex-Philips Lighting) will attend the CEE CSR Summit 2018 to speak about co-creation. Products and services developed using co-creation with customers score relatively higher, sell better and even have a positive effect on customer loyalty. Co-

created output is more relevant, recognizable, and attractive for the target group. Complete co-creation has proven itself to be a quick, relatively low cost, and inspiring way to achieve sustainable success, well-suited for the specific challenges of our time.

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Pia Webb, a Swedish inspirational speaker and author of the book *Improve Your Own Quality of Life – The Swedish Way*, will talk about feeling in control, being free to

make your own choices while also taking responsibility for your actions and not blaming anyone else for the challenges you face, or the problems you may have. If we are happy at home, we are more likely to be happier at work. The power of looking holistically at the individual is therefore crucial.

From Germany, will come Lavinia Kochanski from Kaufland, who will talk about the difficulties of implementing CSR in the retail industry across several countries. Lavinia and her team work on developing the company's CSR activities and making Kaufland a more responsible and greener company - in cooperation with other departments, business partners and suppliers.

We are also here for those who don't want to just listen passively and would like to add to the discussion by sharing their own experience. There will be more than ten discussion tables and everybody can choose a

topic, such as greenwashing, the employment-marginalized Roma, or the fight against misinformation.

Last but not least, we are also here for those who surely don't consider themselves CSR experts. This year, our Responsible Marketplace is dedicated to children of all ages. The youngest will enjoy locally-produced wooden toys and correctly set-up ergonomic baby carriers. The older ones will be learning how to clean their teeth properly, and the even older ones will have a chance to find out more about programming, so that one day they will be able to teach you how to code. The Stará tržnica (Old Market Hall) will be open to all curious children and their parents from three o'clock in the afternoon.

A business that gives more can be difficult to manage – just like every meaningful aspect of life. What makes responsibility beautiful (and difficult at the same time) is that there is always room for improvement. So come and join us on our slow, sustainable, responsible, waste-free journey and take a step in the right direction! We hope to see you at Stará tržnica in Bratislava on 13 November.

 For more information and registration, visit www.cee-csr-summit.eu

