

The Construction of an Ideal Think Tank: Shortcomings, Pathways, and Methods (Postprint)

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Abstract

[Purpose/Significance] At present, the “reputation effect” of certain domestic think tanks is less than ideal: their intellectual endowment remains suboptimal, their methodological approaches insufficiently scientific, and the development of these institutions lacks sustainable confidence. This phenomenon has emerged as one of the focal and challenging issues in constructing think tanks with Chinese characteristics. Consequently, prioritizing the resolution of existing problems, emphasizing the concept and practice of “think tank methodology,” and fostering the emergence of numerous “ideal think tanks” throughout society has become an imperative task.

[Method/Process] Through multidimensional contemplation and case analysis, this paper conducts an in-depth investigation across three dimensions—“squarely confronting existing problems, enhancing intellectual substance, and prioritizing methodological construction” —and proposes several actionable recommendations.

[Results/Conclusion] The author has presented lectures on these viewpoints to various think tanks and cultural institutions in Jiangsu Province, receiving widespread affirmation. The audience regarded the perspectives as relatively novel, the angle of analysis relatively unique, and the insights quite inspiring, thereby demonstrating strong pertinence, practicality, and feasibility for think tank development.

Full Text

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Abstract

[Purpose/Significance] Currently, the “word-of-mouth effect” of some domestic think tanks is not ideal: their intellectual genes are not excellent enough, their thinking methods are not scientific enough, and their sustainable development lacks confidence. This phenomenon has become one of the focal and difficult issues in constructing think tanks with Chinese characteristics. Therefore, it is imperative to attach importance to existing problems, to the concept and practice of “think tank methodology,” and to promote the emergence of a large number of “ideal think tanks” in society.

[Method/Process] Based on multidimensional thinking and case analysis, this article conducts an in-depth discussion from three levels: “facing existing problems, increasing intellectual content, and emphasizing methodology construction,” and puts forward some practical suggestions.

[Result/Conclusion] The author has given lectures on these viewpoints to some think tanks and cultural institutions in Jiangsu Province, which have been generally well-received. The audience considered the perspectives relatively novel and unique, quite inspiring, and highly relevant, practical, and feasible for think tank construction.

Keywords: ideal think tank; think tank of think tanks; think tank alliance; wisdom methodology

Classification: B804/C03/E03

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping has made important statements on multiple occasions regarding strengthening the construction of new-type think tanks with Chinese characteristics, particularly elaborating in detail on the problems existing in think tank construction. His speeches have evoked strong responses in the think tank community. The author has participated in numerous “wisdom salons” held by the think tank community and has also given lectures in some think tanks and cultural institutions within Jiangsu Province, sharing research insights from three dimensions: “facing existing problems, increasing intellectual content, and emphasizing methodology construction,” which has attracted widespread attention and interest. The feedback from these activities has prompted the author to intensify systematic research efforts. This paper aims to elaborate on these three aspects to facilitate exchanges with experts and scholars, and to gradually deepen the discourse on think tank construction.

1. Think Tank Construction: The Need to Confront Existing Problems

When discussing the problems in China’s think tank construction, General Secretary Xi Jinping stated: “In recent years, China’s think tanks have developed rapidly, achieving great success in producing ideas, results, and talent, and mak-

ing important contributions to promoting reform, opening-up, and modernization. At the same time, with the development of the situation, the problems of think tank construction failing to keep pace and adapt have become increasingly prominent, especially the lack of high-quality think tanks with significant influence and international reputation.” [1] The “Opinions on Strengthening the Construction of New-Type Think Tanks with Chinese Characteristics” (hereinafter referred to as the “Opinions”) issued by the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council further pointed out that as the situation develops, the problems of think tank construction failing to keep pace and adapt have become increasingly prominent, mainly manifested in [2]: (1) the important status of think tanks has not received universal attention; (2) there is a lack of high-quality think tanks with significant influence and international reputation; (3) insufficient high-quality research results are provided; (4) participation in decision-making consultation lacks institutional arrangements; (5) think tank construction lacks overall planning; (6) resource allocation is not scientific enough; (7) organizational forms and management methods urgently need innovation; and (8) there is a shortage of leading figures and outstanding talents.

In recent years, various types of think tanks in China have made considerable progress, but the gap from becoming a “think tank powerhouse” remains substantial. There is still a significant gap in ideological innovation capacity and international influence compared with think tanks in developed countries, with numerous deficiencies in research, practice, talent, management, and evaluation domains. For instance, in the research domain: some studies focus excessively on macro-level and conceptual elaboration, while few address micro-level issues or provide precise strategies. In the practice domain: some research viewpoints are generalized, superficial, and floating on the surface, with few thought products offering profound insights, scarce precise and in-depth investigations, and numerous homogeneous and familiar research proposals; fresh, astute, and highly operational creative planning cases are relatively rare. In the talent domain: there are many generalist talents, but few practical and combat-ready talents with a holistic perspective, and a particularly severe shortage of leading and outstanding talents. In the management domain: there are too many management theory experts but insufficient applied and coordination specialists; too many profit model theorists but few operational profit experts; think tank management ideas are broad while funding mechanisms remain vague. In the evaluation domain: the think tank evaluation index system is still imperfect, many think tanks have an inflated sense of self-satisfaction, and existing rankings lack credibility.

The author has conducted “tracking-style” research on the actual performance of some domestic think tank institutions and found that their “word-of-mouth effect” is not ideal. These think tanks exhibit the problems enumerated in the Opinions, with many specific manifestations: (1) Their positioning is not “standing firm both at the top and bottom,” with suggestions often being flashy but unsubstantial, low in gold content, policy interpretations being grand yet

empty, and full of padding. (2) Their countermeasures lack specificity, fail to prescribe the right remedy, and when the “medicine” doesn’t work, they blame the patient for having the wrong illness. (3) Their proposals are vacuous and generalized, with fragmented information lacking logical coherence, leaving people confused. (4) There are few “brilliant strategies,” with poor scheme intuition, weak adaptability, scarce early warnings and reminders, and even fewer effective countermeasures. (5) There is a shortage of “think tank masters,” and a few think tanks with big names have “hard people but soft goods,” few methods, yet often suffer from “inflated self-satisfaction.”

Why do these phenomena occur? During the research, the author heard such explanations: research topics must first consider whether they can be approved, whether research funding can be secured, and whether they are beneficial for professional title evaluation; to pursue theoretical completeness and perfection, some inapplicable data models are established, new concepts proliferate, and the sense of reality becomes increasingly distant; some think tanks claim they are only part-time. Obviously, such explanations are rather far-fetched.

The author believes that the deeper reasons probably lie in: (1) Changes in the social demand background. The Opinions point out that currently, building a moderately prosperous society in all respects has entered a decisive stage, and the complexity and difficulty of solving problems concerning reform, development, and stability, as well as addressing global issues, are unprecedented. Therefore, there is an urgent need to improve the decision-support system with Chinese characteristics, vigorously strengthen think tank construction, support scientific decision-making with scientific consultation, and guide scientific development with scientific decision-making. We should pay close attention to think tank construction against this social backdrop. (2) Continuously improving client levels. A Chinese book company has found [3] that Chinese entrepreneurs increasingly dislike reading business management books and instead prefer philosophy, religion, and spiritual books, with their thinking methods often demonstrating speculative qualities. A survey shows [4] that over 90% of books in the bookcases of America’s top 100 CEOs are basically unrelated to economics. When our think tank experts communicate with entrepreneurs, if they extensively discuss unoriginal business management theories and “economic principles,” they will inevitably be ineffective. Nowadays, the level of “students” is constantly improving, while the level of “teachers” and “strategists” has not been correspondingly upgraded, inevitably leading to counterproductive consulting effects. (3) Service methods should be greatly updated. First, service thinking needs to be updated; second, service tools need to be updated; and third, service pathways need to be updated. (4) Experts have become impetuous. A few experts are busy “rushing from venue to venue,” unable to sit down and “devote themselves to scholarship,” unable to settle down and conduct in-depth research, with consulting results being “too long for cooking, too short for propping the door.” Some experts have insufficient energy reserves, lack effective information, and while their first “three axe blows” are intimidating, their “fourth axe blow” immediately reveals their true colors. Some think tanks, to solve their “bread

and butter” problems, are eager for quick success, only focusing on the immediate, the partial, and short-term effects. A handful of think tank experts even “hoodwink” clients, lacking integrity. (5) Shortage of social evaluation institutions. When the operations of certain think tanks deviate from actual needs or encounter difficulties, there should indeed be a comprehensive institution or platform organization—the “think tank of think tanks”—to objectively evaluate, remind, assist, and correct them.

In summary, there are still some omissions in our think tank construction, particularly in that thinking methods are not scientific enough and the sustainable development of think tanks lacks confidence. It is no wonder that many experts are called “brick experts” (a pun on “experts”) and some think tanks are ridiculed as “having a warehouse but no wisdom” [5][6].

2. Ideal Think Tanks: A Portrait

The Opinions propose that by 2020, China’s think tank construction should form an overall pattern of “clear positioning, distinctive features, moderate scale, and rational layout,” which has drawn a clear “construction blueprint” for the positioning, functions, characteristics, scale, and layout of think tanks. Similarly, this is also the “construction blueprint” for building “ideal think tanks.”

We should first clarify the conceptual connotation of “ideal think tanks” from two levels: the first level—what is wisdom? What is a think tank? The second level—what is an “ideal think tank” ?

First, what is wisdom? Wisdom is a topic that has been discussed for thousands of years and remains enduringly popular. A consensus view now holds that *zhi* refers to intelligence, while *hui* refers to insight; understanding phenomena is called *zhi*, comprehending principles is called *hui*; the knowledgeable have *zhi*, the enlightened have *hui*. We can also understand “*zhi + hui*” from a deeper level: broadly speaking, “wisdom” is a system composed of intellectual systems, knowledge systems, methodology and skill systems, non-intellectual systems, concept and ideology systems, and aesthetic and evaluation systems; narrowly speaking, “wisdom” includes perception, knowledge, memory, understanding, association, emotion, logic, discrimination, calculation, analysis, judgment, culture, moderation, tolerance, decision-making, and other abilities—a high-level comprehensive capability. An important function of “wisdom” is *mou* (strategizing). *Mou* refers to people’s understanding of problems and grasp of principles. *Zhi* is the foundation of *mou*—only with *zhi* can there be *mou*—so *zhi* is more important than *mou*. Now, what is a think tank? Modern think tanks (think tanks, brain trusts) are extensions of leaders’ “brains,” their advisors and assistants, providing leaders with the best theories, strategies, methods, and ideas. Evidently, “wisdom” has always been inseparable from “think tanks.”

At the second level, what is an “ideal think tank” ? An “ideal think tank” is a reservoir that gathers wisdom talents and is filled with wisdom ideas. It includes

three genetic elements: “wise eyes, insightful brains, and strategic repositories,” as well as three basic functions: foresight, innovation, and application.

The author believes that “ideal think tanks” should have the following characteristics:

2.1 Broad Vision

An “ideal think tank” should possess international vision, holistic vision, and humanistic vision, with qualities such as strategic wisdom, insightful wisdom, forward-looking wisdom, and guiding wisdom. Overall, an “ideal think tank” should have international, domestic, industry, and professional influence, and must have its own unique competitive advantages. Most internationally renowned think tanks enhance their visibility and expand their influence through forums and other forms with brilliant topic selections [7][8][9]. Taking think tank vision as an example: some think tanks focus more on macro-level issues, while others concentrate more on meso- and micro-level issues. However, these two types of vision share some common ground. Although macro thinking predominantly exhibits “inductive” characteristics and meso-/micro thinking predominantly exhibits “deductive” characteristics, “induction” originates from correct grasp of the micro-level, while “deduction” uses clear macro vision and correct macro judgment as its foundation. The essence of the two thinking methods is actually interconnected. Therefore, one of the distinctive features of an “ideal think tank” is that it should simultaneously possess “connecting” and “integrating” thinking methods—both are indispensable. An “ideal think tank” must carefully cultivate this integrated thinking method.

2.2 Distinctive Features

An “ideal think tank” should have unique positioning, prominent features, and innovative genes, with qualities such as dislocation wisdom, sustainable wisdom, and precise wisdom. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized the need to conduct forward-looking, targeted, and reserve policy research around major national strategic demands. To meet this requirement, an “ideal think tank” should possess strategic vision, forward-looking policy reserve capacity, and keen observation, in-depth analysis, and rapid response capabilities regarding economic and social development; it should be brave in proposing new concepts, expanding new categories, and enriching new expressions to make some of its insights easily understood and accepted by the international community; and it should foster strengths while circumventing weaknesses to highlight the fresh charm of the “ideal think tank.”

2.3 Broad-Spectrum Intelligence

An “ideal think tank” should have the characteristics of “broad yet precise knowledge, comprehensive capabilities, and scientific methods,” with qualities such as commanding wisdom, methodological wisdom, trial-and-error wisdom,

and speculative wisdom. Intelligence science attaches great importance to the three-dimensional combination of knowledge, capability, and methodology. The model for this combination is “broad-spectrum knowledge + specialized knowledge, basic skills + specialized skills, comprehensive methods + specialized methods.” An “ideal think tank” should possess this three-dimensional intelligence characteristic.

2.4 Rich Experience

An “ideal think tank” should have the qualities of “case analysis, experience reflection, and psychological endurance,” with attributes such as empirical wisdom, combat wisdom, problem-solving wisdom, and tactical wisdom. The Brookings Institution in the United States has a very rich case library, stemming from the think tank’s hosting of over 200 events annually, averaging one intellectual storm per working day [10]. An “ideal think tank” should form a strong innovation atmosphere and a unique strategic style.

2.5 Outstanding Capabilities

This refers to the integration capability, combat capability, and demonstration capability of an “ideal think tank,” as well as qualities such as compound wisdom, operational wisdom, demonstrative wisdom, and channel wisdom. Among various capabilities, an “ideal think tank” particularly favors a type of soft power—smart power, which is one of its core competencies [11]. Smart power is not about opportunism or putting up facades, but the synergy of hard power and soft power, the crystallization of wisdom that combines substantial material strength, unique problem awareness, and intelligent research methods. Cloud wisdom centered on the Internet and big data is an even more important symbol for an “ideal think tank” to demonstrate its strength and provide high-quality services. The human-machine combination of machine wisdom + human brain wisdom, and the “three-in-one” integration of knowledge systems, expert systems, and tool systems, make the “ideal think tank” even more powerful. We all know that informatics defines “information” as “the elimination of uncertainty.” Borrowing this concept from informatics, the role and function of think tanks should likewise be the “elimination of uncertainty,” the effective “elimination” of perplexing problems. Party and government departments, academies of social sciences, party schools and administrative institutes, universities, the military, scientific research institutes and enterprises, social think tanks, and media think tanks have significantly different positioning, but during their development and growth processes, there remain many uncertain factors that need to be “eliminated.” The characteristics of an “ideal think tank” in this regard should be extremely prominent.

2.6 Excellent Character

An “ideal think tank” should have noble values, moral qualities, and humanistic care spirit, with qualities such as realm wisdom, self-control wisdom, emotional

intelligence wisdom, and alliance wisdom. Currently, think tank talents who possess both policy research capabilities and a high degree of dedication are quite scarce. An “ideal think tank” should promote this spirit, and leading figures should have outstanding personal charisma.

2.7 Complete Team

This refers to an “ideal think tank” having excellent leading geese, balanced combination of practical and theoretical staff, and a complete structural chain, with qualities such as talent-condensing wisdom, public opinion wisdom, structural wisdom, and image wisdom. Taking the talent team as an example, an “ideal think tank” should have such a talent structure: a “leading goose” capable of gathering hearts and pooling strength, outstanding think tank experts, strategists who understand the times and reveal trends, combatants who conquer territories, “diplomats” skilled at opening up situations, scholar-type communicators, and innovative “craftsmen” [12][13].

2.8 Scientific Mechanisms

An “ideal think tank” should have excellent platform mechanisms, transformation mechanisms, and error-tolerance mechanisms, with qualities such as mechanism wisdom, blending wisdom, collaborative wisdom, and evaluation wisdom. The think tank community currently attaches considerable importance to the “revolving door” mechanism, which the author believes is an effective means to prevent “inbreeding” of think tank talent [14]. Regarding the relationship between think tanks and media, we should encourage “media think tankization and think tank mediatization,” encouraging sharp-eyed media talents and deep-thinking think tank talents to engage in intellectual interaction or even position interaction—this is an effective strategy for revitalization. Additionally, the error-tolerance mechanism is also an important mechanism for an “ideal think tank.” When problems arise in business operations, time and opportunities should be provided for them to adjust, giving them certain trial-and-error space and the generosity to allow them to make mistakes.

With these eight characteristics, an “ideal think tank” will present the following situation: “standing firm both at the top and bottom, thoroughly understanding both the higher-level policies and the grassroots realities,” with broad vision, innovative concepts, scientific thinking methods, and distinct interdisciplinary features; having a batch of highly targeted, highly effective, “explosive” research topics; possessing strong team problem-solving capabilities, high problem conversion rates, and high social contribution rates; with its outstanding performance, the think tank itself should become a famous brand; it has strong “stickiness” with “clients”—when clients encounter problems or insurmountable “hurdles,” the first thing they think of is seeking your help; and it particularly emphasizes research on “wisdom methodology.”

3. Think Tank Construction: Methodology as the Foundation

What basic qualities should a new-type “ideal think tank” with Chinese characteristics possess? The Opinions point out: (1) a substantive research institution that complies with national laws and regulations, is relatively stable, and operates in a standardized manner; (2) distinctive features, long-term focused decision-making consultation research fields and their research results; (3) influential professional representative figures and full-time researchers; (4) guaranteed and sustainable funding sources; (5) multi-level academic exchange platforms and achievement transformation channels; (6) a fully functional information collection and analysis system; (7) a sound governance structure and organizational charter; and (8) favorable conditions for conducting international cooperation and exchanges. The author believes that these eight items are the basic conditions for constructing an “ideal think tank,” while “wisdom methodology” is the necessary condition for basic qualities.

3.1 A New Platform for Think Tanks to Function: The Think Tank Alliance

A think tank alliance should be established, which organically organizes various think tanks within a province, a city, or an industry. Its positioning is:

3.1.1 The Think Tank Alliance Should Be a “Business Leader” As a “special-purpose institution,” the think tank alliance should be a vehicle for “strong-strong alliances” between think tanks. It should rely on excellent concepts, novel operations, and strong affinity to give “joined” think tanks a sense of “returning to their business ‘home’.” Bringing “ideal think tank” construction into the vision of the think tank alliance is also a matter of course. Currently, many think tanks neglect their own business construction, and when encountering insurmountable “business hurdles,” they are often “confused by being in the thick of things.” The think tank alliance should precisely become the most suitable object of reliance and should become the “think tank of think tanks,” conducting business evaluation and construction according to the standards of the “think tank of think tanks.”

3.1.2 The Think Tank Alliance Should Be a Comprehensive Functional Platform Since most domestic think tanks are specialized and usually have few business interactions, the think tank alliance, as a cross-industry and cross-disciplinary platform, can maximize the accommodation and gathering of think tank elite talents from the entire society. Increasingly more examples show that when encountering major topics, it can flexibly integrate various talent resources and actively participate in specific operations through a project-based system. It can itself accept commissions or proactively seek major think tank project services at the transnational, national, regional, and provincial/municipal levels. It can also organize cross-city, cross-province, cross-

regional, and even transnational forums and academic investigation and exchange activities that align with the think tank alliance's positioning. In this way, the characteristics of the think tank alliance as a "platform for research and discussion, a platform for key business operations, and a platform for fellowship" will become apparent.

3.1.3 The Think Tank Alliance Should Be a Loose yet Intrinsicly Mechanized Union It can have the following forms: first, the fellowship style, regularly holding fellowship salons to exchange information and enlighten each other; second, the embedded style, where personnel can temporarily support each other or be stationed in each other's institutions in "small formations"; third, the federal style, nominally a group-style institution but actually operating independently with unrelated interests; and fourth, the alliance style, with rotating "alliance leaders" or establishing a "council" to coordinate relevant matters.

3.1.4 The Think Tank Alliance Should Also Be a "Wisdom Salon" The think tank alliance can become an "academy"-style platform providing wisdom exchanges for various think tanks and can establish "wisdom salons" for business discussion. Since "wisdom salons" have advantages such as broad vision, distinct interdisciplinary features, scientific thinking methods, and novelty, when they spark beneficial and practically valuable ideas, these can be rapidly transformed into vibrant think tank projects, brilliant and highly targeted and practical business research topics, and "explosive" business toolbooks can be written and published. The think tank alliance can, according to the needs of member units, organize experts with genuine talent and learning, with "real materials," and with successful cases to conduct training and other activities with enlightening significance and practical value.

3.1.5 The Think Tank Alliance Should Regularly Hold "Huashan Sword Debate" Competitions It should emulate market economy methods, selecting appropriate projects to conduct high-transparency market bidding, where various "immortals" gather together to compete in wisdom and methods, with the strong rising and the weak falling. This will enliven the "think tank market" pool of water.

3.1.6 The Purpose and Function of the Think Tank Alliance Should Be Clear The primary purpose of the think tank alliance is to promote the healthy development of the broad think tank community. The construction of a "business evaluation" mechanism for the think tank alliance should be put on the agenda. Where possible, it could consider undertaking the function of "third-party evaluation." It should "aim high and strike high," actively participating in evaluation practices for think tanks at all levels.

As mentioned above, an "ideal think tank" is an intelligent social organization with a high ideological level, correct value orientation, high comprehensive

quality, and the ability to influence strategic and tactical decision-making by official and various social institutions as well as economic entities. An “ideal think tank” must truly understand where the “itch points” and “pain points” of governments at all levels, institutions, enterprises, and society lie; deeply know where the “knots” of “social quack doctors” mistakes are; and clearly identify where the precisely targeted “prescriptions” are. What are the business differences among various think tanks (party and government departments, academies of social sciences, party schools and administrative institutes, universities, the military, scientific research institutes and enterprises, and society)?

It appears that an “ideal think tank” should have deep *Dao traces* (profound wisdom). The author once passionately appealed in a paper elaborating on the relationship between big data analysis and think tanks: think tank experts must pay attention to the “transformation and upgrading” of their own quality—abandoning “explaining phenomena with phenomena” to achieve the sublimation of “perception”; abandoning “substituting conjecture for judgment” to achieve the sublimation of “knowledge”; and abandoning “replacing rationality with randomness” to achieve the sublimation of “reason.” First-class think tank experts should be experts and scholars who have made breakthrough contributions in major policy research fields, the best experts and scholars in segmented research fields, and they should also be think tank thinkers. Such expert-type strategists have exceptionally clear minds, exceptionally sharp perception and knowledge, exceptionally acute vision, exceptionally meticulous thinking, and exceptionally precise analysis of matters and principles [15]. For an “ideal think tank” to conduct effective policy consultation, it must simultaneously conduct cross-penetrating research and three-dimensional thinking in political science, economics, cultural studies, sociology, psychology, philosophy, ecology, operations research, management, and even religious studies. In short, like some world-famous think tanks, it should actively engage with society, anticipate topics, prepare early, and not miss important development opportunities.

Methodology belongs to the category of philosophy and refers to the means and behavioral approaches taken to achieve certain goals. In relation to this topic, the connotation of “think tank methodology” is extremely rich, extensively involving areas such as modes, pathways, steps, and means. For example: positioning methods, qualitative methods, track-seeking methods, observation methods, law methods, model methods, simulation methods, structural methods, analytical methods, comparative methods, root-seeking methods, logical methods, speculative methods, inductive methods, deductive methods, intuitive methods, hypothesis methods, speculative methods, information methods, statistical methods, mathematical methods, integration methods, trial-and-error methods, optimization methods, coordinate methods, classification methods, black-box methods, early-warning methods, contingency-plan methods, brainstorming methods, sustainable methods, etc., with at least several hundred types by rough count. Each method simultaneously has even richer connotations. Taking the “positioning method” as an example, a brief analysis reveals that it also includes category positioning, value positioning, cultural positioning,

functional positioning, market positioning, channel positioning, tool positioning, planning positioning, etc. Beyond this, various methods can also have more types of vertical and horizontal cross-connections. “Think tank methodology,” if combined with in-depth interpretation of “classic Chinese and foreign think tank cases,” will be extremely fascinating and worth our good exploration, galloping through, and in-depth cultivation. The research results of “think tank methodology” will yield a series of fruitful outcomes, such as academic monographs, toolbooks, lecture notes, etc., as well as related practices. If “grafted” with fields such as culture, art, industry, management, and education, there will be even more harvests. The research prospects and practical prospects of “think tank methodology” are extremely broad.

4. Conclusion

At the recently concluded National Conference on Philosophy and Social Sciences, General Secretary Xi Jinping said, “All philosophy and social science workers with ideals and aspirations should stand at the forefront of the times, understand changes from ancient to modern times, and be pioneers in thought, actively establishing theories and offering suggestions for the Party and the people, and undertaking the glorious mission entrusted by history,” and should have “clear theoretical consciousness, firm political conviction, and scientific thinking methods” [16]. This is also General Secretary Xi’s ardent expectation for think tanks and think tank experts. “Ideal think tanks” have great potential to accomplish much.

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