

Adapting to a Shifting Paradigm: Trends and Factors Affecting Civil Society

**Board/CEO Learning Day
May 23, 2017
Arrowwood Conference Center
Rye Brook, NY**

Running Order

8:00	Welcome	Michael Rose, Board chair
8:05	Introductions (CEOs, Board members introduce themselves)	Meg Gardinier, Secretary General
8:15	Welcome/introduce speakers/outline session goals	Paul Brown, CEO ChildFund NZ/ Carolina Ehrnrooth, CEO Barnfonden
8:30	The philanthropy perspective	Michael Gibbons, Wellspring
8:45	The communications & government perspective	Lisa Witter, Apolitical
9:00	The business perspective	Jacob Park, Forum for the Future
9:15	Q&A/Discussion	Moderated by Paul or Carolina
10:00	Coffee break	
10:15	Small group discussions	
11:15	Plenary	Moderated by Paul or Carolina
12:00	Lunch	

Background

Learning Day gives our board members and CEOs an opportunity to learn from each other, and from outside speakers, in order to enrich their knowledge and improve the Alliance's performance.

For the meeting in May, we have selected speakers who will challenge us to think critically about the role of the civil society sector, emerging trends and new factors influencing the success of our sector and how we need to adapt to a shifting paradigm.

Our speakers will provide us with a forum us to approach these issues from three different perspectives, and stimulate us to think about how we can make our good organization better, and how best to recognize and optimize our niche.

Our panel will be composed of three presenters from philanthropy (Michael Gibbons), communications (Lisa Witter) and business (Jacob Park). Each will make a short introductory presentation, followed by a Q & A and general discussion. Please see their bios below.

Presenter Bios

Michael Gibbons

Director of Children's Rights and Education Programs, Wellspring Advisors

Michael Gibbons has worked in basic education, community development and social justice since the mid-1970s in Asia, Africa, Latin America and low-income areas of the USA. He specializes in basic and non-formal education, child rights and child development, adult learning processes, training of educators and organizational learning.

He holds a PhD from the Fielding Institute in human and organizational development, with a focus on organizational learning processes within educational programs. He is particularly interested in the role learning plays in personal development and social transformation.

Michael serves as Director of Children's Rights and Education Programs at Wellspring Advisors LLC, a donor advising company based in Washington, DC. He also teaches courses in international training, education and development at The American University, George Washington University and the Monterey Institute for International Studies. He has served as associate director at Banyan Tree Foundation, country director and education advisor for Save the Children.

Reading materials:

[Beyond Survival: The Case for Investing in Young Children Globally](#)

[Elevate Children Funders Group Information Sharing Call: Impact of US Presidential Election on Children's Rights/Protection Internationally](#)

Jacob Park

Principal Sustainability Advisor, Forum for the Future

Jacob Park is a futurist and Principal Sustainability Advisor at Forum for the Future, an international non-profit working globally with business, government and other organizations to solve complex sustainability challenges.

His specialty is the use of strategic foresight methodologies such as scenario planning to help organizations create more sustainable strategies and drive system change. These engagements range from working with Levi's to help them rethink their fiber portfolio to running multi-stakeholder initiatives for the Rockefeller Foundation in Bangkok and Manila to catalyze social innovations for urban resilience. Jacob speaks about futures, sustainability and system change at various conferences and universities.

The first part of his career was spent as an international human rights advocate at various NGOs in New York, including Human Rights First and the Center for Economic and Social Rights. Jacob has an MBA in Sustainable Management from Presidio Graduate School and a BA in History from the University of Chicago.

Reading materials:

https://ssir.org/articles/entry/three_keys_to_unlocking_systems_level_change

<https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/blog/six-strategies-systems-change-sustainable-future>

Lisa Witter

Co-Founder and Executive Chairman of Apolitical

Lisa Witter is an award-winning executive, serial entrepreneur, writer and public speaker. She is an expert in the intersections of communications, government, politics, philanthropy, technology, women's issues and behavior change. She has counseled CEOs, Nobel Peace Prize winners, politicians, philanthropists, scientists and academics.

She is the Co-Founder and Executive Chairman of Apolitical: a network connecting impactful public servants around the world to inspiring ideas, solutions to shared challenges, and the best professional resources and opportunities. Apolitical's mission is to make government great for citizens everywhere.

Lisa founded and is a special advisor to *Assembly for*, a B-Corp that applies behavioral science for social good. She was partner and an executive for Fenton Communications, the largest public interest communications agency in the U.S., for 13 years.

In 2010, she was honored as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum and serves on WEF's Global Agenda Council for Behavior.

She is a frequent public speaker and moderator appearing on many media outlets and platforms and has been published in numerous publications. Lisa co-led the Clinton Global Initiative's Action Network on Women and Girls. She is co-author of *The She Spot: Why Women are the Market for Changing the World and How to Reach Them*.

Lisa studied at the University of California Santa Cruz, the University of Washington, the Università di Padua and the Harvard Kennedy School Executive Education.

Reading materials:

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2015/dec/31/six-communications-trends-ngos-should-follow-in-2016>

https://ssir.org/articles/entry/breaking_free_from_the_tribe_why_philanthropy_needs_to_invest_in_bridge_bui