

The Global Diplomacy Lab itself is a very strong network to which many other networks connect. For this, it needs committed and courageous partners who engage with and support the GDL's ideas. To work together for a more sustainable and better tomorrow.

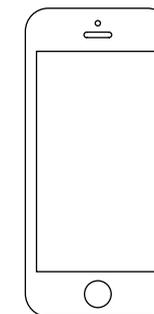
network
noun: a group or system of interconnected people or things.

Shaping Visions of Tomorrow

Global challenges need global answers for local implementation. Whether pandemics, climate change, poverty or cross-border conflicts: to tackle the complex issues confronting humanity in the 21st century and to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we need new forms of collaboration. Traditional diplomacy must open up to new voices, perspectives and expertise – from civil society and business, from culture and academia, from North, South, East and West. It is time for what we call diplomacy 4.0: inclusive, agile, innovative. Shaping a vision of this new diplomacy is the mission of the Global Diplomacy Lab (GDL).

To achieve this, the GDL gathers professionals from various fields and all corners of the earth to develop and test new tools of communication and collaboration, to lend its diverse expertise to external actors, and to formulate concrete propositions for change on the ground – from tackling urban violence in Chicago to envisioning new ways to harness Africa's youth demographic dividend.

The GDL is supported in this mission by the Federal Foreign Office under the patronage of the Federal Foreign Minister as well as the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, the Robert Bosch Stiftung, and the German-American Fulbright Commission. Network partners include the Stiftung Mercator, the Rotterdam School of Management and the Global Leadership Academy of the GIZ, to name just a few. Outstanding representatives of the leading partners' networks have the opportunity to apply for becoming GDL members. In addition, the GDL has cooperated in its various projects with individuals and organisations from a whole range of spheres across the globe and is open to new collaborations and partnerships.



Welcome to the Augmented Reality
There is so much more to see here!
To immerse yourself in Augmented Reality, open your internet browser and go to global-diplomacy-lab.org/ publication. Your camera will be activated automatically. Hold it over the AR marker and you're ready to go!

Federal Foreign Office, partner since 2014

Combining Networks and Creating Synergies



Andrea Christ is the Head of Training of International Diplomats at the Federal Foreign Office.



Gesa Giesing is the programme manager of "Networked Diplomacy: Alumni and Partners" and is responsible for maintaining the networks and alumni.



If you want to listen to the entire conversation, you can find the chat in augmented reality. Simply scan the code and listen!

Andrea Christ
Hey Gesa! I was just thinking of our alumni. I feel they're very active and the alumni work is really focused on dialogue. I was just wondering – is that a change in young people nowadays or is it something that you initiated within the alumni programme?
14:22

Gesa Giesing
Hello Andrea, thanks for your message and thoughts. I am absolutely with you! Yes, we can see a change in our network, it definitely has become more dialogue-oriented. Our young colleagues are used to being able to communicate at all times. And they are willing to invest time and further training in networking outside office hours. But at the same time, we have been developing formats that allow our alumni to get more involved, formats such as our Mentorship Programme or our Train the Trainer format.
14:23

Andrea Christ
Thanks for explaining, that's very helpful! So am I right in thinking that in these new formats we take alumni from the GDL and our alumni network and bring them together so they join forces? The alumni and members of the different networks train each other. So we basically use the alumni networks to strengthen each other and interweave them more?
14:25

Gesa Giesing
Yes, you're right!
14:25

Gesa Giesing
Our new formats are specially designed for cooperation between GDL and Training for International Diplomats. Two of our mentors and mentees are GDL members. One GDL member just gave a facilitation training to seven of our alumni who will then be themselves moderating panel talks online. So yes – we are talking about two networks, but we are close and always ready to strengthen one another.
14:27

Andrea Christ
Thank you for explaining a bit more about the synergies you see. I totally agree with what you said! I feel pretty blessed working with these networks. And honestly, sometimes it doesn't even feel like work, because it is a such a learning experience and so rewarding.
14:29

Andrea Christ
Also, I can hear that you love your job and I feel the same. I think it's a fantastic network. And it's wonderful that we can be part of it and support it and have these synergies between our networks and the Foreign Office, diplomats and people from NGOs from all over the world. That's so great!
14:31

Gesa Giesing
Indeed! ❤️
14:31

Creating and Cultivating Networks

The Federal Foreign Office is responsible for Germany's foreign policy, as well as for the country's international relations. Established in 1992, the Training for International Diplomats invites young foreign diplomats to gain professional experience in Germany at the start of their careers, to compare points of view and to identify common ground. The aim is to promote the development of foreign services in fledging democracies with courses

for diplomats. Since 2014, the Global Diplomacy Lab with the German Foreign Minister as its patron is providing a new platform for exchange between diplomats and experts from non-governmental organisations, businesses, cultural institutions and foundations. At the heart of the GDL lies the shared search for new and more inclusive methods of diplomacy and the drafting of innovative approaches which go beyond conventional politics.

Responsible Leadership Means Questioning Traditional Beliefs

A conversation between Markus Hipp, member of the board of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, and GDL member Trinidad Saona, a diplomat in the Chilean Foreign Service and elected member of the GDL Advisory Council, on responsible leadership, innovative diplomacy, and inclusive communities.

Markus: I still remember the legendary brainstorming session more than five years ago with several foundation representatives that laid the basis for the GDL. Central to our idea was a very strong member-driven approach. That was controversial at the time, but I think today it is at the core of the success and spirit of the GDL: the voices of the participants are stronger than those of the participating foundations.

Trinidad: I agree. At my first Lab in Buenos Aires in 2017, I was very impressed by the fresh, innovative and daring bet of the leading partners. We could speak our minds and freely propose ideas. In the same year, I was invited to a Responsible Leaders Forum of the BMW Foundation in Santiago de Chile where I learned about the importance of creating safe spaces to push innovation forward.

Markus: **In diplomacy and politics, there is always a battle between the “how” and the “what”. Traditional politics usually deals with the “what”. At the Foundation, we are focused on the “how”, which is very often the game changer. Before we start discussions**

about the “what”, we first have to build a deep personal trust between the different sides. Once this trust has been established, the conversation about the “what” will look completely different. And that’s what is happening at the GDL and in our global community of Responsible Leaders: people from totally different walks of life are able to make deep connections with each other as humans.

Trinidad: It amazes me that both through the network of the BMW Foundation and the GDL, I have had very profound, intimate conversations with many different people from different continents, people that I had met only two hours before. And that relates to the responsible leadership concept: in my view, responsible leadership means questioning traditional beliefs and approaches, which can be a challenging task. Therefore, I am so glad whenever I find someone from across the Atlantic who is trying to do the same thing in their own particular context. It helps me recharge and keep pushing for change back home.

Markus: **That is exactly what we try to do: encourage people to stand for their own way**



“I appreciate the GDL as a platform of exchange and social innovation that strives to forward diversity and goes beyond traditional diplomacy.”
— Trinidad Saona with Dean Ruprecht Polenz at the 11th Lab in Berlin



“The GDL is the design for how you can change diplomacy.”
— Markus Hipp

of leadership and to address issues that they might not address if they were lonely fighters. But these networks we are fostering at the GDL and with the BMW Foundation are also beneficial on a meta level: they prove that it is possible to create global inclusive communities of purpose, crossing all kinds of cultural, political, and religious boundaries, based on the human dignity that connects us on this planet that we all share.

Trinidad: And this is so important as a counter-movement to identity politics! It could be a remedy to what is currently happening in different parts of the world.

Markus: **You are right. Looking back at five years of GDL, I**

see an incredible co-creation of people who took common ownership of this project and risks in doing so, and this is what I would like to celebrate. Regarding the future, I hope that the GDL will become attractive enough to be sustainable and become a long-term model as an innovative driver for change with a specific focus on diplomacy.

Trinidad: I have to say that I am amazed by the freedom and the trust that the leading partners as funders have given us as members. That is something I have never seen in any other organisation. I would love it if the German Federal Foreign Office in its leading role in the GDL could be a trailblazer for other ministries of foreign affairs, including my own.

Responsible Leaders Network

The BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt promotes responsible leadership and inspires leaders worldwide to work towards a peaceful, just and sustainable future. They achieve this by encouraging leaders to take their social and political commitment to the next level. By connecting through the global Responsible Leaders Network, a diverse, collaborative and joyful community arises that drives positive change through collaborative action. By investing in the future, a healthy balance of economy, society and environment is being established.

International Alumni Center, partner since 2017
Robert Bosch Stiftung, Leading Partner from 2014–2016

The Networks Provide the Magic of Innovation



Elsa Marie D'Silva is the Founder and CEO of Red Dot Foundation (Safecity), a platform that crowdsources personal experiences of sexual violence and abuse in public spaces.

Elsa: Sexual violence is a global issue that needs to be addressed on a global basis because it is holding back many women and girls from achieving their full potential. And there is a data gap that exists because of the silence around the issue. This is why I launched my online reporting platform Safecity seven years ago.

Being part of the GDL and Bosch Alumni Network has given me a larger platform to showcase my work, to find collaborators and get new ideas and perspectives. I have also discovered innovative formats for discussion and collaboration which are essential when talking to people about a taboo topic such as sexual violence. Formats that I have encountered through the GDL are so interesting and participatory that I have applied them in my own work. And I have met incredible people like Blair, but also fellow GDL member Eirliani Abdul Rahman with whom I have collaborated a lot: she is now on the board of my organisation, and we have worked together in different international fora. All this would have not been possible without the GDL and Bosch Alumni Network.

Blair: I agree. The mission of the Accountability Lab is to find creative ideas to build accountability and transparency around the world, and these networks have been very valuable for me, too. One recent example was in Mexico, where we started a campaign called Integrity Icon, which is a TV show to name and fame the most honest government officials in the country and turn them into celebrities. The Robert Bosch Stiftung is supporting the project financially, and we are working with a Bosch alumnus there who works for the Mexican government on corruption issues.

There are three big things that I find valuable from the GDL and Bosch Alumni Network: first, it is a network of incredible people who are all very action-oriented and working hard to find solutions to collective problems, and these networks allow entry points to collaborate. There have been many different people who have helped the Accountability Lab, either by being board members, by giving advice or by connecting us to other people. The second point is that these networks provide an opportunity to step back from day-to-day management to reflect on some of

the bigger issues, which is not always easy to do when you run an organisation. And the third thing is actively coming up with new and different ideas for change – the networks provide the backdrop for the magic of social and political innovation to happen.

Elsa: I would like to add that it also feels like family. If you are struggling with something, you reach out to the network and you always get support, you always get answers. This is incredible.

Blair: What I like about both of these networks is that it is a very long-term investment in people, in these relationships and the trust that begins to form, often in a very informal way, between different people doing different things in different parts of the world. It is something a bit intangible, but absolutely critical to create shared understanding and collective progress. And it is not something that many organisations invest in because it is difficult to measure, it takes a long time and is not always a linear process from investment to outcome. I find that very far sighted on the parts of these German organisations. I think in 20 years time, if you look up



where all the members of the GDL and Bosch Alumni Network are, there will be all sort of linkages that are shifting power and that otherwise would not have been built.

Blair Glencorse is Founder and Executive Director of the Accountability Lab, an incubator for creative, youth-driven ideas for accountability and transparency around the world.

Connecting Networks

The Bosch Alumni Network brings together former and current fellows, grantees and staff members of the Robert Bosch Stiftung and its partners. By connecting network members with common interests but different backgrounds, it fosters cross-sectoral exchange and international collaborations. The Bosch Alumni Network is a cooperation between the Robert Bosch Stiftung and the International Alumni Center (iac Berlin), a Think & Do Tank for alumni communities with social impact established by the Robert Bosch Stiftung.

“It was a great honour to participate in the 6th Global Diplomacy Lab in Buenos Aires. The GDL mission resembles the philosophy of the global Fulbright Program and I encourage Fulbright Fellows to become more involved in this exciting and dynamic new project.”
— David Patrician



David Patrician is an American moderator and journalist currently based in Hamburg, Germany. He came to Germany on a Fulbright Scholarship and is the Hamburg regional coordinator for the Fulbright Alumni Association.

Turning Nations into People

The Fulbright Program embodies international outreach, enabling exchanges between the United States and over 160 countries and territories worldwide. Currently, 50 permanent bi-national commissions administer and execute the work of the Fulbright Program. About 8,000 scholars, from the U.S. and abroad, participate in the Fulbright exchange year by year. Since its inception in 1946, the Fulbright Program has supported more than 380,000 grantees.

In the run-up to Fulbright’s 70th anniversary, we have asked a Fulbright grantee to interview the late senator, prolific writer, and founder of the program, James William Fulbright (1905–1995). A fictional dialogue based on real quotes.

Fulbright Germany, partner since 2020

The Soft Power of People-to-People Diplomacy

Student: Bill, can you please tell me what you want to achieve with this program?

Fulbright: Well, through international exchange, we would like to spread a little more knowledge, reason, and compassion in the world and improve the odds that we will learn to live together in peace and friendship. Educational exchange can turn nations into people, contributing as no other form of communication can to the humanizing of international relations.

Student: You essentially give people from different countries an opportunity to meet each other. So why is it different from traveling abroad or visiting a country as a tourist?

Fulbright: It’s so much more than that. As an exchange student, I myself have learned what a life-changing experience this can be: to leave your comfort zone, go abroad as a cultural ambassador, and meet people in new communities. You see for yourself how the soft power of people-to-people diplomacy really works.

Student: But does the soft power of exchange work?

Fulbright: I believe that we’re on the right track. Each of the 380,000 Fulbrighters has left their mark, both at home and abroad. Numerous Nobel Prize winners, heads of state and government, and, equally important, artists, scholars, teachers, and professionals in many disciplines attest to the program’s everyday impact.

Student: I’d love to experience other cultures, learn languages and see new places. But isn’t being an ambassador a lot of responsibility for a young person like me?

Fulbright: Personal growth and maturity comes with the challenges you face. In 1945, after the war was over, I wanted to create a means by which people from all over the world could come to know one another, to understand and respect each other’s traditions, cultures, and values. I had never done anything like this before. Today, it’s the only thing that gives me hope that people can overcome conflict or the destruction of our planet.”

Collaboration Drives Innovation: Developing a Future Strategy for GDL

The Partnerships Resource Centre (PrC) is a flagship research centre of the Rotterdam School of Management (RSM), Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR) in the Netherlands. PrC's researchers Marieke de Wal and Stella Pfisterer collaborated with the GDL Secretariat and member groups to develop their next five-year strategy.

For over a year, the Partnerships Resource Centre (PrC) collaborated with the GDL as their knowledge partner. The joint learning question was: how can cross-sectoral collaboration be a driver for innovative thinking and practice in developing the GDL's future strategy? The challenge for the PrC researchers was to facilitate a collaborative process in a cooperative way. Although the goal was clear – a co-created and co-owned future strategy –, the process was not.

Dealing with uncertainty is key

Early on in the process it became clear that dealing with uncertainty and balancing tensions is crucial. Committed GDL members are driven by the conviction that collaboration is necessary to develop new forms of global diplomacy. But how that should be done, let alone what it should look like, is unclear. Within the process the GDL has to cope with at least three areas of tension.

1. Doing things differently

There is a clear appetite for doing things differently. As the way we were thinking and acting is no longer effective, there is a need for new perspectives and other voices. But how to mix and mingle them? Everyone is attached to how they have learned to do things. Bringing people from various geographical, cultural and professional backgrounds together, as the GDL does, is an important first step.

2. Diversity is the basis

Within the GDL, members expect to be seen and heard. In fact, the recognised value of their specific perspective is exactly why they were invited to contribute to the GDL. Inclusivity is key. However, it is not about adding up individual perspectives. It is about creating a new collective point of view in which everyone can recognise themselves.

3. Process versus impact

Driven by the urge to do things differently, the focus is often on new methodologies, new ways of interacting, involving head, hands and heart. But the focus on process can clash with the need for concrete results. GDL members also feel an urgency to move, to act.



Marieke de Wal (left) and Stella Pfisterer (right)

"Sharing individual stories which are also my story and all stories and the GDL's story. That's what makes the GDL." — Marieke de Wal during the Strategy Workshop in Berlin, February 2020.

A balancing act

Striving for concrete impact is not possible without paying attention to the process, and vice versa. The challenge lies in the balancing act. That was what PrC's facilitation was all about: ensuring excellent and thorough stocktaking and preparation while having confidence in the potential and capacities of the group.

The GDL is all about allowing members to create meaningful connections, to exchange experiences, to share their stories. That is how a movement is created: by taking the first and then successive steps towards an inclusive and sustainable diplomacy.

How can cross-sectoral partnerships work?

The Partnerships Resource Centre is an international research and knowledge centre for public-private collaboration for sustainable and inclusive development. Embedded within the Rotterdam School of Management of the Erasmus University, PrC works as a flagship centre to bridge science and practice. The PrC's Knowledge Agenda focuses on: creating knowledge to enhance the transformative capacity of partnerships, connecting academic and practical knowledge to support mutual learning, sharing knowledge to guide navigation, as well as strategising processes of partnering.

Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit,
network partner, from 2016 to 2020 leading partner

Diversity and Inclusion Will Lead to Innovation

Wiebke Koenig, Head of the Global Leadership Academy (GLAC) at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, in conversation with GDL members Elizabeth Maloba, Leona Lillian Abban and Simon Masaba.



Wiebke Koenig's main current objective is to support the establishment of international multi-stakeholder dialogue processes as central elements of international development cooperation

Wiebke: GIZ joined the GDL in 2016, opening it up to our GLAC network with members from 117 countries and thereby adding to the GDL's regional and professional diversity. The potential that the GDL brings to the table given its partnership with the Federal Foreign Office and various foundations is a fantastic entry point for our members and their activities relating to the 2030 Agenda.

Elizabeth: Exactly. I feel that the GDL has enabled me to deepen conversations about issues that I am working on, because I get access to different people that I would normally never meet in my everyday work. This is something I really appreciate about the GDL community.

Simon: I'd add that the GDL is a space of learning. This super-network of the GDL and its partners is filled with knowledge, which for a journalist like me has been a great source of information.

Wiebke: Where would you say the GDL has had the most impact on you?

Leona: Amazingly, a member of the GDL tapped into my expertise to work on a local problem just recently. So, the personal connections, networking opportunities and social media interactions between members create strong bonds that go beyond the Lab platform. This engagement continues to make us better at our professional jobs.

Elizabeth: For me, the most interesting aspect of the GDL is the idea that diplomacy is no longer just the preserve of professional diplomats and state employees. The fact that I'm now talking with all of you without my ambassador knowing about this means that some kind of diplomacy is taking place, but not within its traditional boundaries. And I'm interested in how these new options can promote cooperation initiatives and, ultimately, positive transformation in Africa.

Wiebke: From an African perspective, what should the GDL focus on in the future?



Leona Lillian Abban pictured here during the 2019 Incubator Lab in Ghana

Leona: I think the fact that the 2019 Incubator Lab was the first ever to take place in Africa is something we must celebrate. It was a timely intervention to create inclusion and hear the voices of Africa. The experience and culture of the continent provided a profound context for exploring the topic of the Lab in great depth.

Simon: I also welcomed that very much. We are part of the global village. The world is changing rapidly due to science and technological progress. But when we talk about Africa, there should be even more focus on and engagement with young people as they are the majority in developing countries in Africa.



Simon Masaba is an investigative reporter from Uganda who joined the GDL at the 10th Lab

Elizabeth: I think the issue of diversity and inclusion should be subject of an ongoing conversation. What does "global" mean, and what is the right balance between the different regions of the world? What can we do to achieve diversity and address the tensions that arise when different value systems come into contact with one another? These are difficult questions, and they are work in progress. But I think all of us are driven by the belief that diversity and inclusion will lead to innovation and transformation. And I see huge potential in this.



Elizabeth Maloba is a facilitator, speaker and entrepreneur from Kenya who joined the GDL in 2016

Working on Demand Around the Globe

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is a public-benefit federal enterprise and service provider with worldwide operations in the fields of international cooperation for sustainable development and international educational work. As a federal enterprise, GIZ has over 50 years of experience in a wide variety of areas, including economic development and employment promotion, energy and the environment, as well as peace and security.

Stiftung Mercator, network partner,
from 2014 to 2020 leading partner

The GDL as an Incubator for Wildly Ambitious Ideas

Susanne Salz, GDL member and fellow of Mercator Stiftung, is currently heading a project on multi-stakeholder-partnerships to implement the 2030 Agenda at GIZ. She also started the United Actors, an innovative start-up in the global governance scene, and has worked with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Action Campaign, at the Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production, the OECD and UN Volunteers.



I joined the GDL in its early days as an alumna of the Mercator Programme “Zukunftsbrücke – Chinese–German Young Professional Campus” and participated in the first Lab in Berlin in 2014. I found it very impressive: great formats, great people, great content.

At that time I was working on the “United Actors”, a very ambitious idea on how, instead of just bringing states together like at the UN, one could bring to the table all global governance stakeholders: states as well as local governments, business, academia and non-state actors. In the early stages of my project, the GDL served as a sort of incubator. The connection and exchange with other GDL members helped me a lot. One of my favourite GDL moments happened in the second Lab in Istanbul 2016, where I presented my idea to my fellow members. Imran Simmins, a South African diplomat, told me: “You are crazy, this will never work.” But then he took time to listen and exchange views, and in the end he said: “This is brilliant, you are a genius, the world needs this.” The opportunity to talk to someone in depth who was willing to truly listen and change his mind was amazing. This is one example of the possibilities of connection and exchange on a strong basis of trust that the GDL is creating.

What GDL Enables Me to Do

Another example of what the GDL can help make possible was an event that I initiated in 2015 on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the United Nations. Supported by the GDL, two other GDL

members and I organised a fish bowl discussion in the German House in New York under the headline: “The next 70 years: from the United Nations to the United Actors”. Around 80 participants attended the event, and it was very well received in the New York UN scene.

The Exchange With Others Empowers Me

I am not sure if I would have dared to pursue such a wildly ambitious idea like the United Actors without the support of the GDL and its partners. This is one of the most important contributions of the GDL: it empowers its members to try out their own, crazy, ambitious and innovative ideas. The exchange with other members made me realise that I am not the only one who thinks something has to change fundamentally in the world of global diplomacy and cooperation. (And I am glad and thankful that Mercator as one of the GDL’s partners is making this possible.)

At the beginning, I sometimes wondered how much impact the GDL is trying to have on its own members and how much impact it aims to have on the outside world. But I recently realised that this is a false distinction. Once the GDL has an impact on its members, we in turn have an impact on our own environment in the outside world because we think and act differently. My hope for the future of the GDL is that this positive impact will continue to grow and expand.

Protecting Democracies and Promoting Solidarity

Stiftung Mercator is a private and independent foundation with extensive scientific expertise and practical project experience. Through its work, it strives for a society characterised by openness to the world, solidarity and equal opportunities. To achieve these objectives, it supports and develops projects that strengthen democracy and the rule of law in Europe, foster integration and improve the educational success of children and young people, address the impact of digitalisation on democracy and society, and drive forward climate change mitigation. Stiftung Mercator pursues activities in Germany, Europe and worldwide.



door

noun, symbolic:
abandoning the old and embracing the new; an open door signifies welcome and invites discovery and investigation.

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"It is quite unique that the Federal Foreign Office, together with BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, Robert Bosch Stiftung, Stiftung Mercator and the Global Leadership Academy of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, provide their skills, finances, organisational tools and opportunities, and then leave it up to young diplomats and leaders from all over the world to develop new approaches to diplomacy in the 21st century."
— Ruprecht Polenz, Dean

"Once the GDL has an impact on its members, we in turn have an impact on our own environment in the outside world because we think and act differently."