

BFSU Convenes New Year 2022 Global Index Symposium Forges New Innovative Frontiers in Global Index Research

“Index the World for the Future”—this was the theme for the New Year 2022 Global Index Symposium jointly held by the BFSU Academy of Regional and Global Governance and [Indexpedia](#) in the multi-purpose hall at the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press on Friday, 31st December. Celebrating the culmination of BFSU’s pathbreaking work in index research led by university president Yang Dan, the symposium witnessed the unveiling of “Meta Index”—the world’s first index of indices—and the *Declaration on the Ethics of Indices*. Participants were treated to online demonstrations of Indexpedia—the first-ever encyclopedia of indices—and a pre-release of 20 new indices developed by BFSU.

Chaired by Wang Jianbin, executive vice dean of the BFSU Academy of Regional and Global Governance, the symposium commenced with a welcome speech from BFSU vice president Zhao Gang. During his opening address, Zhao spoke about BFSU’s focus on global languages, global cultures and global governance as part of its strategy to become a world-class university and further contribute to China’s international strategy.

President Yang Dan then went on to introduce the Symposium’s three major innovations—Indexpedia, Meta Index, and the *Declaration on the Ethics of Indices*. Explaining the relationship between the three, Yang described how the *Declaration* provides the values and ethical framework under which Indexpedia operated, while the Meta Index, in turn, acts as an evaluation system, appraising and rating the numerous indices on Indexpedia.

After his introduction, Yang officially launched Meta Index. Driven by the idea that indices need to be better understood, evaluated and developed, Meta Index synthesizes multiple data sources and index measures to provide a holistic evaluation of the world’s indices. At a time when the number of indices across the globe is increasing exponentially, Meta Index provides users with an easier way to understand indices and helps them to quickly find a range of high-quality indices to meet their needs. Looking to the future, Meta Index will act as a reference point for scholars and researchers studying indices and will help support the growth and development of higher-quality indices in the index market. The index will provide the groundwork for the development of index studies (indexology) as its own academic discipline.

Following this, Li Ziyang, vice dean of the BFSU Academy of Regional and Global Governance proceeded to read the *Declaration on the Ethics of Indices* in Chinese, with Ren Wen, dean of the Graduate School of Translation and Interpretation delivering the English translation. The *Declaration* represents the world’s first articulation of a moral and ethical framework that covers international index work and is designed for index researchers and users. It calls for indices to be grounded in the principles of justice, openness and science and advocates that index research and use should be undertaken

in an environment of academic independence, fair competition, and balanced development. The *Declaration* opposes the use of indices as a means for discrimination and calls for the international community to work together to research, create and use indices in a science-based and rational manner.

Niu Huayong, dean of the International Business School then provided participants with an introduction to Indexpedia. Making history as the world's first-ever encyclopedia of indices, Indexpedia aims to break down disciplinary barriers by building a structured, dynamic and interactive encyclopedia of indices and establish an index-based global knowledge system across all disciplines. The site kicked off its first stage of development in 2021 and already collects data from 1,200 influential indices. Boasting a well-designed and interactive interface, Indexpedia has also reprocessed the data of almost 400 indices so that they can be presented in a more user-friendly way through images and graphs. Looking forwards, the site will gradually grow to incorporate multilingual versions and provide users with customized data analysis services. In this way, Indexpedia will provide the groundwork for greater innovation in index research and help create a formalized framework for index studies in our increasingly interconnected world.

In the subsequent round table discussions hosted on behalf of the BFSU Academy of Regional and Global Governance by Zhou Xinyu, participants heard from a number of experts in the field on how indices can be applied to social research and how index studies (indexology) can be further developed as a specialized discipline. Notable experts participating in the discussion included:

- [Yang Dan](#)—President of Beijing Foreign Language Studies University
- [Yu Hongjun](#)—Former vice minister for the International Department of the CPC Central Committee
- [Yu Yunquan](#)—President of the Academy of Contemporary China and World Studies, China Foreign Languages Publishing Administration
- [Cui Hongjian](#)—Director of the Department for European Studies at the China Institute of International Studies
- [Wang Yong](#)—Academic Deputy Dean of the Institute of New Structural Economics at Peking University
- [Wang Jiming](#)—Professor at the Department of Information Management at Peking University

They spoke highly of the Meta Index, *Declaration* and Indexpedia at the symposium.

The symposium also included an announcement on a series of indices that will be released in 2022. These included 11 indices on international communication competencies, 4 indices on global governance and 5 indices on globalization.

Following the discussions, Yang Dan gave interviews with [CGTN Spanish](#) and [Xinhua](#)

[News' Arabic language channel.](#)

The following media organisations also took part in interviews throughout the symposium:

[Xinhua](#) | Xinhua New Media Center | [China Education Television](#) | [China Social Sciences Net](#) | [Modern Education News](#) | [French.China.org.cn](#)

An Introduction to Meta Index

In today's information age, indices are important tools for understanding the world. Yet as the number of indices around the world rapidly increases, we now find ourselves with access to millions of indices covering a vast range of subjects. This presents us with a significant challenge: How do we determine which indices have the most value?

In this context, Beijing Foreign Studies University has developed Indexpedia—the world's first encyclopedia of indices—and is now launching Meta Index, an index of indices. By evaluating the indices on Indexpedia, Meta Index aims to provide users with quick access to the world's most valuable indices.

Drawing its evaluation methods from bibliometrics and altmetrics, Meta Index uses data from multiple sources such as periodical articles, search engines and media outlets to evaluate the indices on Indexpedia across three indicators—importance, authoritativeness and influence.

Meta Index is objective, automatic and flexible. All index data is sourced from objective outcome data and can be collected, processed and calculated by the program automatically. By allowing users to freely combine evaluation indicators as required, Metaindex can accommodate a diversity of user needs.

Indicator System of Meta Index

Indicator	Sub-indicator	Definition
A Importance	A1 Government attention	Whether an index appears on government website
	A2 Public attention	Whether an index is among most searched terms on search engines
	A3 Viability	Whether an index lasts for more than 10 years
B Authoritativeness	B1 Acceptance in authoritative academic journals	Whether an index is used in articles in authoritative academic journals
	B2 Acceptance in key academic journals	Whether an index is used in articles in key academic journals (B1 excluded)
	B3 Acceptance in ordinary academic	Whether an index is used in articles in ordinary academic journals

	journals	
C Influence	C1 Influence on official media	Amount of information concerning an index in central media
	C2 Influence on self-media	Amount of information concerning an index in self-media
	C3 Influence on web portals	Amount of information concerning an index on web portals
	C4 Influence on business media	Amount of information concerning an index in business media

Top 10 Indices

Rank	Chinese name	English name	Importance	Authoritativeness	Influence	Total
1	消费者信心指数	Consumer Confidence Index	10.00	10.00	9.22	9.69
2	制造业指数	Manufacturing Index	10.00	10.00	8.14	9.25
3	人类发展指数	Human Development Index	10.00	10.00	7.69	9.07
4	居民消费价格指数	Consumer Price Index	10.00	10.00	5.95	8.38
5	QS 世界大学排名	QS World University Rankings	10.00	10.00	5.72	8.29
6	期刊影响因子	Journal Impact Factor	10.00	10.00	5.62	8.25
7	采购经理人指数	Purchasing Managers' Index	10.00	10.00	5.57	8.23
8	道琼斯工业指数	Dow Jones Industrial Average	10.00	10.00	5.30	8.12
9	大宗商品价格指数	China Commodity Price Index	8.00	10.00	5.94	7.78
10	非制造业商务活动指数	Non-Manufacturing Business Activity Index	8.00	10.00	5.85	7.74

Declaration on the Ethics of Indices (Beijing 2022)

We live in a world shaped by the indices we have created for ourselves. The drive to produce these indices lies in our universal need for a simpler way of understanding the world. Like a form of virtual and augmented reality, indices have a profound impact on our understanding of our lives, influencing both the subjective and objective world in which we live. Whether indices serve as a commodity or a public good, their design, dissemination and use should be carried out under a common ethical framework.

I. We advocate that indices should be grounded in the principle of justice.

Academic independence.

Indices portray research objects using simplified and quantitative methods and it is inevitable that, during the design process, some form of professional knowledge and subjective judgement will be required. We must, as far as possible, aim to anticipate and avoid any subjective bias from entering the design process. Likewise, we should anticipate and avoid any possible misinterpretations that may arise through the circulation and use of an index. The development, publication and use of indices should be independent of factors such as improper interests, the researcher's reputation, and external influences.

Fair Competition.

Each index should be able to compete fairly in the knowledge market in a way that promotes the development of the index and maximizes its contribution to society. Developers and stakeholders should not pursue individual interests to the detriment of the overall interests of society.

Non-discrimination.

We reject all use of indices as a means for discrimination. The design and interpretation of indices should not be based on race, color, gender, belief, or any other discriminating factor that may lead to unjust results. We oppose the politicization, stigmatization and vulgarization of indices.

Balanced development.

We will promote a balanced approach to the development of indices that focuses on high-quality growth. We aim to bring more indices to more people and ensure that indices can fairly assess and reflect the lives of the broader population. We will eliminate the "index divide" and "index poverty," oppose discourse hegemony, and aim to prevent indices from becoming inflexible measures that are not adjusted when

conditions change. We will correct global imbalances in index development, publication and distribution, and reduce the inequality of index opportunities caused by language, technology and cultural differences.

II. We advocate that indices should be based on the principle of openness.

The development of indices calls for the international community to work together. We are committed to facilitating global cooperation through extensive consultation, joint contribution and international exchange. We call for indices to be open and accessible, and believe that ultimately, indices should become public goods. We aim to provide the public with quicker and more efficient use of the results of indices, while also supporting those involved to take on more extensive and efficient participation in the development of index products and services.

III. We advocate that indices should be founded on the principle of science.

We believe that the utmost attention, care and professionalism must be taken in each stage of the index process, from defining subject matter and content to carrying out index design, data collection, publication, distribution, interpretation, and use for decision making. Indices should reflect their research objects in a way that is as thorough, objective, fair and neutral as possible. We will do our best to make sure that subjective judgements and professional analysis are science-based and reasonable. We will take on the responsibility to apply the latest methods and tools in this endeavor.

We must never forget that when we use indices to evaluate the world, we are taking on the responsibility of establishing standards and setting the future for the international community.

Indexpedia
January 1, 2022

Introduction of Indexpedia

www.indexpedia.net

Indexpedia is the world's first encyclopedia of indices. It aims to break down disciplinary barriers by building a structured, dynamic and interactive encyclopedia of indices and establish an index-based global knowledge system across all disciplines.

Indexpedia kicked off its first stage of development in 2021 with the registration of indexpedia.net and the construction and launch of its version 1.0 website. As a large-scale aggregator of the world's most important and popular indices, the site

already collects data for 1,200 influential indices spanning nearly 200 countries and regions in 18 separate sectors that include culture, society, and the economy. Indexpedia has tailored the development of its data collection methods and tools to match the makeup of each index website it draws data from. The site has developed data collection polling mechanisms that are in constant feedback with all aggregated websites to ensure that data is accurate and up to date. Providing more than just raw information, Indexpedia has reprocessed the data of almost 400 indices so that they can be presented in a more user-friendly way through images and graphs. The platform also incorporates a range of advanced indices that have recently been created by teams at Beijing Foreign Studies University. These include indices on globalization, the influence of international organizations, the global influence of Chinese universities, the presentation quality of accounting information, and the capacity of countries to use their own languages on the world stage.

Looking to the future, Indexpedia aims to increase the global standing of index research through engagement with the international research community. This will include the gradual addition of multilingual versions of the platform as well as customized data analysis services that can be used to research indices from all around the world. Building off the extensive array of indices compiled on the site, we will create “Meta Index”, an influenced-based index of indices. We are also working on a synthesis of academic literature on index research from a range of disciplines and look to consolidate index research methodologies. Through this, we hope to provide the groundwork for greater innovation in index research and help create a formalized framework for index studies in our increasingly interconnected world.