

ON LINE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

# Credibility of scientific expertise and decision-making

New challenges for health risk governance in a changing world



COVID-19 SESSION

## Covid-19 International Comparisons: Crisis, Knowledge, Policy

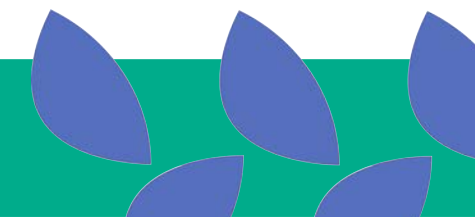
Stephen Hilgartner (Cornell University)

21<sup>st</sup> January 2021

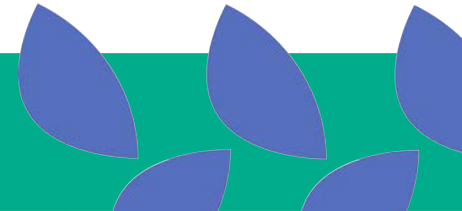
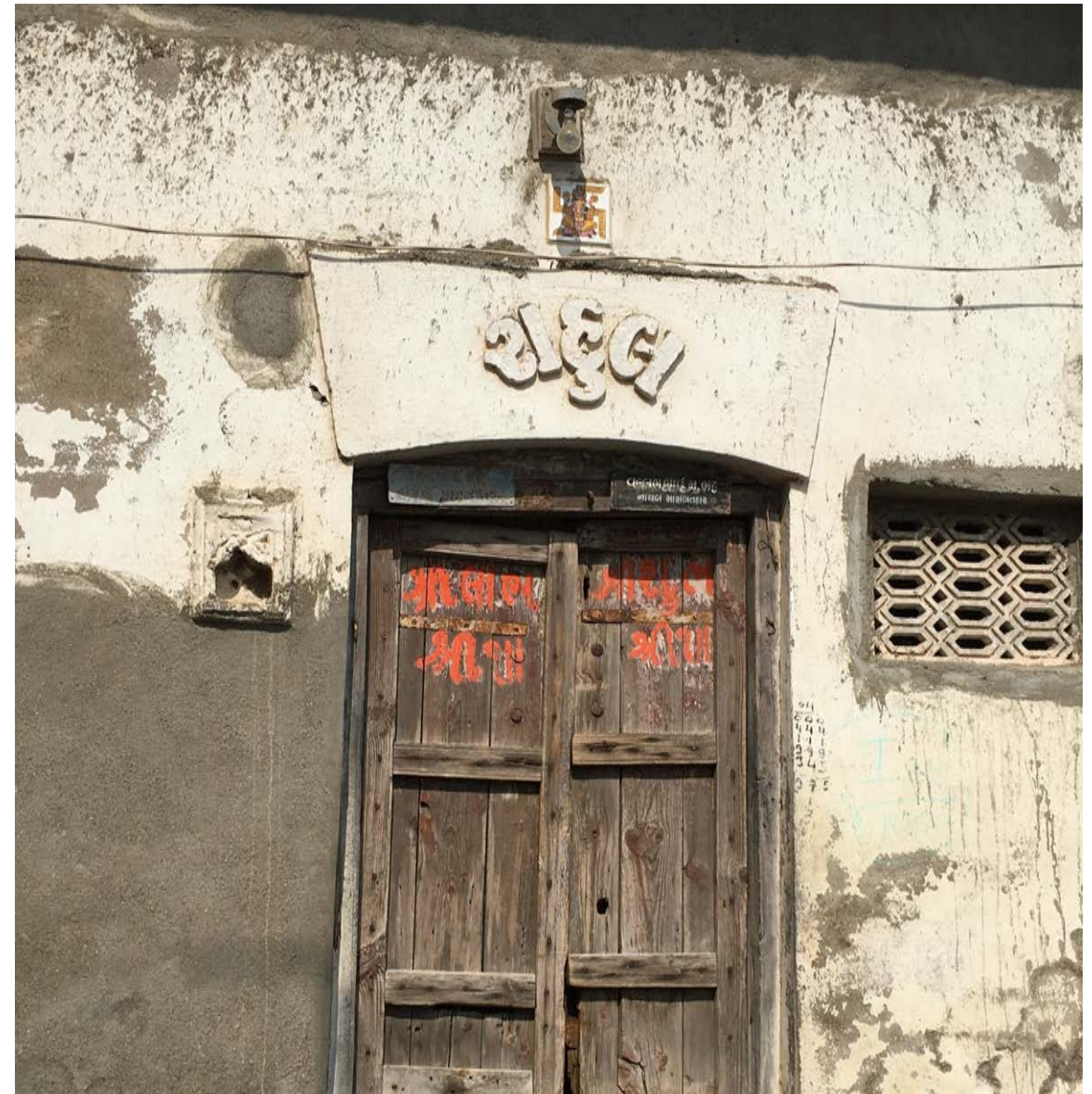
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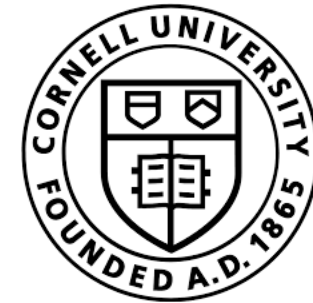


# I. Introduction



# Comparative Covid Response: Crisis, Knowledge, Politics

## Interim Report



- Sheila Jasanoff (Harvard Kennedy School)
- Stephen Hilgartner (Cornell University)
  
- J. Benjamin Hurlbut (Arizona State University)
- Onur Özgöde (Harvard University)
- Margarita Rayzberg (Cornell University)

## Comparative Covid Response Crisis, Knowledge, Policy (CompCoRe)

**16** country teams

**2** Co-PIs

**59** Collaborators

**38** Research Institutions

**2** affiliate countries

### **Funding:**

NSF, Schmidt Futures;  
multiple national partners

## Disciplines Represented

Social sciences

Law

History

Policy

Science & Technology Studies  
(STS)

## ASIA



China



Singapore



India



South Korea



Japan



Taiwan

## EUROPE



Austria



Netherlands



France



Sweden



Germany



United Kingdom



Italy

## AUSTRALIA, NORTH AMERICA & SOUTH AMERICA



Australia



Brazil



United States

# WHY COMPARE?

## It's a Pandemic. Why look at Nations?

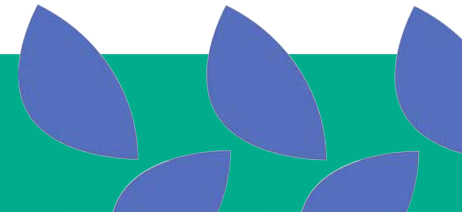
Territorial borders matter

National measures dominate policymaking

National responses have international implications

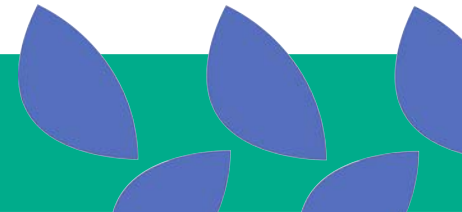
Nation's experiences and responses differ

Varied responses offer opportunities for learning





## II. Findings



# Puzzles, Paradoxes, and Divergences

## Myths and realities

- US (#1 in GHSI, #1 in deaths)
- World evangelist for democracy; democracy under attack

## Outcomes

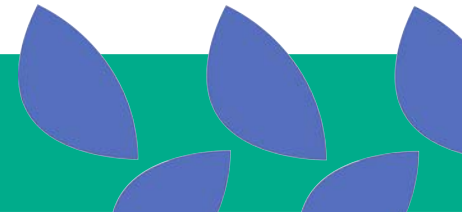
- US confirmed 1837 times more COVID-19 cases per million people than Taiwan
- UK's cumulative deaths per million (1,113) more than double South Africa's (515) in 2021
- UK GDP per capita over three times higher than South Africa

## Science advice

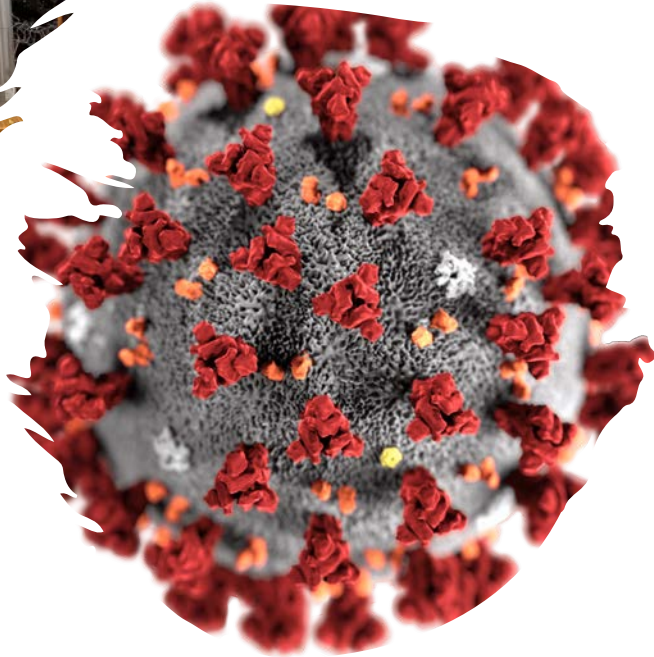
- Germany (Robert Koch Institute) vs. UK (SAGE vs. indieSAGE)

## Relationship between Citizens and the State

- Netherlands (“intelligent lockdown”) vs. Japan (blame victim) vs. Singapore (trusted paternalism)





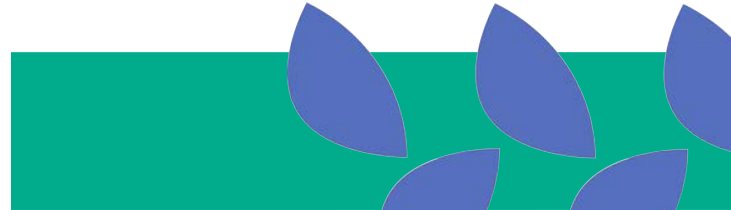


# An Investigation in 3 Parts

- Health system
- Economic system
- Political system

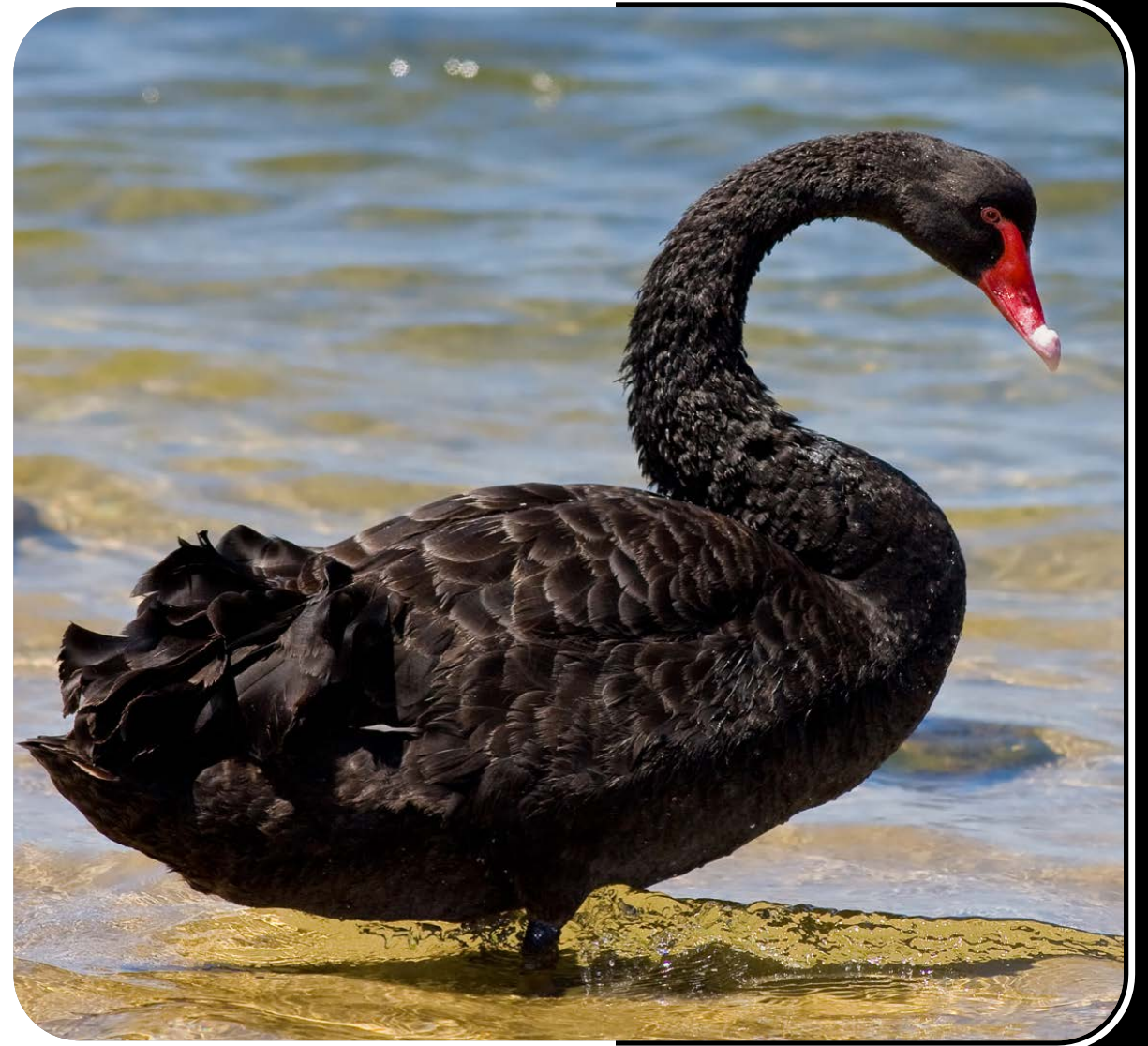


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**Stephen Hilgartner (Cornell University)**



# FIVE FALLACIES

- 01** A playbook can manage a plague.
- 02** In an emergency, politics takes a backseat to policy.
- 03** Indicators of success and failure are clear and outcomes can be well defined and objectively measured.
- 04** Science advisors enable policy makers to choose the best policies.
- 05** Distrust in public health advice reflects scientific illiteracy.





# PREEXISTING CONDITIONS

Health disparities | Inequality | Partisan division

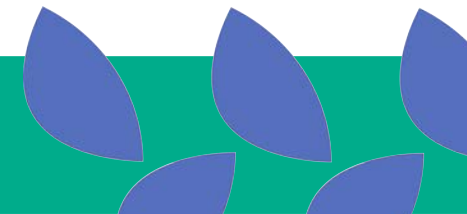
# 3 Response Patterns

*Control,*

*Consensus,*

*Chaos*

	Control (Taiwan)	Consensus (Germany)	Chaos (United States)
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncontested public health sovereignty</li> <li>Learning from SARS and H1N1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiated public health sovereignty</li> <li>National research &amp; advisory system</li> <li>Corporatist medicine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contested public health sovereignty</li> <li>Competing political and biomedical subject</li> </ul>
<b>Economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimal restriction</li> <li>No lockdown</li> <li>Negative effects mainly from networked economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>System stabilization</li> <li>Job protection</li> <li>Learning from 2008</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market stimulus</li> <li>Direct cash relief</li> <li>Controversial bailouts</li> </ul>
<b>Politics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statist approach</li> <li>High public approval of Covid response</li> <li>Victory for incumbent party in local election</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporatist approach</li> <li>Committed to risk aversion and stability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pluralist with high polarization</li> <li>Distrust in expertise</li> <li>Conflict between center and states</li> </ul>





# Public Health Sovereignty



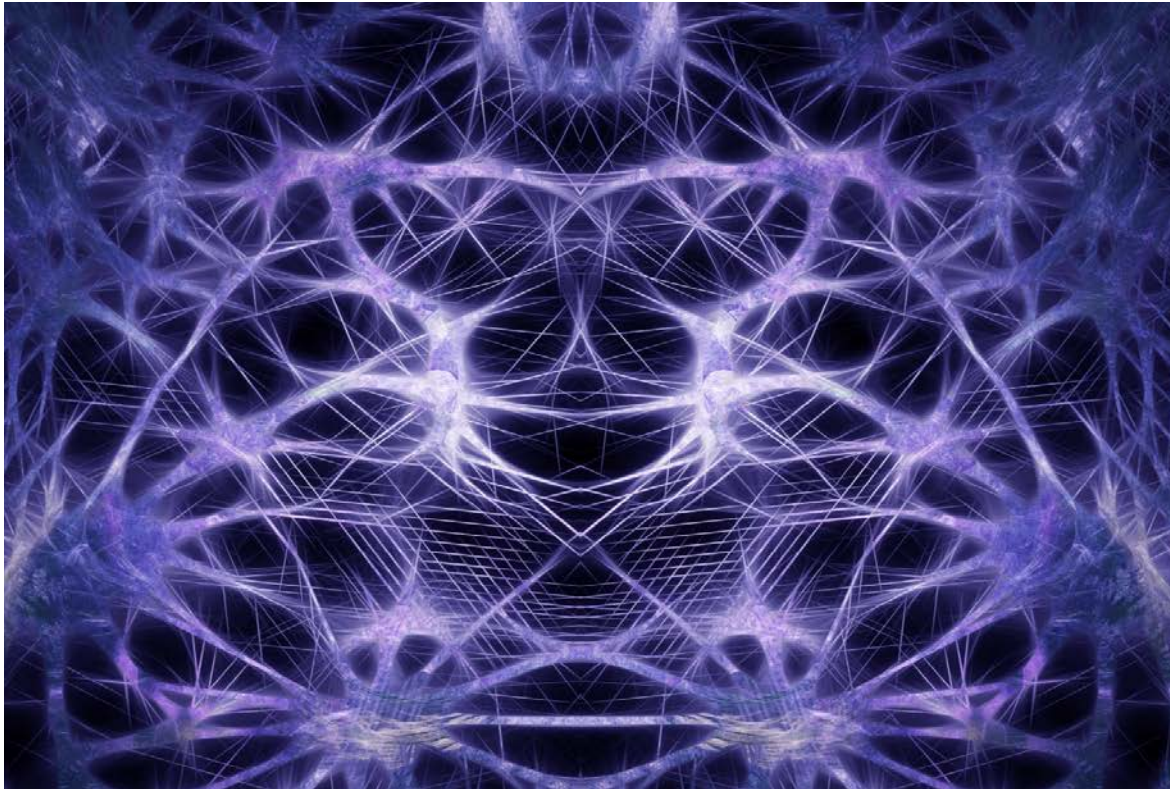
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# Two modes of intervention

## Targeting the Virus

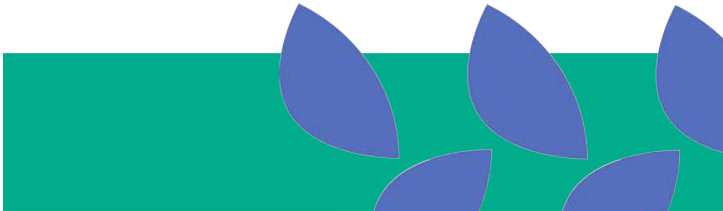
## Targeting Social Practices

	Targeting the Virus	Targeting Social Practices
<b>Metaphoric Frame</b>	Virus as foreign invader	Citizens and social practices as domestic threat
<b>Typical Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Border controls</li> <li>Personal protective equipment (PPE)</li> <li>Isolating vulnerable individuals</li> <li>Herd immunity</li> <li>Miracle drugs</li> <li>Vaccines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social distancing in public</li> <li>Limiting private gatherings</li> <li>Mask mandates</li> <li>Domestic travel restrictions</li> <li>Lockdowns of economies &amp; social life, school closings</li> <li>Combating vaccine hesitancy</li> </ul>
<b>Sources of expertise</b>	Clinical medicine, virology, cellular biology, genomics	Epidemiology, mathematical modeling, social and behavioral science
<b>Imagined mechanism of action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technological fixes</li> <li>"Silver bullet" solutions</li> </ul>	Citizen compliance to limit spread
<b>Intrusiveness</b>	Low	High



The 21<sup>st</sup> Century  
Social Compact

Delegation to experts  
Epistemic authority  
Trust in science



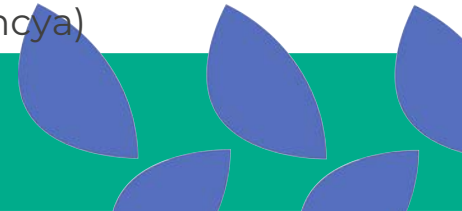
# In sync | Out of sync



(Source: Asad/Xinhua/Newscom)

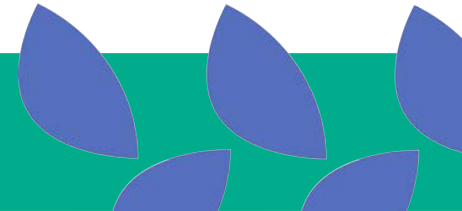


(Source: AP Photo/Paul Sancya)





# IV. Conclusion



## **Hard Truth #1**

Misreading the world  
has high costs

## **Hard Truth #2**

Trust in science is not equivalent  
to trust in public health expertise

## **Hard Truth #3**

Resilience is more important than  
planned public health guidance

### CompCoRe Leadership Team

Sheila Jasanoff (Harvard), Principal Investigator  
Stephen Hilgartner (Cornell), Principal Investigator  
J. Benjamin Hurlbut (Arizona State University)  
Onur Özgöde (Harvard University)  
Margarita Rayzberg (Cornell University)

### CompCoRe Country Teams

#### Australia

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Sujatha Raman, Australian National University

#### Austria

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Iris Eisenberger, University of Graz  
Ulrike Felt, University of Vienna  
Luca Lindner, University of Vienna  
Nikolaus Pöchlhammer, University of Graz

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Marko Monteiro, State University of Campinas  
Alberto Matenhauer Urbinatti, University of Campino

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Maximilian Mayer, University of Bonn  
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Timothy van Galen, Technical University of Munich

#### India

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Leo Saldanha, Environment Support Group

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Emanuela Gambini, Queens Mary University of London  
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Kyoko Sato, Stanford University  
Mikihito Tanaka, Waseda University

#### Netherlands

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Sharad Pandian, Nanyang Technological University

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Shai Mulinari, Lund University  
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Andreas Vilhelmsson, Lund University

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Solange Rokia, University College London  
Jack Stilgoe, University College London  
James Wilsdon, University of Sheffield

#### United States

Stephen Hilgartner, Cornell University  
J. Benjamin Hurlbut, Arizona State University  
Sheila Jasanoff, Harvard Kennedy School  
Onur Özgöde, Harvard Kennedy School  
Margarita Rayzberg, Cornell University

#### Affiliate Country Teams

##### Indonesia

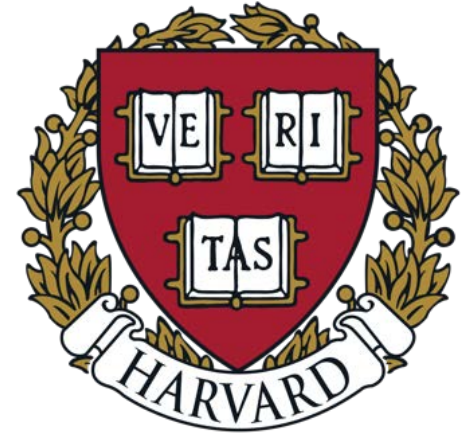
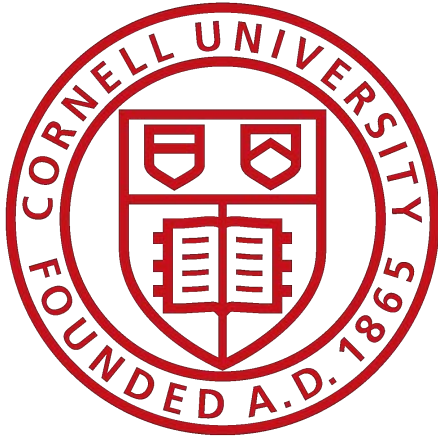
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Enrique Rojas Villalba, Cornell University  
Rogelio Scott Insúa, Cornell University  
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## CompCoRe Participants

5 continents  
16 core countries  
2 affiliate countries  
39 institutions  
59 researchers



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Schmidt Futures  
US National Science Foundation (NSF)  
Harvard University  
Cornell University

# Thank you!

CompCoRe report available here: <https://www.futuresforumonpreparedness.org/research>



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