

# Nguyen Tran Hoang Anh

Board Chair, LIN Center, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



**The LIN Center was established in 2009 with the aim of fostering a culture of philanthropy and supporting the development of a strong and credible non-profit sector in Vietnam. To date Vietnamese philanthropy has mostly consisted of charitable giving to cases of hardship or disaster relief, or funding for capital building projects by foreign and corporate donors.**

Nguyen Tran Hoang Anh was one of LIN's founders, all of whom were concerned about the growing levels of inequality associated with Vietnam's transition to a market-based economy. Neither she nor most of her fellow board members had ever served on a board

before. Nevertheless, she volunteered as chair and has also made regular donations to the organization.

Hoang Anh is a pioneer in philanthropy in Vietnam in many ways. She is working to help companies get a better grasp of CSR issues, which are currently not well understood in Vietnam. She has effected positive change in this regard, connecting corporations with local and international non-profit initiatives to form strategic partnerships. As a member of Ho Chi Minh City's creative community, she has access to an influential network; she keeps the network informed and helps in promoting social justice issues in Vietnam.

As communications director for Brand Maker, a leading Vietnamese company, she provides advice on LIN's marketing and communications activities and is one of a pool of expert volunteers, coaching non-profits in project design and presentation. Her work has helped to raise the bar for skilled volunteers; both volunteers and non-profits are now seeing the virtue of such skilled help.

## EMERGING SOCIETIES – EMERGING PHILANTHROPIES FORUM

1–2 July 2013, Peterhoff, Russia

The goal of this unique event is to raise the profile of philanthropy in emerging economies by creating a forum for leading philanthropy practitioners who drive social change in their regions. The forum will build a basis for collaboration and partnerships, facilitate peer exchange, and provide space and time for discussing key issues participants face. The first Olga Alexeeva Memorial Prize will be awarded at the forum followed by a lecture by the winner. The forum is organized by an international steering committee made up of representatives of philanthropic institutions from Russia, Brazil, China, India, Turkey and South Africa.

[www.emergingforum.org](http://www.emergingforum.org)



I knew Dana [Doan] and I knew about her plan to set up LIN and she asked if I was interested in being on the board. I thought it was a good cause so I agreed. I actually didn't think I'd get so involved but it grew on me. Being involved really changed my perception of NGO work and I felt that I understood more about it and I was able to get people around me like my staff, my company, involved. I just became an endorser of the cause.

It was very different from what I expected because generally in Vietnam we are more familiar with giving to needy people directly. It took me a while to understand LIN's work and so it also took me a while to explain it to other people. I'm very close to my boss and she herself is very involved in NGO work but when I explained to her what LIN is doing she kept coming back and asking 'so what is it that LIN does, again?' It's very challenging to fundraise for LIN because helping an organization is something that's very new, especially when people don't see the impact of its work directly or dramatically. There are now more people like me who have been exposed to other cultures, other ideas, so this is going to change, but it's

not changing very fast. This is one of our biggest challenges right now.

Over the past three years, we have been raising awareness of community work and I think the next thing for LIN is to try to foster this culture of giving back to the community and to generate more participation. I'm trying to help raise awareness by doing things that people are more familiar with. For example, in order to raise funds I set up this virtual shop selling clothes that people donate. It's an easier concept for people to relate to, and through that they get to understand what LIN is doing.

The work I do is not just about LIN, it's also about me. I get a sense of satisfaction. Anyone would feel rewarded by doing something that validates them. It's also challenging. I enjoy setting goals and achieving them. I see it as a mission, that's why I'm getting more involved.

Another thing is that my skills in marketing and communications are relevant to what LIN needs at the moment. It's not very different using these skills in the non-profit or the for-profit sector and that's another reason why I'm getting increasingly involved.