



International  
Civil Society  
Centre

# LEADING TOGETHER

01-03 July  
2025, Berlin

Concept  
note

LEADING THROUGH UNCERTAIN TIMES





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**WHEN:**

13:30 01 July - 14:00  
03 July 2025

**WHERE:**

Berlin, Germany -  
Wikimedia Offices

**INVITE ONLY FOR:**

- HR Directors
- Policy/Advocacy Directors
- Programme Directors
- Strategy Leads

**COST**

Free for Centre  
Shareholders

800€ for Centre  
Core Supporters

1000€ for  
organisations  
outside of the  
Centre community

**Please note:**  
Travel and  
accommodation  
are not included.

# LEADING TOGETHER

## Background

### Leading through uncertain times

*Leading Together* is the annual convening of senior global leaders from the Centre's shareholders and core supporter, designed to foster deep discussions on the sector's most pressing challenges and emerging opportunities. Through peer exchange and inputs from fresh perspectives, this annual gathering fosters collaboration and inspires new approaches to leadership.

The in-person event brings together Directors of Programmes, Policy and Advocacy, Human Resources from ICSOs. This year to help us collectively learn from each other and respond to the huge challenges we are facing we will convene ICSO leaders who are charged with the strategic leadership of their organisations.

With the paradigm shift we are experiencing in the sector; civil society leaders must collectively come together and navigate this rapidly changing space. The direct and indirect ramifications, of USAID and other changes, demand new approaches to leadership, resilience, and collaboration. Our theme for this year's *Leading Together* is: *Leading through uncertain times*.

With mounting attacks on liberal democracy and increasing restrictions on civic space, leaders must address the many interlinked pressing issues. The latest political developments—particularly in the US—are reshaping the civil society sector. The values and rights that ICSOs have stood for and championed are being eroded. We will be joining together to collectively explore ways to respond effectively. There will be time to explore what the future of ICSOs should look like and how could we reimagine the sector, what decisions and steps need to be taken. *Leading Together 2025* will allow for targeted exchanges on practical leadership challenges, including funding constraints, shrinking operating space, and the evolving role of civil society. Along with delving into important topics such as the treat to multilateralism, attack on DEI, gender rights, migrant rights and the rise of techno-autocracy.





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## Theme and draft agenda

**Leading Together 2025 will look into how can ICSOs can frame a collective positive narrative in the current context to ensure our values and the rights of the communities we work with our upheld. To promote the important work and the rights of those most marginalised and the many communities we seek to serve.**

Proposed programme (full agenda to be confirmed)

Starting in the afternoon on Tuesday 01 July (registrations from 13:30), through to lunchtime on Thursday 03 July (including a farewell lunch), this two-day programme will include:

- **Joint sessions:** The majority of the time will be spent together to explore, discuss and shape overarching sector, organisational and leadership issues.
- **Peer sessions:** All four groups (Human Resources, Programme and Policy/Advocacy and new group on Strategic Leadership) meet separately for peer exchange. Session topics will be decided on by an advisory group of participants in the months prior to the meeting.

Since 2016, the International Civil Society Centre has convened global directors from international civil society organisations (ICSOs) for this event. In 2025, we look forward to welcoming you in person in Berlin.

## Terms and conditions

### Participation fee to attend the Lab:

- Free for the Centre's Shareholders
- 800€ for the Centre's Core Supporters
- 1,000€ for interested organisations outside the Centre's community.

### Fee coverage:

- The fee covers participation in the three day programme
- Accommodation and travel to and from Berlin are not included
- Refreshments and lunch during the event will be provided.





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**We look forward to  
welcoming you to  
Leading Together 2025**

