

## OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL

# Richard Bernstein

For the employee who has devised the most innovative or productive way for their company to support charity

### Finalist

● **Michaela Wright** Social leadership manager, First Direct



**Bernstein** When his employer refused to match money he'd raised for charity, he decided he would make up for it

This award is intended for someone working at any level of an organisation who comes up with a great idea or puts in exceptional work for charity. In this inaugural year, the judges decided it should go to a leader – Richard Bernstein, the chief executive of Eurovestech, who has pioneered a new approach to helping charities.

He developed the concept of 'share gifting' – donating shares in a publicly listed company to charitable causes – and backed the scheme with his own money.

Eurovestech has donated 9.1 million shares to charity since 2001, with a market value of more than £1.75m, and Bernstein personally paid the £91,000 nominal cost of them. He has also donated 4.6 million of his own shares, with a market value of £760,000.

Bernstein, who is also a management adviser for the Crystal Amber Fund, continues to give his time and money to encourage other

businesses to adopt share gifting. He has recently formed a company called Share & Share Alike to help companies interested in the idea.

David Moir, head of policy and public affairs at the Association of Charity Shops, was one of the judges. "I was impressed by Richard's personal commitment," he said. "It is in the very best traditions of individual philanthropy."

Bernstein drew inspiration from his early years as an equity analyst. Having raised £3,000 for a charity, he asked his employer if it would match his donation, but it refused. That rejection helped Bernstein develop his philanthropic outlook, and when he formed the technology investment company Eurovestech in 2000 he was determined to establish some form of corporate giving.

Eighty different charities, chosen by the firm's staff and board, benefited from the Eurovestech shares between 2001 and 2009. The

company's shares have helped keep the Kent Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre open, and the Willow Foundation was able to provide an extra 400 'special days' for terminally ill people, thanks to the scheme.

International charities such as the Bishop Simeon Trust, which provides support for orphans with Aids and supplies carers for terminally ill people in South Africa, have also been helped. Organisations such as the British Heart Foundation, the Alzheimer's Society and the Variety Club of Great Britain have also benefited.

Another judge, Richard Evans, chief executive of recruitment agency CfA, said: "These charities are dealing with particularly vulnerable people in conditions not everybody is comfortable with – people with Alzheimer's, the terminally ill in South Africa. He's putting money where it really, really matters."

*Jenny Cornish*

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**Richard Evans** Chief executive, CfA