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**New School Evaluation
Humanity in Action**

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Organizing questions

The following framing questions were articulated and agreed upon by Humanity in Action and New School staff prior to the evaluation:

What are your impressions of the program in terms of

- Quality of program design and delivery;
- Quality of fellows' engagement;
- Quality of directors and staff engagement.

1. Program design and delivery: Are the program's goals and learning outcomes clearly defined, and designed to support the overall program objectives? Do the 2013 theme and objectives support the organization's stated mission? Are the learning outcomes of sufficiently high quality? Does the schedule seem challenging yet feasible, and thoughtfully designed to support the goals and objectives? Are the program materials communicated with clarity? Are the program's speakers appropriately briefed to engage successfully with the fellows on this topic, and at their developmental level? Have the action-plan deliverables been sufficiently explained? Has the program provided experiences and resources to successfully position the fellows to meet the goals of the action plan? Is there sufficient opportunity for fellows' and speakers' feedback to modify the program going forward?
2. Fellows' engagement: Are the learning objectives clearly articulated to each fellow? Do the fellows seem to have been appropriately selected to successfully (at their own particular developmental level) complete the program? Comment on the cohort of fellows in terms of its ability to successfully engage with and benefit from the program and each other (given the varying categories of current student, recent graduate, professional, etc.). Do the fellows demonstrate an interest in a long-term commitment to HIA as senior fellows? What are their expectations of the senior fellows network, in terms of the value it might provide?
3. Directors and staff engagement: Do the directors and staff appear to be sufficiently informed, engaged and well-suited to working with the fellows and the subject matter? Do they support the goals and plans for the program with sufficient clarity?
4. Senior fellows: What is the value of this peer network, and to what degree does the capstone conference support these expectations?

Evaluation process

The evaluation process began with review of the materials provided by HIA: local program schedules and materials, descriptions of the international conference, the recommended readings for the programs and international conference, and questionnaires and other materials used for program self-evaluations. The review also included all web materials about the organization, the local programs (2013 and prior years) and the international conference (2013 and prior years).

The five days of the site visit in Amsterdam included meetings and informal conversations with the current Amsterdam program director and the former director, board members, the current interns, senior fellows of the Amsterdam program, and current fellows. It also included direct observation of the program in action, through joining several site visits with the full group of fellows (the tour of the Blue Mosque, the organization Connect, and a smaller group visit to the Project B installation), attending the final presentations of all the team projects, and observation of and interviews about the group dynamic in individual and group conversations with the fellows.

The five days of the site visit in Warsaw included attending the full conference (formal presentations and workshops); attending an informal dinner meeting with Executive Director Judith Goldstein, board chair Hans Binnendijk, and other board members and friends; attending the formal conference board dinner, which included all program directors and a number of board members; attending the senior fellows (program alumni) gathering; attending the program closing event with all fellows; and a great deal of informal conversation with fellows, board members, and friends of the organization.

A site for additional observation was the one-day New York HIA conference for senior fellows held in September 2013. This allowed additional conversation with former fellows and a chance to see one (particularly committed) segment of the alumni network in action; to observe how the organization creates ongoing opportunities for education, discussion, and connection; and to assess the quality and level of discussion and engagement within this group of senior fellows.

This evaluation focuses both on the local programs (of course through the lens of the Amsterdam program that was directly observed) and on the international conference, as the two enterprises are clearly intertwined; the international conference is the capstone of the local programs. Although the evaluation is not intended to be an evaluation of the organization as a whole, observations of the organization's workings as they affect the program are of necessity a piece of the story.

General observations

Overall, the program is an impressive enterprise with visible successes. Very strong idealism and identification with the larger organization and its mission are evident among fellows, senior fellows, program staff, leadership, and board members. The focus and organization of the program (both the local programs and the international conference) reflect the ethos and ambitions of the larger HIA organization which sponsors it and of its founding executive director. The organization attracts extremely committed leaders and staff who work tirelessly to aid the evolution and development of the program, which is updated and locally tailored each year. There is a strong self-reflective component to the organization's workings; it does not seem to rest on its laurels and it recognizes that its agendas and constituencies need to grow and adapt to changing times and circumstances.

As Pat Cox, keynote speaker at the international conference in Warsaw said, "Networks are about doing business, but communities are about values and hope." It is evident that HIA is rightly called a community, even as it also functions as a network. It is an extremely energetic and welcoming community, and it works hard at enacting its values of being open to and respectful of alternate views, while trying to hold onto a moral center—often fueled by outrage at acts of unfairness and violence—and a vision of a better world that takes difference into account and builds fair, just and democratic procedures.

The different program locations end up having rather different flavors, based on their local histories, their directors' agendas, the seminar topics, and the cultural backdrop and communication styles of the participants from each locale. In each case, the local program interacts in somewhat different ways with the various communication styles and histories that the American fellows bring to the table; this variability is appropriate and consistent with the program mission.

The fellows, senior fellows, leadership, and board members take pride in the program and its intensity. There is general agreement that the program is a powerful acculturation experience, and the fact that fellows find the experience both exhilarating and exhausting is an essential piece of its appeal and the social bonds it creates.

Program design and delivery

The program's mission, as reflected on the website ("educate fellows, connect a network, inspire action"), is at least threefold:

- A. to inspire and educate a class of fellows each year with a transformative and community-building experience;

- B. to connect these fellows with a network of like minded people (their own cohort, senior fellows, interns, board members, conference workshop participants) that will create internship and professional opportunities in the future; and
- C. to train and inspire activists who will implement positive change in the world.

The local programs and the international conference involve all three aspects of the mission, articulated and understood with some variation in emphasis and details by different constituents. There is general agreement that the point of the program is to be a transformative experience that increases sophistication and sensitivity not only about human rights issues and their complexities and histories, but also about group dynamics and cohesion, cross-cultural communication, and everyone's role in systems of privilege. There is also general agreement that the mission of the program is to train cohorts of young people to gain confidence and awareness in learning not to be bystanders, to be responsible for stepping in and acting when it is needed, whether that is through established organizations or through complementary (or even oppositional) paths. There is less agreement among the different constituents about the centrality of the professional networking component, in particular about the extent to which joining professionalized and mainstream organizations is or is not a better aim than doing unorthodox activist work, and occasional questions about the extent to which the professionalization aims can be elitist and work against egalitarian progressive ideals.

Overall, most participants see the different strands as complementary, even though different constituents clearly value the different aims differently and do not necessarily agree on what is most central; occasionally there can even be tensions between the different aims. The organization's emphasis on the different aspects to different degrees at different moments is probably wise, and certainly adaptive; it certainly is not essential for all constituents to be in universal agreement about what is most central. But it is worth noting that taking one or another of these components as more central has implications for the future development of the organization, and also for evaluating the program's success and its future opportunities.

The program objectives are clearly defined:

"The objective of the Humanity in Action Fellowship is to facilitate a collective exploration of the social and political roots of discrimination, as well as to provide a forum where potential solutions to some of today's most challenging issues can be considered and discussed. The programs are also intended to instill a responsibility among Humanity in Action Fellows to recognize and address the need to protect minorities and promote human rights—in their own communities and around the world." (from the website)

The program objectives support the overall organizational objectives and the organizational mission. The objectives (as enunciated in this wording on the website) do not explicitly address the professional networking aspect of the organization's

mission; this may well be a good strategic choice, as the statement on the website is appropriate for attracting the kinds of fellows the organization hopes to inspire, and additional focus on professional aspects might alter the attractiveness for some potential fellows one would not want to lose as applicants.

The plan of action in the local programs is thoughtfully designed to meet these objectives, with appropriate local variation and adjustment depending on the unique histories and opportunities of the different sites, as well as on the personalities and styles of the local staffs. The schedule is an intense mix of activities that include group discussion, seminar-style interactions and site visits with guest presenters from different sectors (academic, NGO, activist, public figures), academic readings, and project presentations. Fellows spend a significant amount of additional time with each other in social and informal activities, as well as significant amounts of time with their host families. The time spent on scheduled and unscheduled program-related activities thus encompasses nearly every minute of the day for the fellows for the duration of their stay in the program; fellows uniformly report that the experience is intense.

The particular mix and balance of activities in the local programs is well designed to further the program goals and the organization's threefold mission. The formal intellectual/academic, cultural, and social programming is interspersed with informal opportunities for interaction, which range from continuing discussion of the complex issues that arise in the presentations and site visits to purely social activities, in which the fellows explore the local scene and build intense friendships and relationships with each other and with their hosts. The atmosphere that is achieved balances intensity with fun, and seriousness about important social problems with lightness, in a way that can be argued to constitute the "secret sauce" of the HIA program.

The staff who design the program are well aware of the delicate balance they are working to achieve, and they clearly value it as central to the success of the program. There is evident self-reflection and adjustment of the programming to design an experience for fellows that will be intellectually and personally challenging while promoting group cohesion. In the Amsterdam program, for example, the 2013 activities included new explicitness for the fellows about group commitment to ideals of respectful discussion and "safe space," with the purposeful idea of improving respect for different views, and modeling an appropriate and professional tone of discussion. This was an appropriate and impressive response to some discord and discomfort in the 2012 cohort.

Although the organization (centrally or locally) has not articulated a formal and detailed statement of activity-by-activity desired learning outcomes for the local programs, it is clear that the scheduled activities are planned with impressive thoughtfulness to align with program goals and the larger organizational mission. The range of topics addressed through the various activities nicely juxtaposes historical events and context

of the program location with related present-day local and larger global issues, with a carefully thought-through sequence of presentations that introduce the issues and allow for group process and discussion. The topics vary in each program location, and they are also adjusted each year to reflect continuing social and political developments in each location.

The speakers and presenters represent a diverse array of backgrounds, with some coming from the academy as experts in a relevant issue and others representing on-the-ground philanthropic, governmental, and activist perspectives. The academically oriented speakers are accomplished researchers in their own right, and the non-academic presenters each have important relevant on-the-ground experience that allows them to speak with authority. Presenters are selected both for their expertise and their ability to communicate well with the fellows. The evidence suggests that the majority do a very good job at communicating appropriately; just as importantly there are clear mechanisms for feedback from the fellows about the success of the communication, and they lead to schedule adjustments in subsequent years.

The assigned seminar readings are of high quality and rigor, suitable for the curriculum at a good university, and carefully curated. The number of readings—those assigned for reading before the start of the program and conference, and those assigned to be read during the course of the program—is large. It is clear that fellows vary in their depth of attention to the readings over the course of the program. The readings are probably best thought of as useful context and potential future reference material for those fellows who want to dive deeper into the particular issues the readings cover, as opposed to course readings for a high-level university seminar; the readings are certainly of university-level quality, and the fellows are certainly qualified to engage with them at a high level, but the program schedule as it stands does not promote or even really allow the kind of academic discussion and critique of the readings that a university course would involve. Given the delicate balance of atmosphere that is created among the cohort of fellows, it is unclear whether changing the program to focus more on academic outcomes is desirable, or whether it could be done without harming the broader learning outcomes that make the program special.

Written group projects and presentations form another important aspect of the program schedule. (Some of these projects go on to gain funding through HIA as post-program action projects). Teams are assembled by the program staff, who also provide mentoring about topic selection and research strategies; teams are encouraged to work on local issues beyond the immediate ones that brought them to the program, and the projects develop in ways that reflect the multidisciplinary backgrounds of the team members and available opportunities on the ground. As evidenced by the Amsterdam projects, the issues that the teams address are timely and of importance in the local context and more broadly; the approaches that the teams take are historically informed and researched using a mix of methods (archival materials, academic readings,

interviews, site visits). It is also clear that the learning outcomes for these projects go beyond increasing sophistication about the topics that are researched, but also broadening experience in cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary teamwork. (The overall quality of the presentations observed in Amsterdam was good, reflecting substantial research and discussion by the teams, and they were presented in a supportive and safe atmosphere that nonetheless allowed challenging questions. It might be useful for the teams to be provided with additional preparation and mentoring about how they are conceiving of the audience for these presentations (Academic? Policy makers? General public? The program staff? This cohort of fellows?); additional intentionality about the audience and form of communication, and perhaps also additional hands-on communication strategies training, would likely be helpful for increasing the potential impact of the work, as well as providing focus that could lead more clearly to subsequent projects that build on this teamwork.

The observations made here about the local programs also apply to the international conference. Overall, the international conference was extremely well designed as a capstone to the local programs: as an opportunity for fellows to broaden and contextualize their local experience in larger intellectual and national frameworks, to experience another set of cultural venues that reflect the program mission and objectives, to connect with fellows from this year's cohort in the local programs and to meet senior fellows from prior years, and to engage in additional pre-professional and activist-training-ground activities.

All aspects of the conference's organization reflected the organization's mission(s) and enhanced the local program objectives. The conference was held in a remarkable setting, the new Museum of the History of Polish Jews, which is an embodiment of some of the central aspects of the organization's mission. The set of keynote speakers on the formal conference program reflected the range of the organization's mission and reach, with programming designed to create transformative experiences on several fronts: education about and reminders of past atrocities, discussions with European and Polish leaders about international and local dialogue and the connection between history and present issues, breakout sessions that brought in an impressive set of activists and professionals who work on important causes of the day into dialogue with fellows and senior fellows, and site visits to important cultural sites including Treblinka. The agenda was also well designed to continue the mix of serious and more lighthearted moments that form the atmosphere of the local programs; there were formal moments designed to promote socializing and bonding among all attendees, as well as informal opportunities created simply through the housing and transportation arrangements.

The academic content of the conference was impressive on all fronts, in the overall high quality of the presentations and discussions and in the seriousness of the questions asked by the attendees. Although an enterprise like this runs the risk of becoming self-

congratulatory or self-satisfied, and obviously no organization is ever immune to this, the general tenor was content-full, serious, and inspirational. Even though the talks were geared for a general audience they did not oversimplify the issues nor suggest that there are easy solutions to complex problems; at the same time they did not communicate a sense of futility or overwhelm. There was a palpable sense among the participants of comfort in being among like-minded individuals with a (generally) shared sense of purpose.

The conference readings, like the local program readings, were rigorous and extremely well chosen to provide important background and introduction to the history of Warsaw and Poland more generally. It is clear that the majority of fellows have not had the time or energy to read them in depth, certainly by this point after their participation in the local program, and so the readings are better seen as useful potential resources for the future as opposed to pieces intended for critique and discussion at the conference or among the fellows during their time together.

Fellows' engagement

The fellows arrive through an extremely rigorous selection procedure which involves a surprisingly large number of senior fellows, staff members, board members, and friends internationally. (This has an additional obvious benefit of enhancing those various constituents' ongoing engagement with the organization and its mission). Most fellows have academic background in history and politics, or interdisciplinary social science variants like migration or gender; but there is clearly an effort at increasing the diversity of perspectives among the fellows, for example with 2013 fellows with training in medicine and in media/theater. The fellows are mostly in their 20's, all with at least some recent undergraduate university experience; some are currently or plan to be enrolled in graduate or professional degree programs, and others have completed them, but there is no evident pattern in whether a particular university degree experience or trajectory affects the fellows' preparedness or success in the program. The selection procedure clearly focuses on additional qualities beyond academic preparedness that make fellows suitable for the program.

In general, the fellows are a remarkable set of young people: intelligent, accomplished, idealistic, and at a point in life where they are facing major choice points and (for some) confusion. They all also bring a personal history that has fueled their interest and desire to change the world, and it is perhaps not surprising that their personal issues and questions are an important piece of what ends up being debated during the program. Based on the rigors of the selection process, the cohort ends up having a high percentage with fairly elite backgrounds and aspirations (with different inflections of what this means in the American and different European cohorts). At least as observed in the Amsterdam group, there is some discussion about the potential importance of

diversifying the political perspectives and backgrounds of the fellows, and there have been some efforts at doing so, including bringing some fellows with more conservative politics than have been the norm. This is an important conversation that strikes at the heart of the organization's mission, but it is a complicated one; if the HIA program becomes more explicitly a training ground for conversations across political divides, in the name of increasing fellows' eventual political efficacy, this could end up changing the atmosphere and perceived purpose of the program.

The fellows seem extremely well prepared to participate in the program and to be deeply engaged with it—and there is strong social pressure in the program to be fully engaged, and so it would be difficult for them not to be. Collectively they bring a range of qualities to the program, both intellectual and experiential, that allow for stimulating and challenging conversation, and they clearly do not shy away from participating fully in questioning each other's (and to varying degrees their own) knowledge, assumptions, and biases. This can take different forms for different fellows, but it is certainly not the case that each fellow's journey is identical, nor that the journey always involves political liberalization or acknowledgment of American ideas about privilege and bias as being universal.

The current fellows seemed particularly engaged in their current group process and experience, and less focused (at least obviously) on the senior fellows network or long-term HIA involvement. Many are in the process of sorting out their next steps professionally, whether that involves graduate school or employment or a start-up, and at least some of them were interested in conversation about their options; in having such conversations with each other and with staff and friends they were already displaying an orientation to the professional aspects of HIA. But it is probable that the potential advantages of the HIA network will only become visible to them over time—the international conference is a good first step at showing some of the options—and also that there will be some fellows for whom the HIA network will ultimately not be a primary site of professional advancement. It also may be that too much of a focus on goal-oriented professionalization—with the specter of competitiveness for limited resources that always comes with that—during the summer program would work against the delicate balance in group dynamic and the group solidarity that is being built during the summer

Directors' and staff engagement

The commitment, energy and competence of the directors and staff is one of the most impressive and visible aspects of HIA, from the executive director and deputy executive director to the program directors and assistant directors to the interns.

The vision, judgment and tone-setting of the founder and executive director of the organization, Judith Goldstein, are palpable forces in the organization, and her role in continuing to animate and build the program is central even as the organization has expanded its enterprises. Her articulation and stewardship of a set of founding ideals continue to inspire both those she works with directly and external constituencies and funding bodies, and her rapport with fellows, senior fellows, staff, board members, and friends is profound. The community and network of HIA have been built on—and continue to rely on—the community-building and networking talents of its executive director. Most notably as it affects the program, she has selected and empowered a staff who can enact and expand her vision.

At all levels the organization succeeds at finding talented, intelligent, thoughtful, articulate, socially skilled, and open staff members to organize the details of the program. The national directors play a particularly important role, along with the program directors and staff they select. As former HIA fellows themselves, they bring a wealth of experiential knowledge to the table; as senior fellows who have a particularly intense commitment to the organization and its ideals, they present visible models for current fellows, both on professional and personal (e.g., balance between career and personal life) levels. All evidence suggests that they are respected as leaders by all constituents. It is clear that their ability to listen and to adjust activities both to meet immediate demands and to continually reflect on the larger vision are an important part of their success.

From all evidence, the national directors are given substantial autonomy to organize local affairs, manage their teams, and work closely with their local board members. The directors coordinate with each other regularly, so that there is a system in place for contextualizing local efforts and providing ongoing feedback about what is working and what needs to change. The structures for coordinating between central and local governance seem to be adequate for allowing ongoing conversation about future directions, even if the number of sites and teams involved can make the conversations complicated.

In any case, it is clear that the network of directors allows for substantial ongoing re-affirmation and discussion about program objectives. This includes discussion of just how uncomfortable and challenging a personal experience is best for fellows, and operational choices about how heavy or light a touch is needed in providing training and ongoing feedback about professional development: e.g., what the best ways are to

introduce and explicitly discuss networking techniques, business etiquette and dress, punctuality and responsibility, the desirability of working within or beyond established venues, etc.

As is the case at many non-profit organizations, compensation and staffing levels are relatively low given the scale of the organization's ambitions, which continue to expand. The formula seems to be working at present; the staff's level of dedication and working beyond the prescribed hours is remarkable, and there is no visible discontent with compensation, but one may question how sustainable this model is in the long run. The incentive structure may well be appropriate for the career stages of all those involved, and as the current staff grows into new ambitions elsewhere there may well be a steady supply of new dedicated senior fellows to take on leadership roles with these levels of staffing and compensation. Nonetheless, if the organization wishes to continue to expand its reach and activities, it will be important to continually examine its compensation structure so as to continue to attract and retain staff of the high quality and dedication it now attracts.

Senior fellows network

At present there are more than 1300 alumni of the HIA program, some percentage of whom remain actively involved with the organization as part of the senior fellows network. The most actively engaged attend the international conference and participate in local workshops and conference activities (like the New York conference in September 2013). A larger percentage use, or at least peruse, the web and email information the organization provides to facilitate personal connections among senior fellows and others connected with the organization: invitations to events for in-person connection, informational blogs focused on particular topics, etc. Of course some percentage of the alumni are not connected with this network at all, and it is hard to know whether they would be interested in other sorts of continuing engagement than are now provided.

It is clear that those senior fellows who are actively engaged find the network useful, and that they can point to moments of connection through the network that have proven professionally and personally advantageous. Less easily quantifiable is the extent to which the senior fellows find that the network provides a home of like-minded people with common ground and shared values, and the extent to which at least some of the senior fellows use the network as an occasional moment to become re-dedicated to the ideals that brought them to HIA. As several senior fellows report, it can be difficult to fend off burn-out or cynicism in professional activist work, and navigating complex organizational politics can be enormously challenging. Maintaining connection with other HIA senior fellows, participating in conversation and raising difficult questions at a

well-curated and inspirational conference provides them with a much-needed and personally satisfying recharge.

Several senior fellows reported that they believe more could and should be done to increase the attractiveness of HIA engagement given their current lives, as well as their utility to the organization and its ideals as the organization develops. A number of good ideas were proposed during this evaluation:

1. Hire one Alumni Director for the organization who is charged with amassing information and creating useful connection opportunities
2. Create events (perhaps large ones every few years at the international conference, and/or smaller professional development events targeted for affinity groups) that are professionally useful for alumni in their current settings, or otherwise compelling enough to make attending worth planning around given their complicated lives, for several purposes:
 - a. For networking with like-minded others from HIA who are doing related work
 - b. For learning from “stars” (who are HIA alumni or otherwise) who are tops in a particular field
 - c. For re-igniting the youngster passion and having new transformative experiences, but this time from the perspective of added experience. That is, some senior fellows report that they would like not only to join in conversations with the 22 year olds, which they don’t necessarily find of professional utility and can feel simply like re-rehearsing the debates they had when they were new HIA fellows, but to have new conversations that reflect their experience and current professional levels.
 - d. For learning new developments or debates of which they might not be aware

A few senior fellows reported feeling that the organization is under-utilizing them, or thinking only of their utility to the new crop of fellows, as opposed to continuing to serve them and build on their accomplishments. Whether this is a broader perception or not, it is clear that the organization has reached a stage in its development where the number of senior fellows is large enough (and the percentage of them in interesting and prominent positions is great enough) that it makes strategic sense on multiple fronts to focus more deeply on serving their needs as they advance in their careers. Enhancing this network is likely to increase the organization’s impact in the long term as well as to provide expanded opportunities for future HIA fellows.

Additional observations and questions

One external funding body has asked about the extent to which the HIA program fosters attention to, explicitly discusses, and promotes love and forgiveness. Arguably the entire program is centered on attending to and promoting love and forgiveness, in its attention to understanding the effects and legacies of past and ongoing atrocities, how we can move forward in remedying wrongs, what makes it possible to go beyond simple blaming and move into acting for the good, and how we individually and collectively can best help those who are least able to help themselves. While it is evident that the motivation behind the program—indeed the entire organization—emanates from a desire for love and forgiveness, it is worth noting that the terms “love” and “forgiveness” are rarely used explicitly in the program. This is fully in keeping with the discourse style of the human rights community worldwide into which the program fellows are being enculturated and trained; in fact, it could potentially be counterproductive for the fellows’ ultimate effectiveness in various communities of action for them to be socialized into using terms and a mode of discourse that are not traditional or professionally appropriate in those communities.

From observation of the Amsterdam program interactions, it was clear that an important element of what happens in the group is that the fellows are confronted with communication styles that reflect unfamiliar cultural and discourse norms, and that the differences go beyond the fact that the language of the program (English) is not everyone’s native language. Of course there is notable within-culture variation among fellows in communication styles, and so one cannot rely on overly simplistic cultural stereotypes of Dutch directness and American/Anglo-Saxon indirectness and politeness to characterize the interactions; nonetheless, it was clear that one of the challenges facing the fellows was encountering a group of others who had different communicative values and different ideas about the right or most effective way to disagree. On one extreme some fellows strongly valued getting right to the point, directly challenging others, sharpening distinctions, and generally confronting others in a spirit of rough and tumble—with a bit of disdain for those not tough enough to handle the directness; on the other extreme were fellows who strongly valued softening challenges, trying not to offend different sensibilities, working to avoid appearing aggressive or disrespectful to a sensitive interlocutor, and surprised when others did not recognize their indirect meaning. It is not clear whether there is consensus (in the organization, or among the fellows) about what the desired learning outcomes in this arena are. Is the desired outcome that everyone should end up being able to accommodate to and recognize the legitimacy of alternate styles, perhaps as pre-training for cross-cultural and interdisciplinary dialogue in professional settings and doing transnational work? Or should everyone be moved toward a more sensitive “international” style that works to minimize offense? Whether or not there is (or should be) consensus on this point, it may be worth considering whether more explicit discussion about or training in issues of cross-cultural communication in the program would be useful.

The fact that the HIA programs are designed to include half American fellows is obviously a defining and founding feature, but it also contains within it the seeds of some difficult questions. In particular, does the numerical balance reflect a presumption (intentionally or not), or license the interpretation, that the organization's intention is to bring America's wisdom about tolerance and diversity to Europe? Is there an implicit message that America is "ahead" of Europe? In the interest of balance, should the programming focus more on explicit comparative discussion of American and local histories, and successes and failures, or would this distort the program's focus inappropriately? If more American program locations are developed, what should the balance of national backgrounds of the fellows be, and how will this affect perceptions of the organization?

The organization has an interesting opportunity to push forward the agenda of connecting the academic with the practical in new ways. The program already embodies a commitment to this agenda on several fronts, and it addresses the hunger among fellows and senior fellows for how the academic/activist intersection is changing in an ever-more-interconnected world through the selection of presenters at the local programs, conference and workshops. It would be interesting for the organization to consider a more explicit focus on how multidisciplinary approaches and "systems thinking" are becoming more essential for academic understanding as well as for project-based interventions.

Specifically, one could imagine including in the programming attention to newer forms of more radical collaboration across disciplines:

- the infusion of "design thinking" into the academy, the action-focused cross-disciplinary projects that this has engendered, and how one might bring design thinking into HIA training;
- newer efforts at enhancing brainstorming and collaborative skills in teams assembled with quite different expertises and perspectives;
- reflection on and training for communicating and presenting to audiences with disparate backgrounds.

HIA's exhortation to action—to stepping in and avoiding bystander apathy—is laudable and central to its mission. One could imagine increasing fellows' sophistication in what this really means by including explicit discussion of new academic work that explores the unintended consequences of well-meaning interventions, for example, anthropologist Miriam Ticktin's work on "Casualties of Care" (on perverse outcomes from the work of Doctors with Borders). The trick would be to include this in a way that does not stymie or reduce the fellows' idealism and enthusiasm; it would be important to frame this as increasing fellows' sophistication in navigating an interconnected world and understanding the complex social and economic systems in which interventions

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operate, and as improving their ability to design action projects that are likely to have the desired impact. In a larger sense, this would be another arena in which HIA could operationalize the ways that “do something” can be balanced by academic critique, and how critique can be turned into useful action.

As an organization, HIA has been doing impressive work in capturing its dynamism and ambitions in its web and video presentations. It is very much in the organization’s interest to continue these efforts, and to include even more content about specific achievements in them. The organization is open to such variation in topical focus and method that it runs the risk of appearing diffuse or unfocused to those who are unfamiliar with it, which means that concrete examples of visible outcomes and demonstrable effects will be particularly compelling in clarifying what the organization does.