



Sustainability | Leadership | Innovation

Thinking Ahead Institute
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In partnership with
Deloitte.

Thinking Ahead Institute: Bringing together the investment industry to create change

Finalist: Driving change through education, training and academia award

What

The Thinking Ahead Institute (TAI) is a not-for-profit membership organisation. Members include asset owners, asset managers and service providers with a collective stewardship responsibility for over US\$12 trillion of assets under management. The Institute was set up to drive change in the global investment industry to benefit the end saver and now focuses on mobilising capital for a sustainable future.

The Institute's research falls under three main areas:

- 1 Organisational effectiveness**
This covers work on culture, purpose and value creation and focuses on how the Institute can help investment organisations operate at their best.
- 2 Investment strategies**
How members do their work and measure their performance.
- 3 Societal legitimacy**
Recognising that the industry needs to build more trust with savers.

TAI carries out original research, works closely with its members and advocates for industry-wide change. The Institute also produces and promotes integrated reporting, encouraging member organisations to develop reports that show how they create value.

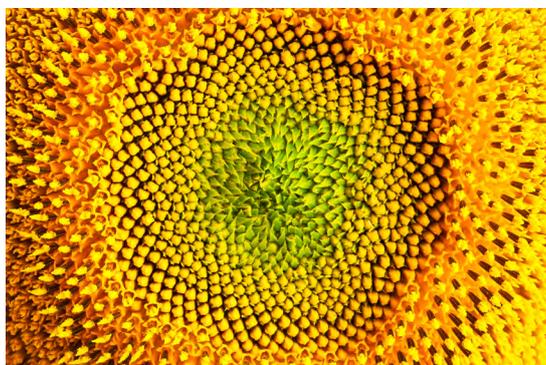
Members actively participate in TAI's activities through research working groups. This enables the Institute to bring industry perspectives into its research and to bring its research into investment portfolios. Working with and through its members, TAI aims to inspire a shift to a more sustainable investment industry.

Why

TAI was established in 2015 and was built on the belief that the investment industry needed change: better investment strategies and solutions, better organisational effectiveness and enhanced societal legitimacy. The Institute and its members are driving the investment industry to be more purposeful, inclusive and sustainable, in the belief that this will help the industry, and the firms that operate within it, to provide better value to the end saver.

For TAI, improving the sustainability of the industry demands research into what the issues are and how the industry can best evolve to address them. Research alone is not enough to create impact, though: it must affect real practice. By setting itself up as a membership organisation, TAI's goal was to engage institutional investors directly. Through this collaborative approach, the Institute could develop targeted, relevant industry research on integrated thinking and promote it to members.

Working through its members means that TAI can amplify its impact by influencing members who in turn can use their institutional power to bring about change.



'The co-creative approach used by The Thinking Ahead Institute is refreshing and distinctive. Ideas are built with the investment industry rather than for the industry, which gives a level of authenticity to its work.'

Finance for the Future Awards judges

'We very much believe in bringing together asset managers and asset owners and other intermediaries from around the world to effect change and... to really add value (with our research), we need to get other organisations on board to do this.'

Marisa Hall,
Co-Head, Thinking Ahead Group

How

TAI works through its members to drive change in the investment industry:

- > Culture is a key idea for TAI in its drive for improved organisational effectiveness in the industry. The Institute works to foster a more purposeful, inclusive and deliberate culture through research and workshops.
- > The Institute has also conducted deep research into how organisations create value, and it encourages investors to recognise a wider range of stakeholders: employees, staff, clients, wider society and the planet. Members can then use their influence on investee companies to spread this approach more widely.
- > TAI working groups include individuals from member organisations who sign up to cooperate on a specific topic through research working groups. Participants come together to discuss the topic and feed into TAI's research. The Institute also runs events and member workshops around the world, creating a space for members to engage on a range of issues.
- > From its research, TAI has developed toolkits for members to support them to improve their work practices. One toolkit is a sustainability beliefs measurement tool and benchmark, which enables organisations to score their sustainability beliefs and compare themselves to peers.
- > Members evaluate TAI's performance through a scorecard. Each year, the Institute polls its members on each element of the scorecard and calculates an overall score. The results are reported in TAI's integrated report.
- > Public forums enable the Institute to play a part in the wider industry movement for greater responsibility and long-term, sustainable value creation. TAI has hosted public forums on areas such as sustainability, investment management fees and creating a fairer world for the end saver.
- > To increase impact and accelerate change further, the Institute is partnering with more organisations on its events and research. Its goal is to transmit key themes so that it can build momentum beyond the immediate control of TAI itself.

www.thinkingaheadinstitute.org



DISCLAIMER

This case study presents **Thinking Ahead Institute** entry for the Finance for the Future Awards 2019. The case study only includes information that was part of the organisation's 2019 entry. Some of this information may now be out of date. For a current view of the organisation's work, please visit their website at the link given above.



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