

thinc. Masterclass 2027

*Israel, International Law,
the Middle East and Global Policy*



Training the Next
Generation of Leaders

thinc. | THE HAGUE INITIATIVE
for INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

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What's New in the 2027 Edition

- **Updated program dates:** February – May 2027.
- **New Speakers:** new international law experts and practitioners join the faculty to lead Part II of the program.

Introduction: A Shared Vision

The mission of *thinc.* – to promote the fair and equal application of international law, to combat the delegitimization of the State of Israel – resonates strongly with the need to develop the next generation of policymakers, advisors, and leaders who can face nowadays' challenges around Israel, International Law and the Middle East.

Situated in The Hague, the historic centre of international law, *thinc.* occupies a vantage point that few institutions can claim. This setting places our work at the confluence of jurisprudence, diplomacy, and policymaking, within walking distance of international courts, diplomatic missions, and multilateral bodies. It offers students a direct view of the processes by which global legal norms are negotiated, codified, and, at times, contested – and an opportunity to engage with them in a meaningful way.

The enduring success of our 'Israel on Trial' foundational online course on our '*thinc.* Academy' platform, together with years of conducting advanced training in The Hague and across the globe, bears witness to the efficacy of our approach. These programs have consistently brought together emerging leaders from a wide spectrum of cultural and professional backgrounds, combining rigorous legal scholarship with applied learning experiences that sharpen analytical, communicative, and strategic capacities.

The *thinc.* Masterclass 2027 is open to motivated individuals worldwide, with the opportunity for universities and organizations to collaborate in supporting their students' participation.

Through this Masterclass, students will acquire not only extensive knowledge of international law but also the ability and skills to employ

that knowledge with precision and influence in diplomatic, judicial, and policy contexts.

1. *Program Overview and Purpose*

The *thinc.* Masterclass 2027 is an advanced legal and leadership training pathway designed to equip a select group of emerging professionals with the *legal expertise, strategic advocacy skills, and international exposure* required to address today's most complex issues in international affairs and to advocate for Israel's rightful place in the global community.

At its core, the program provides rigorous, practice-oriented training in international law – with a specific focus on Israel, the Middle East, and the institutions and processes of global governance, including the United Nations, international courts and tribunals, NGOs, treaty-monitoring bodies, and regional organizations – while simultaneously cultivating the leadership, communication, and advocacy skills needed to operate effectively in legal, diplomatic, and policy-making contexts.

Participants will engage in intensive academic study, learn directly from senior *legal scholars and practitioners*, apply their knowledge through realistic casework, and refine their ability to lead and influence international forums.

By the end of the program, participants will be able to:

- **Analyze and interpret** key principles of international law and their application to complex geopolitical disputes.
- **Identify and challenge** the misuse of legal norms (“lawfare”) in political or ideological contexts.
- **Formulate and present** persuasive legal arguments before academic, judicial, and diplomatic bodies.
- **Design and implement** advocacy strategies grounded in legal legitimacy and factual accuracy.
- **Operate confidently** in leadership roles within legal, governmental, and non-governmental organizations.

This program invites individual participants to join a rigorous academic and professional journey, while encouraging universities, organizations, and faith-based communities to partner with *thinc.* in equipping future legal advocates and policy leaders with the skills and values needed to promote justice, fairness, and the objective application of international law.

Why this program is unique

The *thinc.* Masterclass distinguishes itself through a combination of academic rigor, practical training, and strategic placements:

- **LEGAL CORE** – All content is grounded in the study and application of international law, with emphasis on statehood, sovereignty, the law of armed conflict, international criminal law, international human rights law and international adjudication.
- **ADVOCACY TRAINING** – Participants learn not only the law but also how to present it persuasively in litigation, diplomacy, and media contexts.
- **IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE** – A training conference in The Hague, including visits to i.a. the ICC, ICJ and embassies.
- **EXPERT FACULTY** – Instruction from leading scholars and practitioners in law, politics, and diplomacy, each bringing deep expertise and real-world experience.
- **GLOBAL NETWORK** – Students join an international community of peers, alumni, and mentors committed to upholding the fair application of international law.
- **CAREER CATALYST** – Beyond education, the program positions graduates for careers as international litigators, foreign policy analysts, accredited diplomatic correspondents, and public affairs leaders.

Combining academic rigor with practical experience, the Masterclass offers a structured weekly study plan supported by *thinc.* core books – ***Israel on Trial*** and ***Two States for Two Peoples?*** – and culminates in an immersive field experience in *The Hague*.

2. Who Should Apply

Cohort Size: 30 participants from diverse countries and backgrounds, selected either through individual application or nomination by a partner university or organization.

The program welcomes motivated individuals across a range of academic, professional, and institutional profiles, including:

- Advanced Undergraduate and Graduate Students, and Professionals in:
 - Law
 - Political Science
 - International Relations

- History
- Security Studies
- Economics
- Early-Career Lawyers
- PhD & Postgraduate Researchers (Law/IR/Political Science)
- Diplomatic & Judicial Journalists
- State Functionaries working on the Middle East
- Clergy & Community Leaders

Applicants must demonstrate:

- Academic excellence
- Leadership potential
- Commitment to fairness and objectivity in legal and policy work

The *thinc.* Community at a Glance – 2026 Cohort

31 participants (28 students + 3 <i>thinc.</i> staff)	14 countries across 5 continents	60% from the legal field (lawyers, LL.M./Ph.D. candidates, judiciary)
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Our 2026 cohort brought together professionals from the United States, Israel, the Netherlands, Australia, Ivory Coast, Kenya, the United Kingdom, Singapore, Germany, France, Fiji, Rwanda, and Ireland – working across law, politics, media, advocacy, academia, business and theology.



3. *Specific Learning Outcomes*

By the end of the program, graduates will be able to:

- **Identify and analyze** the main principles of public international law governing the relationship between Israel, the Palestinians and other nations in the Middle East.
- **Recognize and assess** the misuse of international legal norms for political purposes (“lawfare”) against the State of Israel within international institutions and courts.
- **Evaluate the legal status of Palestinian statehood and territorial claims** in light of relevant ICJ and ICC decisions, including the 2024 ICJ Advisory Opinion.
- **Interpret and apply** the principles of international humanitarian and criminal law to recent conflicts — such as the 2023 Gaza war — addressing military conduct, and allegations of genocide or starvation.
- **Assess the interaction between law, politics, and diplomacy** in the Middle East, considering the influence of NGOs, the role of international courts, the “Two-State Solution”, the U.S. “Trump Peace Plan” and the latest diplomatic developments.

4. *Program Structure*

The program is delivered in three parts, ensuring a coherent progression from foundational legal knowledge to high-level application and professional practice. (A fourth part is currently under construction.)

Part I – Theoretical Legal Knowledge (February – April 2027, 10 weeks)

Course: *Israel on Trial* Foundational Course

This phase provides the legal and contextual foundation for the rest of the program.

- Study key treaties, cases, and principles of international law relevant to Israel and the Middle East.
- Analyze primary legal sources and precedents from the ICJ, ICC, and other tribunals.
- Apply legal principles to historical and current disputes.

Modules:

1. *The Israel–Palestine Conflict: Historical, Religious, and Political Context — legal framing*
2. *International Law and “Lawfare” — recognizing and defending against misuse*
3. *Territorial Sovereignty, Occupation & Settlements — rules, disputes, and case law*
4. *The Use of Force: International Criminal Law, Humanitarian Law and the Genocide Convention — theory and practice*
5. *International Courts — jurisdiction, function, and recent developments at the ICC and ICJ*

Learning Components:

- 20 expert video lectures
- Downloadable self-study for every lesson
- PDF editions of *thinc.* books: *Israel on Trial* and *Two States for Two Peoples?*
- Primary legal texts, case law analyses, and recommended readings
- Live academic sessions with senior faculty and guest experts

Part II – Legal Masterclasses & Advocacy Workshops (April – May 2027, 6 weeks)

Building on Part I, this phase offers one advanced legal masterclass per week, combining in-depth understanding, case analysis, and practical exercises of complex legal issues about Israel and the Middle East. Typical topics include (subject to change):

- **Palestinian Statehood and Sovereignty Claims**
Framing the legal arguments on statehood and territorial claims, with focus on the ICJ Advisory Opinion of July 2024.
- **Amnesty, Human Rights Watch, and the Role of NGOs in Lawfare against Israel**
Understanding how NGOs shape perceptions through legal language and how to respond to lawfare disguised as human rights.
- **The UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC): Mandate, Mechanisms, and Political Bias**
Examining the UNHRC's structure, its recurring focus on Israel, and the diplomatic tools available to engage with, or counter, its resolutions
- **Media Warfare: Analyzing the Role and Influence of Pro-Palestinian Media**
An in-depth study of how pro-Palestinian media narratives are constructed and disseminated and their impact on public perception and policy debates

- **The “Two-State Solution’: Legal and Political Dimensions**
Unpacking the evolving debates on the two-state paradigm, its international legal standing, and the challenges it faces
- **Lawfare and Genocide Claims**
Examining famine and starvation allegations, the role of media narratives, misinformation, and strategies to counter false claims
- **The Bias of International Courts: ICJ and ICC under Scrutiny**
Unpacking how international courts are politicized and how legal procedures are manipulated in cases involving Israel

Part III – Training Conference in The Hague – An immersive legal and policy training experience at the heart of the international justice system (May 2027, 1 week)

Includes:

- Visits to i.a. the ICC, ICJ and embassies
- Practical workshops on advocacy, negotiation, and public legal argumentation
- Training in social media advocacy and strategic communication
- Week-Long Moot Court Simulation: participants work in teams throughout the week to build a case addressing the major legal accusations leveled against Israel, guided by professors and *thinc.* fellows to develop their position based on the concepts learned throughout the program, culminating in a live mock hearing on the final day, argued before a panel of judges
- Networking sessions with diplomats, court officials, and leading legal practitioners
- An international symposium with renowned expert speakers
- Accommodation, lunches and dinners included; airfares and local transport not included

Part IV – Internship program (under construction)

We intend to place young lawyers who have completed the *thinc.* Masterclass into offices of influence, e.g. Ministries of Justice or Foreign Affairs, or judge chambers. Internships may vary from 6-12 months.

Candidates must apply and will be selected based on completed attendance, active participation in live sessions, and overall performance during the Masterclass.

Part IV availability depends on available funding/external sponsorships.

Highlights from the 2026 Training Conference



Andrew Tucker, Director of thinc., at the 2026 Symposium



The 2026 Moot Court: final hearing before a panel of judges



Visit to the ICJ – Peace Palace, The Hague



Visit to the International Criminal Court (ICC)

5. Estimated Study Load

Part I – Theoretical Legal Knowledge

Duration: 10 weeks

Components: 20 expert lectures (approx. 40 minutes each), readings from *Israel on Trial* and *Two States for Two Peoples?*, self-directed study, and live sessions with tutors every other week

Workload: An average of approximately 4 hours per week, including lectures, readings, self-directed study, and the biweekly live tutor sessions
Total estimated hours: $\approx$ 40 hours

Part II – Legal Masterclasses & Advocacy Workshops

Duration: 6 weeks

Components: Weekly 1.5-hour live sessions, supported by approximately 2 hours of individual preparation per week – reading the relevant materials and background documents provided by each week's speaker.

Workload: An average of 3.5 hours per week (1.5 hours live + 2 hours preparation).

Total estimated hours: $\approx$ 21 hours

Part III – Training Conference in The Hague

Duration: 6 days (Sunday afternoon – Friday evening).

Components: Lectures, workshops, institutional visits to international courts and diplomatic missions, and a week-long moot court simulation.

Workload: Full-day immersive schedule throughout the week.

Total estimated hours: $\approx$ 44 hours

Part IV – Internship program (under construction)

Duration: variable, 6 - 12 months (internship)

Not included in the academic credit calculation below, given its variable duration and independent, non-coursework nature.

Program availability depends on available funding and sponsorships.

Overall Study Commitment

Total estimated workload (Parts I–III): $\approx$ 105 hours

[equivalent to approximately 2.3 U.S. academic credits or 4 ECTS credits based on standard academic workload calculations]

6. Benefits to Students

By participating, students will:

- **Receive advanced legal training** directly related to the Israel–Middle East context

- **Develop practical advocacy skills** applicable to litigation, diplomacy, policymaking, and public engagement
- **Experience international law in practice** through theoretical knowledge on the issues around Israel and International Law, the role of NGOs, and on-site sessions in *The Hague*, including visits to international courts and exchanges with legal professionals and scholars
- **Join a global learning network** of students, jurists, and policy experts, while positioning themselves for career advancement as international legal advocates, foreign policy analysts, accredited diplomatic correspondents, and public affairs leaders
- **Enhance their academic and institutional profile** by contributing to a program recognized for shaping legally skilled, ethically grounded professionals equipped to navigate the international legal arena.

What Our Alumni Say

“The most rewarding aspect of the conference was gaining deeper insight into the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine, particularly through the lens of international law. It was also highly valuable to connect with others who share a genuine interest in this complex and important subject.”

— **Jacqueline, the Netherlands**

“In only a few days I learned more useful information than in a semester of studying Middle East studies at my university. The conference was an incredible tool to educate people on Israel and international law.”

— **Dina, Germany**

“In-depth learning and discussion of topics related to Israel and international law with like-minded individuals, plus fantastic networking and community building. Thanks very much for another excellent conference!”

— **thinc. Masterclass Alumna**

“It was just an incredible experience to be part of the live debate – we were able to be present to witness and deal with real-world reactions to legal issues regarding Israel. Honestly, it was an incredible week.”

— **A., thinc. Alumna**

“I loved the Symposium the most, and then the sessions on the ICC. The practical advocacy sessions were so great, and I benefitted a lot from these as I was finishing the final part of the Bar.”

— **J., thinc. Alumna**

7. Practical Information

Program Dates: February – May 2027

Fee (minimum cohort of 25 students):

USD 3,400 / EURO 3,000 per participant for Parts I-III

The program fee covers:

INCLUDED	NOT INCLUDED
• Access to the <i>Israel on Trial</i> foundational course and all learning material • Online tutorials, webinars, and discussion sessions • One-on-one mentorship with faculty tutors and practitioners • Accommodation (shared room) and meals during the Training Conference in The Hague • Costs of site visits	• Airfare to and from The Netherlands • Local transport to and from The Hague

Certificate Eligibility: Participants who attend at least 80% of the sessions and complete all assignments will receive a Certificate of Completion from *thinc*.

8. Application Process

To apply for the *thinc*. Masterclass 2027, candidates must submit the following documents in English with the application form (<https://academy.thinc-law.org/masterclass-2027>):

- **Curriculum Vitae** outlining academic background, professional experience, and relevant activities;
- **Letter of Motivation** explaining the applicant's interest in the program, career goals, and alignment with *thinc*.’s mission;
- **One Letter of Reference** (at least) from a professor, employer, or professional supervisor.

Selection Process: Applications will be assessed based on academic merit, leadership potential, and demonstrated commitment to fairness, justice, and principled advocacy in international law.

Sponsored Positions: Two sponsored places are available at a 50% reduced fee for highly motivated candidates who can demonstrate financial need.

Submission and Deadline: All application materials must be submitted through the official *thinc.* online portal by **20 January 2027**.

9. Partnership

We invite universities and organizations to promote this Masterclass opportunity among their students, staff and members, while individual participants may apply directly to join the international cohort.

As part of its mission to train a new generation of international legal and policy leaders, *thinc.* invites universities, law schools and other interested institutions to engage with us to discuss possible partnerships based on the *thinc.* Masterclass.

Conclusion

The ***thinc.* Masterclass** offers a unique opportunity to gain advanced legal training, develop professional advocacy skills, and engage directly with international courts and experts in *The Hague*.

For **universities, law schools and other interested institutions**, joining as a partner means contributing to the preparation of a new generation of principled, strategically minded advocates committed to justice, fairness, and Israel's legitimate place under international law.

For **individual participants**, the Masterclass provides an exceptional platform to strengthen your expertise, expand your international network, and experience how international law operates in real-world diplomatic and judicial contexts in relation to Israel, the Middle East and International Law — positioning you for career advancement as an international litigator, foreign policy analyst, accredited diplomatic correspondent, or public affairs leader.

Appendix

a) List of tutors

(additional speakers for Parts II and III of the Masterclass will be announced at a later stage)

- **Natasha Hausdorff** – Legal Director at UKLFI Charitable Trust, barrister specialising in international law and legal issues relating to Israel.
- **Jonathan Turner** – Executive Director at UKLFI Charitable Trust, solicitor with extensive experience in legal advocacy concerning Israel and international law.
- **Andrew Fox** – Graduate in Law, Psychology and Military History; Former British Army Major; conflict researcher and publicist; Senior Fellow Henry Jackson Society and MacDonald-Laurier Institute; currently pursuing a PhD in War Studies.
- **Prof. Wolfgang Bock** – Senior Fellow of *thinc.*, Professor of Law and former judge, specialising in constitutional and security law with a focus on the MENA region.
- **Prof. Steven E. Zipperstein** – Senior Fellow of *thinc.*, is an Adjunct Assistant Professor with the Luskin School of Public Affairs. He serves as Director of the UCLA Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for Israel Studies. He is also a Distinguished Senior Scholar at the UCLA Center for Middle East Development and Visiting Professor at Tel Aviv University.
- **Dr. Matthijs de Blois** – Senior Fellow of *thinc.* and Professor Emeritus at Utrecht University's Institute of Legal Theory, specialising in law, religion, and Israel under international law.
- **Prof. Gregory Rose** – Senior Fellow of *thinc.* and legal scholar at the University of Wollongong's ANCORS, specialising in marine, environmental, and counter-terrorism law.
- **Alessandro Spinillo** – Legal Advisor at *thinc.*, lawyer admitted in Spain and Argentina, with experience in proceedings before the ICJ and ICC.
- **Andrew Tucker** – Director of *thinc.* and international law specialist focusing on Israel and the Middle East.
- **Prof. Geoffrey S. Corn** – Professor of Law at Texas Tech University School of Law, specialising in the law of armed conflict and national security law.
- **Prof. Daphné Richemond-Barak** – Professor at Reichman University's Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy & Strategy, specialising in international law, counter-terrorism, and warfare.

- **Prof. Robbie Sabel** – Member of the *thinc.* Advisory Board and Professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem Faculty of Law, specialising in international law and diplomacy.
- **Anne Herzberg** – Legal Advisor NGO Monitor, specialising in international law human rights, and NGO accountability.

