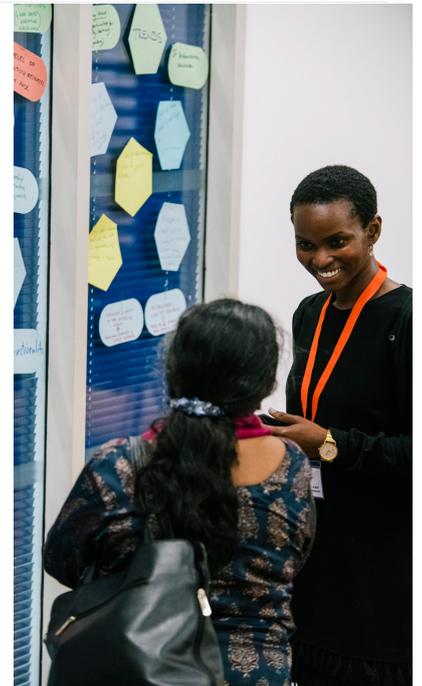




International  
Civil Society  
Centre



## **LEADING TOGETHER 2023**

The peer event for Directors of Divisions: HR, Policy/Advocacy, Programmes as well as the Scanning the Horizon Community of civil society futurists

**13 – 15 June 2023**  
**Berlin, Germany (no hybrid)**

# What is Leading Together?

*Leading Together* is the only sector space where you – as global Heads of the Divisions Human Resources, Programme, and Policy/Advocacy – come together to discuss the challenges you share with your peers, learn from and with each other, get out of the box inspiration, and find a friend or future collaborator. Since 2016, the International Civil Society Centre has convened global Heads of Divisions of international civil society organisations (ICSOs) for high-level strategic discussions on joint challenges, global trends, and best practices. In joint and peers-only sessions, participants have the opportunity to explore topics of common interest, identify areas for concrete collaboration, exchange advice and discuss how to jointly inspire and lead change in the sector.

In 2023, we have two exciting changes in store for your *Leading Together* event: First, for the first time since 2019, we will be **coming together face to face**, to finally have a chance to network again and have the space for those spontaneous connections and ideas that only emerge over a personal gathering inside and outside the conference room. We will also make use of the many exciting stakeholders and places Berlin has to offer for further external contributions and inspiration.

And second, in addition to convening the three peer groups (Human Resources, Policy/Advocacy and Programme), members of the **Scanning the Horizon Community (civil society futurists and strategists) will also join**. They will have their annual community meeting in parallel and join for the networking and some if not all of the joint sessions, making for a great opportunity to have a futures-focused event!

Concretely, *Leading Together 2023* offers two half and one full day with joint and peer group sessions:

- **Joint sessions:** Space to explore, discuss and shape burning issues related to the future of the civil society sector - with all participants.
- **Peer group sessions:** Space for peer exchange and exploration of collaboration – in parallel groups of Programmes, Policy/Advocacy, and HR directors; and Scanning the Horizon Community members.

# What will you get out of Leading Together?

*Leading Together 2023* will provide participants with:

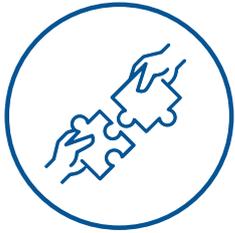
- An experience of applying a futures methodology and an opportunity to discuss how anticipation can increase your organisation's resilience.
- Inspiration, guidelines or tools depending on specific group topics.
- An extended network of peers from ICSSOs and other organisations.
- Ideas for potential areas of collaboration, support and/or exchange.
- Opportunities for peer problem-solving, advice or joint planning and strategising for specific issues you are seeking support on.

## **Joint sessions: Being more futures ready and resilient**

In the past years the sector – and the world – has been hit with what has come to be known as “polycrisis”, multiple overlaying and interdependent crises that beg for a term that holds the extremity of it all. The COVID-19 pandemic, the takeover of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Russian war on Ukraine and its subsequent crises in energy prices and inflation, the earthquake striking Turkey and civil war-torn Syria, to name a few; all the while trying to avoid the worst of the climate crisis. Our sector is tied to crisis, sometimes thrives on it, but is equally overwhelmed by it.

Let's take a moment and step off the crisis carousel.

Our organisations hold strong visions for the future, but shaping the futures we want is a mindset that gets buried in the day-to-day of dealing with the immediate. At the most, a department or a few individuals in the organisation feed into the longer-term thinking. With the support of the Centre's *Scanning the Horizon* community and possibly external collaborators we want to take a step back, look at the trends already shaping possible futures and understand better how futures methodologies can increase organisational (and sometimes personal) resilience.



How can futures skills and mindset be democratised in an organisation and thereby helping to overcome Northern dominated and “official” futures? How can a stronger futures mindset support crisis preparedness or programmes but equally improve “selling” the futures we want, advocating for them? What capacities and structures would this take, especially as likely futures are increasingly digital?

The Centre will also offer the opportunity to be part of a futures exercise and have participants experience an innovative collaborative scenario creation tool called ParEvo. It is a method of exploring alternative futures (or histories), using a participatory evolutionary process (hence ParEvo). By the time of *Leading Together* the Centre will have used ParEvo within its initiative **“Anticipating futures for civil society operating space”**. At *Leading Together* you will learn about future stories that have emerged from the exercise and will be invited to share your feedback and insights on the storylines. Your contributions will feed into the overall exercise which results will be used to inform follow-on activities aimed at translating developed scenarios into concrete organisational strategies.

### **Parallel sessions: Peer exchange and exploring collaboration**

In the second element, the peer groups will meet in parallel. They will focus on different topics depending on their specific interest. At registrations you will have the chance to indicate your specific areas of interest. Get a better understanding of the peer groups here:

# Parallel sessions

- **Human Resources (HR) Directors:** This group has convened annually since 2019; since 2022, the Centre facilitator is **Susanne Kremer**, Head of Operations, who has also convened two more HR online sessions during the year.

Topic suggestions for 2023 are: Making an impact on locally led development incl. equal pay, compensation, and benefits; safeguarding; misconduct disclosure; avoiding overload and establishing a healthy work culture; talent acquisition and retention in globalised settings.

*For illustration, past HR peer group topics included: digital workplace and engagement, cultivating culture in a crisis, building resilience, staff wellbeing in times of pandemic, challenges and chances of working abroad, racism and discrimination in our organisations.*

- **Policy/Advocacy Directors:** This group has convened annually since 2016; for 2023, the Centre facilitator is **Wolfgang Jamann**, Executive Director. Topic suggestions for 2023 are: learning from crisis advocacy; improving joint approaches to multilateral mechanisms; advocacy in partnership – leading and being led; the role of mis-, dis- and mal-information in advocacy.

*For illustration, past Policy/Advocacy peer group topics include: advocacy in the digital era, COVID-19 and the implications for advocacy, how declining trust and empathy is affecting advocacy and communications, putting the Agenda 2030 into focus amidst the pandemic.*

- **Programme Directors:** This group has convened annually since 2018; in 2023, the Centre facilitator is **Miriam Niehaus**, Head of Programmes. Topic suggestions for 2023 are: Measuring and improving power shift initiatives; cybersecurity and cyberthreats, with a possible link to mis-, dis-, and mal-information; new insights and solutions in civic space.

*For illustration, past Programmes peer group topics include: COVID-19 and the relevance and effectiveness of civil society in Africa, leading on operational challenges during the pandemic, ICsOs as donors: partnerships and power, and mis- and disinformation and its impact on Programming.*

# Want to make the most out of the meeting?

...Then join your peer group's advisory group to shape the agenda. Between March and May the advisory groups with two to three members will have 1-3 calls to decide on focus topics and formats. Indicate in the registration whether you want to be part of the advisory group for your peer group or message us directly by 15 March:

**[mniehaus@icscentre.org](mailto:mniehaus@icscentre.org)** Miriam Niehaus, Head of Programmes

As we build the agendas in the coming months the Centre will also consider if for parts of the meeting certain groups will join together. In the past this has worked well when several *advisory groups* indicated overlapping interests.



# What have previous peers got out of Leading Together?

## Leading Together Overall (2019)

- 'Space to discuss common challenges and potential solutions [and] joint action points'
- 'The collaborative spirit and safe conversations were highly appreciated'
- 'Having time to think about strategic leadership, good thought and direction input from others'

## HR Directors (2021)

- 'A community of HR professionals in our sector that can tap into each other for ideas and support'
- 'Exchange between peer organisations [is]...highly relevant and helps a lot for further development'

## Policy/Advocacy Directors (2020-21)

- 'The opportunity to discuss with policy directors from around the world is hugely inspiring; seeing how others deal with the crisis is very helpful and reassuring'
- 'Good inputs, great discussion, sufficient depth and no DevSpeak overload...'

## Programme Directors (2021)

- 'There's always something you can learn from peers you've never met before!'
- '[A network where] we're all dealing with similar challenges'

Leading Together 2018



# Agenda Overview

## Tuesday, 13 June

13.30 – 14.00	<i>Registration</i>	
14.00 – 14.30	<b>Opening</b>	
	<b>Welcome / Introductions</b>	<i>Wolfgang Jamann, Centre Exec Director</i>
14.30 – 15.30	<b>Welcome to our futures</b>	
14.30 – 15.15	<b>Trends overview and what to look out for</b> An overview of the big and the underexplored trends and what it takes to become more anticipatory as a sector	<i>Tbc and Centre team as presenters and facilitators</i>
15.15 – 16.00	<b>Group Discussions</b> In-depth discussions	
16.00 – 16.30	<i>Break</i>	
16.30 – 18.00		
16.30 – 17.00	<b>ParEvo Scenario Building Exercise</b> Joint introduction to exercise	<i>Eva Gondor, Senior Project Manager and Paola Pierri, Co- Programme Manager Futures and Innovation</i>
17.00 – 18.00	<b>Group Work</b>	
18.30	<i>Dinner</i>	

## Wednesday, 14 June

09.00 – 18.00	<b>Parallel Meetings: Policy/Advocacy, Programme, HR (agendas tbd)</b> <b>Annual Community Meeting Scanning the Horizon</b>
18.30	<i>Optional Dinner or Excursion (TBC)</i>

## Thursday, 15 June

09.00 – 10.30	<b>Parallel Meetings: Policy, Programme, HR and Comms (agendas tbd)</b> <b>Annual Community Meeting Scanning the Horizon</b>	
10.30 – 11.00	<i>Break</i>	
11.00 – 12.30	<b>Digital futures – Cybersecurity, Disinformation and ChatGPT (tbc)</b>	
11.00 – 11.30	Presentation of new insights	<i>tbc</i>
11.30 – 12.30	Group discussion on wider learnings and applicability	<i>Miriam Niehaus, ICSC</i>
12.30 – 13.00	<b>Learnings &amp; Wrap Up</b>	
	Highlights from the groups / Future meetings	<i>Meeting Reps</i>
13.00	<i>Lunch and Departure</i>	

# Our community

The Centre's programmes and activities bring together ICSSOs with leaders from civil society networks, think tanks, local communities, business, politics and academia. This intermediary environment allows to leave logos and egos outside and foster effective knowledge and capacity pooling. Voices from communities and local CSOs are an integral part to the Centre's work and thus assure truly participatory and self-reflective partnerships.

# Owners & Supporters

The Centre is owned and supported by more than 20 of the largest ICSSOs working across environmental, human rights, social justice and humanitarian themes. Fourteen of them hold equal shares in the Centre, through its not-for-profit limited liability company status. Elected shareholders constitute the governing board, which oversees our work and finances.



The Centre's work is also supported by ICSSOs who are our Core Supporters:



# Get involved!



All our events and projects ▶



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