

AGORA THINK TANK

England & Wales · Charity number 1176974

Details

Other names AGORA

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2018-02-05

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

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Activities

Objects: TO ADVANCE EDUCATION, FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, BY PROMOTION, ON AN INDEPENDENT AND NONPOLITICAL BASIS, OF THE STUDY, DISCUSSION, EXCHANGE, AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE CONCERNED WITH THE FOREIGN POLICY AND RELATED PUBLIC POLICY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

Activities: Agora provides a platform for people who are knowledgeable and passionate about international affairs. Our aim is to create and grow a community that combines the intellectual rigour of academia with the professional standards of a think tank. We support our members in developing ideas and empower them to influence foreign policy outside of the conventional channels.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research
- **What:** Education/training, Economic/community Development/employment
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	-	-	-	-
2023-12-31	-	-	-	-
2022-12-31	£2,470	£1,600	-	-
2021-12-31	£814	£604	-	-
2020-12-31	£3,452	£2,528	-	-
2019-12-31	£455	£216	-	-
2019-04-05	£1,540	£1,128	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
PASCAL ROELCKE	Chair	2017-06-30
ABIGAIL WATSON		2017-07-30
DANIEL FITTER		2017-06-30
Ellen Groom		2022-03-10
JOHN STUART MCSTRAVICK		2017-06-30
Jack Ithell		2022-03-10
KATHRIN WARTMANN		2017-07-30

Accounts

Agora Annual Return (2022)

Charity #: 1176974

Voted on 28 September 2023

Trustee annual report

Agora began a new phase of its development in 2022, with the first year of a new 24-month strategy (covering Y5-6 of the think tank's life). Our three core, strategic areas of focus for these two years are: amplifying Agora's impact, increasing funding, and ensuring consistent content and event output. All of these are to be underpinned by an overarching goal of growing our membership base. Our belief is that this can be done as we adjust our offering to cater to the needs and preferences of our members and wider audience of participants in the post-pandemic world.

The structure of the think tank remained the same. Our Executive Committee (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer) provided leadership and set agendas, informed by a strategy co-decided by the Board of Trustees. The organisation's Council is in charge of operational delivery.

Our regional branches in London, Northern Ireland, the South West, and the South East grew and gained momentum. This expansion was complemented by the restarting our Policy & Pints monthly community events series which run concurrently in all four locations. There are early signs of a group establishing itself in Scotland. A longer term aim of the organisation is to gradually expand to have a regional branch in each of the UK's 12 regions.

Agora remains a committed member of the Open Think Tank Network, collaborating with think tanks across Germany, Austria, and Switzerland to foster cross-border research and initiatives.

In 2022 we expanded our paid internship programme from one to three interns, taking students from two top UK universities. Following our internship programmes, we were honoured to be listed as the LSE Volunteer Organisation of the Year. Agora representatives participated in a number of university events too, often run by career departments.

Agora participated in a cultural festival for the first time, hosting a panel event at ImagineBelfast. We also used events as a way to broaden our stakeholder engagement, such as a collaborative project with the Swiss Embassy at the University of Oxford.

The think tank's membership grew slightly over the course of the year. We were able to hold a first members' Summery Symposium event in London to celebrate and consolidate our community of international affairs enthusiasts.

Our social media presence remained steady and we sent out quarterly newsletters.

We look forward to 2023 with energy and enthusiasm.

Accounts

Financial activities

Revenue (£)		Expenses (£)	
Item	Value	Item	Value
Membership fees	1180	Wages	1330
University funding	1260	IT services	86.2
Donations	30	Banking fees	37.6
		Events	146.4
Total	2470	Total	1600.20

Net income (£) 869.80

Balance sheet

	(£)
Carried over from previous financial period	2369.38
Revenue	2470
Expenses	1600.20
Total assets at financial period end	3239.18

Accounts

Agora Annual Return (2021)

Charity #: 1176974

Voted on during AGM on 10 March 2022

Trustee annual report

Agora enjoyed another successful year in 2021, despite the challenges posed by a lingering pandemic and its associated public health measures.

Structurally the think tank remains the same. Our Executive Committee (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer) provide leadership and sets agendas, informed by a strategy co-decided by the Board of Trustees and Council. A two-day retreat at FCDO executive agency Wilton Park in August 2021 gave us the opportunity to discuss our future developments with government stakeholders too.

In 2021 Agora was a founding member of the Open Think Tank Network, along with partner think tanks in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. The Network seeks to promote cross-border research and project collaboration. A flagship piece on feminist foreign policy has already been done to good effect.

Although we did not replicate the previous year's success in taking on an employee, we were able to take on a paid intern through a scheme run by the London School of Economics.

Following on from the establishment of a first regional group in 2010, two more branches were kicked off this year in Northern Ireland and the South West. The former in particular has got off to a strong start.

A pleasing development over the last 12 months was the recovery of a membership base. In 2010 we suffered a disappointing if understandable atrophy of our membership numbers, likely driven by a breakdown of our community meet-ups after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. We ended the year with 31 members, albeit currently largely made up of those who also volunteer for the think tank. Looking forward, our new payment system means that membership recurs automatically, so we can anticipate a growth in our community without seeing the same level of drop-off.

In terms of written output, Agora published 16 blogs (a decline from 27 in 2020), and published a briefing and our first policy paper. The paper offered an opportunity to speak with senior political figures and was also the subject of an op-ed in EU news outlet Euractiv. 2021 also saw us experiment with new forms of content, with the launch of our podcast Agora Radio. So far we have published eight episodes.

Agora put on 13 public events in 2021, mostly online policy panels, the same number as the year before. Representatives of the think tank also attended numerous careers and outreach events on university campuses.

At the end of the year the organisation had 2303 followers on Twitter (up 11% YoY), 940 on its main Facebook page (+7%), 974 across its regional groups' Facebook pages (+524% in total), 561 on Instagram (+21%), and 659 on LinkedIn (+117%). We also created a YouTube page, and Spotify and Anchor accounts to disseminate our podcast on.

Our team goes in to 2022 with ambition to grow the think tank. Through a new strategy for our fifth and sixth years of operation, we have set ourselves three core aims: promoting Agora and its work so that it has greater impact, increasing funding, and ensuring that we have consistent output of content and events. All three of these will be underpinned by a significant increase in our membership.

Accounts

Financial activities

Revenue (£)		Expenses (£)	
Item	Value	Item	Value
Membership fees	640	IT fees	38.38
Donations	174	IT services	71.94
		Banking fees	17.36
		Transport	460
		Gifts	16.1
Total	814	Total	603.78
Net income (£)		210.22	

Balance sheet

	(£)
Carried over from previous financial period	2159.16
Revenue	814
Expenses	603.78
Total assets at financial period end	2369.38

Accounts

Agora Annual Report and Accounts (2020)

Charity #: 1176974

Approved by board of Trustees on 30/3/2021

Trustee annual report

Adapting to a global pandemic made 2020 challenging for all organisations, so we are particularly proud of our achievements this year. We end it stronger than we began. There are also some true milestones which demonstrate our continued growth as a think tank.

The Executive Committee (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer) continue to provide leadership to the organisation, informed by a strategy co-decided by the Board of Trustees (BoT) and Council. This year is the first where the membership of the BoT and Council is separate (except for the Executive Committee, which *ex officio* sits on both). This allows Trustees to focus on longer-term plans for the Agora and for the Council to concentrate on the effective running of the think tank.

We launched our first regional group in Oxford. The group are already active, with a sub-team of volunteers who organise and hold regular events.

Agora also crossed a financial and professional Rubicon, winning and delivering our first project contract. This allowed us to take on our first ever employee for a fixed period of time. The project saw us work with a coalition of organisations to feed in to the Government's Integrated Review. Beyond this, modest sums were brought in through membership fees and donations. The think tank's balance sheet is starting to look healthier and begins to present us with greater opportunities.

All six of our research programmes continue to work well, producing content and providing a point of contact for our members and participants. We published 27 blogs and held 13 public events throughout 2020. Considering the disruption of COVID-19 and the need to be agile in moving our operations entirely online, we are pleased that our written output increased and our number of events only declined very slightly. Through the use of the Policy Kitchen platform developed with our Open Think Tank Network partners we developed and participated in our first cross-border policy exercise, seeking to define a feminist foreign policy and establish its possible aims for the 2020s.

We ended this reporting period with 10 paying members, likely a consequence of an inability to meet during the pandemic. We are working on implementing a digital membership and payment system, which we trust will help us grow our number of members again.

Our online community grew significantly during this reporting period. Our number of followers on Twitter increased 78%, on Facebook 38% (in part driven by a new page for our Oxford group), on Instagram 265%, and on LinkedIn 99%. Our total social media following at the close of the year was 3875. The think tank enjoyed a similar growth in website visitor numbers, with traffic growing 52% year-on-year in Q4. Last but not least, the launch of a new quarterly newsletter allowed us to connect with our audiences in a new way.

Accounts

Financial activities

Revenue (£)		Expenses (£)	
Item	Value	Item	Value
Project contracts	3648.29	Salaries	2325.36
Membership fees	200	Insurance	30.80
Donations	204	IT fees	33.58
		IT services	137.94
Total	4052.29	Total	2527.68
Net income (£)		1524.61	

Balance sheet

	(£)
Carried over from previous financial period	654.44
Revenue	4052.29
Expenses	2527.68
Total assets at financial period end	2179.05