

The FT helps the Chicago Council on Global Affairs engage a diverse international audience

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The challenge

To provide analysis and effectively foster dialogue about critical world issues and why they matter, it's vital for the Chicago Council on Global Affairs to have access to trustworthy sources of global insight.

The solution

Through their FT Group Subscription, the Council has committed to providing staff with reliable and insightful intelligence. The breadth of FT coverage offers perspectives and ideas on areas that simply aren't covered as widely in the American media.

The benefits

The timeliness and accuracy of FT commentary keeps teams across the Council well-informed. This enables the curation of relevant events, research, and digital content to engage their diverse audiences and advance the conversation around key global themes.



We encourage everyone here to spend part of the day educating themselves on what's happening in the world and the FT is the best resource that you can have.

Ivo Daalder
President, the Chicago Council on Global Affairs



The premier global affairs organization in America's heartland

For almost 100 years, the Chicago Council on Global Affairs has provided a forum in America's Midwest for thoughtful discussions on the world's most pressing issues.

Global leaders, policymakers, journalists, and other experts share their insights and experiences from the Council's stage at more than 100 public events each year that are live streamed on [TheChicagoCouncil.org](https://www.thechicagocouncil.org).

Beyond offering a platform for constructive dialogue, the Council's work extends to advancing policy solutions to drive action on themes such as food security, as well as collaboration with foundations and corporations seeking to demonstrate their leadership on a wide range of subjects.

In an environment where political and technological disruption are driving momentous and historical shifts in the global order, trusted and nonpartisan voices are more important than ever in engaging the public and promoting an inclusive and secure world.

To keep current in a period of rapid change, the Council's 80+ staff need sources of global intelligence they can trust.

Developing deeper global understanding

It's unsurprising that as an organization formed in 1922,

the Chicago Council has had to adapt and evolve as the world has changed over the past century.

One thing that's remained constant however is the Council's commitment to public education, which they deliver largely through their 100 public and 50 private programs each year.

Jonathan Macha, managing director of programs at the Chicago Council explains that while "We've done 150 programs per year since 1922 and that's never going to change," the audience they want to reach and topics they cover now go way beyond just what's been historically important in Chicago.

"A key goal for the team is to launch more initiatives that really do make us more of a global entity," Jonathan says. "Where people know that they can get information that's harder to obtain, but positioned in a way that is more approachable in understanding how these concepts actually affect their lives."

Jonathan highlights the importance of the FT's in-depth analysis in helping how they frame global trends. "The FT did a [Big Read piece on the China Belt and Road initiative](#)," he explains. "That was central for us in crafting our narrative around China's global expansion and how the private sector should be thinking about it."

This shift towards thinking globally about issues is echoed by Juliana Kerr, director of the Council's global cities research program.

"The research project is really about trying to change policy," Juliana explains. "Our primary audience is the policymakers, mayors of big global cities and other municipal civic leaders. We try to translate to them



FT columnists such as Ed Luce and Phillip Stevens give me another way to think about how to interpret what's going on, which I then use in my own daily work.



Ivo Daalder

President, the Chicago Council on Global Affairs



really pragmatic ways that they are part of global affairs in the international world order.”

When thinking about how cities tackle challenges such as migration, inequality, housing and climate change, access to the FT’s insightful analysis “enables our research to be timely and connected.”

An institution powered by insight

For the Chicago Council, the Financial Times provides far more than just news. Ivo Daalder, the Council’s president has been a habitual reader of the FT since his time in Brussels as the US ambassador to NATO.

Initially Ivo was drawn to the FT by his need for “a more European perspective”, however it’s even more crucial in his current role. “I’m running an organization that writes and pontificates on global affairs virtually 24/7,” he says. “And that’s what the FT does better than anyone.”

Being well-informed is essential in Ivo’s role, but not something he feels should be confined to just him and other senior staff.

Through their FT Group Subscription, the Council has made a statement in terms of what their people should be reading in order to develop their international perspective.

“I always encourage young folks in particular, that if they’re interested in global affairs, they make sure they read the FT,” says Ivo. “It gives you an insight that you just don’t get by reading American news sources.”

The value of a FT Group Subscription

The Council’s Group Subscription to the FT enables staff to benefit from the full suite of content and tools on FT.com, including editorially-curated email briefings. Across the Council’s various teams, FT commentary in a range of formats serves different purposes and benefits staff in a number of ways.

For programs, Jonathan cites the FT’s ability to

take on big concepts and make them approachable, as a tangible way he and his team benefit from access. The growing interest around sustainability has led him to [Moral Money](#), the FT’s trusted guide to socially responsible business.

“I tend to gravitate towards your section on [Moral Money](#) quite a bit,” he says. “It’s not the area that I’m strongest in but increasingly sustainable business is a theme that comes up in our conversations with the private sector.”

As well as being Juliana’s day-to-day source of international news, she highlights the [FT’s special reports](#) as being particularly valuable to their research on global cities.

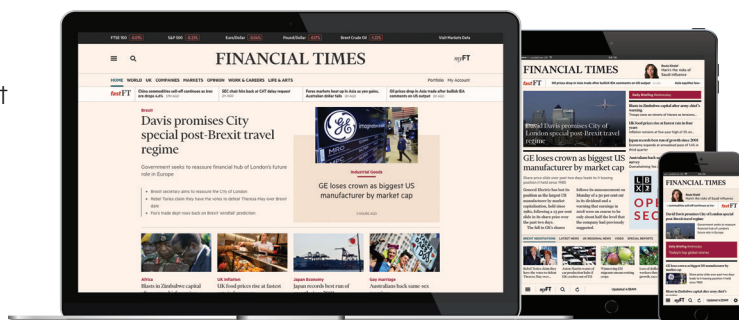
“The FT does a special report on cities every year, which comes out around the time of our forum on cities,” she explains. “That is probably one of the most important outputs for our institution.”

Whilst the depth and quality of analysis is key, in a world where we’re already overloaded with information, getting the format and delivery of content right is also crucial. The FT’s fast-expanding range of curated newsletters deliver important insight, in a concise and easily digestible format.

“The [Brexit Briefing](#) by James Blitz, is the single best daily piece of information on what’s been happening in the UK,” comments Ivo. “It’s just the right size, you read it in about a minute and James is terrific. He’s just a very smart reporter.”

The combination of quick bites of analysis and the ability to also dig deeper is a powerful one for the Chicago Council.

Reflecting on how they benefit as an organization from their FT Group Subscription, Ivo concludes, “For us to be able to do what we do, the FT is a pretty big part of it. It’s a no-brainer.”





About the Financial Times

An FT Group Subscription extracts the intelligence that's relevant to your business and delivers it via the media and technologies that suit you best, saving you time and keeping you informed on what matters.

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