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## On Modernization of New Think Tanks with Chinese Characteristics—Analysis from Perspective of Think Tank Influence Evaluation

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## On Modernization of New Think Tanks with Chinese Characteristics—Analysis from Perspective of Think Tank Influence Evaluation

### Abstract

Under the great changes that have not happened in a century, Chinese think tanks should not only actively answer the propositions put forward by the times, actively promote the modernization process of national governance, but also clarify the goal and path of their own modernization. Modern think tanks are the ideological approach of national governance, the ideological guide, theoretical power, and important promoter. The modernization of national governance is the fundamental guarantee for the development of think tanks and creates a good ecological environment for the development of modern think tanks. Based on the evaluation of think tank influence, this study analyzes the trend and problems of the construction of new think tanks with Chinese characteristics, and clarifies the target direction and main path of the modernization of think tanks in China. In the context of the modernization of national governance system and governance capacity, the key to examine the bottlenecks and weaknesses in the modernization of think tanks is to promote Chinese think tanks to better embed them into the national governance system, effectively highlight the backbone of decision-making consultation system, accelerate reform and innovation, optimize internal governance, strive to improve the quality of research and promote the realization of their social functions.

### Keywords

Chinese characteristics, new think tanks, modernization drive, target path, influence evaluation

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## On Modernization of New Think Tanks with Chinese Characteristics—Analysis from Perspective of Think Tank Influence Evaluation

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**Abstract:** Under the unprecedented great changes, Chinese think tanks should actively answer the propositions put forward by the times, actively promote the modernization of national governance, and also clarify the goal and path of their own modernization. Modern think tanks are the ideological approach of national governance, the ideological guide, theoretical power, and important promoter. The modernization of national governance is the fundamental guarantee for the development of think tanks and creates a good ecological environment for the development of modern think tanks. Based on the evaluation of think tank influence, this study analyzed the trend and problems of the construction of new think tanks with Chinese characteristics, and clarified the goal, direction, and main path of the modernization of think tanks in China. In the context of the modernization of the national governance system and governance capacity, the key to examining the bottlenecks and weaknesses in the modernization of think tanks is to promote Chinese think tanks to better integrate them into the national governance system, effectively highlight the backbone of decision-making consultation system, accelerate reform and innovation, optimize internal governance, strive to improve the quality of research, and promote the realization of their social functions.

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At present, the construction of new think tanks with Chinese characteristics drives into the “fast lane”. Different departments in China are enthusiastic about developing think tanks, and various think tanks have emerged one after another. National high-end think tanks tend to have clear leading and demonstrating effects, offer political consultation and theoretical innovation, and play an increasingly prominent role in public opinion guidance, social services, and public diplomacy. However, as the situations in China and abroad are dynamic, the internal need for modernizing new think tanks with Chinese characteristics becomes urgent, along with increasingly serious problems to be addressed. A lack of innovative ideas and modern management methods prevents some think tanks from adapting to the new trends of modernization in science, technology, economy, and society. Woefully, they are inadequate to use new technologies such as big data and artificial intelligence to improve their research capabilities or expand their influence through communication. They even feel pressured due to the competition with professional service organizations such as consulting companies and media in the decision-making consulting market, and are at risk of degenerating from the core of government decision-making to the margin. Under the unprecedented great changes, the key for Chinese think tanks to be integrated into the national governance system and effectively serve as the backbone in the decision-making consultation

system is to accelerate reform and innovation, optimize internal governance, strive to improve the quality of research, and become modernized.

### 1 Development trends and characteristics of Chinese think tanks from the perspective of think tank influence evaluation

Influence is the lifeline and value of think tanks. Building an influence evaluation framework for think tanks meets the development requirements and internal law of new think tanks with Chinese characteristics. Influence evaluation is an important criterion to measure the functional quality of think tanks. Influence can be reflected in different fields such as decision-making, academia, public media, and the international community. Therefore, the influence of think tanks is a combination of their clout in decision-making, academia, society and the international community, which, together with growth ability (an important support for think tanks to exert influence), constitutes the influence evaluation criteria and indicator system for Chinese think tanks. Table 1 lists five first-level indicators (i.e., five dimensions of think tank influence evaluation criteria), 12 second-level indicators, and 33 measurable third-level indicators. Based on these evaluation criteria and orientations, the Center for Think Tank

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**Table 1** Chinese think tank influence evaluation indicator system

First-level indicator	Second-level indicator	Third-level indicator
Decision-making influence	Leader's instructions	Instructions from national-level leaders (documents/year) and the number of instructions per capita
		Instructions from provincial and ministerial leaders (documents/year) and the number of instructions per capita
	Suggestions adopted	Proposals adopted by the CPPCC, the NPC, and national ministries and commissions (cases/year) and the number of adoptions per capita
		Proposals adopted by local CPPCC, NPC, and commissions, offices and bureaus (cases/year) and the number of adoptions per capita
	Planning and drafting	Organizing or participating in the research, drafting and evaluation of national development plans (plans/year)
		Organizing or participating in the research, drafting and evaluation of provincial and ministerial development plans (plans/year)
Academic influence	Consulting activities	National-level policy consultation meetings and hearings (person-times/year)
		Provincial-level and ministerial-level policy consultation meetings and hearings (person-times/year)
	Papers and books	Number of think tanks and academic papers published per capita (papers/year) <sup>a</sup>
		Reprints of think tanks and academic papers per capita (papers/year)
		Published proceedings or think tank reports (volumes/year)
Social influence	Research projects	Number of major (key) projects of the National Social Science Foundation of China/the National Natural Science Foundation of China (projects/year)
		Research projects assigned by the central and national governments (projects/year)
		Research projects assigned by local governments (projects/year)
	Media coverage	Commentaries published in national mainstream media (articles/year)
		Commentaries published in local mainstream media (articles/year)
		Participating in interview programs of mainstream media (times/year) <sup>b</sup>
		Reported by media with significant influence (times/year)
International influence	Internet communication	Click rate of think tank homepage (annual cumulative clicks, times)
		Followers on mobile media (WeChat) (annual cumulative person-times)
	Global cooperation	Proportion of foreign experts engaged in the board of directors/academic committee (%)
		Branches set up in major countries across the world (yes/no)
		Number of cooperation projects with international think tanks (n)
Growth ability of think tanks	Global communication	Commentaries published in international mainstream media (articles/year)
		Linked by internationally renowned think tanks (yes/no)
		Searches of the English name of think tanks on major search engines
	Properties of think tanks	Inception of think tanks (year) <sup>c</sup>
		Nature of think tanks (government agency/public institution/private non-enterprise organization/enterprise)
		Jurisdiction (global/national/regional/local)
		Research specialty
	Resource endowment	Size of researchers (leaders, rationality of team structure, etc.)
		Size of research funding (10,000 CNY/year)
		Proportion of financial aid in research funding sources (%)

a. In both Chinese and foreign languages, independently published or by the first author from think tanks; each article by the second author from think tanks is calculated as 1/2, and by the third author, as 1/3; b. Interview programs are generally broadcast for 20 min or more; TV, telephone, and Internet, etc.; c. 3 years or more

Studies of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (CTTS-SASS) has, for seven consecutive years, followed and studied the development trajectories of nearly 1,000 Chinese think tanks that have been established for more than three years. More than 300 important think tanks were visited and investigated to inform a general development picture.

By constructing the influence evaluation criteria for think tanks, this paper tried to make an objective evaluation of the influence of major think tanks in China. Following closely on the requirements of the Party and the government and focusing on the annual development themes of think tanks, this paper intended to offer an objective analysis on the status quo and construction trend of new think tanks with Chinese characteristics that fully reflected the characteristics, features, and specialties of think tank development. It is expected to provide the direction of industry development, criteria, and experience for the think tank community, and also express the concern about the theoretical innovation and practical frontier of think tank construction to provide forward-looking and feasible suggestions for improving the development environment and promoting the construction of think tanks. Judging from the influence evaluation results of think tanks in recent years, the development of new think tanks with Chinese characteristics mainly takes on the following trends.

### **1.1 National-level think tanks are the most influential think tanks in China**

Measured by comprehensive influence, itemized influence, system influence, professional influence, influence on major issues, and the nomination for best think tank projects (activities) and new think tanks, 158 think tanks (about 15% of the think tank candidates) were included after exclusion of duplicates to constitute the top influential think tanks in China. They are national high-end think tanks, think tank incubators, or those being ranked as top ones in each scoring category after multiple rounds of questionnaire screening and objective data sorting. They objectively represent the “head ideological market” of Chinese think tanks. The national think tanks affiliated to the Party and the government/research institutes (including those of public institution nature directly under ministries and commissions) are the main force and national team in the construction of new think tanks with Chinese characteristics, accounting for half of the Chinese think tank market. These think tanks possess high decision-making influence, and also pay attention to enhancing their academic influence, social influence, and international influence. In addition, think tanks affiliated to universities and the local Party and governments also find their influence gradually grow, which indicates a reflection of how the massive investments that universities and local governments have made in the construction of think tanks have paid off. In addition, social think tanks are gradually rising thanks to their flexible institutional advantages.

### **1.2 Chinese think tanks pay more attention to professional research fields and the ability to chart research topics**

Generally speaking, think tanks evaluated with high annual influence tend to be interested in research topics that are closely related to the research hot spots of the year. Economic development and international relations serve as the key research areas for Chinese think tanks. With the development of the times, new research fields such as society, culture, education, science and technology, and ecology become increasingly popular, and a number of new professional think tanks are on the rise, such as AliResearch and Tencent Research Institute. Therefore, think tanks of economic development and international relations are not only the focus of influence evaluation, but also attract more and more attention in the influence evaluation focused on other professional fields.

Meanwhile, the ability to chart research topics, as a core competence of think tanks, is also the focus of think tank influence evaluation, including both professional issues and time-sensitive issues that have been followed by think tanks for a long period of time. In recent years, CTTS-SASS has been evaluating the influence of various think tanks by focusing on such major national strategic issues as the “Belt and Road” initiative, free trade zones, coordinated regional development, China-the US trade disputes, supply-side structural reforms, building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and targeted poverty alleviation. For example, China Center for International Economic Exchanges, National School of Development at Peking University, and the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation of the Ministry of Commerce are among the top influential think tanks due to their undertaking of predictive research and input of political advice around the topic of “China-the US trade disputes” to varying degrees. Another example shows that Guangdong Academy of Social Sciences, Institute of Guangdong Hong Kong and Macao Development Studies, Sun Yat-Sen University, Yangtze Industrial Economic Think Tank of Nanjing University, and Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences move up in the ranking list of influence evaluation in respective systems rapidly due to their research achievements in regional coordinated development.

### **1.3 Chinese think tanks develop to be more diversified and plural**

Measured by itemized influence, professional influence, influence on major issues, and the nomination for best think tank projects (activities) and new think tanks, Chinese think tanks are initiatively building their own development advantages through various means. The think tank influence evaluation reveals and communicates their practices carrying both professional value and innovative value and fully demonstrates the diversity and personalities of Chinese think tanks. With the increase in research methods, tools and means

available, Chinese think tanks are extending their research from traditional fields such as economy and society, international relations, and military security to new fields that seem prohibitive to traditional think tanks, such as culture and education, technology and ecology, and public governance. Especially with the rapid development of the current technological revolution and industrial transformation and the rapid changes in global governance structure, Chinese think tanks face continuously innovative cooperation models, and various think tank alliances and communities develop rapidly. On the one hand, Chinese think tanks become increasingly professional and differentiated, with “invisible champions” constantly emerging in different industries; on the other hand, as a development trend and strategy, think tanks of different natures with different research fields have begun to conduct cross-border research and cross-field explorations. Moreover, Chinese think tanks are communicating more closely with the government, media, enterprises, and the public. These two trends echo and interact with each other to jointly promote the diversified, plural and high-quality development of new think tanks with Chinese characteristics.

## **2 Problems in the construction of modern Chinese think tanks**

Based on the multi-year influence evaluation of Chinese think tanks made by CTTS-SASS, Chinese think tanks have generally ushered in a new stage of quality and efficiency improvement and steady development. Their participation in the modernization of national governance grows in depth and breadth, and their decision-making influence, academic influence, social influence, and international influence are significantly enhanced. However, in the context of the modernization of the national governance system and governance capacity, a number of difficulties and problems have to be overcome before a system for new think tanks with Chinese characteristics toward modernization, the world, and the future is constructed at an accelerated pace and a group of new modern think tanks that stand at the forefront of the times, lead advanced thinking, and develop innovation research paradigms are cultivated. The most conspicuous difficulties and problems include unscientific resource allocation, backward organizational and management methods, and a lack of leading talents and professional interdisciplinary talents; a huge gap to internationally renowned think tanks in terms of the charting of research topics, development concept, research methodology, and communication method. Overall, the following six problems hinder the modernization of Chinese think tanks.

### **2.1 Inadequate capability to chart cutting-edge research topics and a lack of predictive and trend-setting research**

The new round of scientific and technological revolution

and the change of world order are reshaping the global economic structure, and the Chinese economy and society have ushered in a new stage of high-quality development. It presents many new research topics for think tank research. The primary problem for Chinese think tanks is how to understand the new development trends, chart global and inclusive research topics in line with the times, and inform decision-making. However, they are inadequate to chart forward-looking research topics on the international stage, and also have difficulty in charting research topics on Chinese policy and market and even lag behind decision-making authorities. This inability is often reflected in research results that fail to offer ideological, strategic and policy decision-making guidance and even mislead decision-making. In recent years, Chinese think tanks have put forward few professional, constructive, and practical policy suggestions when they have the chance to study, evaluate and predict some major international issues and economic and social issues in China. The fundamental reason is the lack of innovative ideas and the ability to chart cutting-edge research topics. In contrast, top international think tanks are able to study some forward-looking cutting-edge research topics. For example, the US-based RAND launched a research on “Cyberspace: National Security and Information Warfare” back in 2007 and is currently advancing the “Security 2040” project that is aimed to predict how technology, people and ideas will shape the future security in the world.

### **2.2 Unscientific allocation of human resources and low output efficiency**

The core element of a think tank is human resources. A leading team of experts equipped with innovative awareness, strategic thinking, and advanced technology, a cross-disciplinary composite professional technical research team that integrates theoretical and applied research, and an operation and management team familiar with the development laws of modern think tanks are critical to efficient output. However, most think tanks in China do not possess such human resources. For example, although most science and technology think tanks own a group of strategic scientists and sci-tech workers, they are in shortage of public policy research experts, resulting in a serious separation between scientific and technological development and policy research. Since philosophical and social sciences professionals are gathered as leading fellows and research teams in social sciences think tanks, scientific and technological professionals who master cutting-edge new technologies are rarely participated in them. As a result, despite the large number and generous funding of Chinese think tanks, they have relatively low output efficiency and effectiveness. In contrast, top international think tanks attach importance to the allocation of human resources. For example, RAND has 1,850 employees who specialize in a wide range of disciplines from mathematics, operations research, and statistics to political science, economics, business and law, arts and literature, and most of

its leading experts are authoritative scientists in respective fields.

### **2.3 Homogeneous and simple organizational structure and a lack of specialized and brand features**

Currently, a diversity of think tanks affiliated to the Party and government departments, social sciences academies, Party schools and administration colleges, universities, military units, scientific research institutes, enterprises, and social organizations develop and co-exist in China. However, most Chinese think tanks are born out of the traditional research institution system. In spite of the varieties, they are mostly organized as a single administrative institution. Moreover, they are obviously not differentiated and specialized in terms of research contents, research methodology, funding sources, and the channels to inform political decision-making. Furthermore, due to different administrative affiliations, various think tanks belong to different systems and departments, with research resources scattered in different departments and regions. In order to compete for research resources and make their voices heard, think tanks often flock together to the same research topics. As a result, plenty of homogeneous internal political reference materials, research reports, and academic conferences appear, leading to inefficient use of think tank resources. There is a big gap in comparison with international top think tanks that are deeply committed to professional research and brand building. Chinese think tanks still have a long way to go before they embrace diversified and plural organizational forms and varieties, develop their own signature specialties and features, and venture into diverse research fields, funding sources, product lines, and channels to influence decision-making.

### **2.4 Poor ability to use new technologies and a lack of targeted and precise research on decision-making consultation**

Unique data resources and research models are the source of inherent competitiveness for think tanks to carry out policy consultation research. As information technology develops rapidly, it has become increasingly important to apply new technologies such as big data and artificial intelligence to develop innovative research methods and expand research capabilities so as to improve the efficiency and precision of policy consultation research. Many foreign think tanks provide good references in this respect. For example, the tax policy micro-simulation model developed by the US Urban Institute uses cloud processing to analyze the impact of the new tax law on the tax revenue of the US federal government, the after-tax income of taxpayers, and the tax revenue for each iteration. This technology is also used to quickly analyze the pros and cons of more than 9,000 alternative schemes and generate the best one for decision makers. At present, Chinese think tanks are generally not competent enough to

use new technologies to conduct government-sponsored decision-making consultation research, and most of their research methods are traditional, such as theoretical derivation, brain-storming, experience extraction, and case analysis mainly relying on external statistical data as inputs rather than long-term accumulated and developed thematic data. Restrictions on policy analysis methods and information support undermine the quality and influence of policy insights from Chinese think tanks and deprive them of the entitlement to peer-to-peer dialogues in the competition for international right of speech.

### **2.5 Insufficient innovative management methods and endogenous impetus for the development**

Before they are transformed into think tanks, research departments affiliated to the Party and government organs, such as scientific research institutes of public institution nature and university-based research institutes, are managed in the same way as Party and government organs and public institutions in terms of goal orientation and management system. Their internal governance structure fails to provide any incentive and differs from the goal orientation and requirements of modern think tanks. The ways of using funds, managing personnel, and evaluating achievements generally do not allow the flexibility and autonomy necessary to formulate policies in line with the inherent development requirements of modern think tanks, and a talent-oriented management system is not established. For example, think tanks following the funding management method as Party and government organs have regular funding sources, detailed budget accounts, and strict use systems, but they are not given more flexibility in the use of funds. Most universities do not accept research achievements from think tanks as a criterion for professional title promotion, which prevents think tank research fellows from shaping their long-term development expectations. Most of the think tanks in the system adopt a bureaucratic management model involving lengthy internal processes and departmental coordination processes which retard emergency response and result in collective aphasia when certain major events occur. In contrast, most foreign think tanks adopt a project-oriented system and a flat management model that supports simple and easy management processes and high efficiency.

### **2.6 A lack of effective ideological communication means and difficulty in enhancing the influence and voice**

To make a difference, think tanks must make use of media communication channels to expand their influence among the public and indirectly influence decision-making. Meanwhile, they must make good use of media channels to act as a bridge between decision-makers and the public. Hence, the integration of think tanks and the media has become a new trend of global public opinion guidance and publicity. The media can dig deeply into the research topics of think tanks and

communicate public policies to the public, while think tanks can lead new topics through the media and expand the influence of their research results. However, Chinese think tanks are still handicapped when it comes to communication. Especially due to mismatched discourse systems, limited communication and cooperation, and a shortage of new technologies and new methods, Chinese think tanks own even poorer international communication power and voices. Therefore, they need to make full use of the power of new media, new technologies, social networks, and “cloud” to enhance and extend their ability in ideological communication and its effect. By virtue of Internet technology for communication purposes, think tanks will exist as more intelligent, real-time, and interactive organizations.

### **3 Suggestions on accelerating the construction of modern new think tanks with Chinese characteristics**

In the new era marked by rapid changes in the international order, revolutionary development of new technologies, and accelerated transformation of global governance model, Chinese think tanks will find their position and role in informing public policies shrink and their mission to serve national strategies hard to fulfill if they choose to follow the beaten track and refuse reform and innovation. Therefore, from a global perspective, the key to accelerating the construction of modern new think tanks with Chinese characteristics is to follow closely the modernization development requirements of the national governance system and capacity, stand at the forefront of the times, grow through reform and innovation, adopt new technologies and methods, and strengthen forward-looking research to “achieve excellence, respect science, pursue quality, and effectively improve the level and ability of serving decision-making” and to fully contribute “wise insights, foresight, visionary outlook, and creativity” from public policy research.

#### **3.1 Embracing innovative development concepts and encouraging diversified development of Chinese think tanks**

To stimulate the enthusiasm and creativity of think tanks, think tank managers need to embrace innovative development concepts, follow the trend of China’s transformation and development, and actively explore a path for diversified development of Chinese think tanks. During the modernization transformation, Chinese think tanks need to create a good think tank ecosystem where various think tanks with diversified organizational forms can leverage their own advantages and influence. Different think tanks are not only competitors in policy ideas, but also partners who learn from each other and jointly provide intellectual support for the government. For this purpose, government decision-making

departments and management agencies should accelerate the reform of “delegating power, improving regulation, and upgrading services”, allow think tanks to have more autonomy, and especially moderately relax the control over think tanks specialized in technological and economic issues. For example, in the selection of research topics, think tanks should be given both specific requirements and guidance and flexibility for making independent choices. Instead of having to obey excessive rules and regulations, they should be encouraged to carry out third-party research objectively and independently and to participate in exchanges of different policy recommendations and equal discussions.

#### **3.2 Attaching importance to professional advantages and creating differentiated think tank brands**

Think tanks of different types should understand their own characteristics, give full play to their advantages, and inform the Party and the country of scientific and democratic decision-making precisely and effectively. For example, scientific research institutes and universities that concentrate on theoretical research in social sciences must highlight their strengths, exploit their advantage in leading theoretical innovation, and develop into professional think tank brands by making use of their special advantages in different disciplines. Social think tanks and enterprise think tanks that concentrate on applied research to serve regional policy consultation markets must focus more on conducting “small but excellent” professional research that enable them to fulfill their social service function. Additionally, hundreds of think tanks across the country are interested in the “Belt and Road” initiative, but different think tanks should continue to generate research results differentiated by specialty, region, and field. During the modernization process, Chinese think tanks of different types should be committed to their professional fields and try to create distinctive brands by taking into account both social needs and the characteristics of their own resources.

#### **3.3 Strengthening scientific management and establishing a modern think tank operation mechanism**

In the modernization process, a sound modern management system that caters to the development models of Chinese think tanks of different types should be established, coupled with an efficient and orderly internal governance mechanism. As a suggestion, think tanks of different types should be given more autonomy in making reforms and be encouraged to establish people-centered management systems on the use of funds, evaluation of achievements, and appraisal of personnel. The purpose is to put in place a project accountability-oriented appraisal and incentive mechanism and to adopt a more targeted flat management model. Currently, most university-based think tanks are affiliated secondary research institutions rather than independent legal

entities, and they are subjected to many restrictions on internal management, such as personnel evaluation and employment, and the use of funds. University-based think tanks are advised to register as independent entities like social think tanks and enterprise think tanks to the extent permitted by policies. When conditions permit, the policy that encourages Sci-tech workers on permanent establishment to start their business with their job retained but without pay may apply to encourage think tank fellows with high social influence to set up various specialized social think tanks.

### **3.4 Actively cultivating composite talents and enhancing the core competence of think tanks**

To build world-class modern new think tanks with Chinese characteristics requires the recruitment of researchers majoring in various disciplines and from various practical backgrounds, and even researchers from all over the world, to build an international and diverse team. The recruitment and introduction of such composite international talents follows no set form, and internal training matters more. Talent training plans should be formulated with a view to long-term development instead of participating in a competition simply for quick success and instant benefits. RAND provides valuable experience. Back in 1970, it founded the Pardee RAND Graduate School, which becomes the main awarding institution of doctoral degree in "Policy Analysis". Students are supervised by several project leaders simultaneously while they are at school. In addition to the regular courses, PhD students are also required to complete policy project internships that last a specified number of days, during which they get into contact with various research fields, research methods, and RAND clients and accumulate practical experience through "learning by doing". Think tanks affiliated to Party and governments are advised to establish mobile post-doctoral stations with universities to train reserve talents for think tanks. Professional titles for researchers working in universities should be recognized to encourage university faculty into think tank research. The "revolving door" mechanism for think tank fellows and government department workers should be institutionalized to mutually recognize administrative ranks and research fellowship titles.

### **3.5 Empowering think tank research with new technologies and improving the quality and influence of research results**

At present, China masters the leading artificial intelligence and 5G technologies in the world, and there is great potential and room for Chinese think tanks to utilize new technologies. With their sheer size, university-based think tanks, science and technology think tanks, military think tanks, and enterprise think tanks are important backbones to support scientific and technological innovation and development in China. They may take the lead in applying big data and artificial intelligence in think tank research due to their strong scientific and technological research capability and abundant

financial and human resources. Through cooperation with university-based think tanks and science and technology think tanks, think tanks affiliated to Party and governments and social sciences think tanks may accelerate the construction of professional databases and improve the level of policy consultation and research capability by using new technologies. At the same time, due attention must be paid to the communication of think tank achievements, and all-media platforms including portal websites, Weibo, WeChat, and even foreign language websites and social platforms should be built. Chinese think tanks must combine the modernization process with the international development path to exert influence and make their voice heard on the international stage. They should actively chart international research topics, participate in international cooperation and exchanges to enhance their international communication power, and make their voice heard actively among international public opinions. They should focus on using Internet technology and new media to connect with various international organizations and establish various exchanges and cooperation platforms. They may make full use of millions of Chinese students studying abroad and overseas Chinese living abroad to connect with the international discourse system and to promote exchanges and cooperation in tackling problems hindering the common development of mankind beyond ideology.

### **3.6 Studying and developing standards and promoting the modernization of think tanks in an orderly manner**

The modernization of Chinese think tanks is a fresh topic on which no consensus has been reached. An objective study of the internal characteristics and standards of modern think tanks and the related indicator system is a necessary condition for understanding the requirements for the modernization of new think tanks with Chinese characteristics in line with the times. Academic research institutions and think tanks concerned are advised to develop a measurement and evaluation indicator system for the modernization of think tanks by taking into account the development trend of global think tanks and the development practice of Chinese think tanks. The think tanks affiliated to management departments of governments may, on the other hand, seriously study and develop the standards for the modernization of think tank that can actively guide the healthy development of Chinese think tanks.

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