

# Universities, Think Tanks, Research Organizations

Never has harnessing the best expertise and academic rigour been more necessary for policy-making. Accordingly, the World Economic Forum sets the global, regional and industry agenda by tapping into the foremost global network of experts from universities, think tanks and other research-based organizations.

Moreover, the Forum acknowledges the central role and responsibility of higher education and research as drivers of innovation, talent, entrepreneurship and, ultimately, economic development; providing private and public sector leaders across disciplines with a platform for dialogue and initiatives on the future of the sector.

## How are the best experts involved?

The Forum offers unparalleled exposure to people, topics and platforms throughout its network of leaders from business, government, civil society and academia.

We are constantly in search of the world's best experts on diverse topics and invite them to interact in global knowledge hubs and other strategic meetings. Selected experts are invited to present and participate in meetings, to become members of expert groups such as the Global Agenda Councils, and advise and steer projects and initiatives of the Forum where they have a unique expertise.

Forum meetings include special formats such as the IdeasLab or BetaZone, one-on-one sessions that provide experts with an opportunity to discuss issues with leaders from all sectors in a highly interactive setting and with significant feedback.

In addition, some of the world's leading academics are members of the Young Global Leaders, Technology Pioneers, Young Scientists and other communities of the Forum.

## How can organizations get involved?

Equally key, and often instrumental to the engagement of individual experts, is the Forum's institutional engagement with universities, think tanks and research organizations. Through regular contact and collaboration with a growing network of leaders from these institutions (presidents, chancellors and other senior executives), we explore longer-term collaboration and institutional partnerships on issues and projects where there is complementarity between respective strategies and agendas.

As we pursue this collaboration, the Forum also offers academic leaders regular communication on activities and opportunities for engagement with the Forum through its diverse network and peer-to-peer exchange throughout the year, in different locations around the world and often with special guests participating from the broader Forum community, to address challenges in higher education and research.

“

**The marketplace of ideas is buzzing with academics and world leaders talking more than ever. The conversations are changing the way businesses and governments are run, producing cutting edge research questions and shaping our future. Many of these conversations are taking place through the World Economic Forum--at Davos, at Dalian, in the Global Agenda Councils. It is amongst the best places to listen and be listened to.**

”

Sendhil Mullainathan, Professor of Economics, Harvard University

“

**Collaboration between the IT Sector and Academia through the World Economic Forum is a shining example of how innovation occurs at the intersection of disciplines. This partnership serves as a valuable source of inspiration for corporations to embrace and plan for disruption in the form of market transitions.**

”

Padmasree Warrior, Chief Technology and Strategy Officer, CISCO

In 2006, the Forum created the Global University Leaders Forum (GULF), a small community of the presidents of the top universities in the world, aiming to offer them, similarly to industry leaders, a non-competitive platform for high-level dialogue on issues of higher education and research with other sectors, including the business community; and to foster collaboration between universities in areas of significance for global policy. Initiatives that have been facilitated by GULF include the International Sustainable Campus Network (ISCN), the Society for the Advancement of Science and Technology in the Arab World (SASTA), and the Réseau d'excellence des sciences de l'ingénieur de la Francophonie (RESCIF).

The Forum's network of top universities is currently expanding and expected to reach 200 globally by 2015.

### Setting the Agenda on Higher Education and Research

Through multistakeholder networks of leaders and organizations from its broader community, to whom education is of paramount concern, the Forum is tracking the evolution of higher education and research, currently under pressure caused by rapid technological progress, rising costs in an overall challenging economic context, demand for access to education, demand for more employable people for the

workplace and a reduction of the cost of onboarding. To activate new opportunities for collaboration, through programmes at the Forum's Annual Meetings in Davos and regional meetings, by initiating dialogue among experts, projects, and through extensive social media drive, the Forum is setting the education agenda in the three priority areas:

- Role of Technology and Online Education
- Creation of Knowledge and Future of Research
- Values and New Social Contract for the University



#### Key

- City or country hub where we work with leading institutions
- GULF members

“  
Through the activities of World Economic Forum such as its summits, Global Agenda Councils, Blogs and its various communities, I have had the privilege and the rarest of opportunities to interact with leaders from around the globe. This has broadened my way of thinking as well as enhanced my knowledge and the way I think about improving the state of the world.

”  
Lee Sang Yup, Distinguished Professor, Director and Dean, Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST)

“  
Working through the Forum with CEOs that have high-octane careers, ranging from economics to journalism has opened my eyes to how differently and perhaps narrowly we academics view the world as compared to them. They have compelled me to think more globally and to develop a better way to relate fundamental science to the actual world.

”  
Julia R. Greer, Professor of Materials Science and Mechanics, California Institute of Technology

“  
In a world that is ‘immediate’ and ‘always on’ – where opinions are shaped and offered very quickly – the World Economic Forum and its various events, provide the opportunity for academics, business and political leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs, to interact, discuss and share meaningful dialogue concerning the world’s many challenges. It is to me a very special opportunity and one in which knowledge is enhanced for everyone’s benefit.

”  
Mohammed Al Mady, Vice-Chairman and CEO of Saudi Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC)