



SCHOOL for
THINKTANKERS

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

On Think Tanks

#schoolforthinktankers2022

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WELCOME

Dear participant of the 2022 School for Thinktankers,

We are happy and excited to welcome you to this edition of School for Thinktankers. In this document you will find useful information that will help you prepare for the course. Please take the time to read it, make notes, and plan ahead to make the most of the programme.

If you have any questions, please contact Andrea Baertl: abaertl@onthinktanks.org or Marília Cunha: school@onthinktanks.org.

**We look forward to getting to know you.
Get ready for three weeks of rich discussions and reflections with
experienced thinktankers, trainers and colleagues from around the world!**

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INTRODUCTION

The School for Thinktankers is designed to prepare the next generation of think tank leaders. A think tank leader cannot rely solely on being a great researcher, they also must be managers, networkers, and communicators. Unfortunately, many researchers and think tankers do not get to build many of these skills during their careers; and by the time they are ready to take on leadership roles it is (almost) too late. The School for Thinktankers wants to remedy this problem by creating a space to learn about the many dimensions of working in, and leading, a policy research centre.

Taught by senior thinktankers and expert practitioners, the programme has a practical approach. It is designed to:

- Prepare and inspire the next generation of think tank leaders.
- Build a community of emerging think tank leaders to support and learn from each other.
- Encourage participants to reflect on their own organisation and how to support its development.

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Our approach to develop and deliver the Online School for Thinktankers:

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- Is based on evidence: it draws on adult learning theories and builds on lessons learnt during the delivery of previous on-site schools and other online courses we have run.
- Encourages participants to bring and reflect critically on their experience, and on the lessons and experiences shared in the programme.
- Helps participants to address ongoing professional dilemmas.
- Enables participants to experiment with new approaches in their workplace
- Promotes engagement between participants, trainers, and course facilitators to form a sense of community, as learning and improvement is usually a social process in which conversation and feedback is vital.
- Enables participants to receive guidance and supervision from a range of experienced think tankers and experts.

STRUCTURE AND DELIVERY

This section outlines the different components and elements that make up the School for Thinktankers.

TIMING

The programme (see below) will be delivered Monday to Friday for three weeks (starting 24 Jan) from 12:30 GMT to 14:30 GMT (except a couple days in which the school will end later). We have sent a google calendar invite so you can block the time in your agenda.

WEBSITE

All course materials, details, access to slack channel and links for live sessions are available on the website www.ott.school in the [School for Thinktankers 2022 course page](#) (password: *evolvingthinktanks*)

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LIVE SESSIONS

The live sessions will be held in zoom. You will find the link to each session on the website, inside each module. Speakers will give a presentation and engage in a dialogue where participants can ask specific questions, engage with experts, and discuss with their peers, some sessions will have online groupwork.

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Sessions will be recorded and then uploaded to the website, but we encourage participants to attend each session as the richness of the experience stems from engagement with fellow participants and trainers.

Each day will start with a summary (recap) of the day before by one of the participants. The summary should be short and highlight the presentations, discussion, or anything interesting from the sessions or discussions. If you want to sign up to do a recap, [please complete this form](#).

MATERIALS

We have prepared a background document and videos to give you an overview of the key issues in each topic (which you will find on the website). Both types of materials offer essential definitions and highlight fundamental questions, and they seek to trigger reflection and discussions and help you embark on your learning journey.

Additionally, all presentations used by trainers will be uploaded to the website in their corresponding modules.

ENGAGEMENT

We will use Slack for day-to-day communication and engagement (you should have received an email with your login details, if not please contact Marília). All participants and trainers are part of the slack channel, as well as past participants of the school for thinktankers, so please take advantage of the platform and use it to connect with your new network.

ABOUT YOURSELF

We have set aside one session (Jan 25) for participants to get to know each other and the work each does. As you will see on the website all attendants have remarkably interesting profiles, coming from all over the world and focusing on different issues. To be able to get to know each other better please prepare a short 1-2 minute presentation about yourselves and your current work ([like an elevator pitch](#)) (could be spoken or using any other format) for those sessions.

LEARNING JOURNALS

We have developed a learning journal (uploaded to the website) which is a tool to help you plan and reflect on your learning experience. We will use those questions through the programme to help you reflect, but also encourage you to complete it on your own.

CERTIFICATE

At the end of the training, participants who have successfully completed the course will receive a certificate. The criteria to receive this certificate is: attending at least 11 live sessions and engaging in slack discussions.

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PREPARING FOR THE SCHOOL FOR THINKTANKERS

We encourage participants to:

- Take the time to read the programme, the background document, watch the videos, explore the [OTT website](#) and reflect on how the concepts relate to your own work.
- Note down any questions or thoughts, which might be useful for discussions at the school and/or for your personal learning journals.
- Actively use Slack for questions, comments, or resources you would like to share with others.
- Review the profile of your peers and trainers and start connecting with them (in slack and social media).

PROGRAMME

Through the duration of the School for Thinktankers participants are expected to participate in slack discussions. Additionally, participants should agree on a suitable time with their fellow study group participants to discuss and work on their tasks.

TIME	MONDAY 24 JAN	TUESDAY 25 JAN	WEDNESDAY 26 JAN	THURSDAY 27 JAN	FRIDAY 28 JAN
12:30- 13:00 GMT	Welcome and programme overview	Participant's presentations	Crosscutting session Transparency and Credibility workshop. Andrea Baertl	Module 2 Policy relevant research. Session 1 Bridging Research and Policy: Challenges for the Activist Think-Tank. Simon Maxwell	Reflection session
13:00 -13:30 GMT	Getting to know each other				Crosscutting session Founding a think tank Q&A session with founders. Orazio Belletini, Nicolás Ducoté and Simonida Kacarska
13:30 -14:00 GMT	Module 1 Think tanks and evidence-informed policy. Session 1 What is a think tank? History, roles and models in differing contexts. Enrique Mendizabal	Expectations and learning objectives- group discussion			
14:00-14:30 GMT					
14:30-15:00 GMT					
TIME	MONDAY 31 JAN	TUESDAY 1 FEB	WEDNESDAY 2 FEB	THURSDAY 3 FEB	FRIDAY 4 FEB
12:30- 13:00 GMT	Module 3 Communications. Session 1 Communication Strategies. Cast from Clay. Tom Hashemi and Katy Murray	Module 3 Policy relevant research Session 2 Strategies to increase your reach, functions and impact. Emily Gustafsson-Wright	Crosscutting session Branding Workshop John Schwartz & Naomi Isaacs, Soapbox	Reflection session	Module 4 Fundraising and financial management. Session 1 Fundraising
13:00 -13:30 GMT				Small talks sessions*	
13:30 -14:00 GMT					Module 3 Communications. Session 2 Policy outreach: strategies and challenges. Erin Collinson , CGD
14:00-14:30 GMT					
14:30-15:00 GMT					
15:00-15:30 GMT					
TIME	MONDAY 7 FEB	TUESDAY 8 FEB	WEDNESDAY 9 FEB	THURSDAY 10 FEB	FRIDAY 11 FEB
12:30- 13:00 GMT	Module 4 Fundraising and financial management. Session 2 Finance for non financial managers. Sonja Stojanovic Gajic	Module 5 Governance and management Session 1 Leading a think tank. Simonida Kacarska & Sonja Stojanovic Gajic	Module 6 Monitoring, evaluation, and learning of policy influence. Session 1 Dena Lomofsky and Stephen Yeo	Module 6 Monitoring, evaluation, and learning of policy influence Session 2 Dena Lomofsky and Stephen Yeo	Reflection session
13:00 -13:30 GMT					Final session Advice for think tank leaders
13:30 -14:00 GMT					
14:00-14:30 GMT					School close
OWN TIME	Participate in slack discussions and with fellow participants, read and watch background materials.				
COLOUR CODE	Module session	Workshop	Reflection & Programme sessions	Networking & Engagement	

*Please see the website for the full list of small talks. A form will be sent to you on the first week of the school to ask you to sign up to speak with the speakers of your choice.