

Igor Leonov

Independent Researcher | Founder and President, Amerpass Foundation

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Professional Profile

Founder, institution builder, independent researcher, journalist, and publisher with more than 25 years of experience conceiving, launching, and leading mission-driven projects at the intersection of migration, professional identity, media, and public communication. He created RUPASS in 2005 as an early non-state professional identification initiative and later founded Amerpass Foundation in the United States. His work combines concept development, organizational design, program building, publishing, research collaboration, public communication, and long-term project leadership.

Research Areas

- Migration policy and migrant integration
- Institutional trust and institutional judgment
- Professional identity and cross-border recognition
- Digital platforms, algorithmic visibility, and public communication
- Journalism, self-censorship, and regulated media environments
- Qualitative research, institutional analysis, and case studies

Project and Institution Building

Founder and President, Amerpass Foundation

2024–Present

Founded and is developing a U.S.-based nonprofit as an integrated platform for migrant support, research, education, employment assistance, cultural programs, independent journalism, and professional identity. Defined its mission and institutional model; develops programs, publishing capacity, research collaborations, public communication, and digital infrastructure. Leads the Amerpass Professional Identity Framework, adapting the practical experience of RUPASS to the needs of cross-border professional continuity.

Creator and Project Lead, RUPASS Professional Identification Initiative

2005–2012

Conceived and led an early non-state professional identification project in a highly regulated migration environment. Developed its core concept, institutional logic, documentation framework, public presentation, and implementation model for preserving and communicating professional experience where formal recognition was fragmented or unavailable. The project became the practical foundation for later research on institutional trust, professional credentials, and administrative resistance.

Independent Researcher, Amerpass Foundation

2026–Present

Conducts interdisciplinary research on institutional trust, migration governance, public communication, professional recognition, and the effects of digital platforms and artificial intelligence on institutional decision-making.

Selected Professional Experience

Founder, Editor, and Publisher, Russian Migration and Russkaya Migratsiya

2005–2021

Established and led independent publishing projects focused on migration policy, labor mobility, migrant communities, public administration, and the social consequences of regulatory decisions.

Directed research and public initiatives concerning demography, migration, regional development, and professional mobility.

Selected Publications

Leonov, I. (2026). *Amerpass as a Non-State System of Transnational Professional Identification: Conceptual, Institutional and Ethical-Legal Foundations*. DOI: [10.2139/ssrn.6246498](https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.6246498)

Leonov, I. (2026). *RUPASS as a Non-State Professional Identification System: Institutional Trust Formation and Administrative Resistance in a High-Regulation Migration Regime*. DOI: [10.2139/ssrn.6265998](https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.6265998)

Leonov, I., & Savchuk, Y. (2026). *Institutional Fear and Self-Censorship as Mechanisms of Social Adaptation in Highly Regulated Political Systems*. DOI: [10.2139/ssrn.6767778](https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.6767778)

Leonov, I. (2026). *When Everyone Pays the Price: Collective Reputation and the Spread of Distrust in Professional Communities*. DOI: [10.2139/ssrn.6891778](https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.6891778)

Leonov, I., & Savchuk, Y. (2026). *Trust without Familiarity: Institutional Judgment in the Age of Artificial Intelligence*. DOI: [10.2139/ssrn.7129300](https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.7129300)

Nosova, K., & Leonov, I. (2026). *Cinema as a Cultural Language of Migration: Visual Narratives, Identity Construction, and Social Adaptation*. DOI: [10.2139/ssrn.7130139](https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.7130139)

Leonov, I. (2025). *Institutional Trust in Multilingual Public Communication: Consistency, Answerability, and Migrant Reliance on Government Information*. DOI: [10.2139/ssrn.7508079](https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.7508079)

Leonov, I. (2026). *Humanitarian Protection Is Not Immigration Selection: Why the United States Needs Both*. DOI: [10.2139/ssrn.7533600](https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.7533600)

Current Research and Collaborative Projects**Amerpass Professional Identity Framework**

A research and institutional initiative exploring professional continuity, evidentiary organization, and non-state mechanisms for presenting professional experience across borders.

Life in Waiting

A qualitative research project with Maksym Domashov examining prolonged legal uncertainty and the everyday consequences of extended asylum processing.

Orphaned Digital Archives

A collaborative project with Maksym Domashov on the preservation, loss, and institutional vulnerability of digital media archives.

Algorithmic Visibility and Institutional Trust

A collaborative research line with Yurii Savchuk examining the limits of platform-based professional identity and algorithmic recognition.

Publishing and Institutional Development

- Developed independent media and research initiatives addressing migration, public policy, professional identity, and institutional accountability.
- Provides institutional leadership for Amerpass Foundation publishing activities, including independent journalism and interdisciplinary research platforms.
- Supports collaborative publication projects involving independent researchers, journalists, and specialists working across migration, media, language, and professional mobility.
- Connects long-term experience in journalism and publishing with current research on trust, digital visibility, and cross-border recognition of expertise.

Education

Dnipropetrovsk State University, Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine Field of study: Electronic Computers and Devices	1985–1991
Dnepropetrovsk College of Automation, Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine College studies; field of study not specified in the available record	1982–1984
School of Working Correspondents, Navoi, Uzbekistan Field of study: Journalism	1980–1982

Methods and Professional Expertise

Area	Expertise
Research methods	Qualitative research, case studies, documentary analysis, institutional analysis, comparative interpretation
Research domains	Migration policy, professional identity, institutional trust, journalism, digital platforms, public communication
Publishing	Editorial development, research publishing, scholarly metadata, interdisciplinary collaboration
Institutional work	Nonprofit leadership, project development, professional recognition frameworks, community-oriented initiatives

Professional Identifiers and Links

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