Sage Advice:

International Advisory Councils at Tertiary Education Institutions

Philip G. Altbach, Georgiana Mihut and Jamil Salmi

WORLD BANK GROUP

The Boston College Center *for* International Higher Education

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CIHE Perspectives

This series of studies focuses on aspects of research and analysis undertaken at the Boston College Center for International Higher Education.

The Center brings an international consciousness to the analysis of higher education. We believe that an international perspective will contribute to enlightened policy and practice. To serve this goal, the Center produces *International Higher Education* (a quarterly publication), books, and other publications; sponsors conferences; and welcomes visiting scholars. We have a special concern for academic institutions in the Jesuit tradition worldwide and, more broadly, with Catholic universities.

The Center promotes dialogue and cooperation among academic institutions throughout the world. We believe that the future depends on effective collaboration and the creation of an international community focused on the improvement of higher education in the public interest.

CIHE FOREWORD

It is my great pleasure to present the first issue of *CIHE Perspectives*, a series of studies focusing on aspects of research and analysis undertaken by the Center for International Higher Education (CIHE).

CIHE has a long tradition of producing research and analysis. Thanks to the sustained patronage of Boston College, some of this work has been undertaken entirely independently. Much, however, has been conducted in cooperation with, or through the generous financial support of, a range of international organizations, such as the Ford Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the American Council on Education, the National Research University Higher School of Economics in Moscow, and the World Bank.

> The purpose of *CIHE Perspectives* is to serve as a resource for policy and research, but also to stimulate debate and interaction on key issues in international and comparative higher education.

We have long disseminated the results of our research through a variety of means, including our own quarterly publication, International Higher Education, as well as through books and journal articles, and—in more recent years—via blogs, such as The World View (hosted by Inside Higher Ed), and in cooperation with University World News. CIHE also produces a podcast series, featuring interviews with knowledgeable higher education experts from around the world.

CIHE Perspectives—essentially, an online report series—provides a new outlet for our work. This first issue is an example of a report commissioned by the World Bank. Here, the research endeavors to map the landscape of international advisory councils (IACs), a growing phenomenon at tertiary education institutions around the world. I write this foreword on my return from such an IAC meeting, one of three IACs I myself am involved in. So, the focus of this research, its conclusions and recommendations, resonate well with my personal experience, and I strongly recommend that leaders of higher education institutions and members of IACs read this study and consider carefully the relevance of its findings and the important questions it raises.

This first issue of *CIHE Perspectives* will soon be followed by a number of other studies we are in the process of finalizing. We welcome feedback on its content and would be happy to hear from you about additional experiences that relate to the IAC phenomenon.

Ultimately, the purpose of *CIHE Perspectives* is to serve as a resource for policy and research, but also to stimulate debate and interaction on key issues in international and comparative higher education.

Hans de Wit

Director, Boston College Center for International Higher Education

February 2016

WORLD BANK FOREWORD

Informing institutional decisions based on ideas from external perspectives is not new in tertiary education. In fact, since the creation of the University of Paris in the Twelfth Century, the *Universitas magistrorum et scholarium Parisiensis,* the community of scholars and students looked for expert external advice. In later years, due to concerns about the risk of losing autonomy and under the assumption that some detachment from outside was necessary in order to have objectivity in the analysis of problems, universities gained deserved reputation as "ivory towers".

> There is no doubt that our today's society exists on an increasingly interrelated, interdependent and globalized environment in which tertiary education institutions no longer can stay isolated from outside.

However, many things have changed. There is no doubt that our society exists in an increasingly interrelated, interdependent and globalized environment, in which tertiary education institutions can no longer stay isolated from outside. Currently, the tertiary education sector all over the world is massive, diverse, globalized and increasingly sophisticated. The impact of tertiary education institutions no longer can be confined to their immediate surrounding local context. They require more than ever the creation and nurturing of effective channels of communication with internal and external stakeholders—locally and internationally—as a way to mitigate risks, understand trends, inform academic work, and disseminate knowledge and innovations to the public.

The detailed research work reported here by Philip G. Altbach, Georgiana Mihut and Jamil Salmi provides for the first time a unique glimpse of the role that international advisory councils (IACs) play in guiding the work of tertiary education institutions in different parts of the world. These councils have become more common especially in large comprehensive tertiary education institutions. They can be an excellent source of experienced and somewhat neutral advice—although when not appropriately designed or implemented, they can become a significant burden with limited benefits for the institution.

It could be argued that seeking the advice of international experts is something that just a few elite and well-funded institutions can afford, but as is suggested by the authors, this is a concept that is both applicable and feasible in other tertiary education institutions.

The findings and recommendations discussed in this report constitute a unique source of input and orientation for institutions that have recognized that they can no longer stay isolated from the dynamic and changing world in which contemporary tertiary education operates.

Francisco Marmolejo

Lead, Global Solutions Group on Tertiary Education

The World Bank

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research focuses on mapping the landscape of international advisory councils (IACs), a growing phenomenon at tertiary education institutions around the world. The IAC trend is situated at the intersection of internationalization, the launch of excellence initiatives, and the increasing involvement of external actors at the governance level of tertiary education institutions (TEIs). Importantly, the emergence of IACs exemplifies the increased diffusion of internationalization at the governance level of TEIs, mostly universities. However, to this date, no research was constructed to describe, analyze or theorize IACs. In order to meet this gap, members of IACs and representatives of institutions hosting them were interviewed with the purpose of understanding what IACs are, how they are structured, how effectively they operate, and the rationales for their emergence. This paper reports on the findings of the interviews and advances a typology of IACs. Additionally, the study offers suggestions on how the activity of IACs can be improved and considerations useful in creating new IAC structures.

Based on the findings of our research, we suggest that tertiary education institutions interested in establishing effective international advisory councils consider the following key questions in order to benefit fully from such an initiative:

- Do you value lessons from international experience to inform strategic decisions about the future of your university?

- What is your actual purpose in setting up an IAC? Have you defined the actual goals that you seek to achieve by establishing an IAC and working with its members?

- Does the composition of the proposed IAC reflect a healthy diversity in terms of voices and experience (gender, academic profile and disciplines, geographic distribution, balance between practitioners and researchers, etc.)?

- Do the IAC members have a clear notion of the specific inputs that are expected from them?

- What are the learning and decision-making objectives of each IAC meeting from the viewpoint of the host institution? Is the meeting agenda sufficiently focused to achieve these objectives?

- Are you willing / able to objectively share the challenges that your institution faces and listen to constructive guidance with an open mind?

- Do you have a mechanism to ensure systematic follow up after IAC deliberations and monitor the results of these actions on a regular basis?

- Do you have clear rules to replace IAC members and bring new ones on board in line with your evolving agenda?

- In what ways are you able to obtain useful contributions from IAC members, beyond their inputs during the regular meetings, when you seek additional advice on key decisions that the host university needs to consider?

- Are you able to efficiently organize IAC meetings, providing sufficient advance notice, and help with logistics?

INTRODUCTION

The idea of establishing an international advisory group at tertiary education institutions has become increasingly popular, either due to the interest of institutions to legitimatize their work with adequate international perspectives or in connection with their participation in government-funded special incentive programs. In some cases, the launch of national excellence initiatives aimed at supporting the improvement of a selective number of TEIs such as the ones in China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, Spain, and South Korea, to mention only a few, has often been associated with the creation of such advisory boards at the institutional level. Indeed, some countries have mandated that the universities benefiting from added funds appoint such international advisory councils.

Globalization has created an environment where international expertise and linkages have become common for universities aspiring to world-class status. The idea is that universities must seek to achieve the highest standards of research and, in some cases, teaching, and international experience and expertise is a must to achieve this goal. International advisory councils are seen as a way of obtaining relevant global knowledge about how to best organize and implement top research-intensive universities.

Internationalization has changed the fabric of tertiary education and its actors in recent years (de Wit, Hunter, Howard, & Egron-Polak, 2015; Rumbley, Altbach, & Reisberg, 2012). Students transit national borders in order to gain a broader educational experience and scholars become internationally mobile as a result of the global competition for talent (Douglass & Edelstein, 2009). At the same time, institutions establish partnerships with foreign universities and open branch campuses overseas in order to expand their market and visibility (Lane, 2011). Further, global rankings as attempts to quantify reputation by using primarily indicators on re-

search productivity have impacted institutional strategies and national policies (Hazelkorn, 2011). Many universities are aspiring to become world class, as defined by global rankings (Salmi, 2009) and are taking concrete actions to achieve this goal. With the aid of international experts, governments around the world are establishing excellence initiatives designed to propel selected institutions in global rankings (Salmi, in press). In some cases, the creation of international advisory councils (IACs) has become a strategic action aimed at achieving the label world class, as later revealed in this paper.

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Universities voluntarily and increasingly seek external advice in their decision-making and governance processes (Boer, Enders & Schimank, 2007). The external advice comes from entities such as advisory bodies, boards of trustees, students and industry stakeholders. Occasionally, external advice is given by international organizations such as the World Bank, the OECD or regional governmental entities, such as the European Commission.

In today's internationalized tertiary education environment, where competition for reputation among institutions is increasingly important, an additional international external advice entity is starting to make its impact on the governance of those institutions: international advisory councils (IACs). These councils directly serve the upper administra-

tive levels of an institution. Unlike boards of trustees, or external stakeholder guidance bodies, IACs are composed primarily or exclusively of international members, handpicked by institutional leaders to serve institutional needs and goals.

In this context, the main purpose of this research is to understand the emergence of international advisory councils, a growing phenomenon around the world, and to provide useful guidance for those managing or thinking of establishing IACs. Members of IACs and representatives of institutions hosting them were interviewed in order to understand what IACs are, how they are structured, and the rationales for their emergence. The paper is structured in seven main sections. First, the discussion of IACs is contextualized within the broader phenomenon of internationalization through the concept of internationalization of governance. Sec-

ond, in order to better guide readers in understanding what IACs are, and what IACs are not, a conceptual clarification section is introduced. Following the conceptual clarifications, the third section of the paper explains the design of the study supporting this research, the data collection process, the research instrument employed and key information about the research participants. The fourth section of the study introduces the descriptive results of the research, exemplifying the variety encountered among IACs. Separately, in section five, the thematic analysis conducted on the interviews is used to introduce a typology of IACs, as revealed by our data. Section six includes advice on how IACs can be created and key observations on how the operation of IACs may be improved. The last section concludes the paper with a discussion about the place of IACs in the landscape of tertiary education institutions.

Internationalization of Institutional Governance

Broadly speaking, one stream of focus within the tertiary education academic literature is the discussion of internationalization in reference to the global *mobility* of individuals such as staff, students and scholars (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2010; Choudaha & de Wit, 2014), the circulation of educational curriculum (Brewer & Leask, 2012) and the mobility of institutions through branch campuses (Lane, 2011). The mobility of people, curriculum, and institutions is discussed in the framework of *internationalization at home and internationalization abroad*, thus covering the ramifications of internationalization on both the mobile and settled populations (Knight, 2006). A second stream of recent focus in the tertiary education literature concerns itself with the policies put in place by governments to help institutions achieve the status of world class universities, get better results in the global rankings, (Salmi, in press) and manage the effects of internationalization (Helms, Rumbley, Brajkovic, & Mihut, 2015). In this context and in addition, international-

ization is starting to shape the governance process itself. This happens not only through shifting the content focus of policies and institutional strategies that are typically done by traditional governance struc-

> An IAC is an advisory body formed primarily or exclusively by international members, external to the institution, serving the upper levels of the administration and governance of a tertiary education institution.

tures, but also through complementary structures that have an imbedded international dimension. This often happens at a regional and national level through

international advisory bodies to various traditional governing structures such as governments, ministries and other decision-making agencies and through supranational structures and initiatives. At the institutional level, the internationalization of governance occurs foremost through the creation of IACs. IACs do not have decision-making powers but are voluntary bodies created with the primary purpose of aiding the governance structures of universities.

In addition with the creation of IACs, the internationalization of governance at an institutional level manifests itself also through appointing international members to serve on traditional governing structures such as university senates and boards of trustees, or act as university presidents. Few interviewees discussed their appointments as international members on such governing bodies with decision-making responsibilities.

Conceptual Clarification

We define an international advisory council simply as an *advisory body formed primarily or exclusively by international members, external to the institution, serving the upper levels of the administration and governance of a tertiary education institution.*

However, the label international advisory council can be interpreted to refer to two other distinct types of organizations than the one at the center of this paper. In the North American context, international advisory councils often refer to internal bodies at the level of a TEI, formed by internal faculty and administrative members, focused on addressing internationalization issues at the institutional level and using an institutional perspective. This type of organization bears the label international because of the focus of its activities. In other circles, international advisory councils are perceived as advisory bodies to international organizations such as the OECD. Here, the label international derives from the international nature of the organization that the advisory body serves. In contrast, the international

> IACs do not have decision-making powers but are voluntary bodies created with the primary purpose of aiding the governance structures of universities.

advisory council discussed in the context of this paper is not always or exclusively focused on international issues, and never serves international organizations. In contrast, it always includes international members and serves a specific tertiary education institution. IACs do not always, but often have a broader thematic purpose beyond internationalization strategies, and include decisions about research strategy, regional development, resource allocation and institutional branding.

Data Collection and Study Design

To date, no systematic research aimed at mapping or explaining the activity of IACs exists. This research project was initiated as an exploratory study of IACs, seeking a better understanding of their development and functions. The IAC phenomenon is scattered geographically across the world. In this circumstance, gathering information from participants in IACs activities seemed to be a reliable and trustworthy research design choice. The key participants included as part of this research are international members of IACs and representatives of the institutions hosting them. Given the existence of relatively few IACs (to our knowledge at the time when the study was designed), and the wide geographic distribution of the key actors, interviews were used as a data collection tool in the context of the study. In order to gather comparative data and at the same time allow for the collection of information unanticipated by the researchers, semi-structured interviews were conducted. A snowball data collection procedure (Atkinson & Flint, 2004) was utilized to gather interviewees. The procedure implies that suggestions for additional respondents from prior interviewees were utilized to contact future interviewees. We also used web searches as a way of locating additional potential participants.

Research Questions

Given its exploratory nature, the main purpose of the present research is to describe the IAC phenomenon by answering the following questions:

(1) What are the structures of IACs?

(2) How do IACs operate?

(3) What motivates universities to sponsor IACs and what are their expectations?

(4) What motivates members to join IACs and how do they perceive their roles and contributions?

The Research Instrument

In order to answer the questions above, two semi-structured interview protocols were designed. One interview protocol aimed at capturing the experience of members of IACs, and a second protocol was designed for representatives of universities hosting IACs. Members of various IACs were asked questions about their personal involvement with IACs, about the mode of operation of IACs, and about their reasons for joining an IAC. The interview protocol for representatives of institutions hosting IACs included a section on the rationale behind their existence and their relevance to the university. Additionally, representatives of universities were asked to describe the history and the structure of their IACs. The appendix contains the interview protocols utilized as part of this research. The transcribed interviews were analyzed using the thematic data analysis process described by Braun and Clarke (2008).

Geographic Distribution of IACs

Information on 28 distinct IACs was gathered as part of this research. This information originates from 26 interviewees. These IACs are located in 20 different countries, on all continents, with Western Europe having the highest concentration. Table 1 illustrates the regional distribution of the IACs for which data was collected. We have not named the countries where the IACs are located because many countries have very few IACs and disclosure would mean that confidentiality for IAC members or IAC representatives could not be assured.

TABLE 1 **Geographical Distribution of the IACs Identified**

South America	Southern Africa	Oceania	Eastern Asia	Middle East	Eastern Europe	Southern Europe	Western Europe	Northern Europe	North America	Total
1	2	1	4	3	3	1	10	2	1	28

IACs and Their Members

Profiles of IAC Members

According to our interviewees, IAC members belong to one of the following categories, in the order of frequency (1) current or former high level administrators of universities (usually presidents, vice-chancellors or rectors), (2) higher education researchers, (3) researches that specialize in the current or aspiring area of expertise of the host institution, (4) researchers that specialize their study on the country where the IAC is located, (5) individuals with a policy background, and (6) industry representatives. A few other categories of members, such as secondary education experts, can be found serving on IACs, according to our interviewees. IACs often make strategic decisions regarding the membership composition—this will be discussed later in the paper. The IAC landscape seems to be heavily dominated by males, from Western countries, largely from the United States, and in general affiliated to prestigious institutions.

Terms of Appointment

Fixed and *open term* appointments are both prevalent among IACs. On fixed-term appointments, one interviewee critically mentioned

> *No, there are not fixed appointments (...) and from the university's point of view, they should specify the time. They can renew you, because they do not have a way of getting rid of, a little bit of embarrassment, of people that do not come, or are useless (Interviewee 1, Member of IAC).*

Another interviewee described "I think there are both (fixed and open terms). There are institutions that have been more clever in establishing terms, which in my opinion is the best idea" (Interviewee 19, Member of IAC). On fixed terms among IACs, one interviewee recounted

> *(Name of institution) set guidelines with the terms of reference, with how many years and renewal references. The (name of institution) is just starting up and I was invited in the inaugural meeting, where one of the tasks I had to accomplish was to look at what would be*

the terms of references including the term of appointment (Interviewee 12, Member of IAC).

Changes in senior leadership in the universities hosting the IAC seem to affect the composition of the IAC and determine changes in membership composition. "No, there were no fixed terms, but I remember that in all cases the leadership changed over time and members left or were dropped off, and then some people were added. And it seems that I was one of the people that stayed on all of the time" (Interviewee 7, Member of IAC) one interviewee stated.

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How are Members of IACs Recruited?

Most IAC members are known by or had prior contact with the host institution before joining the IAC. One interviewee said "I received an honorary degree from (name of institution), gave a talk there, and subsequently I was invited by the dean of the faculty of sciences" (Interviewee 3, Member of IAC), while another member stated "well, in both cases I knew people there and I was asked by people that were personal friends" (Interviewee 8, Member of IAC). The selection mechanisms of members based on prior contact with the institution or through social networks is confirmed by multiple other interviewees:

> *...many times is because you know people who are sort of engaged in the activity or because they invite you to something that is intriguing and interesting, or be-*

cause you are familiar with the institution and now you know that they are interested in exploring the international angle. (Interviewee 19, Member of IAC).

Exceptions exist, and few interviewees were contacted "out of the blue" (Interviewee 12, Member of IAC) by the institution hosting an IAC as in this case

I had no connection to (name of institution), but they knew my work and they were establishing the advisory board and they looked to an international composition focused only on the internationalization policy, so they asked for my CV (Interviewee 10, Member of IAC).

Most IAC members are known by or had prior contact with the host institution before joining the IAC.

In one case, the host institution gathered recommendations for IAC members from faculty and colleagues within the institution. Importantly, in deciding which IAC members to select, this host institution preferred members that did not have comparable appointments with other tertiary education institutions in order to avoid conflicts of interest

We gathered information from across the university and colleagues were asked to provide nominations, given their own contacts internationally, and not only internationally, but in (name of host country) as well. We came with a short list. We started with approximately two dozens and we approached all of them. Some of them declined for various reasons: they had other commitments, they were too busy or they were serving on comparable bodies and they correctly regarded a dual service as a conflict of interest (Interviewee 26, Representative of TEI).

What Motivates Members to Join IACs?

Members of IACs tend to be highly established professionals who are "the best in their field, or who have made extraordinary accomplishments in science, education, or other fields" (Interviewee 21, Member of IAC), as one interviewee describes them. At the same time most of them do not receive mon-

etary compensation for their activity on IACs. The tension between the two facts makes relevant the question of what motivates members to contribute towards the activity of IACs. To a large extent, members of IACs see this activity as a form of *academic service*. One interviewee, a retired higher education professional captures this theme:

I have been doing this for most of my life, in higher education particularly, and now that I am a bit further in life, I am a bit older, people keep on asking me to keep coming back or join other advisory councils. And I think I have some experience and I know the literature and I have done that a number of times. So it motivates me to be able to assist, so I like doing it. (Interviewee 17, Member of IAC).

The specific institutions where members undergo academic service, or "academic citizenship" (Interviewee 7, Member of IAC) are often determined by a number of different factors which include the *importance of a relationship* with either *the country* where the IAC is located, *the institution* itself, or *specific individuals* operating at the level of the institution. In elaborating on his motivation one interviewee describes the relation with the institution as follows "I have had some relationship with (name of institution) before that, I think, in terms of research (...) and had a lot of respect for what that university is trying to accomplish in the (name of country) context, and I tried to be helpful" (Interviewee 1, Member of IAC), while another one stated:

Well, I am a specialist in (name of country), I am fluent in (official language), I have many contacts over there, I go back and forward a lot through various networks and, you know, for us, for people who study in that part of the world is in our interest for (name of country) higher education to become more open, transparent and cooperative (Interviewee 6, Member of IAC).

Personal relations were quite apparent in the motivation of several IAC members as illustrated by one interviewee "in both cases I had a personal contact. As I said (name), a researcher in higher education, and we actually coauthored things together. She was a professor at (name of institution), and then she became a (high administrative position) with the rector's office" (Interviewee 14, Member of IAC). Supporting the importance of personal

connection, one interviewee stated "I was friends with people there so I basically did it as a favor to them" (Interviewee 8, Member of IAC).

The *personal relation with other members on the IAC* becomes an additional motivating factor. Often interviewees discussed the stimulating and collegial environment that IACs offer. For one interviewee this stemmed from the international nature of IACs "it's an opportunity for me to get to know people in another country, which I enjoy, I enjoy working with people from other countries, and these boards contain very interesting people" (Interviewee 3, Member of IAC), while another interviewee stated "you always meet people that are knowledgeable. Its contacts, its networking" (Interviewee 16, Member of IAC).

An additional source of motivation for members of IACs is the learning opportunity provided by access to a new university and tertiary education system. For

Feeling that *their opinion was valued*, as stated by one interviewee, and they were offered a *chance to make an impact*, becomes a key component for the retention of IAC members.

one interviewee, a tertiary education expert, the opportunity to stay connected to the institutional realities of tertiary education was a motivating factor:

I am very interested to keep up to date with what is happening at the institutional level reform. I do not want to lose touch with what happens at the institutional level. As you know, I do not work too much at the institutional level (….) I am more national, regional and global (Interviewee 12, Member of IAC).

Another interviewee describes the learning opportunity given by membership on various IACs as *a valuable tool in the work conducted in their home institution*. In this case the interviewee suggested that staying connected is key in remaining fully informed:

…for me it is very interesting. I know very many of the European university systems and it was good for me, as the president of (name of home institution), to know that my knowledge of the different systems is still up to date and where the problems are. Of course, by learning about that I use this knowledge to try to do better in (home institution), where I served as president for 10 years. Europe has a diversity of higher education systems, the Finnish university has nothing to do with the Greek. It's extremely diverse, and if you want to keep informed, you have to keep connected (Interviewee 20, Member of IAC).

Feeling that their *opinion was valued*, as stated by one interviewee, and they were offered a *chance to make an impact,* becomes a key component for the retention of IAC members. In the case of one interviewee, feeling useful was the main criteria in determining to continue as a member of various IACs "I have to feel that I can be useful to them, it's not like I am used for name dropping, but I feel that my expertise is useful to them" (Interviewee 10, Member of IAC). Another interviewee described the possibility to make an impact as a complementary element to the learning opportunity that membership on IACs offers:

…matching between their priorities and my assumption that I think I am suited to those priorities. So there is a combination: I think I can contribute to that and what intrigues me, what excites me. It is kind of a joined enriching experience. I do not do that just for the sake of doing, or because I may know everything about international issues. I also think it's because I think I can contribute to the board (Interviewee 19, Member of IAC).

Membership on IACs was not only viewed as a source of learning, but also as an *opportunity for advocacy* on behalf of values one is guided as someone working in higher education. One interviewee stated:

(Name of home organization) carries a certain number of values that I feel very committed to and so that is also the reason why I want to take part. When you see an institution that is commercial, I can bring in what I believe should be the values to consider to the table, and so I think I am committed to doing that as well as to learning (Interviewee 20, Member of IAC).

For interviewed participants, IACs were seen as an opportunity for academic service and as spaces of

learning and for making what they perceive to be meaningful contributions. The collegial nature of IACs and the relationships built among members added to the reasons for which members continue their involvement.

We have not, in this section, tried to rank by frequency the motivations that were expressed but rather mentioned the ones that we have perceived to be most common and relevant, in no special order of importance.

> For interviewed participants, IACs were seen as an opportunity for academic service and as spaces of learning and for making what they perceive to be meaningful contributions.

Typical IAC Organization

IACs are organized in a variety of ways and configurations. These variations carry across elements such as number of members, number of meetings per year, length of meeting, membership status, and the hierarchical structure of the IACs. The IACs for which data was collected as part of this research most commonly are composed of 6 to 14 members. However, differences were encountered, as the smallest IAC reported 4 members and the largest reported 30 members. Typically, IACs meet once or twice a year, but few meet more frequently, up to four times a year. The meetings last as little as half a day, but are sometimes stretched over three days, and in one case four full days. The most common length ranges between one day and a half and two days. In most cases, the IAC does not have a chair, and the meetings are moderated by the university leaders, frequently the president or rector of the institution. In the few cases when the IAC has a chair, she/he is usually appointed by the sponsoring university. Most IAC meetings include social programs

for members. These social events serve as a form of reward for members, and to solidify networking between members and the institutions themselves.

Functions of IACs

As perceived by IAC members and stated by TEI representatives, the main function of IACs is to provide external advice on the design and implementation of the university's overall strategy. But often, IACs serve functions beyond an advisory role, such as providing internal and external legitimacy for institutional policies, becoming a buffer body between the institution and State actors and bringing prestige to the institution. The functions and motivations encountered throughout the interviews are presented below in the form of rationales. These rationales are not mutually exclusive and multiple rationales facilitating the creation of an IAC are often present.

Most often, both members of IACs and representatives of institutions hosting them reference what is described as the *quality or improvement rationale* in justifying the activity and existence of an IAC. Under this rationale, institutions "really want advice" (Interviewee 25, Member of IAC) and aim at obtaining expertise from respected academic leaders and distinguished scholars, including diverse perspectives from around the world, in order to improve the institution across a number of diverse goals as illustrated by the quotes below:

> *I would say that there is a desire to learn best practice from other parts of the world, to learn about what is good practice. I think there is an interest in extending their understanding about how other countries in the world are undertaking institutional reform (Interviewee 12, Member of IAC).*

Highlighting the impact IACs have on the governance of a TEI and to support the quality or improvement rationale, one institutional representative stated

> *What I just said: we wanted to have the best possible advice for achieving our mission, from stakeholders that are not naturally involved in your governance structure. You have the rector, the faculty and the students that is your common sense representation in your governance structure. But you do not really have employers, people from research, people with a global*

view or people from secondary education. We wanted to make sure that we have a wide range of stakeholders helping us achieve our mission as an institution (Interviewee 15, Representative of TEI).

A second motivation encountered in the data was labeled as the *prestige rationale*. In these situations, the aim and drive behind the creation of an IAC is to boost the prestige of the universities establishing the IAC through association with key international representatives. This rationale is most transparent in the response of members rather than university representatives, as illustrated by Interviewee 1 "They think it will boost their brand image by having some international scholar or other international people affiliated with them, that they put on their website, which they do in our case, they have our picture" (Interviewee 1, Member of IAC). Interviewee 2 (Member of IAC) stated "and at the (name of institution) are keen on improving and becoming more international. Also, in that case, I think there is a prestige element, you know, we have these prestigious people as our members". The same rationale is highlighted in the quote below:

> *Well, I think it's a way of getting some outside advice and some outside validation. It is a way that an institution can improve itself and also tell the world that there are some famous people who are associated with the place (Interviewee 8, Member of IAC).*

In a few instances, an *external rationale* was mentioned as a reason for the establishment of the IAC. In these cases, IACs were established to fulfill the recommendations of external stakeholders, especially in the context of various excellence initiatives across the world. In at least one case, the national legislative framework directly mandates the creation of a university-wide scientific board that includes an equal number of international and national members. While discussing the rationale for the creation of the university-wide IAC, one university representative said the following "it is in the law, but at the second level and the only thing the law says is that there should be as many insiders as outsiders. So it could have been 4 and 4" (Interviewee 23, Representative of TEI).

The *mimetic rationale*, that is the desire to match the activities of close competitors, is another drive detected among IACs. An example of this rationale is given in the following quote "I am not entirely sure why they established the group, but I imagine that a certain amount of it had to do with imitating what was going on next door at (name of competitor institution) (....) and since (name of competitor institution) had an international advisory council, (name of institution) needed one too" (Interviewee 13, Member of IAC).

A common aim and drive behind the creation of an IAC is to boost the prestige of the university through association with key international representatives.

IACs are sometimes viewed as tools that facilitate *internal legitimacy* for the governance structures at the level of the institutions. They increase the legitimacy of internal decisions to internal stakeholders by having them discussed and endorsed by the IAC members. In this way, controversial decisions may be presented as the opinion, or endorsement of international experts, as in this case:

> *The fourth reason is legitimacy or making use for government. It's like just saying because international experts say we should do that. I will give you an example. We are looking into salaries that partially depend on the productivity of the faculty members. This bonus for publication activity is an important part of the salary. There is always a big part of a discussion. We implement changes every year, and people are not happy that their salary structure changes every year, but when you say that international experts said that this is important, people understand (Interviewee 5, Representative of TEI).*

Similarly to the rationale above, the *external legitimacy rationale* was also encountered in some of the interviews. IACs may serve to increase the legitimacy of internal decisions for external stakeholders "sometimes people from the ministry do not want to look bad in the international environment. Sometimes we are saying that is important not to lose face

in front of the international experts, and sometimes it works" (Interviewee 5, Representative of TEI). Another interviewee describes the external legitimacy rationale in a positive light, as illustrated below

> The other reasons are probably political, in a good sense. Because a lot of these universities are public, they have to deal with the ministry, or the funding agency. By having an advisory committee, it serves as an independent piece of evidence. The president will never come in and say "I need your help to fight this ministry", but when we agree, they can use that. Sometime they can also use that internally in changes. One thing is the president to say: "I want to do this", but it's another thing to say: "my independent advisory committee, based on their experience, also suggest this". (Interviewee 25, Member of IAC).

Generally applicable to small countries, the *knowledge gap rationale* explains the emergence of IACs in several instances. In these cases, IACs are created to complement knowledge gaps that are perceived to exist at the university or at the national level. In commenting on this issue, one interviewee mentioned "(name of country) is way too small, you do not want (nationals) on the board, you need international when you are in a small country, and you need the international perspective" (Interviewee 18, Representative of TEI), while another confirmed this to be the case for an institution located in a different country "for years they were discussing and they wanted to have a very international university. And part of it was also to have the international advisory and the governing boards to have foreigners. In fact, there were basically no (nationals) with the necessary level of competence" (Interviewee 23, Representative of TEI).

The *cost-benefit rationale* seems to be another reason for why universities are willing to create IACs. In most cases, members of IACs do not receive a honorarium. This means that the cost to universities is generally limited to travel (although often business class is offered for long international flights), accommodation and meals for a generally small group of individuals. From an institutional perspective, this cost is not high compared with the returns. In answering questions about the budget of the IAC, one institution representative stated "if you compare it to the amount that we invest in other initiatives, it is not that much" (Interviewee 22, Representative of TEI), while a member of multiple IACs stated "I think the value of these IACs is to really have somebody speak their minds frankly, professionally, and give you advice that you might accept. This is a cheap way of getting advice from a very experienced group" (Interviewee 2, Member of IAC).

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A few IACs for which data was gathered as part of this research seemed to exist only for *public relations and symbolic reasons*. These IACs did not seem to accomplish any tangible activities, and in one case it did not meet at all. In describing the experience with two IACs, both of which had between 20 and 30 members that met for four hours to discuss a rather lengthy agenda, one interviewee mentioned:

> I do not think these advisory boards have been too useful. And one of the main reasons to me is that instead of taking one subject and one problem and discussing it, we talk a little about too many things. Therefore, most of what we say are platitudes and it is relatively superficial. I might be able to see a little bit, this is very small statistics, but in most cases it's done because it's supposed to be done (Interviewee 16, Member of IAC).

Effectiveness of IACs

Members and institutional representatives reflected a mixed picture concerning the effectiveness of IACs. Many of the interviewees have been members of more than one IAC. This allowed them to offer a comparative sense of the effectiveness among various IACs, and more importantly, where the

differences in effectiveness stem from. While no definition of effectiveness was provided to interviewees, two criteria of measurement for effectiveness emerged during the data analysis of the interviews. The first effectiveness criterion is *the extent to which the universities considered and followed the advice offered by the IAC*. Implementation of advice by the institution illustrates to members the tangible and meaningful impact that their activity has, and justifies creating and maintaining the IACs from the perspective of institutions. The second effectiveness criterion is the smooth *organization of the IAC activity*. Effective management of IACs can be increased by offering meaningful and transparent information about the institution to members, crafting targeted agendas, selecting members appropriate to the needs of the institution and reaching out to IAC members to leverage their expertise.

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Few interviewees identified IACs with a *low level of effectiveness*. One interviewee associated the low level of effectiveness of IACs to the prestige acquisition function that multiple IACs meet.

> *I must say that in all cases I have a little bit of a question mark about their effectiveness. It looks like many of those institutions use the board as a kind of name-dropping and to show to the internal and external stakeholders that they have an advisory board that is internationally experienced and recognized. So it's a*

reputation game, and not always very effective in terms of making use of the board. Also, given that in an IAC people have to travel, you do not have many meetings. It's basically only one or two meetings a year, there should be more activity and reporting and advice asking between the meetings. In my experience, mostly you come to the meetings, you get your reports for the meeting before the meeting, you discuss at the meeting, and then you wait until the next round, which I found very ineffective (Interviewee 10, Member of IAC).

Another interviewee labeled less effective IACs as "symbolic" (Interviewee 19, Member of IAC). In this case, the symbolic, non-functioning IAC the interviewee discussed never convened for actual advice or discussions with the institution.

Most IACs for which data was collected were identified as having a *mixed level of effectiveness*. In comparing the experience with two different IACs, one interviewee stated "I do not think that the (name of first IAC) one is getting as much as they could or should. I think the (name of second IAC) are doing good, considering their culture. I think we are giving them good value for their money" (Interviewee 2, Member of IAC). In illustrating how the advice given by the IAC was followed at two distinct institutions, one interviewee discussed the varied level of openness in the two cases "certainly (name of first IAC) did to a certain extend. I think on the (name of second IAC) we provided very good advice, but to be honest, I think the leadership was defensive, and they could have gained a lot more from the board, if they were prepared to listen to our advice" (Interviewee 3, Member of IAC).

A few IACs were praised by their members to display a *high level of effectiveness.* One interviewee suggested that:

> *The composition of the (name of institution) panel was rather intelligent, because they selected rectors from (host country) and other countries, and they also have selected a number of deans at (peer institution according to field of specialty) that gave them a better comparative analysis. I think that in the case of (name of institution) the president has surrounded himself with some of the best people in the world in quality assurance. I wish we had in the US a comparable body (Interviewee 14, Member of IAC).*

The effectiveness of IACs is strongly influenced by its relationship to the leadership of the institution.

The very existence of the IAC may change suddenly as a result of changes in leadership. One interviewee recalled the experience with an IAC that dissolved before our interview took place. The decision making process that determined the closure of the IACs was not transparent, but the interviewee suggested that a change in leadership at the institutional level triggered the closure. In another case, one IAC paused its activity temporarily also as a result of changes at the leadership level, but a university representative indicated that it will resume its operation soon, with a different composition. At the other end of the spectrum, another IACs survived after changes at the leadership level of a different institution, nonetheless, several changes in membership were made. The volatility of IACs in relation to the governance composition of the institutions can partially be explained by the personal relationships that drive the appointment of IAC members, and the need for new leadership structures to build trust with the IAC structures they will intimately work with.

Again, we have not sought in this section to quantify levels of effectiveness. Our general impression is that the levels of effectiveness overall is mixed, with few IACs identified as highly effective by our interviewees.

Typology of IACs

The data gathered through the interviews allow us to create a simple typology of IACs (Table 2). We have identified three broad types of IACs, based on the main purposes universities identify for their IAC, and the ways in which universities make use of these bodies: (i) transformative, (ii) prestige-oriented, and (iii) symbolic. In the first case, the universities actually use the advice provided by IACs. In the second case, the universities are mainly interested in the prestige associated with the profile, experience and visibility of IAC members. In the last case, the universities go through the motion of establishing and running an IAC but do not take much or any advantage from its presence.

A *transformative IAC* is focused on institutional improvement, and the universities are interested in ensuring that the councils are organized to provide targeted advice. The selection of members to join transformative IACs focuses on the needs of the institution and its broad strategic goals. Members are often experts in areas of the institution's interest, and come from peer universities. In order to increase effectiveness, members tend to serve for a fixed period of time, with possibilities for renewal. Examples of how the activity of the IAC and the advice provided was incorporated at the level of the institution were frequently given by our interviewees for transformative IACs. A transformative IAC can evolve to meet

TABLE 2 **Typology of IACs**

	Transformative	Prestige-Oriented	Symbolic
Leading rationale	Improvement	Visibility	Public relations
Terms of office	Fixed	Open	Open
Composition of members	Expert/Peer institutions	Representatives of prestigious universities	Varied/Political composition
Overall effectiveness	Rather high	Mixed	Rather low

the changing needs of the institution it serves, which allows it to maintain relevance over time. The quote below by a university representative discusses three evolving stages the IAC hosted underwent:

...this was the first period, so the council was acting close to the process of developing a potentially successful project for (excellence initiative project of the country). In the second period we were discussing the outcomes, the results of the already project which was funded by means of the (excellence initiative project of the country). (....) And there was a third period when we were identifying potential key topics for joint discussions. For instance, digitalization or the general aim of international activity (....) So according to these different phases, the international council was contributing to different fields. I think the first was that all critical remarks concerning the ongoing project in the launching period were taken very seriously, so they were influencing the settings of the proposal. In the second period the general assessments were also taken very seriously because this was a kind of early evaluation and this was exclusively offered by the international council (Interviewee 22, Representative of TEI).

Noteworthy, transformative IACs often include discussions concerning institutional research excellence, internationally or regionally, but its purposes are multidimensional and span across different aspect of an institution.

A *prestige-oriented IAC* derives from the desire of the university to gain visibility from association with prestigious individuals and leverage the expertise of professors and leaders of prestigious institutions to enhance the reputation of the host university. While a transformational IAC focuses on a breath of aspects relevant to the institution, prestige-oriented IACs have a one-dimensional focus of facilitating prestige acquisition, often as defined by institutional rankings. Members of a prestige-oriented IAC tend to originate from highly prestigious institutions abroad, and benefit from open terms. The host institutions are more likely to offer an honorarium for member involvement. While the effectiveness of prestige oriented IACs may be high, the evidence throughout the data suggests a mixed level of effectiveness.

Lastly, *symbolic IACs* often bring little contribution to the governance or the improvement of the institution. In our research, three cases of symbolic IACs were identified. In one case, the members of the IAC never met physically or virtually, and the host institution requested no service from the IAC members. In the other two cases, while the IACs met, the meeting lasted for half a day, included between 20 and 30 members and the agenda was too long to allow for meaningful contributions to be collected from IAC members. In all cases, the IAC members had open terms.

How to Create IACs and Make Them Better

Both members of IACs and university representatives were asked to offer suggestions to tertiary education institutions that may be considering creating an IAC. Many of the answers to this question can serve the purpose of both improving the activity of current IACs and avoiding common mistakes in the creation of new IACs.

The most frequent response from interviewees advises institutions to *clearly define the mission and the vision of the IAC* before its creation. One interviewee mentioned "they should first sit down, and explain what they are after, then talk to people and put this kind of group together" (Interviewee 11, Member of IAC). Another interviewee suggested "I would tell them that you need to define your mission and vision. You must know what to do" (Interviewee 24, Member of IAC). This suggestion is prevalent among individuals that have experiences with IACs. One related suggestion offered by interviewees connected to *tailoring the composition of members to the mission and vision* set for the IAC:

They should consider the purpose of the IAC, why do

we want that and why an advisory board. My experience is that they have a fake idea and a fake description, and they should elaborate what they want from the advisory board. And based on these two questions, what they want the composition of the IAC to be (Interviewee 10, Member of IAC).

Many interviewees strongly advocated for a more *diverse membership* on IACs. A diverse composition includes variation across gender, geographic origin, field of expertise, institution of origin, and stakeholder representation. One interviewee stated:

...second, have a balanced IAC, so that you don't have just people from Harvard and Stanford, I do not think that is useful. You want to have a range, you want to have a good gender balance, you want to have a mix of rectors, academics, one or two policy makers (Interviewee 2, Member of IAC).

In discussing the membership of IACs, few IAC members suggested that members with expertize in advising should be preferred "first of all, getting the most experienced people who are truly prepared to participate in the activities of the board" (Interviewee 2, Member of IAC). Other interviewees deemed knowledge about the local context to be relevant in the process of selecting members "I would suggest they choose people that know a little bit about their system, not necessarily the institution, but the system it operates in" (Interviewee 20, Member of IAC). Given the importance of interpersonal relations between members on IACs, institutions should *consider the collective* group that the individual members form, and not just each individual appointment.

Institutions hosting IACs should promote *transparency and frankness* with their IAC members. In the words of one interviewee, IAC gatherings should not become "propaganda meetings" (Interviewee 2, Member of IAC). One of the tools institutions can employ in being transparent and open is to *involve members of the institution, especially the senior management, in the meetings of the IAC*. One interviewee described the following practice at one IAC:

...the other thing that has worked rather well at (name of IAC) is that they involve a lot of people. We prepped them to bring more people. We would like to see more students involved. Now, I have my private access to the (name of institution) students, but some committee members have not met students. Generally they do

make people available, if you want to see someone, they have that person. And there is a plenary session that goes a whole day as I recall, and there are 40-50 people there, and that is good (Interviewee 6, Member of IAC).

At the same time, institutions cannot expect IAC members to be intimately familiar with the institution. This requires designing systems to both *leverage general knowledge* that members possess, and processes that *facilitate learning about the host institution*. One institution organized a preparatory day for IAC members that enabled them to study documents relevant to the institution and have any questions answered. Another institution organized tours for IAC members in which they could discuss with representatives of various units and internal stakeholders. Generally, institutions send IAC members relevant documents in advance. According to IAC members, these documents should not be lengthy.

An additional set of aspects to consider in creating an IAC connects to the *size of the council, planning for the meeting, the design of the agenda, and the terms of office.* In order to promote effectiveness, most interviewees suggested that IACs should not exceed 12 members.

In few cases, members were not able to attend IAC meetings due to late planning by the host institution, or other scheduling problems. In order to facilitate attendance, IAC *meetings should be planned far ahead of time.* At the same time, lengthy agendas were seen as less effective by IAC members. It is preferable to have relatively *few agenda items* that prioritize the strategic needs of the institution. Creating fixed terms of office for IAC members may also ensure effectiveness of IACs.

All but one university representatives who were interviewed did not view the cost of establishing and hosting an IAC as high. One interviewee stated "we have a very small budget which is only confined to bringing members of the IAC to (name of city where the university is located), their travel cost and a small honorarium, and the cost for conducting the event, some translation, some food" (Interviewee 4, Representative of TEI). However, financial costs do exist, as highlighted by one university representative who stated that "without question" (Interviewee 26, Representa-

tive of TEI) the cost of hosting the IAC was significant for the tertiary education institution. Distinctly, this IAC met twice per year for a week at a time. This cost needs to be weighed against the effectiveness that an IAC can bring to an institution.

In order to fully take advantage of IACs, one of the final suggestions from interviewees was for universities to be better prepared for *considering and implementing the advice from IAC members.* One interviewee discussed the reluctance of university leadership in making use of external advice "some university leaders are not prepared to put their defenses down in that way. If you want to have a good board, you have to be prepared to bring the real problems and use their advice to solve the problems" (Interviewee 3, Member of IAC).

The decision to create an IAC should not be taken lightly by an institution, and should not be seen as a silver bullet for addressing institutional challenges or acquiring prestige. There are examples of highly successful emerging universities that do not host an IAC. In addition to being a member of various IACs, one of our interviewees also happens to occupy a key leadership position at a young, highly ranked research-intensive university. This university does not host an IAC. When asked why the institution decided against creating an IAC, the interviewee mentioned that, in order to host an IAC effectively, an institution needs to be both open to receiving external advice and prepared to implement the advice received.

...when you ask for their advice, you'd better listen to some of it, otherwise they would not come. It sort of ties you, so you have to be ready, be prepared to receive advice. So we decided that at this stage of our development, there are so many things we want to do, so we do not need to add another thing with the international advisory committee. There is a potential danger, frankly, in getting too much advice (Interviewee 25, Member of IACs).

Additionally, the leadership of this institution is already composed by international members or members with an international background, which means that diverse and international perspectives are already present within the decision-making bodies of the university. As such, the governance of this institution is internationalized through other means than the presence of an IAC. The interviewee explained:

We are in a sense our own international committee. If you look at (name of IAC interviewee is a member of), their own board, their culture is very much (culture of host country for IAC). They needed an IAC more than us in order to push them to be international. We were international from day one. Most of our faculty is not from (country of university), 80% of our faculty are not from (country of university), our senior management are not from (country of university). (Interviewee 25, Member of IACs).

Notably, this interviewee suggested that, in time, the university might change its current policy and create an international advisory council, given the positive experience the interviewee had as a member of other IACs.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Even though they are difficult to research because little information about them is available publicly, IACs are a fast growing phenomenon, particularly in Europe. IACs are bodies of varying size and composition, often including distinguished university researchers and current or former leaders of prestigious tertiary education institutions around the world, as well as a few tertiary education researchers. In most cases, IAC members do not receive financial compensation for their advisory services, and interviewees describe their contribution to IACs as a form of voluntary academic service, of giving back to the tertiary education arena.

What have we learned from this research? What roles do international advisory councils play? How can they operate successfully as vehicles of global knowledge for the improvement of higher education practices around the world? The interviews show that, when they are designed and operate in an effective manner, IACs can be a highly relevant tool for bringing international perspectives to tertiary education institutions, especially research universities, and providing guidance from external experts who are at the same time objective observers and have a genuine commitment to the institution. The extent to which universities and other types of tertiary education institutions can benefit from having an IAC depends, primarily, on their ability to convene a diverse group of dedicated experts and practitioners and their willingness to engage with them in a candid and open conversation about the institution's mission, achievements and actual shortcomings. The independent advice offered by IAC members can be an invaluable input for institutions seeking to refine their strategic vision and improve the implementation of their development plan in line with international trends and experience.

Based on the findings of our research, we suggest that tertiary education institutions interested in establishing effective international advisory councils consider the following key questions in order to benefit fully from such an initiative:

- Do you value lessons from international experience to inform strategic decisions about the future of your university?

- What is your actual purpose in setting up an IAC? Have you defined the actual goals that you seek to achieve by establishing an IAC and working with its members?

- Does the composition of the proposed IAC reflect a healthy diversity in terms of voices and experience (gender, academic profile and disciplines, geographic distribution, balance between practitioners and researchers, etc.)?

- Do the IAC members have a clear notion of the specific inputs that are expected from them?

- What are the learning and decision-making objectives of each IAC meeting from the viewpoint of the host institution? Is the meeting agenda sufficiently focused to achieve these objectives?

- Are you willing / able to objectively share the challenges that your institution faces and listen to constructive guidance with an open mind?

- Do you have a mechanism to ensure systematic follow up after IAC deliberations and monitor the results of these actions on a regular basis?

- Do you have clear rules to replace IAC members and bring new ones on board in line with your evolving agenda?

- In what ways are you able to obtain useful contributions from IAC members, beyond their inputs during the regular meetings, when you seek additional advice on key decisions that the host university needs to consider?

- Are you able to efficiently organize IAC meetings, providing sufficient advance notice, and help with logistics?

Finally, while IACs have so far been mainly limited to universities interested in strengthening their international profile and level of peer recognition,

there is no reason why other types of tertiary education institutions could not benefit from IACs in their search for excellence in the areas that correspond to their specific mission and characteristics. Indeed, the institutions on which this article is based are all research-intensive universities—but there are strong arguments why other kinds of tertiary education institutions can benefit from the expertise and international perspectives of an IAC.

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Appendix

Interview questions for TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS hosting international advisory councils (IACs)

Section 1: IAC history

1.1. Since when does (name of tertiary education institution) have an IAC?

1.2. How did the tertiary education institution decide to establish an IAC?

Section 2: IAC structure

2.1. What is the structure of the IAC you host?

2.2. What is the budget allocated for the activities of the IAC?

2.3. What criteria do you use to determine who should be the members of your IAC?

2.4. What is the time commitment you expect of the members of your IAC?

Section 3: Motivations and relevance

3.1. What motivated your institution to create an IAC?

3.2. In your opinion, what motivate the members of your IAC to join?

3.3. What are the ways in which the tertiary education institution uses the contributions of its IAC?

3.4. In your opinion, what are the main purposes of IACs for different higher education institutions?

 If needed: Is your IAC meeting its purpose?

3.5. What advice would you have for tertiary education institutions when they establish an IAC?

Section 4: Final remarks and referrals

4.1. Is there anything else you would like to add to our discussion about IACs?

4.2. Could you suggest any other person who would be relevant to interview in order to discuss about IACs?

Interview questions for REPRESENTATIVES of international advisory councils (IACs)

Section 1: Involvement with IAC

1.1. What IACs have you served on, or you are currently serving on?

> **In needed:** Please share the named of the IACs you serve on and the names of their tertiary education institutions.

> If answer is "Cannot share, is confidential": Alternatively, please describe the tertiary education institution/institutions hosting the IAC(s) you are a member of

1.2. For how long have you been a member of each IAC?

> **If needed:** For how long to you expect to continue being a member of each IAC?

1.3. What were the circumstances under which you joined each IAC?

> **If needed:** Do you know whether there was a selection process associated with your position?

> **If needed:** Were you invited to join?

> **If needed:** How many invitations to join IACs do you estimate to have received?

> **If needed:** How do you decide what IACs to join and what IACs not to join?

> **If needed:** Were you given the opportunity to suggest or decide what other members should be invited to join an IAC you are/ were a member of?

> **If "yes":** Describe the opportunities of suggesting or deciding on what other members should join.

1.4. **If needed:** What are the terms of office for your appointment on each IAC you are a member of?

> **If needed:** Is your membership determined for a fixed duration?

> **If "yes":** Can this duration be extended? Under what terms?

If needed: Are there any conflicts of interests clauses or exclusivity clauses to your arrangements with each IAC?

If "yes": What are these terms?

Section 2: How IACs operate

2.1. How many members does each IAC you are a member of have?

If needed: Is this number constant?

If "no": Under what circumstances does the number of members change?

2.2. How often does each IAC you are a member of meet per year? How long is each meeting?

If needed: In person?

If needed: Virtually?

2.3. What is the profile of a typical member on each IAC you are a member of?

If needed: What are their main occupations?

If needed: How many of your IAC colleagues are academics?

If needed: How many of your IAC colleagues are current or former academic leaders?

If needed: How many of your IAC colleagues are policy makers?

If needed: How many of your IAC colleagues are industry representatives?

If needed: What geographical regions and countries do they come from?

2.4. What resources are made available to IACs you are a member of?

2.5. Do you receive any honorarium or remuneration for your service on the IAC?

2.6. Please describe the main activities you perform as part of your IAC appointment.

2.7. What conflict of interest provisions apply to your contracts with various IACs?

If needed: Are there any ethics principles you believe should apply to appointments on IACs?

Section 3: Motivations and relevance

3.1. What motivated you to join various IACs?

3.2. In your opinion, what is the motivation of tertiary education institutions to create IACs?

3.3. In your opinion, what is the main purpose of IACs?

If needed: Are IACs, in your experience, meeting their purpose?

3.4. What advice would you have for tertiary education institutions when they establish a IAC?

Section 4: Final remarks and referrals

4.1. Is there anything else you would like to add to our discussion about IACs?

4.2. Could you suggest any other person who would be relevant to interview in order to discuss about IACs?

For a detailed description of the data collection and analysis process, please contact Georgiana Mihut at *georgiana.g.mihut@gmail.com*.

About the Authors

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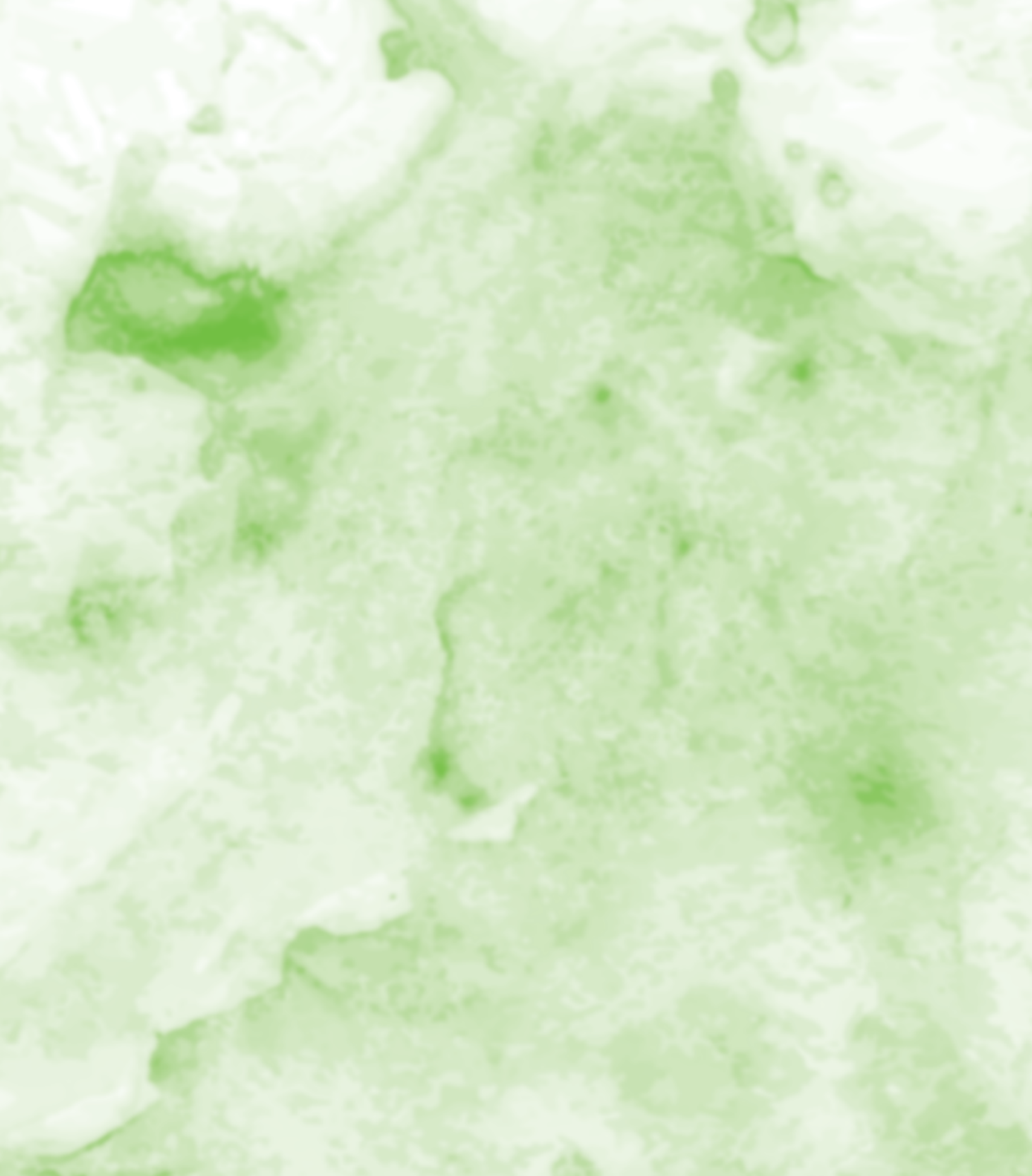
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