



THINK TANK SCHOOL 2025

June 3 – November 13, 2025, in Berlin and Brussels

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The call for applications is now open for the Think Tank School 2025—a **unique training program for early-career professionals** that is tailored specifically to the needs and demands of the think tank sector.

The five-month program offers participants the opportunity to take the next step in their careers by developing their skills for **effective think tank work**, expanding their professional network in the **policy and think tank community**, and applying **innovative methods** to an individual research project of their choice.

We look forward to receiving your application!

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE

The Think Tank School is open to think tank professionals who have:

- Research and analysis roles in a think tank or policy-oriented research institute based in Germany; and
- 1-6 years of professional experience in the sector or other relevant fields.

Career changers are also welcome to participate. The program offers **up to 18 spots** per cohort. We reserve the right to allocate a limited number of places for **professionals from European think tanks**—please contact us directly, if that applies to you.

“The Think Tank Lab created a rich program that showed us in many different ways how to achieve more impact as think tanks and research institutes.”

– Ana Helena Palermo Kuss, ZEW –Leibniz Centre for European Economic Research and former participant

The Think Tank School is an offer of the Think Tank Lab, a project of the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP) and the Mercator Institute for China Studies (MERICS). It is kindly supported by the Stiftung Mercator and the Robert Bosch Stiftung.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The Think Tank School is based on a comprehensive competency framework reflecting the variety of skills required to excel as a think tanker in an ever-changing environment.

After completing the Think Tank School, you will be able to:

- Critically reflect and consciously shape your role in a dynamic policy environment;
- Design and implement policy-relevant and impactful research projects;
- Convey complex ideas clearly to diverse audiences;
- Build and leverage networks for a common (policy) goal; and
- Translate new methods and insights back into your organization.

PROGRAM AND STRUCTURE

The Think Tank School combines different learning formats, prioritizing your professional growth while supporting knowledge transfer to your organization.



Training Modules in Berlin and Brussels:

Build foundational skills and learn key tools and frameworks for innovative, impact-driven think tank work in expert-led seminars.

Policy Projects:

Apply and test new approaches to a policy challenge of your choice, while developing an individual project step-by-step and benefiting from structured guidance.

Shadowing and Research Visits:

Gain firsthand insights into real policy processes, and inspiration by shadowing key stakeholders or relevant institutions.

Online Community Calls:

Stay connected between modules, present your project updates, receive feedback, and exchange insights during interactive online sessions.

Peer Learning:

Collaborate closely with fellow participants in structured peer coaching formats to refine your project, share best practices, and strengthen your problem-solving skills.

Networking Activities:

Expand your professional network with peers, policymakers, funders, and other stakeholders through social events.

WHY PARTICIPATE

For Fellows:

- Gain and apply new skills through hands-on training sessions and project work.
- Get expert guidance, develop innovative solutions, and expand your network with peers, policymakers, and think tank stakeholders.
- Join the [Bosch Alumni Network](#) and [MercatorGlobe](#), global alumni communities fostering cross-sectoral exchange and collaboration.

For Organizations:

- Strengthen staff capabilities with systematic training and empowerment.
- Gain insights into innovative approaches and build networks with other think tanks.
- Experiment with new project formats and ensure effective knowledge transfer back to your organization.

TUITION FEE

Participation in the Think Tank School is possible for a fee of EUR 1,175 (excl. statutory VAT).

The tuition fee covers all expert lectures, all learning materials, lunch and coffee breaks, a diploma upon completion as well as access to the Think Tank Lab community and alumni networks. The fee does not include travel and accommodation to Berlin and Brussels. Participants are responsible for arranging and covering these costs themselves.

We offer a limited number of partial scholarships for participants with financial need. However, we encourage you to explore funding solutions with your organization first. If you would like to be considered, please indicate this in your application and briefly describe your situation.

INFORMATION WEBINAR

For interested participants and organizations, an information webinar will take place on **March, 26, 2025**, from **12:00 – 01.00 PM (CET)**. To participate, please register [here](#).

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for a spot in the Think Tank School 2025, please complete the [ONLINE APPLICATION FORM](#) and submit all supporting documentation. The application includes the following:

- Motivation Statement** (two-minute video or 300 words): Explain why you want to participate, and how you will apply what you learn.
- Policy Problem** (max. 300 words): Describe the issue you would like to work on during the program.
- Stakeholder Plan**: Specify whom you want to interview or shadow, and why.
- Letter of Support**: From your organization, confirming time for all trainings and project work, plus the support provided. You can find a template [here](#).
- CV**: Highlighting your professional experience in a think tank or research environment.

The application deadline is April 23, 2025.

The participants of the 2025 cohort will be announced no later than May 8, 2025.

Find more information on www.thinktanklab.org

For further questions, please reach out to hello@thinktanklab.org