

# Institute for Strategic Dialogue

## Who are they?

The **Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD)** is a London-based think tank concerned with extremism. Its founding CEO is Sasha Havlicek.

Havlicek is a member of the Council On Foreign Relations (CFR). The CFR is an independent, nonpartisan member organization, think tank and publisher who work closely with the World Economic Forum and United Nations

[https://www.isdglobal.org/isd\\_team/sasha-havlicek/](https://www.isdglobal.org/isd_team/sasha-havlicek/)

ISD are frequently given a platform by The Irish Times. Since Covid started their name first appeared in September 2020 with an article entitled “The Far Right Rises”.

However, since April this year they have been mentioned 14 times with articles such as

“How to deal with a Covid-19 conspiracy theorist”,

“Conspiracy theories, why it’s pointless to argue”,

“I have my opinion on the whole thing. I research it”

and

“Anti-lockdown rhetoric turns nasty as businesses fall victim to backlash” to name but a few.

Aoife Gallagher is the name that most frequently appears. Her area of speciality is far-right extremism and says that conspiracy theories are the far right’s greatest weapon.

[https://www.isdglobal.org/isd\\_team/aoife-gallagher/](https://www.isdglobal.org/isd_team/aoife-gallagher/)

She has written articles for Thejournal.ie also on the far-right.

<https://www.thejournal.ie/eyes-right-pt4-5381554-Mar2021/>

She has also appeared on RTE podcast: The Truth Matters: A Guide To Misinformation. She previously worked for Storyful as did other guests on the podcast.

Storyful was set up by Mark Little who went on to found Kinzen. Kinzen has been in the press a lot recently due to spying on social media posts by the general public at the behest of Stephen Donnelly, Minister of Health.

<https://gript.ie/revealed-5-months-of-kinzens-disinformation-digests/>

But who are funding ISD. Their partnerships and funders page explains a lot. They are funded by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), Omidyar group and Open Society foundations (George Soros).

## Funders (2018 – Present)

### Foundations

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
British Council  
Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF)  
Europäisches Forum Alpbach  
Gemeinnützige Hertie Stiftung  
Gen Next Foundation  
Hirondelle Foundation  
International Republican Institute (IRI)  
Mercator Stiftung Germany  
Mercator Stiftung Switzerland  
National Democratic Institute  
Omidyar Group  
Open Society Foundations  
Robert Bosch Stiftung  
United States Institute for Peace

BMGF has funded ISD \$199,704. The purpose of the money was “To research public discourse on vaccines in Germany and address possible implications for the global Covid-19 response.”

## Institute for Strategic Dialogue US

[Grantee Website](#) → Toledo, Ohio, United States

### Purpose

*To research public discourse on vaccines in Germany and address possible implications for the global COVID-19 response*

DIVISION	DATE	REGION SERVED	COMMITTED AMOUNT
Global Policy and Advocacy	AUGUST 2020	GLOBAL, EUROPE	\$199,704
GRANT TOPIC	DURATION (MONTHS)	GRANTEE LOCATION	
Global Health and Development Public Awareness and Analysis	9	Toledo, Ohio, United States	

The Omidyar group through their funding company Luminate donated \$185,000

## Institute for Strategic Dialogue

### Impact area

Other

### Geographic focus

Western Europe

### Status

Alumni Partner

Founded in 2006, ISD is now the leading global 'think and do' tank dedicated to understanding and innovating real-world responses to the rising tide of polarisation, hate and extremism of all forms. They combine anthropological research, expertise in international extremist movements and an advanced digital analysis capability that tracks hate, disinformation and extremism online, with policy advisory support and training to governments and cities around the world. They also work to empower youth and community influencers internationally through our pioneering education, technology and communications programmes.



### Find out more

<https://www.isdglobal.org/>

### Share profile



### Funding details

Name	Primary impact area	Geographic focus	Year	Amount committed (US\$)	Term	
Institute for Strategic Dialogue 2019 Grant	Other	Western Europe	2019	185,000	9 months	+
Total	US\$ 185,000					

<https://luminategroup.com/investee/isd>

The exact amount Soros donated was difficult to pinpoint.

What is interesting however is that BMGF, Omidyar and Open Society are all members of the World Economic Forum

# Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, guided by the belief that every life has equal value, is working to help people lead healthy, productive lives. Based in Seattle, it is led by Chief Executive Officer Mark Suzman, under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett. The foundation supports work in over 100 countries.

Visit the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation website →



Headquarters  
USA

# Omidyar Network

Omidyar Network is a philanthropic investment organization creating opportunities for low- and middle-income households to improve their lives. Omidyar Network invests in market-based solutions that catalyse economic and social change.

Visit the Omidyar Network website →

Headquarters  
USA

# Open Society Foundations

The Open Society Institute is active in more than 120 countries around the world. Its national and regional foundations and thematic programmes give thousands of grants every year to build inclusive and vibrant democracies. Over 50,000 grants have been awarded so far, amounting to over \$15.2 billion.

Visit the Open Society Foundations website →

Headquarters  
USA

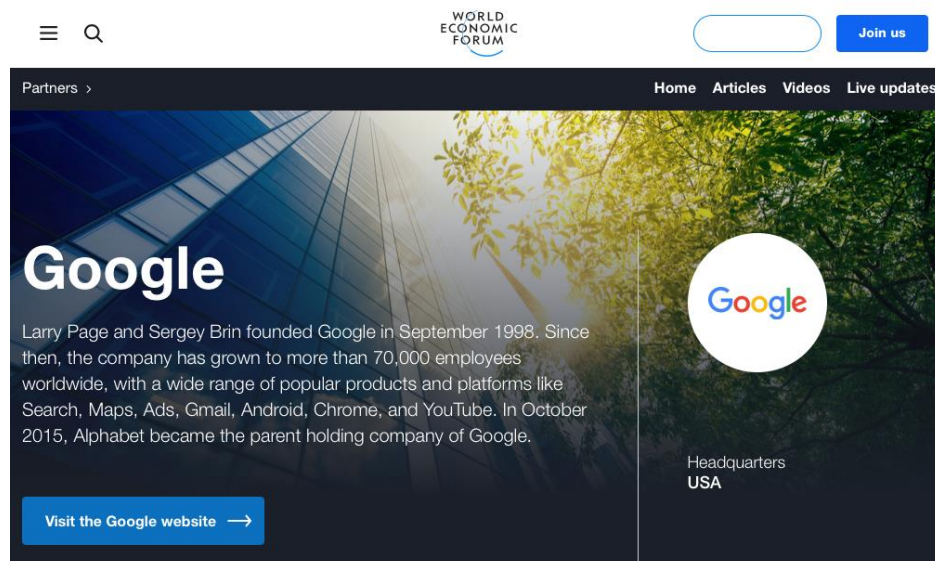
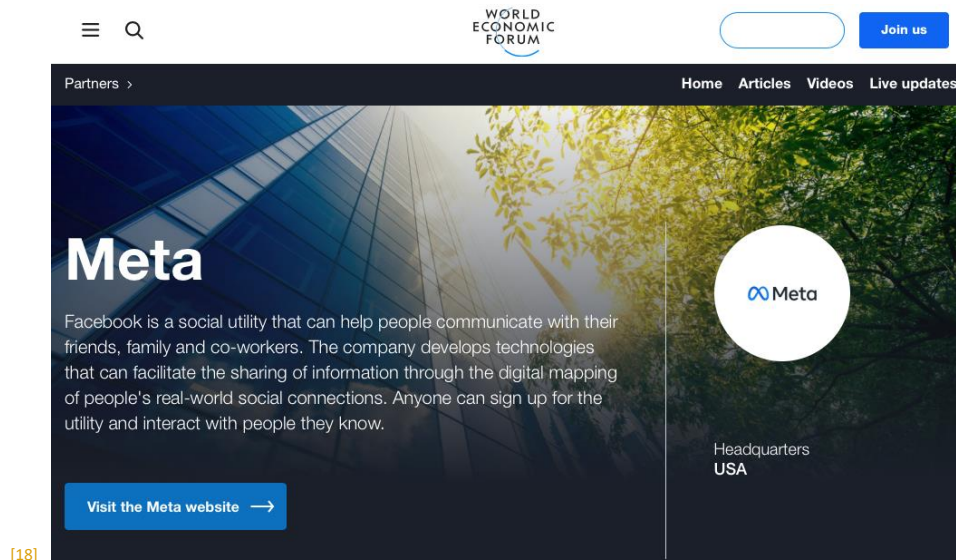
But that isn't all. They also work with the private sector in the shape of multiple IT companies such as Facebook (now known as META), Google and Microsoft who are also members of the WEF.

## Private Sector

Audible  
Facebook  
GIFCT  
Google  
Google.org  
Jigsaw  
Microsoft  
YouTube

In 2017 Google.org and ISD partnered to deliver a £1m innovation fund to counter hate and extremism in the UK.

<https://www.isdglobal.org/innovation-fund/>







So they are funded by Gates, Omidyar & Soros whilst their IT partners are Meta, Google and Microsoft.

However, they are also funded by multiple government organisations as well as the European Commission, Council Of Europe and United Nations. Just some of the govt organisations are US, UK, Germany, Australia, Canada etc.

#### Governments & Multilateral Organisations

Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and trade (DFAT)  
 Australian Department for Home Affairs  
 Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats (CREST)  
 Council of Europe  
 Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
 Danish Ministry of Immigration and Integration  
 Department of Premier & Cabinet, Victoria, Australia  
 Dutch Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
 Dutch Ministry of the Interior  
 European Commission  
 Finnish Interior Ministry  
 German Federal Agency for Civic Engagement  
 German Federal Foreign Office (Auswaertiges-Amt)  
 German Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection (BMJV)  
 Global Affairs Canada  
 Global Coalition to Defeat Daesh/ISIS  
 International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
 London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)  
 Ministry of Justice and Security, The Netherlands  
 New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs (DIA)  
 Norwegian Ministry of Children & Families (MCF)  
 Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
 Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security  
 Public Safety Canada  
 Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB)  
 Swedish Ministry of Integration  
 Swedish Ministry of Justice  
 Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)  
 UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)  
 UK Home Office  
 UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)  
 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
 US Department for Homeland Security (DHS)  
 US State Department

You can see a full list at

<https://www.isdglobal.org/partnerships-and-funders/>

*Finally, following from the ISD 2019 annual report which I had a look at. Just before Covid kicked off:*

**INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC DIALOGUE  
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)  
TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019**

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- **Far-Right Interventions Research:** With extreme right ideologies on the rise, Google's think tank Jigsaw approached ISD to undertake a review of existing intervention practices. Drawing on interviews with practitioners throughout ISD's networks in Belgium, Canada, Germany, France, Sweden, the UK and the USA, ISD's *An Imprecise Science: Assessing Interventions For The Prevention, Disengagement And De-Radicalisation Of Left And Right-Wing Extremists* exposes the lack of investment for interventions both online and offline, an area that ISD has pioneered.
- **Islamist Women and Girls Interventions Research:** ISD has been at the forefront of understanding the role of women and girls in extremist movements. 2019 saw concerns heighten with the return of women and girls from former ISIS-held territories. To help build capacity of practitioners to deal with this cohort, ISD received support from the Ministry of Justice in The Netherlands to produce *Women, Girls & Islamist Extremism: A Toolkit for Intervention Practitioners* in English and Dutch. Drawn from the expertise of British and Dutch intervention providers who have worked with over 250 females, the toolkit highlights effective practices for intervention provision with women and girls, existing policy frameworks and practical tools available for those involved in these cases.

**Policy Advisory**

Throughout 2019, international organisations, national governments, cities and the private sector looked to ISD for policy recommendations and thought leadership. ISD strengthened partnerships with the United Nations Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate (UNCTED), the World Economic Forum, the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF), and the Global Internet Forum for Counter Terrorism (GIFCT). ISD supported the New Zealand and French governments in launching the Christchurch Call to Action, providing input to Jacinda Ardern and her team over the course of the year, while significantly deepening ISD's impact with policymakers in France, the UK and Germany on digital policy. ISD's Strong Cities Network consolidated its status as the go-to network for local mayors and practitioners seeking solutions to hate, polarisation and extremism. Finally, ISD continued its role as a critical friend to the social media companies, mounting a programme of digital policy advocacy work designed to achieve greater transparency in relation to the companies' advertising, algorithmic and content moderation processes. The intention of this work is to address ways in which the technological architecture of the platforms inorganically amplifies extreme messaging and enables the proliferation of disinformation.

ISD have a lot of balls to juggle at any one time with all their funders and partners.