

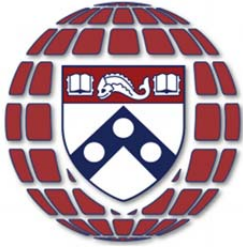


**Think Tanks & Civil Societies Program**  
**The Lauder Institute**  
*The University of Pennsylvania*

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# **2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report**



**Think Tanks & Civil Societies Program**  
**The Lauder Institute**  
*The University of Pennsylvania*

*“Helping to bridge the gap between knowledge and policy”*

Researching the trends and challenges facing think tanks, policymakers, and policy-oriented civil society groups...

Sustaining, strengthening, and building capacity for think tanks around the world...

Maintaining the largest, most comprehensive database of over 6,500 think tanks...

All requests, questions, and comments should be directed to:□

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## Acknowledgements

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I would also like to express my appreciation to the United Nations, the World Bank, the Wilson Center and the University of Pennsylvania for hosting the panel discussion and global launch of the 2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index in Washington, DC, Philadelphia and New York. Finally, I want to thank the more than 100 host and partner institutions around the world that have agreed to host think tank events in approximately 50 countries and 70 cities.

Thank you for helping the TTCSP highlight the important role think tanks play in civil societies and governments around the world.

James G. McGann  
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**TTCSP**  
THINK TANKS AND CIVIL SOCIETIES PROGRAM  
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***“Helping to bridge the gap between knowledge and policy”***

*The mission of the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) is to increase the profile, capacity and performance of think tanks at the national, regional and global levels so they can better serve policy makers and the public.*

*The TTCSP conducts research on the relationship between think tanks, politics and public policy, produces the annual Global Go To Think Tank Index, develops capacity-building resources and programs, manages and supports a global network of close to 7000 think tanks and trains future think tank scholars and executives. The TTCSP often is referred to as the “think tanks think tank”.*

## **Introduction**

The 2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index (GGTTI) marks the ninth year of continued efforts by the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) at the University of Pennsylvania to acknowledge the important contributions and emerging global trends of think tanks worldwide. Our initial effort to generate a ranking of the world’s leading think tanks in 2006 was a response to a series of requests from donors, government officials, journalists, and scholars to produce regional and international rankings of the world’s preeminent think tanks. Since its inception, our ongoing objective for the GGTTI report is to gain understanding of the role think tanks play in governments and civil societies. Using this knowledge, we hope to assist in improving the capacity and performance of think tanks around the world.

Since 2006, the ranking process has been refined and streamlined, and the number and scope of the institutions and individuals involved has steadily grown. The process, as in past years, relies on a shared definition of public policy research, analysis, and engagement organizations, a detailed set of selection criteria, and an increasingly open and transparent nominations and selection process. As part of the nominations process, all 6,846 think tanks catalogued in the TTCSP’s Global Think Tank Database were contacted and encouraged to participate, in addition to over 4,750 journalists, policymakers, public and private donors, and functional and regional area specialists. This group of peers and experts was surveyed to both nominate and rank public policy research centers of distinction for 2015.

To refine and validate the generated ranking lists, TTCSP assembled Expert Panels comprised of hundreds of members from a wide variety of backgrounds and disciplines. Additionally, new media – the website and social media presence – helped us communicate and disseminate information about criteria for this year’s Index to a wider audience (please see “Methodology and Timeline” for the complete set of nomination and ranking criteria, and “Appendices” for a detailed explication of the ranking process). Given the rigor and scope of the nomination and selection processes, the rankings produced thus far have been described as the insider’s guide to the global marketplace of ideas.

As a final note, we would like to remind you that the data collection, research, and analysis for this project, as in previous years, were conducted without the benefit of field research, a budget, or staff. We are confident that the peer nomination and selection process, as well as the work of the international Expert Panels, have enabled us to create the most authoritative list of high performance think tanks in the world. Still, efforts to streamline and perfect the process are ongoing. We are continually seeking ways to enhance the process and welcome your comments and suggestions. We further encourage you to provide the names and contact information for prospective expert panelists for functional and regional areas covered by the Index.

Thank you for your continued support of the TTCSP and of the annual Global Go To Think Tank Index. We hope our efforts to highlight the important contributions and emerging global trends of think tanks worldwide will foster insightful discussions and debates on the present and future roles of these vital institutions.

## **What is a Think Tank?**

Think tanks are public-policy research analysis and engagement organizations that generate policy-oriented research, analysis, and advice on domestic and international issues, thereby enabling policymakers and the public to make informed decisions about public policy. Think tanks may be affiliated or independent institutions that are structured as permanent bodies, not ad hoc commissions. These institutions often act as a bridge between the academic and policymaking communities and between states and civil society, serving in the public interest as independent voices that translate applied and basic research into a language that is understandable, reliable, and accessible for policymakers and the public (Think Tanks and Policy Advice in the US, Routledge 2007 and in *The Fifth Estate: The Role of Think Tanks in Domestic and Foreign Policy in the US* forthcoming University of Pennsylvania Press).

In an effort to bridge these conceptual problems and create a typology that takes into consideration the comparative differences in political systems and civil societies, we have developed a number of categories for think tanks. Think tanks may perform many roles in their host societies – there is, in fact, wide variation among think tanks in the work they do and the extent to which they do it. Over the last 87 years, several distinct organizational forms of think tanks have emerged that differentiate themselves in terms of their operating styles, patterns of recruitment, and aspirations to academic standards of objectivity and completeness in research. It

should be noted that alternate typologies of think tanks have been offered by other analysts.<sup>1</sup> In the global context, most think tanks tend to fall into the broad categories outlined below.

**Figure 1: Categories of Think Tank Affiliations**

CATEGORY	DEFINITION
AUTONOMOUS AND INDEPENDENT	Significant independence from any one interest group or donor and autonomous in its operation and funding from government.
QUASI INDEPENDENT	Autonomous from government but controlled by an interest group, donor, or contracting agency that provides a majority of the funding and has significant influence over operations of the think tank.
GOVERNMENT AFFILIATED	A part of the formal structure of government.
QUASI GOVERNMENTAL	Funded exclusively by government grants and contracts but not a part of the formal structure of government.
UNIVERSITY AFFILIATED	A policy research center at a university.
POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATED	Formally affiliated with a political party.
CORPORATE (FOR PROFIT)	A for-profit public policy research organization, affiliated with a corporation or merely operating on a for-profit basis

<sup>1</sup> Another typology distinguishes between three types of think tanks: “universities without students,” contract researchers and advocacy tanks. Weaver (1989).

## **North America and Europe**

- ♦ There are 1931 think tanks in North America (Mexico, Canada and US) of which 1835 are in the United States
- ♦ There are 1770 think tanks in Europe
- ♦ Close to 55 percent of all think tanks are in North America and Europe
- ♦ 90.5 percent of think tanks were created since 1951
- ♦ The number of think tanks in the US has more than doubled since 1980
- ♦ 31 percent of think tanks were created between 1981 to 1990
- ♦ The End of Post WWII consensus & Challenge to the Welfare State contributed to the growth of think tanks on the left and the right of the political spectrum
- ♦ Most of the think tanks that have come into existence in the United States since the 1970s are specialized for a particular regional or functional area
- ♦ About one quarter of U.S. think tanks (approximately 400 institutions) are located in Washington, DC
- ♦ More than half the think tanks are university affiliated
- ♦ The rate of establishment of think tanks has declined over the last 12 years in the United States and Europe

## **Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East**

- ♦ Asia, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and North Africa continue to see an expansion in the number and type of think tanks established
- ♦ Asia has experienced a dramatic growth in think tanks since the mid-2000's
- ♦ Many think tanks in these regions continue to be dependent on government funding along with gifts, grants, and contracts from international public and private donors
- ♦ University, government affiliated, or funded think tanks remain the dominate model for think tanks in these regions
- ♦ There is increasing diversity among think tanks in these regions with independent, political party affiliated, and corporate/business sector think tanks that are being created with greater frequency
- ♦ In an effort to diversify their funding base, think tanks have targeted businesses and wealthy individuals to support their core operations and programs

## **Reasons for the Growth of Think Tanks in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries**

- ♦ Information and technological revolution
- ♦ End of national governments' monopoly on information
- ♦ Increasing complexity and technical nature of policy problems
- ♦ Increasing size of government
- ♦ Crisis of confidence in governments and elected officials
- ♦ Globalization and the growth of state and non-state actors
- ♦ Need for timely and concise information and analysis that is "in the right form, in the right hands, at the right time"<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> McGann, James G., ed. *Think tanks and policy advice in the US: Academics, advisors and advocates*. Routledge, 2007.



## **Reasons for the Recent Decline in Number of Think Tanks Established Worldwide**

- ♦ Political and regulatory environment growing hostile to think tanks and NGOs in many countries
- ♦ Decreasing funding for policy research by public and private donors
- ♦ Public and private donors tendency toward short-term, project-specific funding instead of investing in ideas and institutions
- ♦ Underdeveloped institutional capacity and the inability to adapt to change
- ♦ Increased competition from advocacy organizations, for-profit consulting firms, law firms, and 24/7 electronic media
- ♦ Institutions having served their purpose and discontinued their operations

When I helped organize the first international meeting of think tanks, one of the major debates at the meeting was the contention that the term “think tank” doesn’t travel well across borders and cultures. That is clearly no longer the case, as the term is now widely accepted around the globe to describe “public-policy research analysis and engagement organizations that generate policy-oriented research, analysis, and advice on domestic and international issues, which enable policymakers and the public to make informed decisions about public policy issues.”<sup>3</sup>

And increasingly, think tanks are a global phenomenon because they play a critical role for governments and civil societies around the world by acting as bridges between knowledge (academia) and power (politicians and policymakers).

Governments and individual policymakers, throughout the developed and developing world, face the common problem of bringing expert knowledge to bear in government decision-making. Policymakers need understandable, reliable, accessible, and useful information about the societies they govern. They also need to know how current policies are working, as well as to set out possible alternatives and their likely costs and consequences. This expanding need has fostered the growth of independent public policy research organization: the think tank community, as we know it.

Think tanks have increased in number, but also the scope and impact of their work have expanded dramatically as well. Still, the potential of think tanks to support and sustain democratic governments and civil societies around the world is far from exhausted. The challenge for the new millennium is to harness the vast reservoir of knowledge, information, and associational energy that exist in public policy research organizations so that it supports self-sustaining economic, social, and political progress in every region of the world for public good.

Part of the goal of this report is to raise some of the critical threats and opportunities that face the think tank community globally. These threats are best expressed by what I call the “four mores”:

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<sup>3</sup> McGann, 2007.

- ♦ More Issues
- ♦ More Actors
- ♦ More Competition
- ♦ More Conflict

These threats create a set of challenges that confront all think tanks:

- ♦ Competitive challenges
- ♦ Resource challenges
- ♦ Technological challenges
- ♦ Policy Challenges

To effectively respond to the threats and opportunities posed by this new and challenging environment, think tank need to focus on the “four M’s”:

- ♦ Mission
- ♦ Market
- ♦ Manpower
- ♦ Money

Finally, in a global market place of ideas, think tanks need to develop national, regional, and global partnerships while creating new and innovative platforms to deliver their products and services to an ever-expanding audience of citizens, policymakers, and businesses around the world.

## Think Tank Innovation

The nature and role of think tanks around the world have been in flux in recent years. In the [2014 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report](#), we noted a decline in the formation of new think tanks for the first time in 3 decades. What are the forces that have brought about the sea change in the political economy of think tanks? By the end of World War II think tanks had become indispensable advisers to presidents, prime ministers, members of parliament and congress and as the saying goes all they had to do was “research it, write it and policy makers would beat a path to their door”. In the 1970s and 80s, think tanks of every size, type and political persuasion appeared on the policy landscape. This impressive growth was due to the information and technological revolution, the increased complexity of policy issues, the growth of global philanthropy, the rise of civil society, the forces of globalization, and the demands for timely and concise policy analysis. But today, these same drivers of think tank growth may be the seeds of discontent that herald the demise of the think tanks as we know them.

Though causation is somewhat diffuse, there are certainly key factors that pose a threat to the think tank community. First and foremost, the change in how think tanks are funded poses a fundamental challenge for all think tanks. With the rise of professional philanthropy donors have moved away from providing general operating support to short term, high impact, project specific funding. This change has forced think tanks to change their fundraising strategies so they can raise the resources needed to cover their core operations. The days of a small a group of “golden donors” who provide large, multi-year institutional grants are gone. Today think tanks and most publicly supported institutions have to raise a large number of relatively small short term, project specific grants so they can have enough funds to cover the overall operations of the organization. Project specific funding has also forced think tanks to become more specialized in order to be compete in a crowded marketplace of ideas. Since the late 80s the vast majority of think tanks that have come into existence are specialized think tanks that focus on a single issue area or a carefully defined target audience. There are some journalists and scholars who have concluded that this trend has resulted in a loss of control of the mission and research agendas of many think tanks. This is a gross mischaracterization because most think tanks have well developed policies and procedures to assure the quality, independence and integrity of their research. Sure some scholars may step over the line from time to time but the vast majority of think tanks have policies and procedures in place to monitor conflict of interest, gifts from donors and adherence to basic social science research standards.

Second, the changes in power and politics around the world have led to increased pressure on non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or what I describe as “NGO Pushback” that is often directed at think tanks because they are frequently in the vanguard of political and economic reform. This involves the use of legal and extra legal means to limit the number, role and influence of think tanks around the world. Equally problematic is the rise of partisan politics and political polarization that tends to erode effective decision making and blur lines between policy advice and advocacy for think tanks.

Finally, with rapid-fire technological advancements and demands for immediate commentary and analysis has intensified the competition in the global marketplace of ideas. Media organizations, advocacy groups, consulting and law firms,– they are all vying for the attention of busy policy makers and the public policy, a space that was traditionally reserved for the think tanks. Relevancy amid a sea of policy ideas requires constant innovation, effective communication strategies, hefty political influence, and above all rigorous and timely research.

Consider the lifespan and impact of music technologies as an analogous case. Over the years, we've adopted and later phased out the phonographic record, the eight-track, audio cassettes, CDs, and iPods. With each major innovation, the lifespan grew shorter and became obsolete faster. Think tanks face a similar threat of extinction unless they learn to innovate and adapt to the rapidly changing political economy in which they operate.

Traditional methods of impact and delivery are increasingly less relevant and new methods of public engagement constantly emerge. This poses both an existential challenge and an incredible opportunity. Think tanks must seize the potential to innovate and adapt and be willing to throw the old rulebook out the window.

In early October 2015, the *Washington Post* published a series of articles gauging today's climate for think tanks. Right out of the gate, Amanda Bennett's piece, "Are Think Tanks Obsolete?" demonstrated the tenuous environment in which think tanks are operating. Subsequently, my piece, [\*\*"For Think Tanks, It's Innovate or Die"\*\*](#), proposed that think tanks are not necessarily doomed for obsolescence; rather they must innovate to remain relevant in the changing times.

In this light, the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) at the University of Pennsylvania and the Fundação Getulio Vargas (Brazil) co-sponsored an international conference that brought together chairpersons, presidents/executive directors, senior scholars, staff members, and research interns from leading global think tanks to address the need for innovation in the think tank sector. The [\*\*2015 Think Tank Innovation Summit\*\*](#), held in Philadelphia, PA, on December 13-15, 2015, sought to understand why certain think tanks have been able to adapt and maintain their relevance in an increasingly competitive environment. Questions explored included: What about the structure and strategy of these think tanks makes them so successful? What are innovative practices in other relevant sectors that can be adopted by think tanks to improve their performance and impact? What type of leadership is most conducive to fostering innovation? What funding practices should organizations adopt to ensure innovation?

At the Innovation Summit, leading scholars from around the world presented methods and strategies practiced by their institution to cope with the rapidly changing public policy landscape. With topics ranging from investing in diverse human capital, the rise of consulting firms, to the use of big data and new technological platforms, contributors highlights the many faces of innovation and change in the policy environment. Overall, while discussions varied, many highlighted the need to build bridges between institutions and regions to merge strategic and effective thinking across boundaries.

Think tanks today must face, head-on, the foundational challenges to their operating and dissemination models. The discussion below focuses on the forces transforming the world of think tanks and highlights representative case studies to illustrate effective innovation strategies.

### **Contributing Factors Creating a Need to Innovate**

First, think tanks exist in an increasingly information-rich environment. The power of information is useless unless it is in the right form at the right time and in the right hands. Globalization, the Internet, 24/7 cable news networks and social media are redefining how think tanks operate. In the past, think tanks would come up with grand strategies and big ideas and policy makers would beat a path to their door. Today, traditional measures of impact and policy research are less relevant than ever and the medium and measures of reaching policy makers and the public are constantly evolving. Further complicating matters, busy policy makers, on average, only have 30 minutes a day to read, which precludes books, journal articles, and detailed white papers. Add the increasing reliance on mobile devices into this mix and you begin to understand how profoundly the world of ideas and think tanks has changed. As think tanks strive to remain relevant, their long-winded reports published in PDFs are becoming less attractive to modern audiences.

**Case Study: The Disappearing PDF.** Traditionally, the PDF was the main format for dissemination through the Internet. But today, the PDF is becoming almost as obsolete as the print versions. Thinking beyond the PDF has practically become an key question for think tanks in the past few years. If PDF versions of white papers and research findings do not attract their desired audiences, think tanks are forced to new products and distribution channels to disseminate their analysis and policy advice. A recent report by the World Bank revealed that nearly one-third of their PDF reports had *never* been downloaded. Another 40 percent of their reports had been downloaded fewer than 100 times. Only 13 percent had seen more than 250 downloads in their lifetimes.<sup>4</sup>

Better, cheaper, and faster technology has given individuals and small organizations platforms to operate and publicize their work. Internet, social networks, the cloud, and handheld computers have also made it easier for individuals with limited financial resources to conduct research and disseminate their findings globally. Hence, the globalization of ideas and constant technological innovation has empowered individuals in a way that poses a major challenge to established knowledge-based institutions like think tanks and universities. Manuel Castells has termed this force “the network society” – a new social structure that utilizes Information-Age technologies to expand, reconfigure and overcome the limitation of traditional networks.<sup>5</sup> The “network society” is best illustrated by the transformation of policy making dynamics in the age of Twitter.

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<sup>4</sup> Doemeland, Doerte; Treviono, James. 2014. *Which World Bank reports are widely read?* Policy Research working group; no. WPS 6851. Washington, DC: World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2014/05/19456376/world-bank-reports-widely-read-world-bank-reports-widely-read>

<sup>5</sup> Castells, Manuel. *The rise of the network society: The information age: Economy, society, and culture.* Vol. 1. John Wiley & Sons, 2011.

**Case Study: Tweeting to Influence.** In an example of a game-changing relationship between technological access and policy influence, Twitter users came out in force to comment on the Common Core State Standards on the digital platform. University researchers looked at a six-month period and found almost 53,000 individuals using the #commoncore hashtag, with more than 30,000 tweets per month. University of Pennsylvania researcher Jonathan Supovitz argued, as a result of the study, that “social media-enabled social networks are shifting the dynamics of factional politics in American policymaking.”<sup>6</sup>

Twitter is not the only medium an individual or group can make their policy message heard. One can click, share, post, and TED talk their way to a vast audience. The playing field is wide open.

A think tank might interpret the changing digital times as indicating a need for omnipresent digital activity. However, the new reliance on the Internet also raises questions about the difference between visibility and influence; often a think tank’s popularity on the Web does not translate into an ability to effect change.<sup>7</sup> When considering how to increase the overall impact of an organization, access and comprehension are the two main drivers. Thus, innovation in this arena needs to be highly strategic and focused on impact.

First, in order to reach policy makers and the public, think tanks must support their research with effective dissemination and external relations strategies. Think tanks must establish a balance between analytical rigor and rapid “just-in-time” information and analysis. Following are two case studies to illustrate think tank innovations that capitalize on the digital age:

**Think Tank Innovation Case Study –  
The Center for Strategic and Innovative Studies (United States):**

While many think tanks are struggling to establish effective communication channels in the age of information overload, some think tanks, such as CSIS, have learned to adapt their research to suit the needs of a new policy environment. In 2012 CSIS established the Dracopoulos Family iDeas Lab to “use the latest graphic design, audiovisual techniques, and technologies to produce cutting-edge multimedia products that foster innovation and creativity, and help bring CSIS scholarship to a wider audience.”<sup>8</sup> This in house production company is revolutionary in that it offers polished, authoritative information in an accessible and appealing multimedia format. Since 2012, the iDeas Lab has produced more than 800 original videos, interviews, and podcasts for the Center.<sup>9</sup> By stepping away from books and long research reports, CSIS has found a way to remain relevant in an increasingly fast-paced and digital world.

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<sup>6</sup> Jonathan Supovitz, “The Rise of Crowd-Sourced Political Influence,” <http://hashtagcommoncore.com/>, accessed November 23, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> McNutt, Kathleen, and Gregory Marchildon. “Think Tanks and the Web: Measuring Visibility and Influence.” *Canadian Public Policy* 35.2 (2009): 219-36. Project MUSE. Web. 20 Oct. 2013.

<sup>8</sup> <http://csis.org/program/ideas-lab>

<sup>9</sup> *ibid* 6

**Think Tank Innovation Case Study –  
Amnesty International (United Kingdom):**

As far as information dissemination goes, Amnesty International (AI) consistently ranks with some of the best communicators. Driven by the desire to fight for human rights among immigrants, refugees, political prisoners and many others, AI remains committed to maintaining an influential public relations position. Amnesty International uses social media platforms effectively and regularly: it has over 800,000 likes on Facebook, over 500,000 followers on Twitter, and has a Youtube, Instagram and other social media platforms. Moreover, Amnesty International has chapters all over the world in high schools and universities, further spreading its human rights message to young activists. AI has a Media Center that provides breaking news globally, as well as expert opinion analyses. The multimedia newsroom is full of videos with breaking news from all over the world. Amnesty also provides an annual report and invites readers all over the world to sign petitions and campaigns.

Second, and closely related to technological innovation, think tanks will have to innovate amid a noisier, more competitive policy research field. For think tanks, competition, including competition from advocacy organizations, for-profit consulting firms, law firms, electronic media, and big data, will reign in the coming years.

Big data, which involves the collection and analysis of massive amounts of information to pinpoint critical data points and trends, may render think tanks and their staffs superfluous. This new analytic capability enabled by supercomputers, maybe the think tank of the future.

Increasingly, developing nations are playing a role in this trend: in 1997 none of the world's fastest 100 supercomputers was found in one of the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China). Today, six from that list are in use in China, including the Tianhe-2, the world's fastest computer, and six others can be found in the remaining BRIC nations.<sup>10</sup> Technological expansion in the BRIC countries is just the beginning of emerging technological revolutions in the developing world – but these tech adjustments are often made in environments without privacy laws or regulatory systems in place to check big data gathering. As of 2013, just 40 of the 101 countries with data privacy laws or with a bill in place were in the developing world.<sup>11</sup> Regardless of these regulatory shortcomings, big data and high-level technology will only play a growing role in an increasingly interconnected world. Think tanks will have to either integrate this knowledge to their research or become an outmoded source of information.

Third, with new technologies, big data, and more competition, the battle for capital will become fiercer. With limited private and public funding, think tanks are turning to more short-term, project-specific funding, rather than long-term institutional support. However, the following case study describes one think tank's approach to funding.

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<sup>10</sup> McGann, James. "Global Think Tanks Policy Networks and Governance." Routledge, 2011.

<sup>11</sup> Provost, Claire. "Poorer Countries New Privacy Laws as They Adopt New Technologies."

*Theguardian.com*. Guardian News and Media, 04 Dec. 2013. Web. 9 Jan. 2014.

<<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2013/dec/04/poorer-countries-privacy-laws-new-technology>>

**Think Tank Innovation Case Study –  
Center for Social and Economic Research-CASE (Poland)**

CASE has shown innovation in its approach to creating financial stability for newly established think tanks. CASE came into existence when the Soviet Union collapsed. Starting from scratch they assembled a team of first rate economist, put together a business plan and set about raising funds through grants and contracts. They also create an endowment fund to strengthen its long-term financial stability. CASE's scholars quickly gained a reputation for conducting excellent economic analysis and producing high quality reports that were circulated widely among policy elites in Poland and throughout Central and Eastern Europe. In addition they produced CASE network E-Briefs which were shorter and once again had a wide distribution. They have also made some of their materials and publications accessible to both English and Polish speakers to reach policy makers and donors outside the region.

With diminished access to funding, many think tanks encounter the phenomenon of “short-termism”. Today, many politicians choose to focus on short-term issues rather than addressing the large looming crises that are just ahead. Short-termism is, in part, a result of the culture of Western society. Many politicians choose to avoid major policy concerns like aging or declining populations, climate change, and sovereign debt. While these issues are pertinent and risky for the wellbeing of a nation, politicians would rather dodge and defer the issue in order to ensure reelection. “Politics, technology, and human nature all militate in favor of kicking the can down the road. The most severe financial and economic crisis in more than half a century has further discouraged policymakers from raising their eyes from the present to the distant horizon.”<sup>12</sup> Indeed, George Papandreou, former Prime Minister of Greece has stated, “Citizens feel alienated with conventional politics and frustrated by the absence of effective policies that serve societies’ needs.”<sup>13</sup> Think tanks, striving to uphold access and influence among policymakers, are increasingly viewed as part of the problem: they too fall into the trap of short-termism and fail to pressure elected leaders to take action.

Finally, alongside the technological and funding changes, there is an emerging generational shift in the think tank environment. A current catalyst for think tanks to innovate is a challenge in their leadership – an unprecedented number of think tank executives, many of whom founded or led these institutions for many year, are retiring or stepping down. Often high-profile, well-respected think tank executives “outperform their own organizations” in readership: Augustin Etchebarne, leader of an Argentinian think tank, has 33,000 Twitter followers, while his think tank has only 8,000.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, retention of talents and resources during a leadership transition becomes a key issue.

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<sup>12</sup> Anderson, Victor. “Addressing short-termism in government and politics.” *The Guardian*. Last modified March 02, 2011. Accessed January 7, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Papandreou, George. “Rediscover the Lost Art of Democracy.” *CNN*. Cable News Network, 20 Oct. 2013. Web 25 Oct. 2013.

<sup>14</sup> McGann, James G., ed. *Think tanks and policy advice in the US: Academics, advisors and advocates*. Routledge, 2007.



Ensuring the success of future generations of leadership is never easy, but it is nonetheless essential. One bad hire or a rocky transition can cripple an organization for years. Even when the search for an executive is successful, the institution will face a range of challenges that will require careful management by the governing board. New leaders will face new challenges. As scholar Andrea Moncada notes, “Increased competition, donor expectations, the 24-hour news cycle and the expectation to respond to politics” will place a strain on think tanks, particularly those with new directors who “do not have the same relationship with donors as their predecessors did.” In this situation, Moncada continues, research produced may be “in danger of being dictated by politics,” as new leadership may not maintain the leverage necessary to resist donor requests.<sup>15</sup> The American Enterprise Institute, a conservative-leaning Washington D.C. think tank, faced the challenge of a leadership transition head-on in 2008, and their story of transition highlights an effective strategy for future power transitions.

#### **Think Tank Innovation Case Study –**

##### **American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research-AEI (United States):**

Alongside many organizations, the AEI’s finances were badly affected by the 2008 economic crisis. Indeed, AEI was arguably disproportionately affected by the downturn given that much of their funding comes from corporate philanthropy. AEI responded by switching the majority of their publications from print to electronic formats. In 2008, as Arthur Brooks was appointed president of AEI, Brooks immediately started an aggressive outreach and fundraising campaign that resulted in significant increases in funding, the largest donation being \$20 million. Looking forward, AEI has purchased its first building on what use to be Embassy Row and is now Think Tank Row on Massachusetts Avenue in Washington, DC. having rented for most of its history. The extensive renovations will include a TV and radio station to increase their media presence and specifically target college campuses. According to Newsweek the restructuring under Brooks resulted in AEI producing more newspaper op-eds and testifying before Congress.

In summation, think tanks will be required to deal with the continuing challenge of managing the tensions between influence and independence, rigor and relevance, specialization and breadth, continuity and change in pursuing these issues, and ultimately, having an impact on policy and the lives of the people in the countries in which they operate.

#### **Attributes of Think Tank Innovation**

To successfully navigate threats and challenges described in the section above, think tanks must adapt and seek opportunities in the fray. Below are several attributes of an innovative think tank, and corresponding case studies to illustrate each point.

First, to survive, think tanks must produce research that is timely and accessible. Research findings must be communicated effectively to policy makers and the public.

#### **Think Tank Innovation Case Study –**

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<sup>15</sup> Andrea Moncada, New blood means new challenges for U.S. think tanks. Onthinktanks.org. June 12, 2012. <<http://onthinktanks.org/2012/06/12/new-blood-means-new-challenges-for-u-s-think-tanks/>>

**Brookings Institute (United States):**

The Brookings Institution long viewed as a “university without students” because of its scholarly but policy oriented research has adapted to the changing political economy of think tanks by adopting effective hybrid model that places an emphasis on communication and dissemination of research findings. While books are still supported through its Press and the Brookings Essay, these long-form products are also now available to download in e-Book format. In addition to the long-form products, Brookings also has a strong blogging initiative designed to help get key works into circulation. All of their major research fellows write blog posts of 500-800 words for their respective programs and are encouraged to be active on social network and in the media. This allows experts to comment quickly on emerging issues and trends. These blog posts also serve to generate interest for long-form products on relevant issues. This case illustrates that even the most venerable and well established think tanks in the world have been forced to innovate and adapt to the pressure of the global marketplace of ideas. It also highlights the rebalancing that is taking place in think tank budgets—funds are being increased for strategic communications to assure that the report is in the right hands at just the right time..

**Think Tank Innovation Case Study –****Pew Research Center (United States):**

The Pew Research Center has a Fact Tank, described as a “real-time platform” dedicated to finding news in the numbers. Launched in mid-2013 to build on the center’s unique brand of data journalism, Fact Tank is written by experts who combine the rigorous research and quality storytelling for which the Center is known to help readers understand the trends shaping the nation and the globe.” The Fact Tank provides insightful and interactive research articles - in blog entries no more than 1000 words. For those interested in methodologies and more information, the Fact Tank provides them with more information through links. The Pew Fact Tank also engages its audiences on Twitter, where it has a following of over 44,000 people. The Pew Research Center articles, which focus on demography, provide up to date news and research on issues such as immigration, political opinion, social and technological trends among other relevant issues of the day.

**Think Tank Innovation Case Study –****Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies - WMCES (Belgium):**

The Marten Centre was founded with a pan-European mindset with offices in 22 EU and non-EU countries. This pan-Europeanism also translates into the Centre’s initiative, “Up2Youth”, which aims to engage with youth across Europe. While most think tanks are struggling to engage with the younger demographic, CWMCES has managed to create an online, interactive forum for young Europeans to engage with policy issues that are important to them. This survey was launched in time for the 2014 European elections, and allowed a forum for European youth to contribute to policy reforms and debate. Participation was further incentivized by offering internships to the people with the best ideas.

The demands for effective communication, think tanks must collaborate more frequently and effectively if they are to innovate successfully. In particular, as many of the pressing issues facing our world today transcend borders, it is necessary for think tanks to work across borders to uncover solutions. This can be challenging, given political dynamics of nation-states and competition among think tanks. However, sometimes looking to outside-of-the-box ideas of the past can lead to innovations of the future: a Cold War-era think tank provides inspiration for global collaboration in the twenty-first century. Mark Garrison, former Director of the Center for Foreign Policy Development at Brown University, pointed to his work with Soviet academics, including Sergei Khrushchev (son of Nikita Khrushchev), on projects during his directorship as evidence of the possibility to create productive relationships despite political boundaries. Garrison noted that more think tanks today could “transnationalize” in the face of border-crossing issues by bringing in foreign scholars and collaborating with think tanks abroad.<sup>16</sup>

More recent examples of transnational cooperation can be found around the world:

**Think Tank Innovation Case Study –**

**Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (United States):**

Since a restructuring in 2007, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace has repositioned itself as the first global think tank. Carnegie’s innovative structural model involves an international network of satellite offices in Belgium, Beirut, Brussels, Moscow, Washington DC and this spring in India. This network offers policymakers and the larger public a deeper understanding of the circumstances shaping policy. Scholars from each center are all locally based and write in the local language—but also collaborate with their global counterparts. This collaboration reduces redundant structures, pools expertise, offers program support, and brings together multinational viewpoints on a global scale.

In addition to global collaborations, think tanks can also consider new partnerships and affiliations to become stronger.

**Think Tank Innovation Case Study –**

**The Hindu Centre for Politics and Public Policy (India)**

A large amount of resources are required to start and sustain a successful think tank. An even larger amount is needed in a country with underdeveloped infrastructure. This dynamic makes the Hindu Centre for Politics and Public Policy all the more interesting. The Hindu Centre is an outgrowth of the prominent Indian publishing enterprise *The Hindu*. While the Centre is separate from the newspapers in terms of its research, it still has access to the formal and informal resources of its parent organization. This collaboration allows the Centre to draw upon the *The Hindu*’s cemented ties with India’s policy makers in ways that would not be possible if it were an unaffiliated think tank – especially in a country where funding and poor infrastructure are major barriers to think tank sustainability. Consequently, the Hindu Centre demonstrates effective strategies for circumventing obstacles for younger, under-funded think tanks.

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<sup>16</sup> Garrison, Mark. Interview with Gwyn Garrison. Personal Interview. Philadelphia, November 27, 2015.

Innovative think tanks may also be pursuing engagement of institutions, communities, and individuals to enhance performance and garner support.

**Think Tank Innovation Case Study –  
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung-FES (Germany):**

FES works toward strengthening social democracy, by engaging actors from a range of high-level global institutions all the way down to local sub-national groups and individuals. On the local level FES has scholarships targeted toward involving low-income high-performing youth in educational democracy. This program is then supplemented by political education programs that engage the general public in social discussion and the policy making process. FES also maintains formal collaborations with other think tanks, academics, and politicians. With centers in more than 100 countries, FES seeks to “promote the establishment and consolidation” of democratic structures. By involving such a diverse set of actors FES ensures widespread support and success for its mission.

Finally, a forward-thinking think tank should look across sectors for inspiration. Businesses and the non-profit sector have been discussing and implementing innovations for years. Corporations have long noted the positive correlation between innovation and business success and sustainability: more than 70 percent of senior executives surveyed by McKinsey and Company say that innovation will be at least one of the top three drivers of growth for their companies in the next three to five years.<sup>17</sup> The importance of innovation has also been recognized in the non-profit sector (Dart 2004, Goerke 2003). In both the private and non-profit worlds, empirical evidence shows that organizational innovation offers an immediate competitive advantage. In light of the fierce competition think tanks are facing from consulting firms, law firms, and advocacy groups, it is crucial that think tanks use organizational innovation tactics to cultivate competitive advantages.

The current literature highlights the following five factors as key in developing innovative practices:

**Transformational Leadership:** An organization needs strong leadership to cultivate and manage an organizational culture geared toward innovation. Leaders can drive an organizations forward through teaching, coaching, role modeling, and reward allocation (Jaskyte 2004).

**Overhead Funding:** Organizations that are heavily reliant on external sources of funding for their operational budgets do not feel stable enough to undertake the risks that innovation requires (Osbourne 2014). Having long-term operational funding provides the stability and flexibility required to innovate.

**Clear and Strategic Mission:** A clear, motivating mission will help organizations identify and focus on the development and/or adoption of innovations that will support their work (McDonald 2007).

**Collaboration:** Establishing networks with consumers and peers allows organizations to leverage existing resources to create new value (Shuman 2009).

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<sup>17</sup> How companies approach innovation: A McKinsey Global Survey

**Flexibility with Employees:** Just as innovation can flow down from senior management, it can also flow up from employees. Incentivizing innovation and allowing employees flexibility in their research, creates a stronger cultural consensus around innovation (Kanter 2001).

### **Looking to the Future of Think Tank Innovation**

As discussed in the sections above, think tanks are facing several trends which will force them to innovate, including: the operational environment, which has become highly competitive; technological advances and the way globalization has irreversibly changed the way information is consumed; an unstable political order; and the information saturation of the digital age. However, this uncertainty can also be a time for opportunity if think tanks can effectively harness new technologies, business models, and innovative approaches to developing and delivering policy advice.

## **Overview of Modifications and Enhancements to the Global Go To Think Tanks Index**

Each year we attempt to respond systematically to comments and suggestions to improve the nomination and ranking process for the Global Go To Think Tank Index (GGTTI). Since the inaugural report in 2006, the nomination and selection processes have changed significantly. While the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) continually seeks to improve the nomination and selection process, several things should be kept in mind. First, although we do our best to catch and eliminate as many mistakes as possible, we do not claim that the annual rankings are error-free. As with many ranking systems, the GGTTI has its fair share of limitations, which we continually seek to overcome. Second, critiques highlighting the rankings' comprehensiveness fail to understand our commitment to studying the contributions and impact of think tanks worldwide. The Index's aim is to produce an inclusive and far-reaching report of international think tanks. Moreover, we hope to extend the Index to include even more think tanks around the world.

### **Recent Years' Modifications**

TTCSP is committed to increasing the quality and representativeness of the Index every year we conduct the survey. Since 2010, hundreds of expert panelists have participated in an evaluation of the ranking criteria and nominations and indexing processes. As a result, the Index has undergone a number of major changes designed to limit bias, expand the rankings' representativeness, and improve the overall quality and integrity of the nomination process. The following modifications have been made to the Index over the last several years:

#### 2010

In 2010, a ranking list for think tanks with an annual budget of less than five million U.S. dollars was created. This category helps to recognize the work of smaller think tanks that produce influential research, but might otherwise be edged out in the rankings by think tanks with larger budgets and greater manpower.

American think tanks were removed from the global ranking in an effort to improve the visibility of global organizations, and recognize the inherent advantages of American think tanks.

The methodology was revamped to encompass an open nominations process in which all 6,480 think tanks identified by the TTCSP at that time were invited to submit nominations. This replaced a system where the Expert Panels developed the initial slate of institutions. The change dramatically increased the levels of participation, and greatly improved the quality and representativeness of nominated institutions.

An outreach effort was launched in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to improve the Index's inclusivity.

## 2011

The Latin America category was restructured into two categories: “Top Think Tanks in Mexico, Canada, and the Caribbean” and “Top Think Tanks in Central and South America.”

## 2012

The Latin America categories were further refined into: “Top Think Tanks in Mexico and Canada” and “Top Think Tanks in Central and South America.”

The Asia category underwent revisions in order to prevent the group’s domination by China, India, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. The Asia section was divided into two categories: “Top Think Tanks in China, India, Japan, and the Republic of Korea” and “Top Think Tanks in Asia (excluding China, India, Japan, and the Republic of Korea).”

Five new special achievement categories were created: “Best Advocacy Campaign,” “Best Policy Produced by a Think Tank 2011-2012,” “Best For-Profit Think Tanks,” “Top Energy and Resource Policy Think Tank,” and “Top Education Policy Think Tanks.” These categories recognize both special achievements and excellence in particular areas of study. This expansion aimed to better recognize the diverse range of issues think tanks address, and the new organizational types that have emerged over the past five years.

The “Best New Think Tanks” category examined organizations founded over the past 24 months instead of the past 18.

## 2013

To increase inclusivity, the Asia categories were further subdivided into three categories: “Top Think Tanks in Asia and the Pacific (Excluding China, India, Japan, and the Republic of Korea),” “Top Think Tanks in China, India, Japan, and the Republic of Korea,” and “Top Think Tanks in Central Asia.”

The “Top Security and International Affairs Think Tanks” category was divided into “Top Defense and National Security Think Tanks” and “Top Foreign Policy and International Affairs Think Tanks.”

Eight new special achievement categories were added: “Think Tank to Watch,” “Best Use of Social Networks,” “Best Institutional Collaboration Involving Two or More Think Tanks,” “Best Think Tank Network,” “Best Think Tank Conference,” “Best Managed Think Tank,” “Best New Idea or Paradigm Developed by a Think Tank,” and “Best Transdisciplinary Research Program at a Think Tank.”

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To amend anomalies that are present in the 2013 Global Go To Index, some of the regional categories have been reorganized according to countries geographic location.

The Central Asia category underwent revisions and will consist only of think tanks from Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Turkish think tanks will remain in the Middle East and North Africa category, as will Cypriot ones – despite Cyprus’ status as an EU member state. Think tanks from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, and Pakistan will be ranked in the Asia and the Pacific category. The Central and Eastern Europe category will include Russian think tanks and also think tanks from those countries that lie between Turkey and Russia in the east and Sweden, Germany, Austria, and Italy in the west.

The “Top Health Policy Think Tanks” category was subdivided into the “Top Global Health Policy Think Tanks” and “Top Domestic Health Policy Think Tanks” categories so as to better reflect the fact that there are two distinct areas of focus in the field of health policy.

## 2015

Three new categories were added to the 2015 Global Go To Index: “Best Regional Studies Policy Research Think Tank (University Affiliated)”, “Best Regional Studies Policy Research Center (Free Standing, Not University Affiliated)”, “Think Tank with the Best Practices (Policies and Procedures) to Assure the Quality, Independence and Integrity of its Policy Research”.

## **2015 Process and Methodology**

Each year our best efforts have gone into generating a rigorous, inclusive, and objective process. However, we recognize the impossibility of entirely ridding the Index from bias. Inevitably, personal, ideological, disciplinary, and regional biases of those consulted throughout the process may have influenced the rankings. While some have suggested that we move to a small group or panel of experts and journalists to make the selections, we are unwavering in our commitment to an open and democratic process. Given the safeguards in place – the transparent process, the provisions set by the detailed nomination and selection criteria, and the annually increasing participation of think tanks and experts from every region of the world – we are confident in the quality and integrity of the Index. Additionally, with the growing involvement of the expert panelists, the nomination and ranking process has also been dramatically improved. Together, we believe these measures insulate the nomination and selection process from any significant charges of bias and misrepresentation.

We would like to underscore that the GGTTI is but one measure of a think tank’s performance and impact, and has been designed for use in conjunction with other metrics to help identify and evaluate public policy research organizations around the world. An organization’s inclusion within the Index does not indicate a seal of approval or endorsement for the institution, its publications, or its programs by the TTCSP. Conversely, an organization’s exclusion from the rankings does not necessarily indicate poor quality, effectiveness, or performance. There are 6,846 think tanks around the world completing exceptional work to help bridge the gap between knowledge and policy. This report is no more than one effort to highlight some of the world’s leading think tanks.



## **Methodology and Timeline**

Before beginning the 2015 nomination and selection process, the team conducted extensive research in order to update and verify the Think Tank and Civil Societies Program's (TTCSP) Global Think Tank Database. Through this process many additional think tanks were identified for possible inclusion in this year's study. A month in advance of the 2015 nomination and selection process launch, a letter announcing the commencement of the 2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index (GGTTI) was sent to all catalogued organizations. Think tanks were asked to make recommendations for improving the nomination and selection process, in addition to potential Expert Panel nominees. A letter requesting evaluations of the efficacy and validity of the 2015 Rankings criteria, and nomination and selection process, was also sent to expert panelists from previous years.

### **Timeline of the Nomination and Ranking Process**

#### **Nominations: Expert Panel – March 15 to May 31, 2015**

In preparation for the 2015 Global Go To Think Tank Indexing process, a call for nominations was issued for qualified individuals to serve on the Regional, Functional, and Special Areas of Distinction Panels.

#### **Round I: Nominations – August 1 to September 30, 2015**

A call for Nominations was sent to over 6,500 think tanks and approximately 7,500 plus journalists, public and private donors, and policy-makers from around the world. These nominations were tabulated and institutes with 10 or more nominations were included in the next step of the 2015 Think Tank Indexing process. All of the top ranked think tanks from 2014 were automatically included in the 2015 ranking ballot.

#### **Round II: Peer/Expert Rankings – October 1 to October 31, 2015**

Think tanks with 10 or more nominations were placed in an electronic ranking survey. A letter announcing the second round was emailed to all the think tanks, journalists, public and private donors, and policy maker groups who agreed to participate in the process. The rankings were tabulated and the list of finalists was generated for the Expert Panel to review and make final selections. This year, Regional and Functional Expert Panels were created for every category. These specialists were consulted to help assure the quality and accuracy of the nominations before they were placed on the final rankings survey.

#### **Round III: Expert Panel Selects 2015 Go To Think Tanks – November 1 to December 2015**

The members of the Expert Panel received information packets by email in order to facilitate the final selection process. Individuals who served on last year's Expert Panel as well as those who were nominated this year were invited to serve on the 2015 Expert Panel. Experts from every region and functional area were represented on the Expert Panel. Panelists submitted their rankings and recommendations by Friday, November 15, 2015.

## **Launch: 2015 Global Go-To Think Tank Rankings Announced January 2016**

The 2015 Global Go-To Think Tank Rankings were announced at the United Nations in New York, at the World Bank in Washington D.C., and at selected organizations in every region of the world.

## **2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index Nomination and Ranking Criteria**

The peers and experts who participated in the indexing process were encouraged to employ the following criteria when considering nominations and rankings. The 2015 GGTTI Nomination and Ranking Criteria include, but are not limited to the following criteria:

The quality and commitment of the think tank's leadership (chief executive and governing body). This involves effectively managing the mission and programs of the think tank, mobilizing the financial and human resources necessary to fulfill the mission and monitoring the quality, independence and impact of the think tank;

The quality and reputation of the think tank's staff. Ability to assemble a critical mass of highly skilled, experienced and productive scholars and analysts who are recognized as either emerging or established experts in their respective area of research;

The quality and reputation of the research and analysis produced. The ability to produce high quality, rigorous, policy oriented research that is accessible to policymakers, media and the public;

Ability to recruit and retain elite scholars and analysts;

Academic performance and reputation. This involves the academic rigor associated with the research conducted. This includes formal accreditation of a think tank's scholars and analysts, the number and type of scholarly publications produced such as: books, journals and conference papers and the number of presentations delivered at scholarly and other professional meeting and the number and type of citations of the think tanks scholars' research in scholarly publications produced by other scholars;

The quality, number, and reach of its publications;

The impact of a think-tank's research and programs on policymakers and other policy actors. Policy recommendations considered or actually adopted by policymakers, civil society or policy actors;

Reputation with policymakers (name recognition associated with specific issues or programs, number of briefings and official appointments, number of policy briefs and white papers produced, legislative testimony delivered);

A demonstrated commitment to producing independent research and analysis. This involves standards and policies for producing rigorous evidence based research and

analysis that are posted and monitored by the organization, research teams and individual researchers. This includes disclosure of conflict of interest (financial, institutional or personal) and a commitment to nonpartisanship and established professional standards for research in the social sciences;

Access to key institutions. The ability to reach and connect with key audiences and personnel such as government officials (elected and appointed), civil society, traditional and new media, and academia;

Ability to convene key policy actors and to develop effective networks and partnerships with other think tanks and policy actors;

Overall output of the organization (policy proposals, web visits, briefings, publications, interviews, conferences, staff nominated to official posts);

Utilization of research, policy proposal and other products. The effective transmission and utilization of policy briefs, reports, policy recommendations and other products by policymakers and the policy community, number of current and former staff serving in advisory roles to policymakers, advisory commissions, etc., awards given to scholars for scholarly achievement or public service;

Usefulness of organization's information in public engagement, advocacy work, preparing legislation or testimony, preparing academic papers or presentations, conducting research or teaching;

Ability to use electronic, print and the new media to communicate research and reach key audiences;

Media reputation (number of media appearances, interviews and citations);

Ability to use the Internet including social media tools, to engage with policymakers, journalists and the public;

Web Site and Digital presence. The quality, accessibility, effective maintenance of the organization's web presence, as well as, the quality and level of digital traffic and engagement (quality, accessibility and navigability of web site, number of website visitors, page views, time spent on pages, "likes" or followers);

Level, diversity and stability of funding. The ability of an organization to mobilize the necessary financial resources to support and sustain the think tank over time (endowment, membership fees, annual donations, government and private contracts, earned income);

Effective management and allocation of financial and human resources. The ability of a think tank to effectively manage its money and people so that they produce high quality outputs that achieve maximum impact;

Ability of the organization to effectively fulfill the terms of the gifts, grants and contracts from government(s), individuals, corporations and foundations who have provided the financial support to the think tank (financial stewardship);

The organization's ability to produce new knowledge, innovative policy proposals or alternative ideas on policy;

Ability to bridge the gap between the academic and policymaking communities;

Ability to bridge the gap between policymakers and the public;

Ability to include new voices in the policymaking process;

Ability of organization to be inscribed within issue and policy networks;

Success in challenging the traditional wisdom of policymakers and in generating innovative policy ideas and programs; and,

The impact on society. Direct relationship between the organization's efforts in a particular area to a positive change in societal values such as significant changes in the quality of life within respective country (amounts of goods and services available to citizens, state of physical and mental health, quality of environment, quality of political rights, access to institutions).

## **Think Tank Impact Assessment Tool**

Clearly, assessing the impact of think tanks is not an easy endeavor to undertake given the various and conflicting actors, events, and politics involved in the policy making process. Despite the significant challenges in establishing a causal relationship between knowledge and policy, it is necessary for think tanks to understand and effectively respond to the growing chorus of questions being raised by donors, journalists, and the public about the role and influence of think tanks in civil societies and governments around the world.

Think tanks can employ a variety of metrics to assess their impact, including such measures as an increase in research and analysis they produce as well as to account for their contributions to the policymaking environment and civil society. McGann's recent (2008) research has focused on developing a comprehensive assessment tool for evaluating a think tank's impact. The impetus for this research, in part, was the apparent confusion that exists about the differences between outputs and impacts. In various studies and surveys that McGann has conducted over the years, researchers and think tanks responded curiously when asked about impact on public policy and how they measure it. The overwhelming response was to provide a list of research outputs (number of books published, conference held, web hits, media appearances, etc.). Outputs, however, are not the only way to measure impact.

The metric provided below is designed to serve as a catalyst for a discussion on how to effectively measure the impact of think tanks. It is provided here as background for the think tank ranking process in the hopes that it will help clarify the distinction between outputs and impacts. We ask that you consider the following indicators when contemplating the impact of think tanks:

***Resource indicators:*** Ability to recruit and retain leading scholars and analysts; the level, quality, and stability of financial support; proximity and access to decision-makers and other policy elites; a staff with the ability to conduct rigorous research and produce timely and incisive analysis; institutional currency; quality and reliability of networks; and key contacts in the policy academic communities, and the media.

***Utilization indicators:*** Reputation as a “go-to” organization by media and policy elites in the country; quantity and quality of media appearances and citations, web hits, testimony before legislative and executive bodies; briefings, official appointments, consultation by officials or departments/agencies; books sold; reports distributed; references made to research and analysis in scholarly and popular publications and attendees at conferences and seminars organized.

***Output indicators:*** Number and quality of: policy proposals and ideas generated; publications produced (books, journal articles, policy briefs, etc.); news interviews conducted; briefings, conferences, and seminars organized; and staff who are nominated to advisory and government posts.

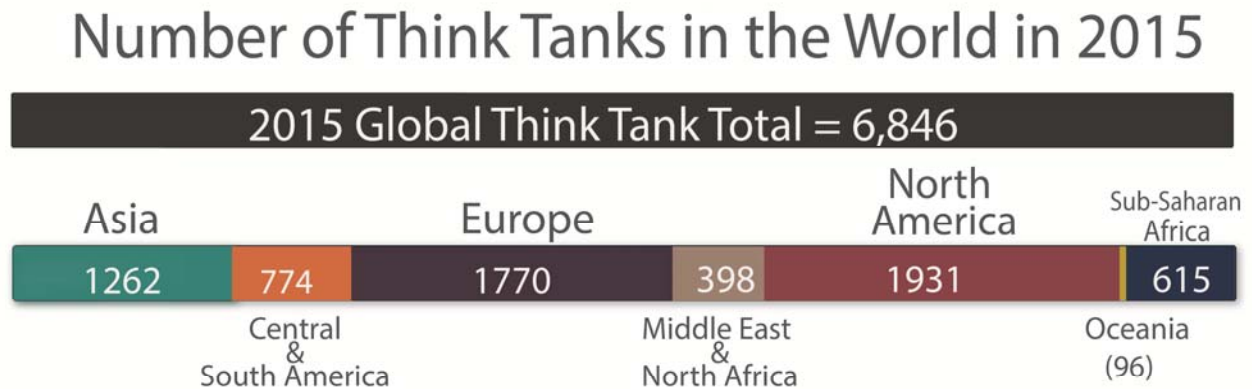
***Impact indicators:*** Recommendations considered or adopted by policymakers and civil society organizations; issue network centrality; advisory role to political parties, candidates, transition teams; awards granted; publication in or citation of publications in academic journals, public testimony and the media that influences the policy debate and decision-making; listserv and web site dominance; and success in challenging the conventional wisdom and standard operating procedures of bureaucrats and elected officials in the country.

Beyond this qualitative assessment, an effective evaluation of impact should also involve NGOs, as well as members of the government and policymakers, to ascertain the degree to which they have utilized the grantee’s research output. This participation can be obtained through interviews, surveys, questionnaires, and focus group meetings, utilizing the Outcome Mapping which “moves away from assessing the products of an activity or a program to focus on changes in behaviors and relationships (outcomes) which can lead to changes.” Impact can be viewed as positive if it “changes the behavior, relationships, activities, or actions of the people, groups, and organizations with whom a program works directly.”

Although this qualitative assessment is essential because it recognizes that policy impact can be successfully achieved even if policy prescriptions are not directly translated into actual policy, we recommend that this assessment should be translated into numerical rankings, thereby allowing comparisons with baseline data for effective monitoring and evaluation in the future.

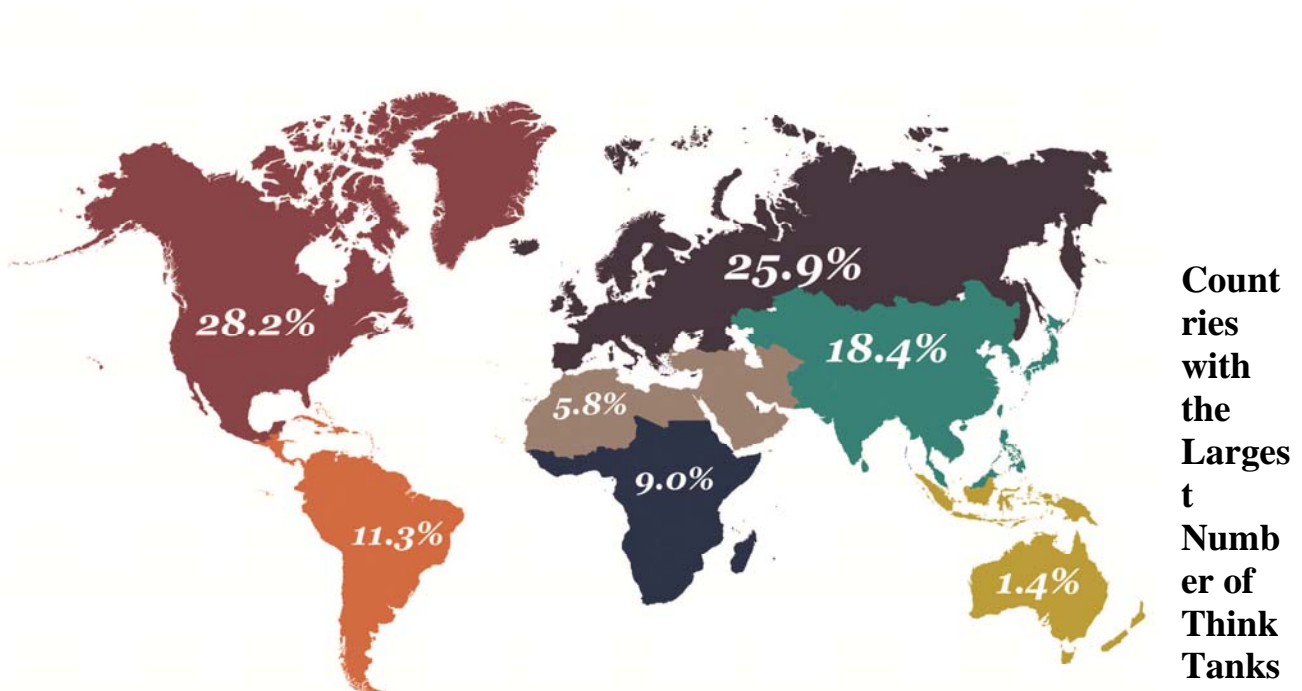
## 2015 Think Tank Statistics

### Number of Think Tanks in the World in 2015



This chart reflects the number of think tanks in 2015 based on data collected as of December, 2015.

### Global Distribution of Think Tanks by Region



Rank	Country	Number of Think Tanks
1	United States	1835
2	China	435
3	United Kingdom	288
4	India	280
5	Germany	195
6	France	180
7	Argentina	138
8	Russia	122
9	Japan	109
10	Canada	99
11	Italy	97
12	Brazil	89
13	South Africa	86
14	Sweden	77
15	Switzerland	73
16	Australia	63
17	Mexico	61
18	Iran	59
19	Bolivia	59
20	Israel	58
21	Netherlands	58
22	Spain	55
23	Romania	54
24	Kenya	53
25	Belgium	53

Global Distribution of Think Tanks by Country

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA		ASIA		CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE		WESTERN EUROPE	
Angola	4	Afghanistan	6	Albania	14	Andorra	2
Benin	15	Armenia	14	Belarus	21	Austria	40
Botswana	13	Azerbaijan	13	Bosnia and Herzegovina	14	Belgium	53
Burkina Faso	16	Bangladesh	35	Bulgaria	35	Denmark	41
Burundi	5	Bhutan	9	Croatia	11	France	180
Cameroon	21	Brunei	1	Czech Republic	27	Germany	195
Cape Verde	2	Cambodia	10	Estonia	17	Greece	35
Central African Republic	2	China	435	Finland	28	Iceland	7
Chad	3	Georgia	14	Hungary	42	Ireland	14
Congo	3	Hong Kong	30	Kosovo	3	Italy	97
Congo, Democratic Republic of	7	India	280	Latvia	11	Liechtenstein	2
Cote d'Ivoire	12	Indonesia	27	Lithuania	19	Luxembourg	6
Eritrea	5	Japan	109	Macedonia	18	Malta	4
Ethiopia	25	Kazakhstan	8	Moldova	9	Monaco	2
Gabon	2	Kyrgyzstan	10	Montenegro	4	Netherlands	58
Gambia	6	Laos	3	Poland	42	Norway	15
Ghana	37	Macao	1	Romania	54	Portugal	21
Guinea	2	Malaysia	18	Russia	122	San Marino	1
Guinea-Bissau	1	Maldives	6	Serbia	24	Spain	55
Kenya	53	Mongolia	7	Slovakia	18	Sweden	77
Lesotho	4	Nepal	12	Slovenia	19	Switzerland	73
Liberia	3	North Korea	2	Ukraine	47	United Kingdom	288
Madagascar	5	Pakistan	20			Vatican City	1
Malawi	15	Philippines	21				
Mali	12	Singapore	12				
Mauritania	2	South Korea	35				
Mauritius	8	Sri Lanka	14				
Mozambique	4	Taiwan	52				
Namibia	15	Tajikistan	7				
Niger	4	Thailand	8				
Nigeria	48	Turkmenistan	1				
Rwanda	7	Uzbekistan	8				
Senegal	16	Vietnam	10				
Seychelles	3						
Sierra Leone	1						
Somalia	6						
South Africa	86						
South Sudan	5						
Swaziland	4						
Tanzania	15						
Togo	4						
Uganda	28						
Zambia	13						
Zimbabwe	26						



<b>CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA</b>		<b>MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA</b>		<b>NORTH AMERICA</b>		<b>OCEANIA</b>	
Anguilla	1	Algeria	9	Canada	99	Australia	63
Antigua and Barbuda	2	Bahrain	4	Mexico	61	Fiji	1
Argentina	138	Cyprus	6	United States	1835	New Zealand	5
Aruba	1	Egypt	35			Papua New Guinea	1
Bahamas	2	Iran	59			Samoa	1
Barbados	9	Iraq	31			Vanuatu	1
Belize	4	Israel	58				
Bermuda	3	Jordan	21				
Bolivia	59	Kuwait	14				
Brazil	89	Lebanon	19				
British Virgin Islands	1	Libya	2				
Cayman Islands	1	Morocco	15				
Chile	44	Oman	3				
Colombia	40	Palestine	28				
Costa Rica	37	Qatar	7				
Cuba	19	Saudi Arabia	4				
Dominica	3	Sudan	5				
Dominican Republic	31	Syria	6				
Ecuador	18	Tunisia	18				
El Salvador	13	Turkey	32				
French Guiana	1	United Arab Emirates	7				
Grenada	1	Yemen	22				
Guadeloupe	5						
Guatemala	12						
Guyana	4						
Haiti	2						
Honduras	9						
Jamaica	6						
Martinique	2						
Montserrat	1						
Nicaragua	10						
Panama	12						
Paraguay	27						
Peru	33						
Puerto Rico	6						
St. Kitts and Nevis	1						
St. Lucia	3						
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	1						
Suriname	3						
Trinidad and Tobago	12						
Turks and Caicos Islands	1						
United States Virgin Islands	1						
Uruguay	21						
Venezuela	20						

## U.S. Think Tanks by State

State	Number of Think Tanks
D.C.	397
Massachusetts	177
California	169
New York	144
Virginia	105
Illinois	62
Maryland	50
Texas	47
Connecticut	44
Pennsylvania	42
New Jersey	36
Colorado	31
Florida	31
Michigan	31
Georgia	29
Ohio	25
Minnesota	23
North Carolina	23
Washington	23
Wisconsin	22
Arizona	21
Indiana	21
Maine	21
Rhode Island	20
Tennessee	19
Missouri	18
Alabama	16
Kansas	17
Oregon	16
New Hampshire	13
Hawaii	12
Kentucky	11
Oklahoma	11
Iowa	10
Louisiana	10
Mississippi	10

Arkansas	8
Montana	8
Nebraska	7
New Mexico	7
Utah	7
South Carolina	6
West Virginia	6
South Dakota	5
Vermont	5
Idaho	4
Nevada	4
North Dakota	4
Alaska	3
Delaware	3
Total	1835

## **2015 Ranking Categories**

### **Top Think Tanks in the World**

- Think Tank of the Year 2015 – Top Think Tank in the World
- Top Think Tanks Worldwide – (Non-U.S.)
- Top Think Tanks Worldwide – (U.S. and non-U.S.)

### **Top Think Tanks by Region**

- Top Think Tanks in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Top Think Tanks in Canada and Mexico
- Top Think Tanks in Central and South America
- Top Think Tanks in the United States
- Top Think Tanks in Central Asia
- Top Think Tanks in China, India, Japan, and the Republic of Korea
- Top Think Tanks in Southeast Asia and the Pacific
- Top Think Tanks in Central and Eastern Europe
- Top Think Tanks in Western Europe
- Top Think Tanks in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

### **Top Think Tanks by Area of Research**

- Top Defense and National Security Think Tanks
- Top Domestic Economic Policy Think Tanks
- Top Education Policy Think Tanks
- Top Energy and Resource Policy Think Tanks
- Top Environment Think Tanks
- Top Foreign Policy and International Affairs Think Tanks
- Top Domestic Health Policy Think Tanks
- Top Global Health Policy Think Tanks
- Top International Development Think Tanks
- Top International Economic Policy Think Tanks
- Top Science and Technology Think Tanks
- Top Social Policy Think Tanks
- Top Transparency and Good Governance Think Tanks

### **Top Think Tanks by Special Achievement**

- Best Advocacy Campaign
- Best For-Profit Think Tanks
- Best Government Affiliated Think Tanks
- Best Institutional Collaboration Involving Two or More Think Tanks
- Best Managed Think Tank
- Best New Idea or Paradigm Developed by a Think Tank
- Best New Think Tanks (Unranked)
- Best Independent Think Tank
- Best Policy Study/Report Produced by a Think Tank 2014-2015

Best Think Tank Conference  
Best Think Tank Network  
Best Think Tanks with Political Party Affiliation  
Best Transdisciplinary Research Program at a Think Tank  
Best University Affiliated Think Tanks  
Best Use of Social Networks  
Think Tank to Watch  
Think Tanks with the Best External Relations/Public Engagement Programs  
Think Tanks with the Best Use of the Internet  
Think Tanks with the Best Use of the Media (Print or Electronic)  
Think Tanks with the Most Innovative Policy Ideas/Proposals  
Think Tanks with the Most Significant Impact on Public Policy  
Think Tanks with Outstanding Policy-Oriented Public Programs  
Top Think Tanks with Annual Operating Budgets of Less Than \$5 Million USD  
Best Regional Studies Policy Research Think Tank (University Affiliated)  
Best Regional Studies Policy Research Center (Free Standing, Not University Affiliated)  
Think Tank with the Best Practices (Policies and Procedures) to Assure the Quality, Independence and Integrity of its Policy Research

## *2015 Categorical Definitions*

### *By Region*

**Top Think Tanks in Sub-Saharan Africa:** This category is dedicated to the leading institutions in the region south of the Sahara desert. The term is used to contrast the countries that are included in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) category. Sudan, although geographically located south of the Sahara desert, it is not considered a Sub-Saharan country. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top Think Tanks in Central and South America:** This category is dedicated to the leading institutions in the Central and South part of the American continent, including the Caribbean states. The definition excludes the three North American countries of Canada, Mexico and the United States. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top Think Tanks in the United States:** This category is dedicated to the leading institutions in the United States of America. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in the United States.

**Top Think Tanks in Asia:** This category is dedicated to the leading institutions in Central Asia and the Caucasus region, namely Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Russia, although possesses territory in Central Asia, is not considered part of the region for this definition. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top Think Tanks in China, India, Japan and the Republic of Korea:** The Asia category underwent revisions in order to prevent the group's total domination by China, India, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. As such, we divided a single category for "Top Think Tanks in China, India, Japan, and the Republic of Korea".

**Top Think Tanks in Southeast Asia and the Pacific:** This category includes think tanks in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Macao, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.

**Top Think Tanks in Central and Eastern Europe:** Russia presents perhaps the thorniest case of all, since geographically it could conceivably belong to the Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Asia and the Pacific categories. In order to avoid confusion and to respect the fact that the majority of Russian think tanks lie in the extreme west of the country, Russia will remain in the Central and Eastern Europe category.

The Central and Eastern Europe category will include Russian think tanks and also think tanks from those countries that lie between Turkey and Russia in the east and Sweden, Germany, Austria, and Italy in the west. So this category included think tank in Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine.

**Top Think Tanks in Western Europe:** This category included think tanks in Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and Vatican City.

### ***By Area of Research***

**Top Transparency and Good Governance Think Tanks:** Transparency is a feature that marks the independency of think tanks. There are phantom NGOs and think tanks that actually serve the interest of government or specific individuals and corporations that establish them. Special relationship does exist between funders and thinks tanks that derail the independency and neutral value we believe think tanks should have.

**Top Defense and National Security Think Tanks:** This category is dedicated to the leading defense and national security institutions of the global community. The top think tanks in this category provide superior innovative research and strategic analyses of national security, military and defense policies. These institutions not only strive in developing comprehensive policy initiatives for commercial and government clients but also offer informative publications readily available to the public. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top Domestic Economic Policy Think Tanks:** This category is dedicated to the leading domestic economic policy think tanks of the global community. The top think tanks in this category provide superior innovative research and strategic analyses of domestic economic policy which covers a wide range of topics such as: the money supply and interest rates, macro and microeconomics, trade and investments and various other economic areas the government influences. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top Education Policy Think Tanks:** This category is dedicated to the leading education policy institutions of the global community. The top think tanks in this category provide superior innovative research and strategic analyses regarding educational issues to policy makers and the public. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top Energy and Resource Policy Think Tanks:** This category is dedicated to the leading energy and resource policy institutions of the global community. The top think tanks in this category provide superior innovative research and strategic analyses on a wide set of issues such as: energy development, production, distribution and various resource and energy issues significant to the global community. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top Environment Think Tanks:** This category is dedicated to the leading environmental policy institutions of the global community. The top think tanks in this category provide superior innovative research and strategic analyses on various environmental issues that are of significance on a global level. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top Foreign Policy and International Affairs Think Tanks:** This category is dedicated to the leading foreign policy and international affairs institutions of the global community. The top think tanks in this category provide superior innovative research and strategic analyses pertaining to world affairs, security, political and economic policy on a domestic and international level. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top Domestic Health Policy Think Tanks:** This category is dedicated to the leading domestic health policy institutions of the global community. The top think tanks in this category provide superior innovative research and strategic analyses on topics related to domestic health services and goals within the specific country. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top Global Health Policy Think Tanks:** This category is dedicated to the leading global health policy institutions of the global community. The top think tanks in this category provide superior innovative research and strategic analyses on topics related to the health issues and challenges the global community faces. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public



engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top International Development Think Tanks:** This category is dedicated to the leading international development institutions within the global community. The top think tanks in this category provide superior innovative research and strategic analyses on developmental challenges and issues facing the international community, such as: agricultural, growth, poverty, inequality, humanitarian and various other topics related to development. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top International Economic Policy Think Tanks:** This category is dedicated to the leading international economic policy institutions within the global community. The top think tanks in this category provide superior innovative research and strategic analyses on topics pertaining international economic policy, such as: globalization, international finance, trade, investment, development and various other topics relevant to global economics. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top Science and Technology Think Tanks:** This category is dedicated to the leading science and technology institutions within the global community. The top think tanks in this category provide superior innovative research and strategic analyses on topics ranging from innovation and telecommunications to energy, climate and life sciences. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

**Top Social Policy Think Tanks:** This category is dedicated to the leading social policy institutions of the global community. The top think tanks in this category provide superior innovative research and strategic analyses on topic pertaining to social issues and challenges such as: crime and justice, immigration, poverty, welfare of states and various other topics relevant to social policy. These think tanks excel in research, analysis and public engagement on a wide range of policy issues with the aim of advancing debate, facilitating cooperation between relevant actors, maintaining public support and funding, and improving the overall quality of life in one of the relevant countries.

### ***By Special Achievement***

**Best Advocacy Campaign:** Advocacy campaigns are groups of activities or actions that convey the ideas and believes of the organizations to the public. That being said, advocacy types of think tanks tend to take strong positions on particular policy issues, which may potentially derail the institute's objectivity and consistent value. As a continuum of structure and functions, Advocacy think tanks mirror to public lobbies and interest groups.

**Best For-Profit Think Tanks:** Also known as corporate think tank tanks, for-profit think tanks are research organizations that operate as for profit businesses. In most cases, they are affiliated with a corporation that operates on a for-profit basis. As most think tanks may show structural similarities with organizational siblings, for-profit think tanks are mostly close to government research organizations.

**Best Government Affiliated Think Tanks:** Government Affiliated Think Tanks are those that situate in the government and are considered as a part of the government body. Think tanks honored in this category are recognized for outstanding policy research.

**Best Institutional Collaboration Involving Two or More Think Tanks:** Institution that is able to network, mobilize and collaborate with two or more think tanks to produce a modest yet achievable set of global public goods.

**Best Managed Think Tank:** A well-managed think tank should have institutional-level decision being widely spread among key staff such as organization head, directors and senior fellows to make sure the information is transparent and shared. Also, upward communication from staff to directors during regular meeting is also important, which ensures mutual understanding and common value are identified within the think tank. Nonetheless, the ability to attract senior analysts in completing organization mission and to provide training plans and workshops that keep the continuum of human capital development are key criteria to reflect organizational control over human resource.

**Best New Idea or Paradigm Developed by a Think Tank:** The main issue for organizational paradigm is its ability to define the structural design that is appropriate to the fulfillment of functional needs. New Idea and paradigm are ones with solid framework, ways of thinking and methodologies that are specifically developed to meet institutions goals and concerns.

### **Best New Think Tanks**

**Best Policy Study/Report Produced by a Think Tank 2014-2015:** Quality study/ reports that are able to meet the need of rigorous, policy oriented research and are accessible to policymakers, media and the public.

**Best Think Tank Conference:** A quality conference should be able to bring all together the academics, practitioners and policymakers to evaluate and examine global challenges such as financial risks, sustainability, inequality in the future as a whole.

**Best Think Tank Network:** Working through network is a deciding factor for think tank to reach their goals. The ability to expand, mobilize and nurture network efficiently in an environment where organizations are closely entwined with each other helps to generate momentum for think tanks. Though some think tanks may need more secrecy within networks while others don't based on their goal and focus, networking has made the total greater than the sum of all individuals in a comprehensive environment.

**Best Think Tanks with Political Party Affiliation:** Think tanks that are formally affiliated with a political party and ideology. In the US, they are mostly categorized into Democrats and Republicans and Independents. As aggregate data from 2014 shows, 39% identify as

independents, 32% as Democrats and 23% as Republicans.

**Best Trans-disciplinary Research Program at a Think Tank:** Trans-disciplinary research is a research method in which wide ranges of scholars work jointly with stakeholders. It aims at overcoming the production and demand of knowledge to contribute to solutions of social problems. In other words, it combines scholars of various disciplines together to form new conceptual, theoretical, methodological and translational innovations that move beyond discipline-specific approaches to address a common problem.

**Think Tank to Watch:** Think tanks in this category are honored for their excellent research advances within the past 24 months.

**Think Tanks with the Most Significant Impact on Public Policy:** Public Policy is the means by which a government maintains order or addresses the needs of its citizens, through actions defined by its constitution. Public policy is a term used to describe a collection of laws, mandates, or regulations established through a political process. Think tanks honored in this category produce research that is impactful and evident in Public Policy.

**Top Think Tanks with Annual Operating Budgets of Less Than \$5 Million USD:** Think tanks in this category are honored for outstanding research practices and significant research output while operating on a budgets of less than \$5 Million USD.

**Best Think Tank with the Best Practices (Policies and Procedures) to Assure the Quality, Independence and Integrity of its Policy Research:** Think tanks honored in this category adhere and uphold moral and ethical righteousness in their research practices.

**Best Regional Studies Policy Research Think Tank (University Affiliated):** A university-affiliated think tank is a research center dedicated to public policy analysis with the support of a major university, though the degree of this support fluctuates. These think tanks are often part of a specialized school of a university. Alumni networks often function as sources for key contacts in the policymaking community. The degree of affiliation between think tanks and their respective universities can be measured by analyzing the overlap of certain factors. Most are comprised of professors, researchers and fellows hailing from their respective universities, but may also include visiting scholars and visiting fellows. They involve student research through research fellowships and internships, as well as undergraduate and graduate programs. While some of these think tanks rely on facilities and staff of their respective universities to conduct research, the majority of them determine the research to be conducted independently. Most of these think tanks raise funds specific to their research through grants from individuals, foundations, organizations and governments, while they may also receive financial support from their respective university. Buildings housing these think tanks tend to be located on their respective universities' campuses. They also have access to other university facilities, such as libraries and research labs, and many of the organizations also have facilities in additional locations.

**Best Regional Studies Policy Research Center (Free-Standing, Not University Affiliated):** Think Tanks honored in this category are independent of government or university affiliation, and are self-governing institutions. These institutions are autonomous and produce quality

research that is objective and unbiased.

## **2015 Global Go To Rankings Results**

In advance of presenting this year's results, I would like to stress that the inclusion of an institution in the universe of leading think tanks does not indicate a seal of approval or endorsement of the institution, its publications, or its programs on the part of the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program. Likewise, a failure to be nominated does not necessarily indicate a lack of quality and effectiveness or poor performance. There are 6,486 think tanks that are doing exceptional work to help bridge the gap between knowledge and policy. This report is no more than an effort to highlight some of the leading think tanks worldwide.

With that, it gives me great satisfaction and pleasure to present the results of the 2015 rankings process below.



## Appendices

### **APPENDIX A: 2015 Feedback on to the 2014 Go To Think Tank Survey and Call for Nominations for Expert Panelists**

February 5, 2015

February 12, 2015 (Follow up)

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

As you may know, TTCSP launched the 2014 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report on January 22, 2015 with a series of public policy programs in 60 cities and 50 countries that explored the critical role think tanks play in governments and civil societies around the world. These programs were collaborative efforts involving over 100 think tanks, intergovernmental organizations, journalists, policymakers and policy oriented nongovernmental organizations.

We are seeking your feedback on the 2014 Global Go To Index Report and your recommendations for Expert Panel members for the 2015 Global Go To Index. Your input would be greatly appreciated by March, 1, 2015.

Here is a link to the Go To Feedback and Nominations survey: [SurveyLink]

If you have not yet received a hard copy of the 2014 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report you can use this link to download a copy:

[http://repository.upenn.edu/think\\_tanks/8/](http://repository.upenn.edu/think_tanks/8/)

We are pleased to report that the Global Go To Index Report was downloaded over 33,000 times from January 22-31, 2015. Thanks to our global partners, the 2014 Go To Report has been translated into 20 languages.

As we turn our attention to the 2015 edition of the Go To Index, we would like your feedback on the process and the methodology employed over the past several years. The methodology and Go To Index Criteria can be found on pages 41-52 of the Go To Report. As outlined in the Report, we are continually trying to improve the quality, accuracy and integrity of the Index. With this in mind, this invitation is being sent to the over 20,000 peers and experts who have joined the TTCSP Global Go To listserv.

We are also seeking nominations for qualified individuals at this time to serve on the Expert Panels for the 2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index.

The Expert Panels (EP) will be comprised of distinguished individuals from around the world

who are policymakers, public and private donors, journalists, former think tank executives and academics.

The Expert Panelist (EP) members should have an in-depth knowledge of national and regional think tanks and/or be a functional area expert in the research areas covered by the think tanks index (see list below).

Expert Panelists will help with the nominations and rankings process for the 2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index. The role of the Expert Panelists is to provide quality assurance for the rankings process. Nominations can be made below in the following categories:

1. Regional Expert Panels

- a. United States
- b. Canada, Mexico, and Caribbean
- c. South and Central America
- d. Middle East and North Africa
- e. Sub-Saharan Africa
- f. Western Europe
- g. Central and Eastern Europe
- h. South Asia and the Pacific
- i. China, India, Korea and Japan
- j. Central Asia

2. Functional Research Area Expert Panels

- a. International Development
- b. Environment Policy
- c. Foreign Policy and International Affairs
- d. Defense and Security Policy
- e. Domestic Economic Policy
- f. International Economic Policy
- g. Social Policy
- h. Science and Technology
- i. Transparency and Good Governance
- j. Energy and Resource Policy
- k. Education Policy
- l. National Health Policy
- m. Global Health Policy

Thanks in advance for your comments and suggestions, we value them and will do our best incorporate them into next year's index!

Please note: If you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list: [RemoveLink]

Thanks again for your continued interest in our research.

Jim McGann

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Lauder Institute: [www.lauder.wharton.upenn.edu](http://www.lauder.wharton.upenn.edu) Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program  
[www.gotothinktank.com](http://www.gotothinktank.com)

## **APPENDIX B: Call for Nominations: 2015 Global Go to Think Tank Index**

*Email to over 21,500 individuals and Organizations in over 200 countries*

*Call for Nominations sent on: August 1, 2015*

*1<sup>st</sup> Reminder sent on: September 1, 2015*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Reminder sent on: September 30, 2015*

*3<sup>rd</sup> and final Reminder sent on: October 16, 2015*

*Nominations Round I closed on: October 31, 2015*

*August 1, 2015*

*Greetings Colleagues and Friends:*

*I writing to announce the call for nominations 2015 Global Go-To Think Tank Report.*

*Please submit your nominations on or before September 30, 2014, by using the following survey link provided below.*

*There are a few changes to this year's Go To Think Tank Index. We have added the three new categories:*

- 1. Best Regional Studies Policy Resesarch Think Tank (university affiliated),*
- 2. Best Regional Studies Policy Research Center (free standing (not university affiliated)*
- 3. Think Tank with the Best Practices (policies and procedures) to Assure the Quality, Independence and Integrity of its Policy Research.*

*The annual global ranking of think tanks is conducted with the help of volunteer research interns and without the benefit of funding from any source.*

*The schedule for the 2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index is as follows:*

*Round I (Think Tank Nominations August 1 - September 30, 2015)*

*Round II (Think Tank Ranking October 1 - October 30, 2015)*

*Round III (Expert Panel Review November - December 2015)*

*2015 Global Go To Think Tanks Index Published January 30, 2016*

*You can make up to 5 nominations per category. Please note that all nominations you make will be kept strictly confidential. No self-nominations will be considered. Please submit your responses no later than September 30, 2014.*

*Please note that if you do not wish to receive further emails from us, click the link below, and you will automatically be removed from our mailing list by using this link:*

*Thanks for helping us increase the profile and performance of think tanks around the world.*

*All the best, Jim McGann*

*James G. McGann, Ph.D.*

*Senior Lecturer, International Studies*

*Director, Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program*

*Lauder Institute*

*Wharton School and School of Arts and Sciences*

*University of Pennsylvania*

*212 Lauder-Fischer Hall*

*256 South 37th St.*

*Philadelphia, PA 19104*



## **APPENDIX C: Email Inviting Peers and Expert Panelists to Rank 2015 Nominated Institutions**

*Email to over 21,500 individuals and Organizations in over 200 countries*

*Call for Nominations sent on: August 1, 2015*

*1<sup>st</sup> Reminder sent on: September 1, 2015*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Reminder sent on: September 30, 2015*

*3<sup>rd</sup> and final Reminder sent on: October 16, 2015*

*Nominations Round I closed on: October 31, 2015*

Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program  
Lauder Institute of Management & International Studies  
Lauder-Fisher Hall Room 101  
University of Pennsylvania  
PHILADELPHIA, PA, USA 19104-6330

*October 16, 2015*

*Dear Colleagues and Friends:*

*The ranking process for the 2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index will commence next week. The ranking process will take place over the course of 30 days and we encourage you to participate in the process. Over 2500 journalists, policymakers, academics and think from 143 countries submitted close to 50,000 nominations for the top think tanks in the world. Thanks to those of you who submitted nominations.*

*Please mark your calendars for the 2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index Launch and “Why Think Tanks Matter” events which will take place at the World Bank on the afternoon of January 26, 2016, at the University of Pennsylvania on the morning of January 27th, at the United Nations on the afternoon of January 27th. The Launch will also be celebrated in 75 global cities and is designed to connect the global community of think tanks that spans disciplines, politics and physical boundaries. Each one of these events will focus on the important role think tanks play in governments and civil societies around the world.*

*We are excited to announce that TTCSP has made publicly available the following documents and projects:*

- The Go To Think Tank Indices from 2009-2014 at: [http://repository.upenn.edu/think\\_tanks/](http://repository.upenn.edu/think_tanks/)*
- TTCSP Global and Regional Think Tank Summit Reports from 2012-2015 at: [http://repository.upenn.edu/ttcsp\\_summitreports/](http://repository.upenn.edu/ttcsp_summitreports/)*
- About Think Tanks: The Mission and Impact of the World's Leading Think Tanks*

at: <http://repository.upenn.edu/aboutthinktanks/>

*One of the recommendations that emerged from the G20 Foreign Policy Think Tank Summit in June of 2012 was a strong interest in developing an online platform that would enable the continual exchange of ideas and facilitate collaborative efforts among think tanks around the world. The underlying objective of this recommendation was to increase the profile and performance of think tanks by sharing the best practices for think tank research, management, resource mobilization and external relations of the leading think tanks in the world.*

*As the first step in a larger initiative to advance conversation between policy research, analysis and engagement institutions, the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program has created an online repository featuring the organizational profiles of the world's top think tanks. The profiles are in the form of power point presentations and can be viewed here: <http://repository.upenn.edu/aboutthinktanks/>.*

*If you would like your think tank's institutional profile to be featured please email [fskingsbury@gmail.com](mailto:fskingsbury@gmail.com) for the guidelines.*

*Finally, provided below is a link to feature article I wrote for the Washington Post on the challenges and opportunities facing think tank in the US and around the world (see links below). You are free to post and circulate these two articles. I encourage you to share your reactions and feedback with me.*

*<http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/in-theory/wp/2015/10/06/for-think-tanks-its-either-innovate-or-die/>*

*<http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/in-theory/wp/2015/10/05/are-think-tanks-obsolete/?postshare=981444164532437>*

*Thanks for your help us increase the profile, performance and impact of think tanks around the world.*

*All the best, Jim McGann*

*The Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) is designed to increase the profile, capacity, and performance of think tanks at the national, regional, and global levels, so they can better serve policymakers and the public. TTCSP conducts research on the relationship between think tanks, politics, and public policy, produces the annual Global Go To Think Tank Index, develops capacity-building resources and programs, supports a global network of close to 7,000 think tanks, and trains future think tank scholars and executives.*

# Background on the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program

## Think Tank And Civil Societies Program

The Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) of the Lauder Institute at the University of Pennsylvania conducts research on the role policy institutes play in governments and civil societies around the world. Often referred to as the “think tanks’ think tank,” TTCSP examines the evolving role and character of public policy research organizations. Over the last 26 years, the TTCSP has developed and led a series of global initiatives that have helped bridge the gap between knowledge and policy in critical policy areas such as international peace and security, globalization and governance, international economics, environmental issues, information and society, poverty alleviation, and healthcare and global health. These international collaborative efforts are designed to establish regional and international networks of policy institutes and communities that improve policy making while strengthening democratic institutions and civil societies around the world.

The TTCSP works with leading scholars and practitioners from think tanks and universities in a variety of collaborative efforts and programs, and produces the annual Global Go To Think Tank Index that ranks the world’s leading think tanks in a variety of categories. This is achieved with the help of a panel of over 1,900 peer institutions and experts from the print and electronic media, academia, public and private donor institutions, and governments around the world. We have strong relationships with leading think tanks around the world, and our annual Think Tank Index is used by academics, journalists, donors and the public to locate and connect with the leading centers of public policy research around the world. Our goal is to increase the profile and performance of think tanks and raise the public awareness of the important role think tanks play in governments and civil societies around the globe.

Since its inception in 1989, the TTCSP has focused on collecting data and conducting research on think tank trends and the role think tanks play as civil society actors in the policymaking process. In 2007, the TTCSP developed and launched the global index of think tanks, which is designed to identify and recognize centers of excellence in all the major areas of public policy research and in every region of the world. To date TTCSP has provided technical assistance and capacity building programs in 81 countries. We are now working to create regional and global networks of think tanks in an effort to facilitate collaboration and the production of a modest yet achievable set of global public goods. Our goal is to create lasting institutional and state-level partnerships by engaging and mobilizing think tanks that have demonstrated their ability to produce high quality policy research and shape popular and elite opinion and actions for public good.

## **The Lauder Institute of Management and International Studies**

The Lauder Institute of Management and International Studies offers an MA in international studies, and conducts fundamental and policy-oriented research on current economic, political, and business issues. It organizes an annual conference that brings academics, practitioners and policymakers together to examine global challenges such as financial risks, sustainability, inequality, and the future of the state.

## **University of Pennsylvania**

The University of Pennsylvania (Penn) is an Ivy League school with highly selective admissions and a history of innovation in interdisciplinary education and scholarship. Its peer institutions are

Harvard, Stanford, Columbia, Brown, Dartmouth and the University of Chicago in the US and Oxford and Cambridge in the UK. A world-class research institution, Penn boasts a picturesque campus in the middle of Philadelphia, a dynamic city that is conveniently located between Washington, DC and New York, New York.

Penn was founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1740 to push the frontiers of knowledge and benefit society by integrating study in the liberal arts and sciences with opportunities for research and practical, pre-professional training at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Penn is committed to meeting the full demonstrated need of all undergraduates with grant-based financial aid, making this intellectually compelling integration of liberal and professional education accessible to talented students of all backgrounds and empowering them to make an impact on the world.

## **The Research Team**

### **Program Director**

James G. McGann, Ph.D., is a senior lecturer at the Lauder Institute of the Wharton School and the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania. He is also the director of the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) at the University of Pennsylvania. He conducts research on the trends and challenges facing think tanks and policymakers around the world and provides advice and technical assistance to think tanks, governments and public and private donors on how to improve the quality and impact of policy research. He is also a senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute, a think tank based in Philadelphia. Prior to coming to the University of Pennsylvania



Dr. McGann was an assistant professor of Political Science at Villanova University where he taught international relations, international organizations and international law. His current research interest include: assessing global trends in security and international affairs research; the

role of think tanks in shaping US domestic and foreign policy; think tanks and policy advice in the BRICS and G20 countries and transnational threats and global public policy. He is the creator and author of the annual Global Go To Think Tank Index which 6, think tanks in every region of the world.

Dr. McGann has served as a consultant and advisor to the World Bank; the United Nations; the United States Agency for International Development; the Soros, Rockefeller, MacArthur, Hewlett, and Gates foundations; the Carnegie Corporation; and foreign governments on the role of non-governmental, public policy, and public engagement organizations in the US and developing and transitional countries. He has served as the senior vice president for the Executive Council on Foreign Diplomats, the public policy program officer for the Pew Charitable Trusts, the assistant director of the Institute of Politics, John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He also served as a senior advisor to the Citizens' Network for Foreign Affairs and the Society for International Development.

Among Dr. McGann's publications are "Competition for Dollars, Scholars, and Influence in the Public Policy Research Industry" (University Press of America 1995); "The International Survey of Think Tanks" (Foreign Policy Research Institute 1999); "Think Tanks and Civil Societies: Catalyst for Ideas and Action", co-edited with Kent B. Weaver (Transaction Publishers 2000); "Comparative Think Tanks, Politics, and Public Policy" (Edward Elgar 2005); "Think Tanks and Policy Advice in the U.S.: Academics, Advisors, and Advocates" (Routledge 2007); "Global Trends and Transitions: 2007 Survey of Think Tanks" (Foreign Policy Research Institute 2008); "The 2007 Global Go to Think Tanks" (Foreign Policy Research Institute 2008); "Think Tank Index" (Foreign Policy Magazine 2009); "The 2008 Global Go to Think Tank Index" (IRP, University of Pennsylvania 2009); "Democratization and Market Reform: Think Tanks As Catalysts" (Routledge 2009), "Catalysts for Economic Growth and Development: The Role of Think Tanks in Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa" (CIPE 2009), "The 2009 Global Go to Think Tank Index" (University of Pennsylvania 2010), "Global Think Tanks, Policy Networks and Governance" (Routledge 2010), "The 2010 Global Go to Think Tank Index" (University of Pennsylvania 2011), "The 2011 Global Go to Think Tank Index" (University of Pennsylvania 2012), "Think Tanks and Global Policy Networks, chapter in edited volume, *International Organization and Global Governance*, (Routledge September 2013), "The 2012 Global Go to Think Tank Index" (University of Pennsylvania 2013), "Think Tanks and Social Development Policy: A Global Comparative Study" (Forthcoming, University of Pennsylvania Press 2013); "The Fifth Estate: Think Tanks and US Domestic and Foreign Policy" (Forthcoming 2013); "Think Tanks, Policy Advice and the Foreign Policy Challenges Facing Emerging Powers" (Forthcoming late 2014).

## **TTCSP Research Internship Program**

The **Think Tanks and Civil Society Program (TTCSP)** runs a highly selective internship program for students (grad and undergrad, domestic and international) who are interested in gaining first-hand experience in public policy research in domestic and international affairs.

Over 125 students from across the University of Pennsylvania and from area colleges and universities participated in the TTCSP Research Internship Program during the 2014-2015 academic year. 21 interns from the Program have been successfully placed in internships in the US and abroad in France, Argentina, Jordan, Brazil and Spain.



## **Think Tanks & Civil Societies Program**

**The Lauder Institute**

*The University of Pennsylvania*

***“Helping to bridge the gap between knowledge and policy”  
2014-2015 Milestones***

### **2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index**

The Global Go To Think Tank Index (GGTTI) has become the gold standard of excellence for think tanks around the world and is widely cited by donors, journals, think tanks and policymakers. More importantly, it has served to raise the profile and performance of think tanks. The 2015 GGTTI marked the 9<sup>th</sup> year of the publication of the Index report and with each year the ranking’s influence has grown. For the past several years, the Global Think Tank Index Report has been launched at the World Bank and United Nations in January. This year over 80 think tanks, intergovernmental organizations and civil society organizations simultaneously launched the Index in global cities around the world. Over 4,750 academics, policymakers, journalists and think tank scholars and executives participated in the annual indexing process. The 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the Global Go To Think Tank Index will be released on January 27, 2016.

### **Think Tank Regional and Global Summits**

Since June 2012, the TTCSP in cooperation with its regional partners has co-sponsored and organized 8 regional Think Tank Summits, 2 National Think Tank Summits (China and Korea) and 1 International Think Tank Summit. The purpose of these Summits is to engage think tanks in peer-to-peer dialogue, knowledge exchange, and capacity-building to help improve the image, profile and performance of think tanks in every region of the world.

In addition, we plan to demonstrate the efficacy of creating a global network that engages the leading think tanks in a peer-to-peer exchange of innovative policies and best practices for

research and public engagement on key domestic and international issues. The value of these Summits has been clearly demonstrated by the fact that all of the Summit partners and participants have agreed to partner with TTCSP to organize Summits on an annual basis.

A number of institutional partnerships between leading think tanks have been formed as a direct result of these Summits. Each Summit is expected to have an impact on the think tanks in each region with a set of action oriented recommendations. The Summits have helped facilitate regional and global partnerships and programs and the Summit recommendations demonstrate that each meeting is a “catalyst for ideas and action”.

**Think Tank Innovations Summit**, December 13-15, 2015 Philadelphia, PA

**MENA Summit**, February 24-26, 2016 Istanbul, Turkey

**India Think Tank Summit**, March 2016

**Africa Think Tank Summit**, April 4-6, 2016 Addis Abba, Ethiopia

**North America Think Tank Summit**, May 2016

**Asia Think Tank Summit**, June 2016, Seoul, Republic of Korea

**China Think Tank Summit**, July 2016

While the regional partner's contributions to the Summits vary, many serve as the hosts for the Summit and mobilize local and regional support for them. Often this involves providing in-country logistical support, the venue and significant in-kind support and a financial contribution.

The role of the TTCSP has been to convene the think tanks and to provide the conceptual framework for the Summits which is done in conjunction with our regional partners and based on the research, global think tank index and surveys conducted by the TTCSP.

### **TTCSP Think Tank Publications**

**Think Tanks Shape Social Development Policies (University of Pennsylvania Press 2014)**

We are pleased to announce the publication TTCSP book entitled, **How Think Tanks Shape Social Development Policies (June 2014)** which was funded by the New Venture Fund.

The book includes in-depth case studies involving 27 authors from 17 countries representing every region of the world. The contributors examine the case of innovative think tank aided strategies implemented in highly industrialized world powers including the United States and Russia, emerging countries such as China, India, Brazil, and Korea, and developing nations such as Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania.

This book was formally launched at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and the University of Pennsylvania Press in Washington, DC on June 18, 2014 with

over 200 think tanks, journalists, policymakers and policy oriented civil society organizations in attendance

### **International Organization and Global Governance (Routledge 2014)**

Edited by **Thomas G. Weiss** and **Rorden Wilkinson**

**Chapter 28** Think Tanks and Global Policy Networks, James McGann

This volume is the most comprehensive textbook available for those interested in international organization and global governance. Organized around a concern with how the world is and could be governed, the book offers:

in-depth and accessible coverage of the history and theories of international organization and global governance;

discussions of the full range of state, intergovernmental, and nonstate actors; and

examinations of key issues in all aspects of contemporary global governance.

The book's chapters are arranged into 7 parts and woven together by a comprehensive introduction to the field, separate section introductions designed to guide students and faculty, and helpful pointers to further reading. *International Organization and Global Governance* is a self-contained resource enabling readers to better comprehend the role of myriad actors in the governance of global life as well as to assemble the many pieces of the contemporary global governance puzzle.

### **Security Expertise: Practices, Power, and Responsibility (Forthcoming Routledge 2014)**

The PRIO New Security Studies Series at Routledge has agreed to publish an edited volume entitled, **Security Expertise: Practices, Power, and Responsibility**. Dr. McGann contributed a chapter on trends in security studies research in public policy research organizations, which is part of a larger book project described below.

According to Routledge, the book is the first of its kind on the market and therefore carries the promise of setting the agenda for studies in security expertise for the future. Dr. McGann is finishing a related book that explores the trend in think tanks and security studies away from traditional security issues (weapons systems and defense) to non-traditional threats (climate change, economic security, international political economy, etc.).

### **Books in Progress**

#### **Trends and Transitions in Traditional and Non-Traditional Security and International Affairs Research**

In the last 20 years there has been an apparent shift in the research and analysis foci of security-oriented research at security and international affairs think tanks around the world. We have identified, profiled and analyzed the data on 3,686 Security and International Affairs think tanks out a total universe of over 7500 think tanks worldwide. Our initial research confirmed that a shift has occurred and SIA think tanks are now almost entirely focused on non-traditional disciplines (economic security, environmental security, political security, human security, and



peace and conflict) and defense and security have research programs have diminished in size and scope.

The end of the Cold War and consequent trends in globalization, democratization and development have placed a premium on research and scholarship relating to the policy needs and concerns of an interconnected, rapidly developing world. As a result, the field of security studies, once dominated by “traditional” military and defense-related issues, has diversified greatly, resulting in greater emphasis on “non-traditional” issues, such as environmental, human, economic and political security. As the field of security and international affairs has grown, so too has the number and variety of think tanks all over the world devoted to this burgeoning discipline.

Our current research focuses on the when and how this transition took place and its implications for the fields of defense and security and foreign policy and international affairs.

The proposed book will examine the conditions that allow for and necessitate this shift in research priorities. The book will provide both global and regional analysis, as well as predictions and recommendations for the future. Additionally, drawing on both relevant data and recent scholarship, the book has formulated definitions for traditional and non-traditional security issues and methodology for the classification of SIA think tanks and the research they conduct in this area.

### **Think Tanks and the Foreign Policy Challenges Facing the Emerging Powers**

Dr. McGann is currently working on a book on the role think tanks play in shaping foreign policy in the emerging powers. Think tanks in Vietnam, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, China, Nigeria, Oman, India, South Korea and Turkey have submitted draft chapters for the book.

The project’s objective is produce ten to twelve case studies that explore how emerging powers and the security and international affairs (SIA) think tanks that serve them are meeting foreign policy and security challenges they face now and in the future. The book will include a range defense and security and foreign policy issues. In its aggregate, the project hopes to identify and then examine how think tanks in a variety of political and economic contexts help their respective countries understand and respond to the new challenges and dynamics of an increasingly multipolar world.

In compiling the volume, a great deal of emphasis will be placed on identifying and explicating the unique foreign policy challenges these emerging powers face, as well as the strategies and programs that SIA think tanks have developed in response to these policy issues. In addition, we aim to identify best practices—both for research and policy advice that might improve the capacity of think tanks in Emerging Powers. A concerted effort will be made to select a representative sample of think tanks so we might explore the roles think tanks have played in shaping SIA policies at the nation, regional, and global levels.

The case studies will be include both traditional and non-traditional security issues in the areas of security, defense and foreign policy. Each case must demonstrate the think tank’s impact on SIA policy. Each case will be crafted in such a way that illustrates how the particular strategy and

structure of the think tank contributed to its ability to impact the policy issue at hand. Prospectuses are being solicited from think tanks in China, India, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Vietnam, Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Russia, and Poland. Overall, the objective is to identify and share best practices for research, policy advice, and policy implementation in the SIA context.

### **Think Tanks, Civil Society and Governance**

TTCSP is launching a new book project entitled, **Think Tanks, Civil Society and Governance** (or alternatively **Think Tanks, Public Policy and Governance**), which will explore how the relationship between think tanks, civil society and governments has changed since the publication of **Think Tanks and Civil Societies: Catalyst for Ideas and Action**, a volume I edited with R. Kent Weaver in 1999.

The plan for the new book is to have a regional overview and assessment for each region of the world followed by several illustrative country examples that explore a representative sample of think tanks in a range of the political and economic contexts. A number of scholars have already agreed to contribute chapters and Dr. McGann is planning to convene an international conference around this new initiative. TTCSP is seeking donors to support the book project and international partners who might want to host it.

### **TTCSP Publications:**

Think Tanks and the Foreign Policy Challenges Facing the Emerging Powers (Fall 2016)

Trends and Transitions in Security Expertise From Deterrence to Climate Change (Fall 2016)

Fifth Estate: Think Tanks and Domestic and Foreign Policy in the US (Forthcoming University of Pennsylvania Press 2015)

How Think Tanks Shape Social Development Policies (University of Pennsylvania Press 2014)  
<http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/15244.html>

2013 Global Go To Think Tank (AKA Think Tank Rankings)  
[http://repository.upenn.edu/think\\_tanks/8/](http://repository.upenn.edu/think_tanks/8/)

Global Think Tanks, Policy Networks and Governance (Routledge 2010)  
<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415779791/>

Democratization and Market Reform in Developing and Transitional Countries Think Tanks as Catalysts (Routledge 2010)  
<http://www.routledge.com/books/Democratization-and-Market-Reform-in-Developing-and-Transitional-Countries-isbn9780415547383>

Catalysts for Growth and Development: The Role of Think Tanks in Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (CIPE 2009)

<http://www.cipe.org/bookstore>

Comparative Think Tanks, Politics and Public Policy (Edward Elgar 2005)

[http://www.e-elgar.co.uk/Bookentry\\_Main.lasso?id=275](http://www.e-elgar.co.uk/Bookentry_Main.lasso?id=275)

If you would like to partner with us on one or more of these projects please contact James McGann at [jmcgann@wharton.upenn.edu](mailto:jmcgann@wharton.upenn.edu)

The goal in the next 12 months is to translate this global interest and support into core funding for the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program.





# TTCSP

THINK TANKS AND CIVIL SOCIETIES PROGRAM

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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