

The Boston Globe

The Boston Globe cited the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in an October 1, 2011 editorial, as a “prime example of how private initiatives can – and should – step up” and “brainstorm solutions for the country’s most vexing problems.”

Editorial

Problem-solving: An academy shows the way

As political leaders from opposite sides of the spectrum bicker in Washington, leaders from the public and private sectors are coming together in Cambridge this weekend, as the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, an honorary society and thriving research center, convenes to induct 180 new members.

To many, the group of inductees – which includes singer-songwriter Paul Simon, groundbreaking cancer researcher Clara Bloomfield, New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft, and the first female American Bar Association president, Roberta Ramo – may seem like an incompatible bunch of business people, artists, and thinkers. But when John Adams, John Hancock, and others founded the nation’s first think tank in 1780, their goal was to bring together experts from radically different fields who could put politics aside and brainstorm solutions for the country’s most vexing problems. We could use more of that today.

Last year, Congress wisely called on the academy to establish a bipartisan commission to identify concrete ways America can strengthen education in humanities and the social sciences. The academy is a prime example of how private initiatives can - and should - step up when public policy and institutions stumble.