

A Brand-New Public Policy Institute at UB!

The Belize Policy Research Institute at UB (BELPRI-UB) is here! Policy Pulse is BELPRI's regular newsletter to (1) inform the UB community of BELPRI's activities & opportunities (2) provide updates on BELPRI's policy outputs and (3) share interesting facts on national policy issues. In this first introductory issue, let us tell you who we are, what we will do and the key developments so far.

What is BELPRI-UB?

The Mission of BELPRI is rooted in UB's institutional goal, as stated in the UB RISE Strategic Plan, "to become a centre of excellence in research that contributes to Belize's development."



As an independent multi-disciplinary public policy institute at UB, BELPRI's mission is to produce high quality and accessible research and knowledge through innovation and people-centred approaches that improve policy making and its impact on Belize's sustainable development.

In doing this successfully, BELPRI aspires to become a widely respected and essential policy actor whose evidence-based work influences public policies and behaviours toward a more prosperous, just, equitable and peaceful Belizean society.



Programme Areas

BELPRI's strategic approach is based on the clear understanding that sustainable development challenges are thematically inter-connected, and that good public policy must improve people's livelihoods, generate economic growth, sustain the environment and promote good governance. BELPRI will execute its Mission around four key programmes:

1. Innovative Research
2. Engagement and Influence
3. Building Networks
4. Sustainability

The products of BELPRI's research will be made accessible to a wide audience through BELPRI Policy Reports, Guest Policy Papers Policy Briefs, Policy Information Sheets, Policy Seminars, a Policy Blog (that will accept policy commentaries), Policy Pulse audio-visual materials for use on social media.

'BRIDGING KNOWLEDGE TO POWER'

SAVE THE DATE

The public Launch of BELPRI is on
WED 26 MARCH 2025

Our Core Values

All of BELPRI's work and actions are guided by the following core values:

- Academic Independence
- Research Rigour
- Cutting-edge and Innovative
- Inclusivity and Diversity
- Participatory and Collaborative
- Accessible and Measurable Outputs
- Transparent and Accountable

BELPRI & the UB Community

BELPRI-UB will seek synergies on policy matters with UB's Research Office, four academic faculties, and its existing policy institutes. UB's faculty and students will be able to collaborate with BELPRI-UB as presenters on BELPRI-UB policy seminars, contributors of policy articles and opinions, members of BELPRI thematic Policy Circles, research fellows, research assistants and BELPRI volunteers. Opportunities for collaboration will be shared in Policy Pulse.

During the current academic year, BELPRI Student Clubs will begin to be rolled out with the objective of UB students having the opportunity to learn about policy making in Belize and participate in real policy influence activities.

Our Highlights So Far

Since the Board of Trustees of the University of Belize decided to establish BELPRI in late 2024, we have been quietly setting up our operations, internal policies, programmes and commencing our policy research. Key developments thus far include:

Governance and Operations

- Completion and approval of the BELPRI Bridging Knowledge to Power Strategic Plan 2024 -2027.
- **Dr. Dylan Vernon** hired as BELPRI's first Executive Director.
- Appointment of BELPRI's first Advisory Board and the selection of **Mr. Henry N. Anderson, Executive Director** of the Development Finance Corporation (DFC) as the first Chairman. (See Box on Advisory Board Members).
- Core BELPRI staff are currently being employed.
- BELPRI's office will be on the UB Education Campus in Belize City but BELPRI will have presence on all UB campuses.



Henry N. Anderson,
Chairman, CEO - DFC



Dylan Vernon,
Executive Director - BELPRI-UB

MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY BOARD OF BELPRI-UB

- Mr. Henry N. Anderson, Chairman, CEO of Development Finance Corporation (DFC)
- Dr. Vincent Palacio, President, University of Belize (UB)
- Ms. Dominique Noralez, Coordinator, Leadership Intervention Unit (LIC)
- Ms. Leslie Mendez, Attorney-at-Law
- Dr. Gilbert Canton, Managing Director, National Gas Company (Belize) Ltd.
- Ms. Beverly Wade, Director, Blue Bond & Finance Permanence Unit, GoB
- Dr. Colin Young, Director, CARICOM Climate Change Centre (CCCCC)
- Dr. Dylan Vernon, Executive Director, BELPRI-UB

Outreach and Networking

- Strong working relationship established with the Office of Research of UB.
- Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CAPRI).
- Meetings being held with UB personnel and institutes to introduce BELPRI and explore collaboration.
- Numerous visits made to national and international agencies to introduce BELPRI and explore partnerships.
- The Executive Director has made several presentations at UB seminars, including at UB's Annual State of the Nation Lecture in September 2024.
- Modules for training on policymaking and policy influence are being drafted in preparation for training workshops for the UB community and the wider policy community.
- BELPRI now has a page on the UB website and its own website is coming soon.

Policy Research and Monitoring

- Collation of national public policies for BELPRI's Public Policy Tracker is underway.
- Planning underway for BELPRI's First Annual National Budget Series.
- BELPRI's first pilot Policy Research Project, on the theme of regulating money in politics in Belize, has commenced. Look for the publication of a research paper and policy recommendations in the coming months. UB's Dr. Philip Castillo is a member of the Research Team and opportunities for Research Assistants will be advertised shortly.
- Approval of BELPRI's first Guest Research Paper proposal on Belize's economy since independence from Professor Emeritus Victor Bulmer-Thomas (The Economic History of Belize, Cubola, 2012). The launch of the resulting publication will be in mid-2025.
- BELPRI and the Intercultural Indigenous Language Institute (IILI) have agreed to collaborate on joint events and research, including around the theme of a language policy for Belize.
- Other policy research issues are being prioritised for concept and project development.

Save the date

ELECTIONS & YOU:

Exercising Your People Power in 2025!

Co-Hosted by BELPRI-UB

Tuesday, March 4, 2025
UB Conference Center | 10:00 AM

