



THREE TIPS FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS WITH MIGRATORY BACKGROUNDS WHO WANT TO START A CAREER AT A GERMAN THINK TANK OR FOUNDATION

While our guide How to Hire for Diversity and Inclusion puts the burden on the organizations to attract and retain diverse talent, we want to share three tips for the affected individuals, with a focus on entry-level professionals with migratory backgrounds who want to start a career in the German think tank and foundation sector. The following suggestions are based on the lived experiences of the authors as well as interviews with stakeholders working in German think tanks and foundations carried out in the framework of the [Think Tank Lab Diversity Challenge](#). More information about our methodology can be found [here](#).



WRITE SPECULATIVE APPLICATIONS

If you want to work for a German think tank or foundation, consider writing proactively to the team or department that you are interested in, even if there is no active job offer. Do not shy away from taking the initiative, not only for internships or traineeships but also for regular positions. If you have an interesting profile, the organization may come back to you and look for a way to create a new position together.



USE JOB INTERVIEWS STRATEGICALLY

A job interview is a two-way process. A think tank or foundation is not only evaluating your candidacy, you are also evaluating whether they are the kind of organization you would want to work for. Consider asking questions that give you an idea about the inclusivity of the workplace culture and awareness regarding matters of diversity,

equity, and inclusion. One way to do so is asking about diversity-related initiatives underway at the organization.

Here are some questions you could ask:

- » *What is the commitment of the institution regarding diversity and how is this shown?*
- » *Does the organization have a diversity and inclusion policy? If yes, what does it entail? If no, why not?*
- » *Is there a diversity officer leading the institution's efforts toward equity and inclusion?*
- » *Is there any kind of mentoring program between senior and entry-level professionals?*
- » *What career development opportunities exist in the think tank?*

When offered a job, do not shy away from negotiating salaries. A good starting point are the pay grades of the German federal public administration (*Tarifvertrag öffentlicher Dienst, TVöD Bund*), as these serve as orientation for pay grades in many organizations in the German non-profit sector as well.



BUILD STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

When you have started your job, you might want to raise your colleagues' attention to a diversity issue relevant to you. It can be difficult to bring up diversity and inclusion issues in an organization, especially if you are new. Do not shy away from building alliances with people who share your challenges or support you. It is always useful to get at least one respected senior researcher involved, as this helps to take advantage of the existing power dynamics in favor of a good cause.