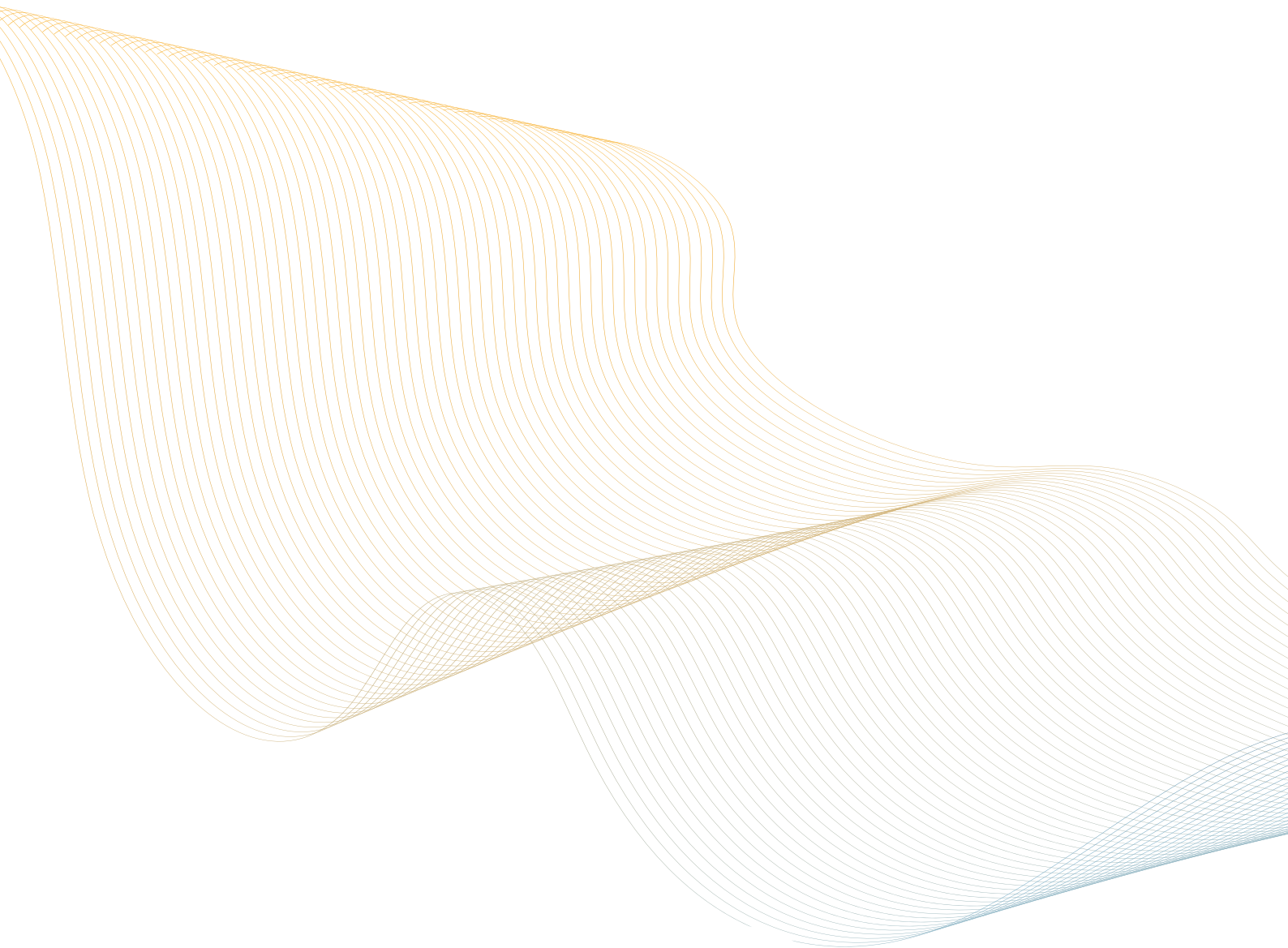
Simon Institute for
Longterm Governance

Annual Report
2023



Introduction from the CEOs

Dear Reader,

2023 was a formative year for the Simon Institute for Longterm Governance (SI). We brought together key actors in international AI governance, leveraging the strengths of the international system and complementing its shortcomings. We published two major UN reports on rapid technological progress and its risks; ran briefings and retreats across New York, Geneva and Paris; grew our team from three to six; developed internal systems to scale along with the complexity of our work; and much more.

As technology companies pushed the cutting edge of research and regulators sought to catch up, SI was able to help governments and their strategic advisors understand the international implications and technical realities of AI progress. Not only that, but we were also able to help some of the leading AI researchers across academia and industry better understand how to engage with the international system in mutually beneficial ways. It's a privilege to have been able to translate between technical experts, analysts, legislators and diplomats.

We're excited about further enabling positive sum games across all scales of governance. As our organization grows, we will continue to learn, and hopefully scale appropriately to help promote the benefits of technological progress for as many as possible – across continents and generations – while working to ensure the dangers are accounted for in the research, development, and governance of increasingly advanced algorithms.

We want to give a special shout-out to our team which has made tremendous progress possible, internally and externally. In Spring and Summer, we welcomed Cecilia Saura Drago as Director of Operations, Sofia Mikton as Operations Associate and Belinda Cleeland as Director of Policy. Additionally, we're very excited that Malou Estier indefinitely extended her contract as Law & Policy Associate; and Jacob Arbeid went on to work at a leading institution for frontier AI regulation: the UK's AI Safety Institute.

Your support and collaboration are absolutely crucial to achieving SI's mission. We're excited to scale up our work and will happily answer any questions that arise from reading this report.

Thank you very much,

Max & Konrad

The SI team, as of July 2023. Photo by Ben Buckland.



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The Simon Institute for Longterm Governance

The Simon Institute for Longterm Governance (SI) is a nonprofit organization based in Geneva, Switzerland, dedicated to cultivating effective multilateralism, enhancing global technology governance, and shifting policy focus to the long term. In 2023, a large portion of our work focused on promoting the safe development of AI through multilateral governance. In practice, our work extends across three areas.

- **Research:** We analyze complex scientific knowledge, technological trends, and policy developments to ensure that decision-makers understand and act effectively.
- **Facilitation:** We cultivate collaboration, exchange, and common knowledge by facilitating workshops, training courses, and events, effectively bringing together technologists and policymakers.
- **Policy Recommendation:** We inform multilateral tech policy processes through speaking engagements and tailored advice to institutions. We focus on tech governance, risk governance, and the rights of future generations.



Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of our work at SI in 2023, covering key figures, progress on our 2023-2025 strategy, notable achievements, challenges faced, and financial updates. For some notable highlights, in 2023, we:

- Published the first-ever UN thematic study on Existential Risk and Rapid Technological Change, while simultaneously raising awareness of these topics during the Mid-term review of the Sendai Framework, speaking at the high-level meeting and being cited in the Mid-Term Review report.

- Collaborated with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, International Science Council, and Centre for the Study of Existential Risk to deliver a comprehensive report outlining hazards with escalation potential, and strategies for governing them. As part of the project, we conducted an extensive literature review on catastrophic and existential risks, surveyed over 250 domain experts on various hazard types, and formalized an updated classification.

- Published the FAIR framework; a **F**uture-proofing framework for policy design emphasizing **A**daptability, long-term **I**mpact assessment, and **R**epresentation of future generations, and subsequently delivered a session on future-proofing for the UN's High-Level Advisory Board on Multilateralism.

- Provided policy input advocating for heightened recognition of future generations in the Declaration for Future Generations, emphasized the importance of centering AI governance efforts on benefit sharing and frontier R&D during consultations for the Global Digital Compact, and supported coordination efforts around the Summit of the Future, including through a two-day workshop with 30 actors from across civil society, academia, and the multilateral system.

- Fostered trust-based relationships with Permanent Missions to the UN in Geneva and New York, resulting in a briefing series on AI governance co-organised with the Permanent Missions of Costa and Kenya attended by 93 diplomats, tailored support to select missions on AI governance, and expanded collaborations with UN actors in New York for 2024.

- Were invited to New York, Paris, Boston, and Dubai to provide expert input to national representatives and international processes alike, from the World Economic Forum, to the OECD and UN.

- Hired 3 new full-time staff members, expanding the SI team to 6, while simultaneously updating our governance structure, refining our strategy, plans and internal processes for the 2023-2025 period, and initiating a successful launch to our next fundraising round.

The SI Team

Our core team



Maxime Stauffer
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Konrad Seifert
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konrad@simoninstitute.ch



Malou Estier
Law & Policy Associate
malou@simoninstitute.ch



Cecilia Saura Drago
Director of Operations
cecilia@simoninstitute.ch



Belinda Cleeland
Director of Policy
belinda@simoninstitute.ch



Sofia Mikton
Operations Associate
sofia@simoninstitute.ch

Temporary team



Jacob Arbeid
Strategy & Policy Associate

Transitioned out of SI in April, and joined the UK's AI Safety Taskforce in October



Lara Thurnherr
Tech Diplomacy Intern
July-August 2023



Claire Dennis
Research Collaborator
June-September 2023



Jason Hausenloy
Research Collaborator
June-September 2023

Board members



Naomi Nederlof
President

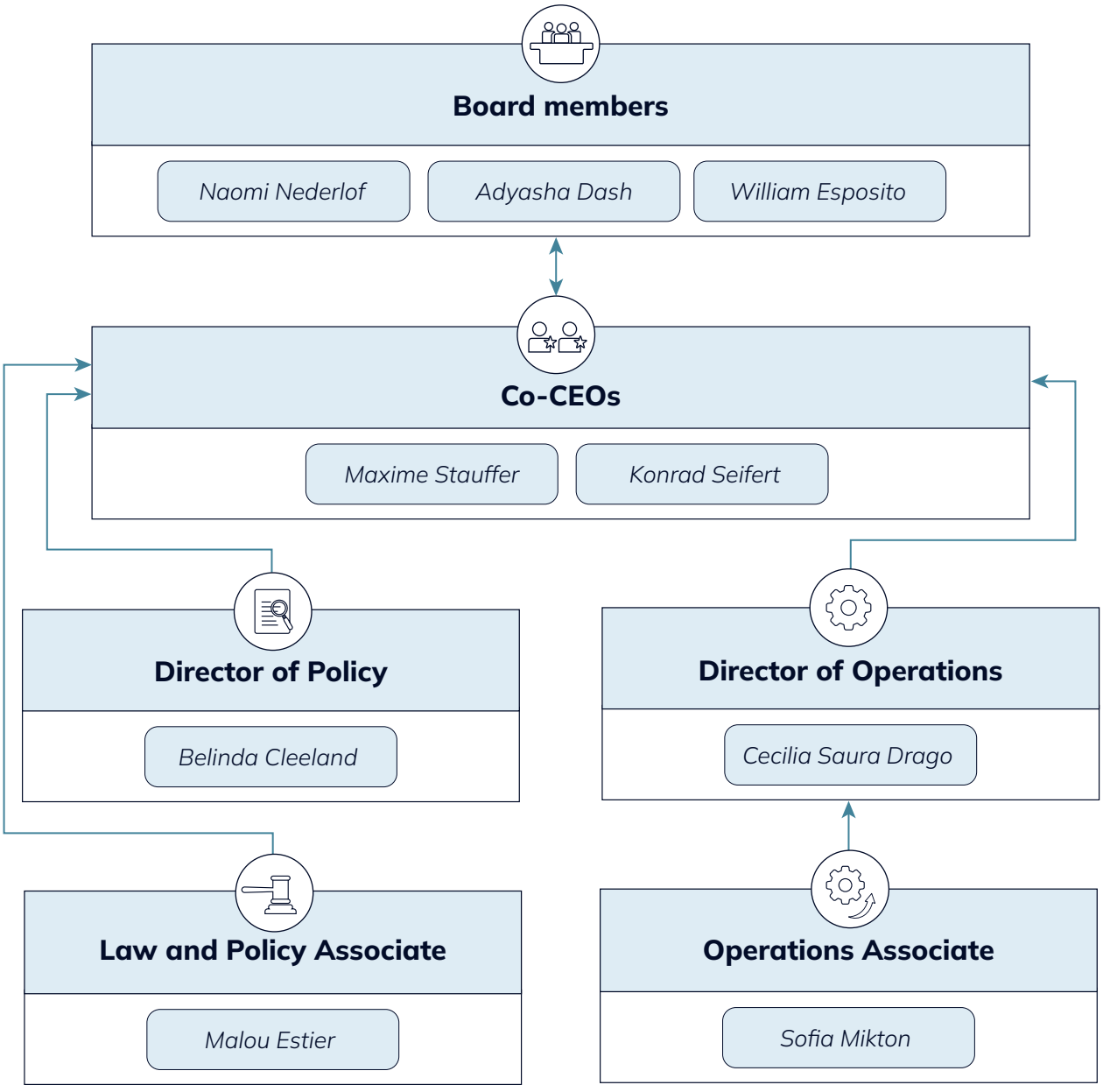


Adyasha Dash
Vice President



William Esposito
Treasurer

In 2023, we also updated our governing structure, offboarding our old board and welcoming three new board members. In tandem, we updated our Association structure, and held a General Assembly to inaugurate our new governing members. You can view the organizational chart below for an overview of the SI board and team.

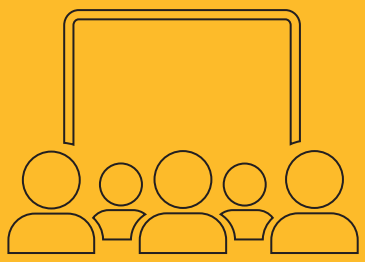


2023 at a Glance

36

Reports, blog posts & briefs published

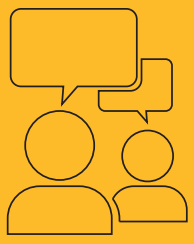
9



Workshops and briefings held with 200+ participants

20+

Public engagements



5

Submissions made to policy processes

3



New staff hired, increasing out total headcount to **6**

70+



Career support calls and career-meetings conducted with individuals

Events Calendar *highlights*

January 13-16

Organized a two-day workshop with 30+ actors on "future-proofing the multilateral system"



March 13

Published the first ever UN thematic study on existential risk and rapid technological change



June 16

Made a statement on future generations at the 23rd International Future Conference in the session "The Next 8 Billion"

June 28

Participated in a UN Human Rights Council panel on AI to speak on the risks and opportunities from advanced AI

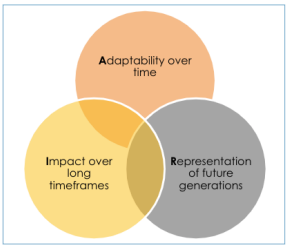


January | February | March | April | May | June

2023

February 17

Held a session on future-proofing for the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism





May 4

Led a fishbowl discussion entitled "The role of international rulemaking in a "disruptive" environment during the OECD's International Organization (IO) Partnership's Spring meeting

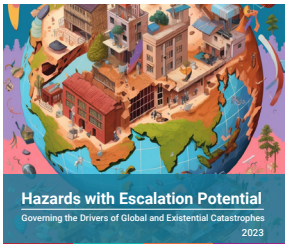


May 18-19

Spoke at the mid-term review of the Sendai Framework's High-Level Meeting in New York on a panel about foresight and frontier risk and participated in a leaders' roundtable on rapid technological change

May 23-25

Organized a 3-day workshop comprising 5 sessions with the UNF to coordinate actors working towards the Summit of the Future



August 21

Published our report with the UNDRR, Hazards with Escalation Potential



October 3-4

Attended the OECD's Government Foresight Community annual meeting, facilitating and participating in three sessions focusing on the transformative impacts of AI

October 16-19

Attended the Annual Meeting of the Global Future Councils of the World Economic Forum



December 7

Gave a statement during the UNCTAD e-week on the importance of AI governance during the Global Digital Compact Session

July | August | September | October | November | December

2024

September 11

Co-hosted a foresight workshop with the Futures Lab Network and the UN University Center for Policy Research



November 10

Moderated a panel at the OECD's 10th Annual Meeting of the International Organization Partnership, on interagency collaboration for AI governance

November 7, 21, and December 11

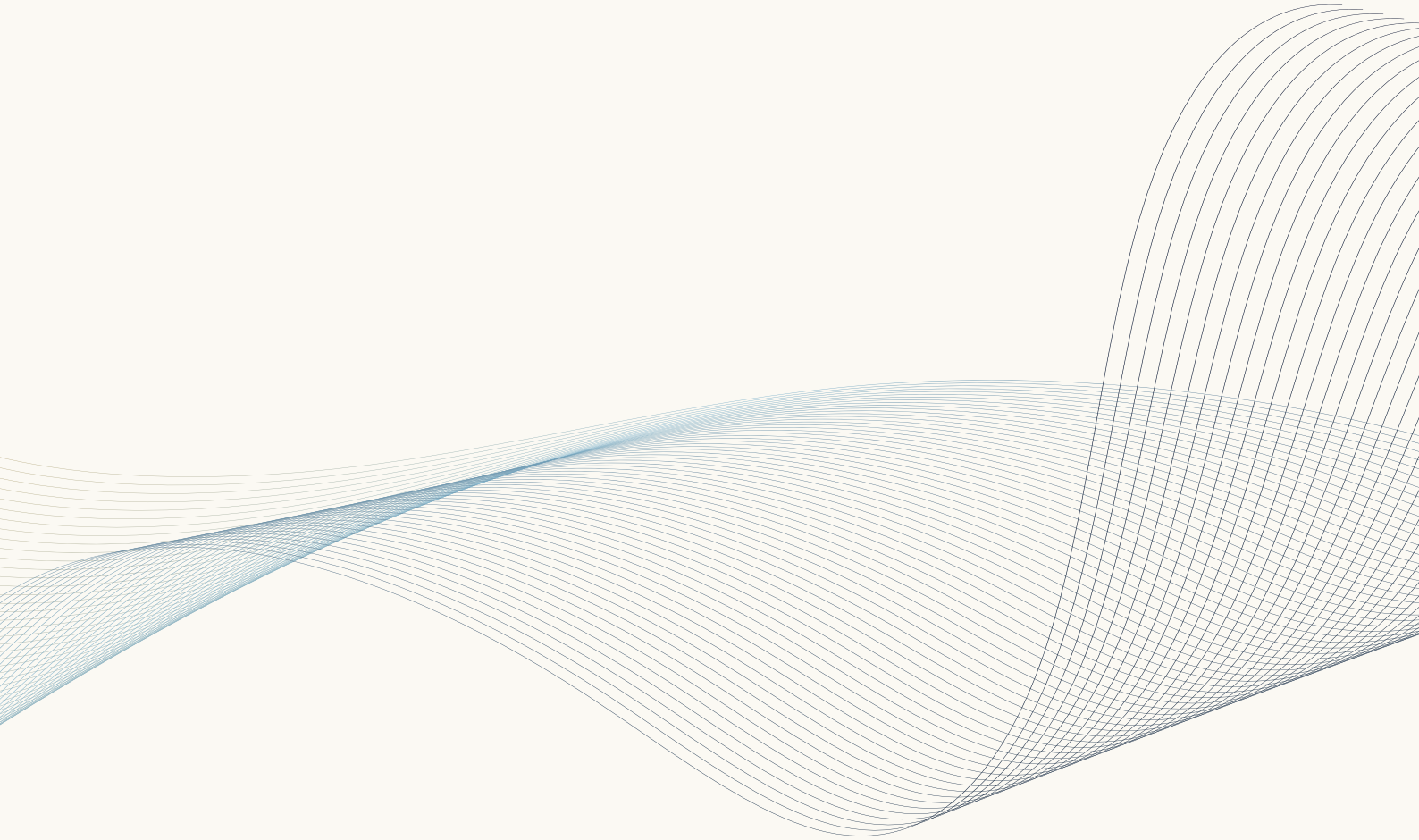
Held a three part briefing series on AI governance for 90+ Permanent Missions to the United Nations in Geneva, from 50+ countries



Progress on SI's 2023-2025 Priorities

In 2023, our team developed an updated set of priorities and goals for the 2023-2025 period, where we outlined our intention to focus on advancing multilateral technology governance, fostering alignment between multilateral activity and other technology governance processes, and reinforcing SI's structure and operations. In the next pages, we outline how our work throughout 2023 contributed to these priorities and goals.





Priority 1:

Advance multilateral technology governance

Brief description: Boost the multilateral system's ability to prioritize, discuss and deploy solutions to reduce risks and maximize benefits from transformative technological advances, in particular artificial intelligence (AI). To leverage synergies between processes, we engaged stakeholders across different fora, regional organizations, the UN, and specialized international agencies.

Estimated resource allocation: 65%



Target audience: International organizations (IOs) and their member states' Permanent Missions who drive international progress on technology governance.

Summary of Achievements Under Priority 1

1. Published the first ever UN thematic study on existential risk and rapid technological change, delivered a talk at the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) on risks from emerging tech, and led the discussion on technological change and existential risk at the High-Level Meeting of the Sendai Framework.

2. Led a survey involving over 250 risk experts and published a report on Hazards with Escalation Potential in collaboration with the UNDRR and International Science Council (ISC).

3. Contributed to the UN's Our Common Agenda by providing two submissions to the consultations of the Global Digital Compact, responding to the UN Executive Office of the Secretary-General's (EOSG) policy briefs on digital governance and future generations, conducting future-proofing sessions with the High-Level Advisory Body (HLAB) on multilateralism, advocating for a strong Declaration of Future Generations, and submitting input on the Pact of the Future.

4. Built 1:1 relationships with Permanent Missions, organized a three-part briefing series on AI governance for diplomats in Geneva, and provided tailored support on AI governance to various missions.

5. Engaged in various activities at the OECD, including attending the Partnership of International Organizations Spring meeting, hosting a roundtable on building up a multilateral regime complex for frontier AI, and facilitating scenario explorations on transformative AI.

6. Co-hosted a foresight workshop with the Futures Lab Network, initiated informal AI governance meetups for the Genevan tech community, and organized two coordination workshops with the United Nations Foundation (UNF) for the Summit of the Future.

7. Published briefs on the risks and opportunities of biotechnology and artificial intelligence (AI), published an article on the need to focus AI governance on foundation models, released a report on AI's impact on Small Island Developing States, and co-authored an article on existential threats posed by emerging disruptive technologies in the age of AI.

Goal 1.1:

Increase demand for the effective international governance of rapid technological change by supporting Permanent Missions in developing their expertise on frontier technologies.

Under this goal, we focused on understanding and addressing the needs of Permanent Missions regarding AI governance, recognizing their key role in driving multilateral processes. Given Geneva's standing as the technical hub of the multilateral system and its existing leadership in science-diplomacy, we focused most efforts in 2023 on engaging Geneva-based missions and supporting them in developing their expertise on AI.

1.1.1 – Capacity building on technology governance for diplomats and Permanent Missions

In 2023, we prioritized capacity-building in technology and AI governance for diplomats and Permanent Missions in international organizations like the UN. This included public briefing series, tailored support, and facilitation efforts to foster discussion. This also involved knowledge sharing, providing definitions and conceptual frames to help guide diplomatic discussions.

As part of our broader capacity-building efforts, In November and December, we hosted a three-part briefing series on AI governance for Permanent Missions to the UN in Geneva, in collaboration with the Permanent Missions of Costa Rica and Kenya. The series welcomed **93 individual participants** from **56 countries** (26 from the Global South), including **20 ambassadors** and **5 deputy ambassadors**. The events spanned 6 weeks, and covered a range of topics:

- On November 7th, we hosted the first briefing, *AI 101: Understanding AI Opportunities and Risks*, featuring guest speaker Haydn Belfield from the Centre for the Study of Existential Risk at Cambridge University. The event welcomed **45 participants**.
- On November 21st, we held the second briefing, T*he AI Governance Landscape: Navigating Initiatives and Challenges*. It drew **46 participants**, and featured a Q&A with Lewis Ho, strategy and governance researcher from Google DeepMind.
- Our final briefing, *The UN and AI Governance: Charting the Path Forward*, took place on December 8th, and welcomed **50 participants**. It featured a participant-driven fishbowl discussion on the GDC, alongside the two co-facilitators of the process (H.E. Ms. Anna Karin Eneström and H.E. Mr. Chola Milambo) and Renata Dwan, Special Advisor to the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology. The discussion was moderated by Sam Daws, Director of the Project on UN Governance and Reform at Oxford University.

AI 101: Understanding AI Opportunities and Risks

45 participants attended



AI Governance Landscape: Navigating Initiatives and Challenges

46 participants attended



The UN and AI Governance: Charting the Path Forward

50 participants attended



The series was well-received by diplomats and allowed SI to foster deeper ties with numerous missions. As a result, multiple leading tech diplomats reported a greater understanding of AI governance and a shift in their prioritization towards the issue. In addition, SI received and fulfilled 7+ invitations to further brief missions and groups of states, including a briefing during a seminar on AI for African Missions in early 2024. We were also invited to an informal discussion on AI governance with the Hungarian Mission and received further invites to brief additional Missions in closed-door sessions.

Throughout 2023, SI developed briefs, reports, and articles on frontier technology and AI governance, aiming to provide accessible content on these subjects for diplomats and other multilateral governance actors.

- In May, we published briefs on the risks and opportunities associated with biotechnology and artificial intelligence.

- In July, we published a blog post on the importance of focusing AI governance efforts on foundation models.

- In July, we published a report entitled Safe and Beneficial Artificial Intelligence for Small-Island Developing States, focusing on the impact of AI on these countries, and the need to include them in processes seeking to establish international mechanisms for governing AI. As a result of this report:
    - A representative from UNDESA invited SI to participate in a SIDS-related side event at the ECOSOC Partnership Forum 2024 - Resilient prosperity: Strategic partnerships to advancing science, technology, and innovation in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), where Max made a statement on AI and SIDS.

1.1.2 – Identifying & supporting diplomatic thought leaders on tech governance

In addition to our capacity-building efforts, we also worked to identify potential diplomatic thought leaders—individuals interested and capable of spearheading key multilateral discussions on AI governance. Throughout September to November, we held bilateral meetings with 7 Permanent Representatives and diplomats from Genevan missions who expressed interest in AI to understand their positions and needs on AI governance.

In addition to improving our understanding of various missions' positions and needs in regard to AI governance, these meetings also allowed us to strengthen our relationship with several missions and offer tailored advice on AI governance to select ones. As a result, we were able to host a briefing series in Geneva in collaboration with Kenya and Costa Rica in late 2023, as well as a training on AI for diplomatic experts in NYC with UNITAR and Costa Rica in early 2024.

Goal 1.2:

Support international technology governance processes in relevant international organization (IO) secretariats and advisory bodies by providing topical expertise, analysis capacity and process support.

In pursuit of this goal, we collaborated with UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations to raise awareness about risks & opportunities associated with rapid technological change, primarily through the provision of topical expertise and input to policy processes. We also encouraged multilateral processes to prioritize future generations' needs, recognizing this as a key component for fostering fit-for-purpose tech governance that takes into account long-term needs.

1.2.1 – Support for the UN Secretariat

Throughout 2023, we monitored and engaged with processes originating from the UN General Assembly, not only by supporting Member States directly, but also by supporting the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) and Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology (OSET). This included engaging with Our Common Agenda (OCA) and related processes, such as the Pact for the Future, the Global Digital Compact (GDC), and the Declaration for Future Generations (DFG).

Introduced in 2021, OCA aimed to provide a blueprint for reform of the multilateral system. It notably outlined plans for a 2024 Summit for the Future, which would convene world leaders to address both current and emerging challenges collectively. Both OCA and the Summit for the Future presented an opportunity for SI to advocate for forward-looking topics often overlooked in multilateral institutions and dialogues, such as the **risks and opportunities of transformative technologies**.

- In March, we developed a repository on OCA processes, providing clarity for both the SI team and our collaborators.
- Later in March, we published a response to OCA Policy Brief 2: "Strengthening the International Response to Complex Global Shocks – An Emergency Platform", suggesting that the platform expand its list of global shocks to include risks from artificial intelligence and abrupt sunlight reduction scenarios, while also not over-focusing on selected crises to preserve future flexibility.
- In April, we contributed a submission to the online consultations for the GDC on the subject of foundation models and transformative artificial intelligence, and summarized the submission on our blog. We also contributed a joint submission on AI with the Future of Life Institute.
- In May, Konrad spoke at a "Future of Multilateralism" event organized by the UN Office in Geneva's Archives & Library division. At the event, we were introduced to Francesco Pisano, and subsequently invited to speak on his podcast, The Next Page.
- In July, we published a response to Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 5: A Global Digital Compact — an Open, Free and Secure Digital Future for All. This helped us articulate our goals for the GDC and the multilateral system's role in AI governance.
- Following a series of November meetings in New York With other multilateral actors on the Summit of the Future, SI experts were invited to various closed-door diplomatic events as the only participants specialized in risk and tech governance.
- In early December, Max, Malou and Belinda attended two sessions on AI governance and

the Global Digital Compact at the UNCTAD e-week, to gain insights into developing countries' concerns regarding AI and its governance. During the GDC session, Max gave a statement on the importance of AI governance, and proposed steps for advancing it within the GDC.



Max Stauffer, co-CEO of SI, during the UNCTAD e-week, December 2023

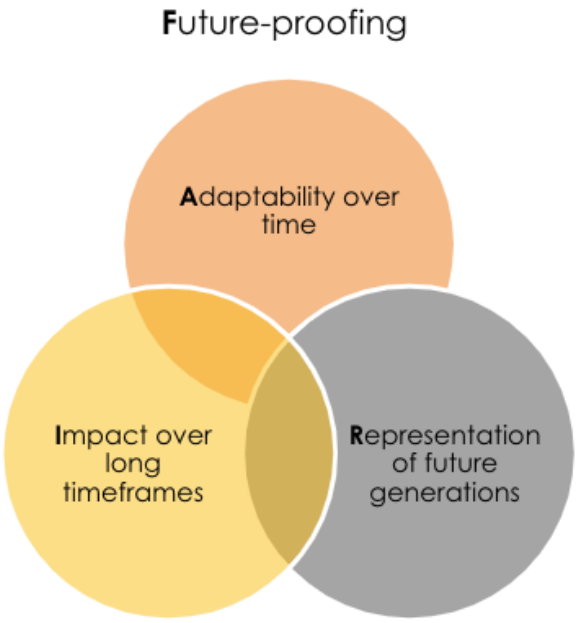
Alongside raising awareness about the risks associated with advanced technologies, the future-oriented processes of OCA also offered a platform for SI to advocate for heightened recognition of the **needs and concerns of future generations**.

- In February, Max participated in a panel organized by the United Nations Foundation on Thinking, Planning and Acting for Future Generations.

- In March, we published a response to Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 1: "To Think and Act for Future Generations", which received positive feedback from the EOSG.

- At the end of March, we held a session on future-proofing for the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism.

- In April, we published a future-proofing framework, providing an outline for policymakers to ensure that the policies they develop are **f**uture-proof via sufficient **a**daptability, **i**mpact and **r**epresentation of both present and future generations (FAIR). The EOSG described the framework as "very helpful, especially given it's simple, and [tangibly] helps show what future-proofing is".



  - As a result, we were invited to make a statement at the 23rd International Future Conference in the session "The Next 8 Billion", where Malou presented our framework to civil society actors working on the rights of future generations.

- In September, we collaborated on the development of a memo advocating for the adoption of a strong Declaration on Future Generations ahead of the 2024 Summit of the Future, alongside institutions such as the Future of Climate Cooperation, the Blavatnik School of Government, and the School of International Futures.

- In December, we submitted joint input on chapter 4 of the Pact of the Future (focused on future generations) to the co-facilitators of the Pact, in partnership with the Future of Climate Cooperation, Blavatnik School of Government from Oxford, and other stakeholders. This is likely the only submission focused entirely on the rights of future generations, **advocating for them as a separate category from "youth"**.

Following our "Future-Proofing the Multilateral System" workshop in January 2023, we were connected with various members of the UN Futures Lab Network, who shared SI's vision of enhancing long-term decision-making within the multilateral system. The UN Futures Lab was born through a mandate by the UN Secretariat, and aims to empower the UN System to "use futures thinking and strategic foresight in planning, policy- and decision-making."

- On September 11, 2023, we co-hosted a foresight workshop with the Futures Lab Network and the UN University Center for Policy Research. The event encouraged actors from diverse UN agencies (such as UNHCR, ITU, etc.) to consider the impact AI and other emerging technologies might have on their work. It also aimed to encourage inter-agency dialogue on emerging technologies to counter the often siloed discussions that occur in the UN.

1.2.2 – Support for the UNDRR

Building on our work from 2022, we continued to raise awareness about risks from rapid technological change in early 2023, during the review period of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction's (UNDRR) Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Despite being the sole framework for coordinating disaster risk reduction efforts on a global scale, the Sendai Framework lacked substantial mention of catastrophic and existential risks from advanced technologies prior to the review period. SI spent the review period addressing this gap.

- In January, Max gave a talk at a "Think Resilience Dialogue" hosted by the United Nations Foundation (UNF) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), entitled "Shaping the Future by Reducing Risks from Technological Development."

- In February, following a request by the UNDRR to synthesize evidence on worst-case catastrophic scenarios driven by rapid technological advancements, we published the first ever UN-thematic study on existential risk and rapid technological change.

    - In March 2023, the mid-term review of the Sendai Framework report cited SI's thematic study **six times** (pp. 84-85), and the political declaration notably mentions "19. We recognize that greater attention is needed in all countries to strengthen awareness and understanding of new, emerging and future disaster risks, including [...] technological hazards and risks." This is a step forward from the 2015 declaration in which tech risks received but a single mention in a footnote. We believe this new language made it into the declaration due to our unique work showing up in the 0 draft via a mention of "the adverse impacts of rapid technological change and artificial intelligence."

- In May, Max was invited to speak at the mid-term review of the Sendai Framework's High-Level Meeting in New York on a panel about foresight and frontier risk and was one of the only panelists who spoke on catastrophic and existential risks from advanced technologies. In addition, he was also invited to participate in a leaders' roundtable on rapid technological change together with ministers and representatives from leading technology companies including Microsoft and OpenAI.

- On May 4th, Max presented on technological risks at an event hosted by the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) programme. The audience comprised disaster risk professionals, including representatives from the UNDRR.

Snapshot from the foresight workshop with the Futures Lab Network



Max speaking at the mid-term review of the Sendai Framework's meeting



We continued our collaboration with the UNDRR by partnering with them, the International Science Council (ISC), and the Cambridge University Centre for the Study of Existential Risk (CSER) on a report on hazards with escalation potential. This project aimed to draw attention to hazards that have the potential to escalate into catastrophic or existential risks and serve as an initial step in ensuring such hazards are accounted for in relevant multilateral processes.

- In March, in partnership with our collaborators, we conducted an expert survey with over **250 domain experts** on different types of hazards and held a series of expert consultations on the subject. Among the 302 hazards previously cataloged in the Hazard Information Profile developed by the UNDRR and the ISC, the survey helped identify a subset of 10 geological, biological, technological, and social hazards that possess global escalation potential.

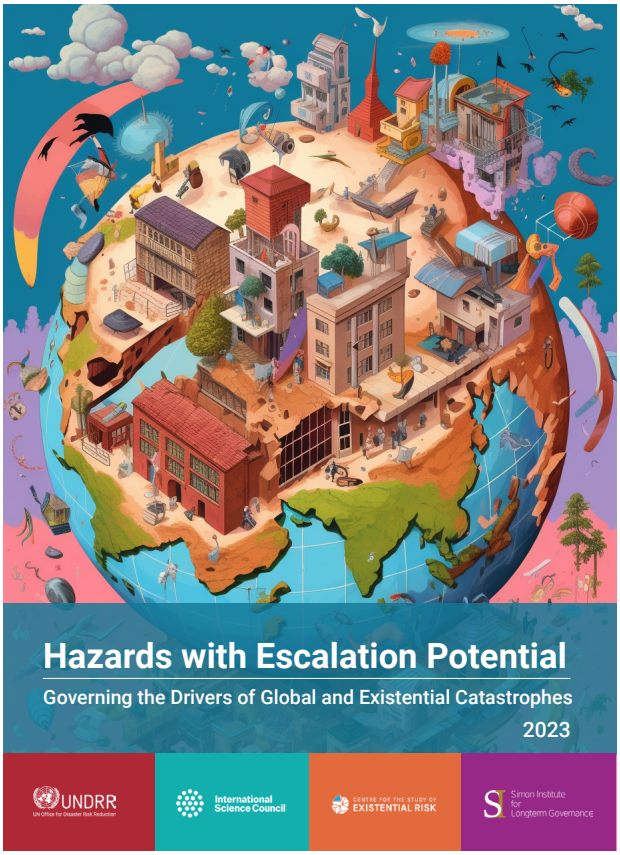
- In August, the final report, Hazards with Escalation Potential – Governing the Drivers of Global and Existential Catastrophes, was published. The report highlights climate change and artificial intelligence as the most influential forces capable of exacerbating major threats, while also outlining strategies for improving international risk management. We summarized key findings in this blog post.

- As a result of this project:

    - SI was invited to participate as a panelist in two virtual Global Risk Dialogues in November, to discuss the implications of the report's findings for the international risk governance community;

    - SI was invited by the UNDRR to brief Member States in New York on escalating risks on January 31st, 2024.

- The report is the only UN-approved report emphasizing AI and climate change as key risk drivers of similar importance. As a result of this and our previous report on existential risk and rapid technological change, multiple missions and the OECD have reached out to us for expert input into their processes, highlighting that these works are the only internationally authoritative source on existential risk.



1.2.3 – Support for the OECD

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is the backbone for various intergovernmental forums and institutions across the standards, customs, and trade ecosystems. With a broad pool of technical experts, manageable membership size and consensus-based decision-making, it offers an ideal platform for conducting foundational work on AI governance (e.g. through knowledge synthesis and standardization). Throughout 2023, SI supported the OECD's foresight, AI, risk, and regulatory cooperation work.

- In May, Konrad attended the International Organization (IO) Partnership's Spring meeting and co-led a fishbowl discussion entitled "The role of international rulemaking in a "disruptive" environment. Following this event, he was invited to the OECD's IO Partnership as an external expert.

- On October 3rd and 4th, Konrad and Belinda attended the OECD's Government Foresight Community annual meeting. Together, they hosted a roundtable discussion on "Building up the multilateral regime complex for frontier AI", helped facilitate a scenario exploration exercise on "Anticipating the transformative impacts of artificial intelligence", and participated in a panel discussion on "the impacts of artificial intelligence on broader socio-economic-environmental systems".

- On November 9th and 10th, Konrad participated in the OECD's AI expert group meeting. The group discussed risks, accountability, incident response and developed a scenario exploration exercise on transformative AI.

- In November, Konrad supported the OECD's regulatory policy unit's review of existential risks through a series of calls and meetings.

- In November, Konrad moderated a panel at the 10th Annual Meeting of the International Organization Partnership, on interagency collaboration for AI governance.

As a result of our engagement and support for the OECD, SI has become a key resource across departments for their work on existential risk, rapid technological change and engagement with the UN system.

1.2.4 – Additional engagements

Outside of the processes and international organizations (IOs) mentioned above, we also engaged with other regional organizations, branches of the UN, and specialized international agencies, to explore potential pathways for collaboration, foster shared understandings of key issues, and raise awareness about risks and opportunities from frontier technologies and AI.

- In February, we held a 1-day work session with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with the aim of building a mutual understanding of risk-informed development.

- Throughout January and March, we engaged in discussions with the IAEA to explore mechanism design for frontier AI regulation, system evaluations, and incident response.

- In June, Max participated in a UN Human Rights Council panel on AI to speak on the risks and opportunities from advanced AI.

- Throughout the summer of 2023, we hosted Jason Hausenloy and Claire Dennis in the context of a project for the UN University: Towards a UN Role in Governing Foundation Artificial Intelligence Models. This collaboration enabled us to think through possible models for international agencies for AI, and generated valuable insights and contacts for our AI briefing series at the end of 2023 and in early 2024.

Konrad (left) on a panel at the OECD regulatory policy unit review



Goal 1.3:

Foster improved information exchange and action within the multilateral system by developing a support ecosystem of actors directly involved in international tech governance processes.

In 2023, SI united actors from different realms of the multilateral system to strategize and share insights on AI governance and relevant multilateral governance processes. Our efforts in this area are focused on **fostering ecosystems of actors in Geneva and New York**, two central hubs for multilateralism.

1.3.1 - Fostering information exchange on tech governance in New York

The United Nations Foundation (UNF) is based in New York and is similarly invested in the success of the Summit of the Future. In 2023, we worked with the UNF to increase the Summit's probability of success.

- In March, we organized a 1.5 day workshop with the UNF to coordinate plans around the Summit of the Future. As part of the workshop, we met with Micheal Møller, the 12th Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), UNDRR, Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator (GESDA), the Swiss Mission, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), The UN University Centre for Policy Research (UNU-CPR), and the Kofi Annan Foundation to discuss existential risk, the future of multilateralism, bridging UN ecosystems in New York and Geneva, and hopes for the Summit of the Future.
- In May, we organized a 3-day workshop with the UNF to coordinate actors working towards the Summit of the Future. Work sessions included Strengthening the Futures Lab with Director Christopher Earney; developing asks for the Ministerial Meeting with SI, UNF and ICC; a dinner with UNDRR & GESDA; a workshop on long term demographics; a presentation of new models of citizen deliberation; and a workshop on intergenerational debt with the IHEID and SDG Lab.
- In November, Konrad and Max visited New York for meetings on AI and risk governance with UN stakeholders, to gain their insights on these subjects, and better understand their positions on various OCA-related processes. This included meetings with the UN Foundation, Executive Office of the Secretary-General, Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology, UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, and select Ambassadors and Missions working to address AI governance via OCA processes.

1.3.2 - Fostering information exchange on tech governance in Geneva

In 2023, we spent time engaging with the Genevan network of multilateral actors dedicated to tech governance, to get a better sense of how other actors think about AI.

- From May 1st - 2nd, Max participated in the Geneva Growth Summit, engaging in a closed roundtable on global risks, with a primary focus on AI and AI Governance.

- From July 6-7, the SI team participated in ITU's AI for Good Summit, to connect with global and Geneva-based AI professionals.

- In August, we organized an informal AI governance after-work event with external visitors and local actors to network, discuss the current state of multilateral AI governance, and explore ways for the Genevan community to contribute.

- In September, Belinda attended the AI2S2 Symposium, to meet other multilateral actors focused on AI governance.

- From October 11 to 13, members of the SI team attended GESDA's annual Summit once again to interface with other actors working on the governance of emerging technologies.

Priority 2:

Foster alignment between multilateral activity and other technology governance processes.

Brief description: Advise national and non-governmental actors working on technology governance, in particular on frontier AI, to act and communicate in ways that enhance multilateral progress, instead of risking further fragmentation. Drawing from our work on priority 1, this work entails advising national governments, private sector, and civil society to reinforce multilateral activity.

Estimated resource allocation: 10%



Target audience: National governments, private sector governance teams, advocacy organizations, academic institutes, and philanthropic organizations.

Summary of Achievements Under Priority 2

1. Convened a two-day workshop with 30 participants from civil society, academia, and the multilateral system to address gaps in the governance of emerging technologies and enhance coordination.
2. Joined the European Leadership Network as part of the “New Emerging Voices on Existential Risk” and appointed as an expert for the World Economic Forum’s Global Future Council on Complex Risks, providing insight on risks from rapid technological change.
3. Initiated collaboration with a Private Lab to explore pathways for Private Sector interaction with the multilateral system and provided essential multilateral context to actors helping drive the UK AI safety summit.

Goal 2.1:

Foster civil society engagement in multilateral processes by offering insight and contribution opportunities to academics, advocates, researchers, educators, journalists, mediators and philanthropists.

Under this goal, we worked to facilitate meaningful civil society involvement in multilateral processes and cultivate mutual understanding between the frontier tech community and various branches of the multilateral system. This work involved ongoing facilitation, participation and outreach work with various civil society actors, including tech governance NGOs, nonprofits, leadership networks, and high-level forums such as the World Economic Forum (WEF).

2.1.1 Facilitation

In January, we organized a two-day workshop with 30 actors from across academia, research, and the multilateral system to discuss risks from rapid technological change and possible governance solutions. The workshop aimed to provide academics and researchers with insights into the current state of affairs in the multilateral system, while also serving as a platform for multilateral actors to gather input from civil society. Some of the sessions included:

- Integrating forecasting techniques into the SDG process: forecasting progress on SDG achievement and potential reasons for falling short of them
- A workshop with leading AI labs and biosecurity agencies on AI-enabled biorisks
- Research into diverse global perspectives on the legal rights and protection of future generations, to inform the upcoming UN Declaration on Future Generations
- Research into the use of technical standardization to develop safe AI and biotech, via organizations like the International Organization for Standardisation

Images from January two-day workshop discussing risks from rapid technological change and possible governance solutions







As a result of this workshop:

- The University of Oxford initiated an Alliance for Future Generations;
- The UN Foundation and Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) invited SI to host a workshop to Member State delegations on future-proofing for the governance of rapid technological change;
- EOSG cited SI in the EOSG policy brief on future generations, and a member of the EOSG explicitly asked SI to respond to additional briefs;
- EOSG invited one of the workshop participants, Cecil Abungu, to make an expert statement in front of the UN General Assembly;
- SI published workshop proceedings and maintained two Slack platforms (one for attendees of the September 2022 workshop and one for international policy practitioner attendees of the January 2023 Workshop), with a total of about 100 attendees.

In early 2023, the International Risk Governance Council (IRGC), a Swiss academic foundation that established the field of risk governance in the early 2000s, asked us for strategic advice on its future directions. We concluded that the IRGC would have the most impact if it were to facilitate interactions between academics and policymakers rather than solely producing academic outputs. The organization ultimately chose a different route, but the collaboration nonetheless boosted our understanding of the academic risk governance field.

2.1.2 Participation

Outside of tailored workshops, SI maintained and built relationships with civil society actors throughout the year, focusing on information exchange and coordination.

- In May, Konrad joined the European Leadership Network as part of the "New Emerging Voices on Existential Risk" group.
    - In November, Konrad co-authored an article for the European Leadership Network, titled "Existential threats beyond the bomb: emerging disruptive technologies in the age of AI", outlining the evolving risk landscape surrounding emerging disruptive technologies.
- On May 23rd, Max gave a presentation to the WEF Global Future Council on Complex Risk, highlighting risks from rapid technological change and AI as examples.
- From October 16th-19th, Max attended the Annual Meeting of the Global Future Councils of the World Economic Forum. He was appointed as an expert as part of the Global Future Council on Complex Risks, and joined other actors to discuss different approaches to multilateral governance for frontier AI.

2.1.3 Outreach

- In April, we organized a dinner with 15 biosecurity experts from academia who were visiting Geneva for a conference, to help connect them to local diplomatic networks.
- In November, Konrad gave a talk to the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) fellows on international AI Governance.
- In November, Konrad gave a talk to the International Center for Future Generations (ICFG) team on SI's work.
- Throughout 2023, we maintained relationships with 30+ IOs, NGOs and civil society stakeholders, with the intention of fostering collaboration, sharing insights and advancing shared objectives.

Goal 2.2:

Contribute to the development of effective multi-stakeholder bodies by studying how industry leaders can best be included in international tech governance processes and engaging with their private governance initiatives.

While not a primary focus for SI in 2023, within this goal, SI aims to ensure that technology industry leaders contribute productively to relevant international governance processes, and that multilateral actors have a solid understanding of the inner workings and incentives of private companies. To that end, SI spent substantial amounts of time engaging with experts from leading AI companies across Microsoft, OpenAI, Google DeepMind, Anthropic and Meta, as well as with colleagues from other think tanks, international organizations and academia to discuss the potential risks and opportunities of industry involvement.

Goal 2.3:

Boost national awareness of multilateral affairs and policy coherence by providing tailored insights into multilateral processes to national technology governance initiatives.

While not a primary focus for SI in 2023, under this goal, we aim to ensure that national technology governance initiatives are well-aligned with multilateral activity. To this end, we kept in touch with contacts around the globe throughout the year, and advised actors working towards the UK's 2023 AI Safety Summit, but did not initiate any projects.

Priority 3:

Reinforce SI's structure and operations

Brief description: Secure SI's sustainability in terms of funding, human resources and organizational processes to become maximally effective and agile at achieving its mission.

Estimated resource allocation: 25%



Target audience: SI operational network (staff members, internal stakeholders, donors and funders, strategic partners).

Summary of Achievements Under Priority 3

1. Expanded our team by hiring three new full-time staff members, including a Director of Policy, Director of Operations, and Operations Associate.
2. Completed SI's registration with the Swiss Registre du Commerce, updated our governance structure, and welcomed a new board.
3. Overhauled our operations systems, implementing new project management software and communications platform, setting up new internal policies and introducing numerous other tools and processes to improve internal workflows.
4. Strengthened our public communications presence by updating our website, launching a newsletter, and increasing our frequency of postings on the SI blog and social media channels.
5. Initiated a new fundraising round by submitting 4 funding applications, launching a new fundraising page on our website, and providing updated information to 4 additional funders.
6. Improved the resilience of our financial infrastructure by changing banks and fiduciary firms.
7. Hosted various collaborators and two interns, while also welcoming over 20 aligned fellows, guests, and students to the SI coworking space.
8. Conducted our first team retreat as a team of 6, during which we refined SI's mission, vision, and core values.

Goal 3.1:

Raise between 3.4MM-5.5MM CHF from a diverse set of funders.

Our aim for the 2023-2025 period is to secure funding ranging from 3.4MM to 5.5MM. The bulk of our fundraising efforts began in the second half of 2023, with our first major successes appearing in early 2024.

3.1.1 – Fundraising

In October 2023, we formally kickstarted a new official fundraising round for the 2023-2025 period by launching a fundraising page and producing additional communications materials to showcase our work to funders. In total, we submitted four fundraising applications and provided updates about our work to four additional funders.

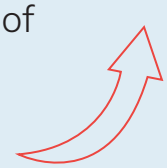
Kickstarted a new **fundraising round** in October 2023



4 fundraising applications submitted



Set funding target of **3.4MM to 5.5MM**



Saw major fundraising **successes** in early 2024: 1.4MM raised



Goal 3.2:

Strengthen and grow the SI workforce, and foster a vibrant ecosystem of collaborators.

Under this goal, we focused on expanding the SI team, strengthening team cohesion, and promoting team growth.

3.2.1 – Hiring & onboarding

In 2023, SI experienced its largest increase in headcount to date. Following a public hiring round launched in late 2022, we reviewed hundreds of applications, moved 16 through work tests, held six interviews, two work trials, and successfully onboarded three new full-time employees.

- In January, Malou Estier joined SI at 70% and later moved to 80% as Policy & Law Associate.
- Throughout January and February, we signed contracts for a Director of Operations, a Director of Policy, and an Operations Associate.
- In April, Jacob Arbeid, Policy & Strategy Associate, transitioned out of SI, and joined the UK AI Safety Institute's Foundation Model Taskforce.
- In May, we onboarded two new team members; Cecilia Saura Drago as Director of Operations, and Sofia Mikton as Operations Associate, and in July, we onboarded our sixth team member, Belinda Cleeland as Director of Policy.
- From July - August, we welcomed Lara Thurnherr as a summer intern, and from June to September, we welcomed Jason Hausenloy and Claire Dennis as research collaborators.

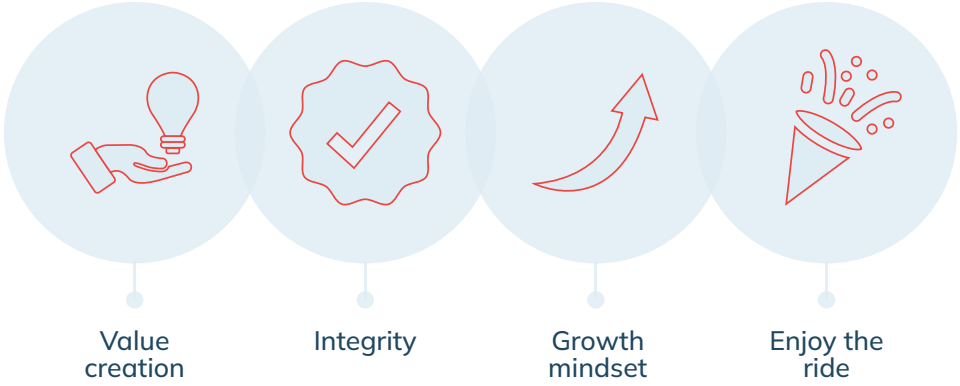
3.2.2 – Team bonding & growth

In addition to hiring, 2023 saw us establishing new core values, strengthening relationships within the team, and participating in a course to improve our shared knowledge on AI.

In July, we held our first three-day team retreat for our team of six in Domancy, France. Through brainstorming sessions, we defined new core values, refined our mission and SI's vision.

From October to December, the entire SI team completed a condensed version of Blue Dot Impact's AI Safety Fundamentals Governance Course, with the aim of improving our foundational knowledge of AI. Across the span of six weeks, we participated in weekly one-hour sessions and completed an additional 2-3 hours of course readings each week.

Our core values



Goal 3.3:

Enhance strategic direction, public communications, and internal systems.

In 2023, we dedicated significant resources to updating our strategy, boosting our public communications presence, and refining internal operational processes at SI, spanning finances, governance, human resources and project planning.

3.3.1 – Financial & legal operations

In 2023, we transitioned Fiduciaries, registered with the Registre du Commerce (as required for all Swiss Associations by summer 2024), changed and diversified our bank accounts, conducted research on best practices for well-balanced accounting and financial management in Switzerland, and made plans to further enhance our financial infrastructure in 2024. For more details about SI's finances, please refer to the Finances section.

3.3.2 – Governance

During the summer of 2023, we initiated a search for new board members, with a focus on finding members based in Switzerland, who could devote more time to overseeing our operations. In August, the General Assembly of the SI association thanked its previous board for its work and successfully elected a new board, composed of Naomi Nederlof (President), Adyasha Dash (Vice-president) and William Esposito (Treasurer).

3.3.3 – Strategy development

Throughout 2023, we dedicated considerable time to evaluating and updating our strategy, taking into account ongoing multilateral affairs, developments in the tech world, as well as updates to our own thinking and team.

This included a week-long strategy brainstorm in February, dedicated time spent thinking through AI strategy, and sessions during our July team retreat focusing on framing our vision, mission, and strategic priorities. These efforts resulted in the publication of an updated strategy and set of plans for the 2023-2025 period in October 2023, where we outlined our intention to focus on improving the multilateral system's capacity for the governance of rapid technological change, with a specific focus on AI.

3.3.4 – Internal operations

Under this goal, we implemented a new internal communications platform, project management system, team-wide password manager, HR software, and CRM. Additionally, we finalized an updated budget, HR policy, and monitoring, evaluation, and learning plan for the 2023-2025 period.

3.3.5 – Communications

One of our goals in 2023 was to improve and ramp up SI's public communications – making our work more understandable to the public, and sharing greater insight into the work we do and the ecosystem we operate in. Key achievements in 2023 included launching an official newsletter in August 2023, updating our website copy in line with our new strategy, drafting a communications plan for 2024, publishing 22 blog posts, and posting more frequently on social media, leading to our LinkedIn follower count surpassing 1000.

Simon Institute Strategy Diagram:



Finances

This year, SI reiterated its commitment to transparency and fiscal responsibility by preparing its 2023 financial statements in accordance with Swiss Auditing Standard 930, via a new external fiduciary, Ofico Fiduciaire S.A.

Overall, the financial health of SI remains in good standing, supported by a dedicated team of six employees as well as ongoing efforts to secure funding and manage expenses effectively. The financial results for the year highlighted significant shifts in both income and expense trends compared to 2022. The most notable changes in the financials include a significant decrease in donation income and a significant increase in personnel expenses, due to the headcount growth of the organization and a decision to only raise funds every second year. These changes have led to a transition from a substantial operating profit in 2022 to a considerable operating loss in 2023, however, this was mitigated by successful fundraising efforts in early 2024.

Income

Total income for the year amounted to CHF 418.749,61, down from CHF 995.665,95 in 2022. In 2023, SI's proceeds from free donations and fundraising campaigns amounted to CHF 400,045.56, a decrease from CHF 970,812.26 in 2022. Income from services was CHF 18,704.05, compared to CHF 24,853.69 in the previous year.

SI's main sources of funding are for general support, allowing for the flexibility needed to navigate the uncertain landscape of our work. Thus, salaries and other general operating expenses are not directly tied to specific projects in SI's accounting.

Expenditure

In 2023 and in line with priority 3 of its Strategy 2023-2025, SI focused on building its structure in terms of personnel and operations, as the team size doubled. Personnel expenses increased significantly to CHF 599,487.77 from CHF 157,217.32, reflecting the team's expansion, while expenses such as consultants, workshops and travel were reduced to CHF 86,963.65 from CHF 167,486.26. Other operating expenses such as rent, office, accounting, maintenance, etc. also rose to CHF 104,889.99 from CHF 59,528.25 as significant improvements were made, such as the appointment of a new fiduciary.

The annual result was a deficit of CHF 424,449.36, compared to a surplus of CHF 616,312.83 in 2022. Despite this shortfall, SI ended the year with a positive balance thanks to unrestricted capital received in 2022 from philanthropic contributions. To ensure future financial stability, SI started a fundraising campaign towards the third quarter of 2023. This effort proved fruitful in Q1 2024 already, raising over USD 1.4 million from philanthropic contributions.

Looking ahead

Moving forward, SI is focused on diversifying its financial support to ensure long-term sustainability and growth. The operating results highlighted the necessity for a robust second fundraising round in 2024. This includes increasing amount raised, diversifying funding sources, enhancing its financial management systems and reporting capabilities to further improve transparency and accountability. By strengthening these capacities, SI aims to establish a more resilient financial foundation, ensuring the organization is well-prepared to navigate future challenges and seize emerging opportunities with sustained impact.

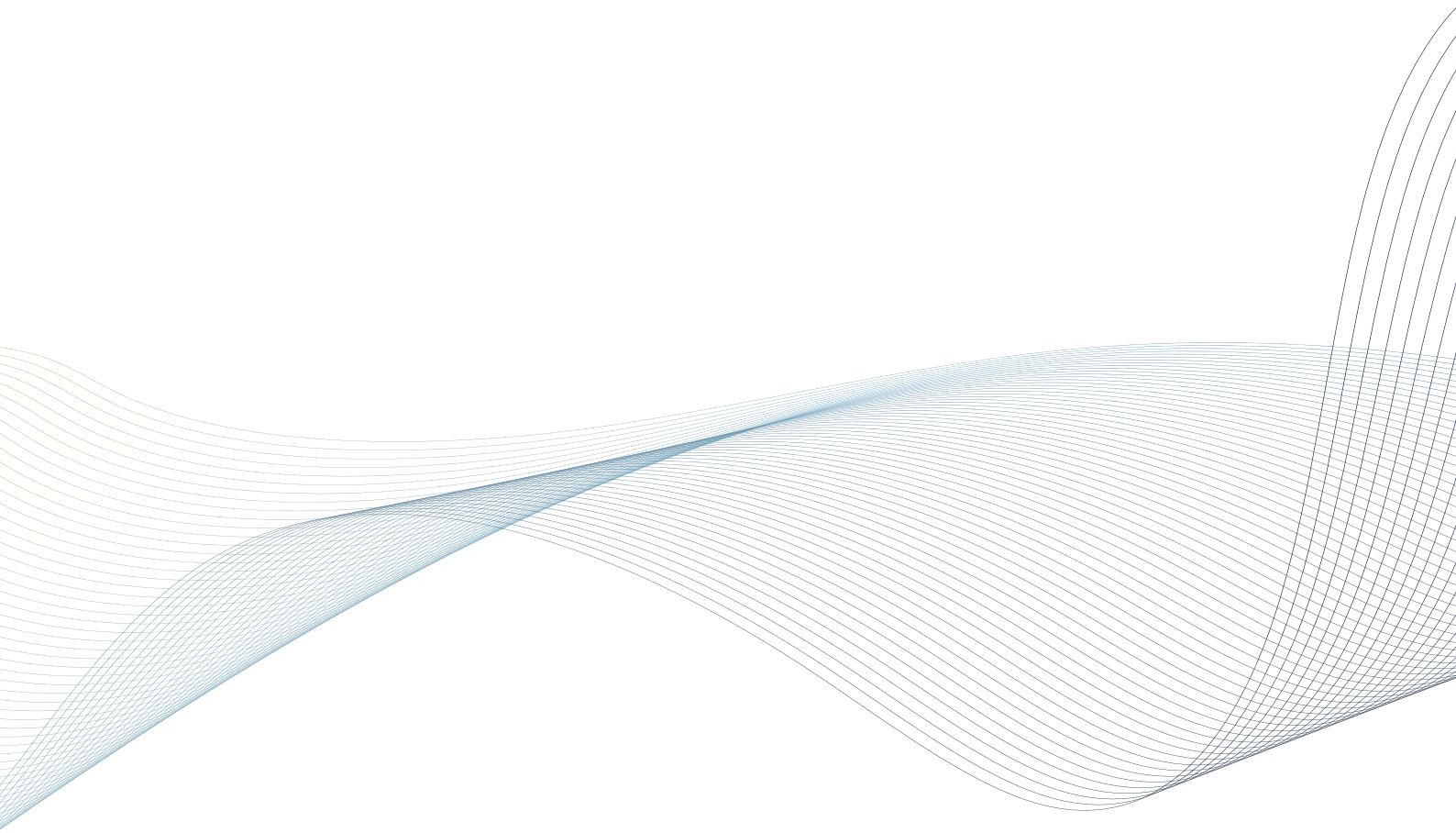
Simon Institute for Longterm Governance, Geneva

Profit and loss statement for the period ended 31 December	2023	2022
	CHF	CHF
Proceeds from free donations and fundraising campaigns	400,045.56	970,812.26
Income from services	18,704.05	24,853.69
Total donations, grants and income	**418,749.61**	**995,665.95**
Direct expenses	-86,963.65	-167,486.26
Personnel expenses	-599,487.77	-157,217.32
Other operating expenses	-104,889.99	-59,528.25
Annual result before interest, change in fund capital and amortisation	**-372,591.80**	**611,434.12**
Depreciation and amortisation	-1,661.08	0.00
Annual result before interest and change in fund capital	**-374,252.88**	**611,434.12**
(Financial expenses) / financial income	-50,196.48	4,878.71
Annual result before change in fund capital	**-424,449.36**	**616,312.83**
Change in the fund capital	394,465.92	-586,329.39
Use of free capital	29,983.44	-29,983.44
Annual result after change in fund capital	**0.00**	**0.00**

Plans for 2024

In 2024, we plan to focus on improving the multilateral system's capacity for the governance of rapid technological change, with a specific focus on AI. In Q1, our focus will continue to center on supporting Permanent Missions from International Organizations who are driving key multilateral processes on tech governance, building upon our work from Q4 2023. Given the rapidly changing environment we work in, we plan to remain flexible to seize impactful opportunities as they arise. For more on our plans, you can read this blog post here.

To get in touch with our team you can reach out to konrad@simoninstitute.ch.



Annex

List of Publications

Reports & Briefings

- Thematic Study: Existential Risk and Rapid Technological Change - Advancing Risk Informed Development
- Hazards with Escalation Potential: Governing the Drivers of Global and Existential Catastrophes
- Safe and Beneficial Artificial Intelligence for Small-Island Developing States
- Briefing Notes from our AI Governance Series for Permanent Missions to the UN:
    - Briefing 1: Artificial Intelligence 101: Understanding AI opportunities and risks
    - Briefing 2: The AI Governance Landscape: Navigating initiatives and challenges
    - Briefing 3: The UN and AI governance: Charting the path forward

Input & Responses to Policy Processes

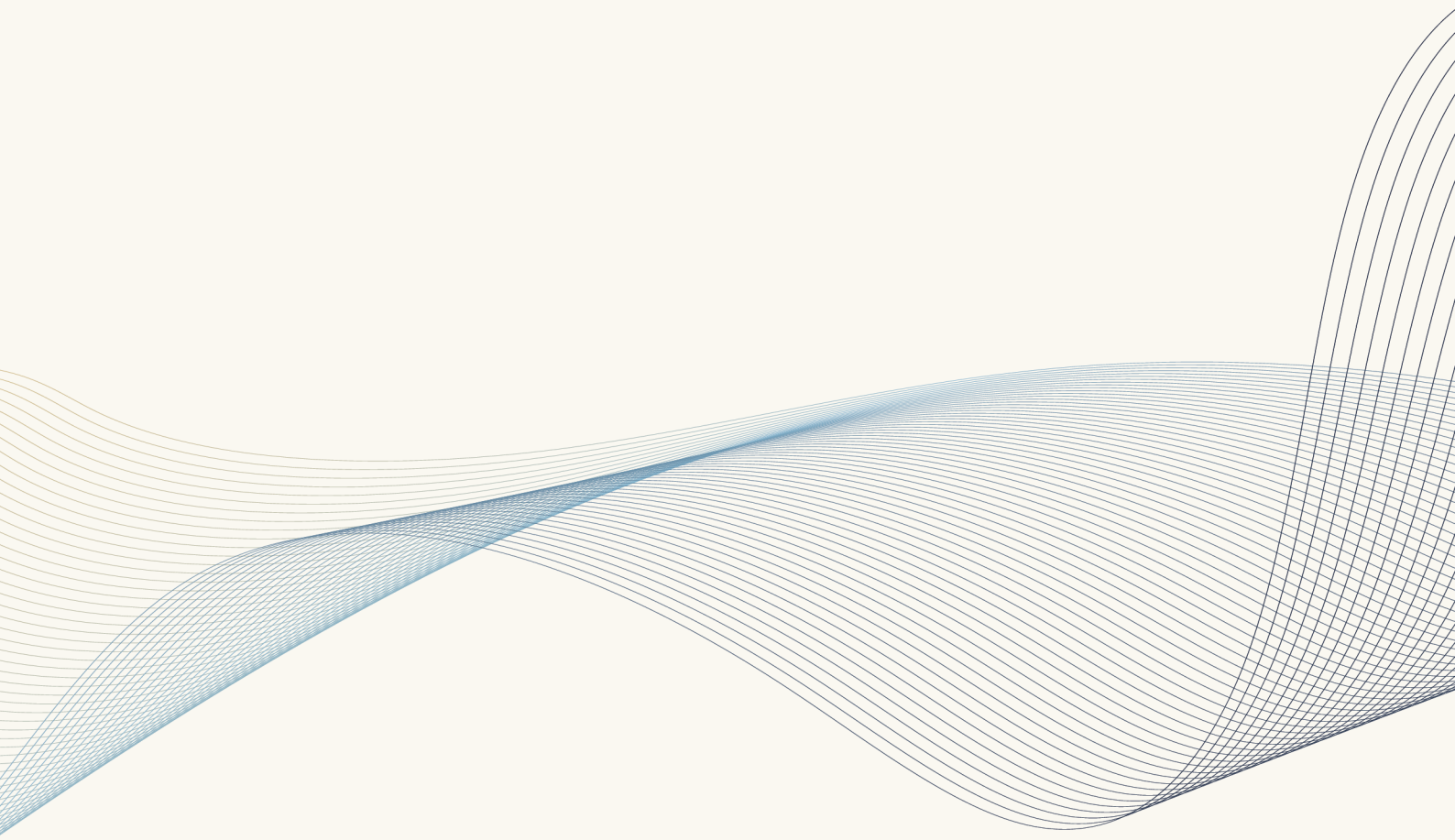
- Response to Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 1: "To Think and Act for Future Generations"
- Response to Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 2: "Strengthening the International Response to Complex Global Shocks – An Emergency Platform"
- Response to Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 5: A Global Digital Compact — an Open, Free and Secure Digital Future for All
- Joint memo: Preparing a UN Declaration on Future Generations
- Joint Input: Submission on Chapter 4 of the Pact for the Future; on Future Generations
- Joint Report: Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on AI Governance for the Global Digital Compact
- The Global Digital Compact and Foundation Models: Submission by the Simon Institute for Longterm Governance

Articles

- Joint Commentary: Existential threats beyond the bomb: emerging disruptive technologies in the age of AI

Blog Posts

- Workshop Proceedings: Future-proofing the Multilateral System
- Existential Risk and Rapid Technological Change - a Thematic Study for UNDRR
- Response to Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 2: “Strengthening the International Response to Complex Global Shocks – An Emergency Platform”
- Response to Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 1: “To Think and Act for Future Generations”
- How Computers Will Continue to Shape the World - Herbert A. Simon (Video & Transcript)
- The FAIR Framework - A Future-Proofing Methodology
- Submission to the Global Digital Compact on the Interpretability of AI Foundation Models
- Artificial Intelligence: a Brief on Risks and Opportunities
- Biotechnology: a Brief on Risks and Opportunities
- Advancing Sendai: Bringing Risks from Rapid Technological Change into Disaster Risk Reduction
- 2-Year Review: Concluding SI’s Inception
- Agile Multilateral AI Governance Starts with Foundation Models
- How to Reduce AI Harms and Future Risks at Once
- Response to Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 5: A Global Digital Compact — an Open, Free and Secure Digital Future for All
- Safe and Beneficial Artificial Intelligence for Small-Island Developing States
- Hazards with Escalation Potential - Governing the Drivers of Global and Existential Catastrophes
- Foresight Workshop on Frontier Technologies
- Our Updated Theory of Change
- Our Plans Until 2025
- AI Governance Briefing Series for Permanent Missions to the UN in Geneva
- Response to the Interim Report of the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence



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