2018 Latin America Think Tank Summit Report: Think Tanks: A Bridge over Troubled Waters and Turbulent Times

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2018 Latin America Think Tank Summit Report: Think Tanks: A Bridge over Troubled Waters and Turbulent Times

Abstract

The Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program of the Lauder Institute at the University of Pennsylvania, CLAEH University and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung hosted the 2018 Latin America Think Tank Summit under the theme "Think Tanks: A Bridge over Troubled Waters and Turbulent Times."

The summit was held September 12-14th, 2018 at the Hilton Garden Inn Montevideo, Montevideo, Uruguay. The most influential and innovative think tanks in Latin America gathered to discuss contemporary issues they are facing, such as growing trade tensions, economic turbulence, climate change, mass migration, corruption and traditional and non-traditional security threats.

In a world where facts, evidence, and credible research are often ignored, this summit explored how think tanks can remain relevant and impactful by simultaneously pursuing rigor, innovation, accessibility, and accountability more than ever before. As such, the summit explored not only the ways in which think tanks are currently making a difference and finding solutions to contemporary policy challenges, but also how they can become increasingly relevant in these tumultuous times. To that end, in addition to these pressing contemporary policy challenges, the 2018 Latin America Think Tank Summit also focused on sharing the best practices for raising funds, recruiting key staff, harnessing new and innovative technologies, and responding to increased public scrutiny and discontent.

Disciplines

Latin American Studies

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THINK TANKS
URUGUAY 2018
12 al 14 de septiembre
MONTEVIDEO
SUMMIT REPORT
Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program
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Introduction
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Format
This Summit is conducted in a Roundtable Format with panels that are intended to frame the key issues and provide constructively provocative questions to stimulate the discussion that follows each Session. The Summit is conducted in accordance with the Chatham House Rule.
Vectors of Change

Latin American Think Tanks at the Forefront of Political and Economic Challenges

The current state of the world and Latin American region calls for Latin America’s think tank scholars to be at the forefront of contemporary challenges. Enrique Iglesias, former President of the Inter-American Development Bank and current President of Astur Foundation, outlined the framework of the 2018 Latin American Think Tank Summit in his opening keynote address by addressing five main vectors of change that Latin American think tanks will have to face:

• First is technology, privacy, employment and the evolution of human societies.

• Second is the impact of globalization on neglected sectors and how the ostracization of such sectors and those working within them can lead to the rise of populist leaders, such as the election of President Trump in the United States.

• Third is the rise of the middle class, far right and far left movements and its implications on the youth.

• Fourth is the transfer of power from the West to the East. In this regard, it is important to note that while China generates production expectations that other regions cannot meet, the United Nations, the former champion of globalization and connectivity, weakens as the Security Council begins to fail, leaving traditional institutions scramble to adapt to the new world order.

• Fifth is commerce and the World Trade Organization (WTO), the latter of which is in particular danger due to the trade war between the Americas and Asia and their attempts to expand their spheres of influence.

Enrique Iglesias summarized these challenges facing Latin American think tanks by urging think tanks to address how to “coexist in peace, and abide to international agreements, while being respectful to our democratic institutions.”
Prominent Chief Executives of Latin American think tanks sought to answer that question during the opening Chief Executives panel. Leaders expressed how they have needed to adapt to various historical changes such as dictatorships, reaffirmation of democracies and economic crises. One leader further noted the motivation behind the foundation of many think tanks in Latin America had been to fill a void between public policy and human rights developments within the context of Operation Condor in the 1970’s.

However, the role of think tanks in Latin America have changed greatly since the 1970s. Some of the new challenges that these think tanks face involve social justice, an aging population and migration. These challenges are exacerbated with increasing flows of information and disinformation—both of which put the ideal of the democratic state at risk.

As these new challenges loom, scholars are reminded of the struggles and political turmoil of the past 25 years and how a generation was stripped of their democratic and civil liberties. Think tanks must learn from these lessons, emphasize diplomacy and dialogue, and apply them to the problem at hand to avoid the mistakes of the past. This can only be achieved through an additional understanding of the ways in which social media and technology have modified citizen participation, and the ways that such technological trends can fall into autocratic tendencies.

Finding access to resources that can produce valuable research in countries where civil society and government are weak actors in the public sector can be difficult. Additionally, issues still remain with the representation of women in civil society and positions of leadership, and the Latin American region has faced certain cultural setbacks and institutionalized inequalities, such as violence against women and the creation of obstacles between them and positions of power. When think tanks integrate the youth into their teams, Chief Executives noted that gender equality needs to be at the top of their agendas.

Overall, the Chief Executives agreed that think tanks should maintain four important characteristics:

1. Rigorous research agendas.
2. Independence to promote their own ideas and not those of other interests.
3. Collaboration with other think tanks, government officials, community leaders, and so on.
4. The willingness to enact change in maintaining just and democratic societies.
Opportunities for Latin American Think Tanks

New Faces and New Ideas: Women and Young Scholars

For the prosperity and relevance of think tanks, Latin America’s think tanks need to attract women and young scholars to the think tank and policy field. As discussed in the women and young scholars panel, there exists a large gap between women and young scholars who join think tanks and those who are achieving executive- and board-level positions. For women in particular, this can be linked back to discriminatory maternity leave practices.

The incorporation of women and young people into the leadership of think tanks is crucial for think tanks to be able to adjust and cater to a broader audience. Here, there exists an important opportunity for think tanks to take advantage of the potential gleaned from diversity and to be at the forefront of broader regional movement to incorporate women and young scholars in the workforce.

With this in mind, the think tanks at LATTS 2018 committed themselves to being at the forefront of this generational change and to developing the role of women and young people within their institutions.

Challenges

- Knowledge-based institutions like think tanks are primarily male-led institutions; there is very little female representation, and there is rarely a woman at the head of the organization or in any senior level position. Overall, this discourages young girls from pursuing a career in think tanks.
- The lack of female representation also affects the quality of research - when women are at the decision tables, the research product is more diverse and comprehensive. The latter also ensures a balance in power structures. In the African and Latin American continents, the average think tank staff is comprised
of 42% women, while only 17% of think tanks are directed by women. However, in certain organizations represented at this summit, 60% of the staff are women.

Think tanks can struggle to maintain their relevance. Finding individuals who can track current trends in society and in the digital global age are ways to integrate and involve other actors into research projects.

Recommendations

- Create internship and mentorship programs to train young students, particularly women, to conduct research. This will increase their willingness to work at think tanks and in the long run eventually become members of their executive boards.

- In order to enact change, think tanks need to be headstrong about attending meetings where there are few or no women present. Think tanks need to think about how this looks in terms of publicity for the future of their institutions. Think tanks with more women on staff have a smarter working group. As such, our organizations need to present themselves as more attractive to women of all ages.

- Integrate youth into think tanks through academic programs that spark a desire to work in public service, in addition to providing a new flow of ideas within the think tank sphere.

- Avoid allowing women to become pawns in the recruitment process - do not only involve women to solely work on “women’s issues” or because a vacancy needs to be filled; involve women because they diversify and strengthen investigations and research as a whole. To do otherwise discourages women to participate.
Opportunities for Latin American Think Tanks

Staying Relevant in a Digital Society

With the rise of social and digital media as modes of communication, think tanks in Latin America must use new technology and incorporate successful outreach methods in order to reach new audiences. The digital age has changed the way audiences receive information, creating an entire generation that relies on quick news. This generation of citizens is less likely to read long reports of information in paper journals or newspapers. Instead, they prefer information in bite-sized pieces that is distributed through online journal and newspaper platforms as a means of news consumption.

If think tanks would like to target a broader audience and become relevant to younger generations, they must shift the way they release their information to incorporate social media and other digital outlets. Think tanks at LATTS 2018 also discussed the importance of a broad content-base in reaching a wider range of individuals. Diversity in executive positions - including having women and minorities in managerial positions - were discussed as key in enabling closer connection to audiences and a range of perspectives on current issues.

By looking at new mediums of communication and developing a broader range of content, think tanks will be able to remain relevant in an age of Twitter sized information releases.

Challenges

- Citizens do not often understand the role of the think tank in their society, or the investment of think tanks in creating lasting and innovative change.

- Think tanks have fallen behind in technology, and do not interact with the civilians as they once did. This needs to change, as think tanks must engage and play an active role in society.
Recommendations

• Think tanks need to be more public about what they are and how can others contribute to their respective organizations and society.

• One way to help citizens engage may be to inspire creativity towards public problems and take an optimistic outlook towards change.

• Think tanks need to take their research to social media as the most adaptable populations are the populations using these sites, and social media allows think tanks to spread their research through a more universal means with a national and international audience.

• Think tanks can inspire change in the citizen by providing a positive outlook on the problems facing society today. Therefore, encouraging the citizen to engage, not disengage, with government and civil society.
Opportunities for Latin American Think Tanks

Combatting the Rise of Disinformation

The rise of mass media platforms has had several implications on the way information is dealt with. On the one hand, digital media platforms have enabled the spread of fake news and disinformation – leading to political implications. On the other hand, digital media has facilitated education empowerment, especially for the youth of Latin America. As such, think tanks should consider how they can utilize digital media to both prevent the spread of disinformation and educate the youth to become more socially aware.

Challenges

- The spread of disinformation in the realm of politics has become prevalent over the past few years. The prediction is that the means by which Putin spread disinformation during the US elections will now be adopted by others on a larger scale.

- With the rise of social media, individuals today may have greater power than states, due to the ways in which individuals are able to reach out directly to electorates. Politicians, for example, utilize social media to spread their campaigns and agendas directly to citizens.

- The rise of Artificial Intelligence processing necessitates changes in the infrastructure of think tanks. If think tanks are to remain relevant in the age of mass digital information, they must look at the value of their expertise, rather than just analyzing and looking for trends in data.
**Recommendations**

- Create alternative sources of information that are more applicable to younger generations such as YouTube videos and infographics.

- Encourage scholars within think tanks to share their research through online digital platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. The use of free platforms such as Twitter to share this information, for example, enabled a think tank to greatly increase its following and source more funding.

- As paper journals and newspapers become more obsolete, a look into digital options and partnerships with digital outlets are likely to lead to youth readership in their respective institutions.
Opportunities for Latin American Think Tanks

Financing Think Tanks

For most think tanks, the dominant sources of project-based funding are the government and private sector - especially from the finance and technology sectors. In Colombia, companies are beginning to understand that they need to engage with a variety of issues that affect the public and are increasing their funding in think tanks. Nonetheless, a lack of resources for many think tanks has led to setbacks in creating resolutions and implementing projects. Because of this system, many think tanks have been in competition with each other. However, think tanks must lean towards an effort of collaboration in order to ameliorate some funding alternatives.

A discussion of collaboration can be centered around the reframing of institution building and what it means to think tanks regionally. A collective of regional institutions can more easily turn down ideas from funders as they exert less influence over a large group rather than a single think tank.

Some other alternatives that were touched on were the importance of crowdsourcing, creating an equal relationship between donor and funder, and creating a plan to make sure the funding is going towards benefitting projects and the citizens instead of paying for what they produce. The most necessary thing for think tanks is to create a detailed plan in how they will distribute the resources given to them so they have the liberty to aid their country instead of being preoccupied with restrictions of funding.

Challenges

- Think tanks now have to compete with NGOs that advocate for and implement ideas, consulting companies, law firms and educational institutions that have moved into a space that think tanks had traditionally dominated.
• In order to conduct research, engage in digital spaces and combat issues such as corruption, implementing SDGs and migration, think tanks need to be financially stable.

• It can be difficult for a think tank to secure funding from the government or private companies without compromising its mission and research agenda.

**Recommendations**

• Diversifying funding sources can be difficult. One method of doing so is not depending solely on large contracts. Large contracts can be unsustainable in the long-run as they come from a single source. Think tanks should instead pursue multiple smaller contracts. This would allow for increased financial stability in the long-run if the government or a company rescinds funding.

• To obtain additional funding, think tanks can expand their services to include consulting instead of focusing solely on research.

• Think tanks should look into crowdfunding - especially those on online platforms - as a potential source of funds.

• In order to diversify their funding, think tanks should focus on reaching out to the public and creating donor networks. If possible, these networks would not include individuals from the 1%. Diverse donor networks would also help in maintaining a think tank’s reputation as a democratic institution.

• Think tanks can prepare a variety of seminars that cover a range of topics and issues that companies or government institutions can help fund. This allows a think tank to retain a certain level of autonomy in what it researches and presents, and promotes engagement between different sectors.
Policy Directions

Migration: Economic, Political and Security Implications in Latin America

The political situations in Venezuela and Nicaragua have forced leaders of Latin American think tanks to reconsider the terminology that is used around migration—specifically when it comes to discerning between different types of migration. These different types include: internal migration; external migration; regional migration; internal displacement; extra-regional migration; and physical migration. These new terms need to be included in future legislation regarding migration, given that the context in which the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees was written no longer addresses the realities facing migrants at the global level.

Overall, migration in Latin America is not only caused by and correlated with discontent with local governments but with violence, discrimination, lack of food and economic insecurity. The next step is to present migration as a human right and to evaluate the negative consequences populism has had due to it often being ignored in the history of Latin America as a region.

Challenges

- Venezuela’s and Nicaragua’s situation has rendered previous conversations and usage of terms obsolete. It has bypassed everything known up until this point, which is part of why Latin America is having issues addressing the immense number of migrants. In Venezuela, numbers continue to rise: in the beginning of 2012, 1,500 people per day were fleeing the country. By 2013, one million a day were entering neighboring countries like Ecuador and Colombia. Currently, the flux of Venezuelan migration is the highest in
the world. The institutions, civil society organizations and the government have no clear parameters to address the situation.

- Due to the fact that Latin America does not have a supranational structure, the emergence of far right movements promoting anti-immigration policy threatens the security of migrants. The latter proves that there is a real need to change the narrative about migrants and view them positively.

**Recommendations**

- Reevaluate terminology that dates back to 1951, to provide our current migrant situation the right terminology in order to find solutions, given that it boxes migrants in a sea of bureaucracy.

- Latin America, as a region, needs to establish that migration is a right. Think tanks need to take an active role in changing that narrative. Migrants are entrepreneurs. They bring opportunity and contribute to development. Additionally, migration is not a Latin American phenomenon, but rather a global one, and it needs to be treated as one.

- Inclusive and generic categories of migration need to be shared and accepted across Latin America. It would be advisable to have a more expedited and facilitated visa process for migrants that Latin America can share.

- Think Tanks in Latin America need to establish a cohesive network for migrants that is general enough that other countries in the region can adapt it to their own realities. Networks can include an application “app” for migrants, to facilitate their transition. In the application they can find information regarding schooling, housing, basic necessities, municipalities ready to receive them, etc.

- When cohesive networks are established within a country and across countries, there needs to be an effort for accurate data collection to share with the rest of Latin America.

- Convene recurring meetings with interregional organizations and leaders in order to strengthen migrant networks.

- Think tanks can help conduct and create awareness campaigns to attack xenophobia, since exposure to a subject not only increases understanding but also augments acceptance and sensibilities. The latter facilitates the implementation of solutions. If the vulnerable migrant population is focused on, others can be attracted to take action.
Policy Directions

Globalization: A New Roadmap for Latin American Integration

The summit highlighted four central aspects to regional integration: commerce, technology, globalization and the rise of conservative and leftist movements. This era of globalization has facilitated an increase of upward social mobility within Latin America - nearly seventy-percent of Latin America is now part of the middle class. Nonetheless, globalization is both an obstacle that think tanks must adapt to and an opportunity for regional integration. In the past seven years, the Pacific Alliance has facilitated increased investment between four of the largest economies in Latin America: Chile, Colombia, Peru and Mexico. Despite the increase of investment, after the Pacific Agreement there was a decrease in trade between the member countries. This highlights the opportunities for economic integration, an area where think tanks and other regional institutions have an important role to play. Furthermore, as global trade shifts towards Asia, Latin American countries must take on the challenges of integration while contending with China as a global economic power. Assisting governments to facilitate intra-regional political and economic cooperation while finding ways to establish channels of commerce and communication with external partners will push think tanks to think creatively and critically about their responsibilities to governments and its citizens.

Challenges

- With increasing economic competition from Asia, regional structural challenges and the looming threat of trade wars, think tanks need to quickly adapt to these changing landscapes while developing sustainable strategies with the goal of creating an inclusive
and integrated region that is globally competitive.

- The uncertainty of the political situations in Argentina and Brazil, two of the largest economies in Latin America, makes it difficult to pursue economic integration in any capacity. The potential of regional trade blocs is not promising, as exemplified by the issues Haiti experienced because of political and economic noncooperation.

- A trade war between the US and China threatens to destabilize global trade and the multilateral system that supports it. Economically strong actors will seek to strengthen their spheres of influence in different regions of the world, which will inevitably involve Latin America.

**Recommendations**

- Increasing cross-border communication and cooperation between think tanks is essential to creating inclusive strategies for regional cooperation. It is important to think in terms of the region as a whole instead of individual countries, as this will help reinforce a multilateral system and defend against trade wars.

- Even though countries within Latin America think differently than each other, think tanks and other regional institutions need to realize that this is not a barrier to collaborating on short- and medium-term plans. Think tanks need to deepen their understanding of regional integration.

- Think tanks need to adapt to Asia’s expanding sphere of influence - especially China’s. One method is to organize discussions and seminars with experts about Asia, China and its markets. The seminars can be open to the public or directed towards specific institutions and audiences.

- New developments in technologies allow for increased production output, especially within the labor sector. Think tanks need to research ways in which individuals and businesses can utilize new technologies without increasing levels of inequality.

- Young generations are intrinsically connected with the integration of Latin America. Education reform will be important to ensuring that these up-and-coming generations are able to smoothly adapt to and participate in an integrated region and globalized world. Think tanks can play an important role in what type of reforms are implemented and how they are pursued.
Policy Directions

Effective Approaches to Deterring Organized Crime and Corruption in Latin America

Corruption and organized crime are closely linked and are pervasive in many Latin American countries, especially Colombia, Brazil and Mexico. In Colombia, political elites use their power to ensure that others with similar interests are elected, completely side-stepping a democratic process. In Brazil, Operation Car Wash (Operação Lava Jato) has exposed connections between the private and public sectors and how corruption can be a regional issue. Mexico struggles with systemic corruption but is reluctant to focus on it as a domestic issue.

This opens a door for think tanks to step in and establish themselves as transparent actors working against the tides of corruption. For example, in Mexico, there was a newly created think tank that focuses on journalists and investigates media sources. Given that it is a deeply rooted systemic issue that has been present within governments and societies for years, collaborative approaches that involve both private and public sectors will need to be taken. However, the safety of those working on anti-corruption campaigns, conducting research on corruption and pressuring public and private institutions to increase transparency must be taken seriously. In Mexico, many are afraid to take a stand against corruption because of the threat from organized crime that is involved in it.

The issue of corruption is now expanding beyond that of individuals, government institutions and civil society actors. As the world becomes more digital, so do corruption and organized crime. With this comes digital investigation which has provided more efficient outcomes with software investigation. However, since this is a new type of investigation, it has been found to be more difficult than the traditional efforts to combat crime. This raises a serious problem of understanding how the criminal economy incorporates citizens, law enforcement, local officials, politicians, etc. and the digital world. Central to this issue is...
Challenges

- The digitalization of organized crime and corruption will make it more difficult to track and combat illicit activities and transactions.
- The threat of violence prevents many individuals and organizations from becoming more involved in combating organized crime and corruption.
- Corruption is present in multiple sectors of society, such as law enforcement, private companies, and the political establishment. The level of corruption within each sector varies from country to country. However, as we have seen in Brazil, it can be deeply embedded in several sectors, and involve other countries.
- Corruption creates discontent and distrust of the political establishment. This discontent is an opportunity for populist leaders to present themselves as solutions to a broken system.

Recommendations

- Given how the specifics of organized crime and corruption are different in every country, it is important for think tanks to communicate with each other on what strategies are being pursued in their respective countries as they can learn from and assist each other.
- Understandably, the public is increasingly skeptical of government institutions. Think tanks should work on increasing their financial transparency to help establish a relationship based on trust and cooperation with the public.
- It is imperative that think tanks conduct research on how laws combating corruption and increasing transparency within government institutions can be effectively passed and implemented.
- Think tanks need to be more innovative when it comes to disrupting organized crime and rooting out corruption. For example, one think tank launched a successful public education campaign about corruption through comic books.
- Think tanks should participate in regional and local conventions on transparency and corruption that bring together different civil society actors. Conventions facilitate an easier exchange of ideas and strategies and create space for a diverse array of organizations and individuals to make connections.
Throughout the world, at least forty-seven think tanks have voiced their support for programs that would start SDG initiatives. This is significant, and it is important that think tanks take advantage of this opportunity as this is likely the last generation that can reverse the detrimental consequences of climate change. To do so, Latin American countries should begin to look at the research from UN reports on what projects should take priority. Collaboration from other think tanks and funding from the private and public sector are necessary in order to implement the multiple projects from the SDG initiative. Despite the UN reports on project priority, there are not definitive guidelines that give countries a framework for pursuing them. Regardless, think tanks have the capacity to engage with governmental and civil society actors in order to understand the SDG indicators and create alternative ones, as well as methods for achieving them. The 2030 Agenda provides an important opportunity for countries to work towards a brighter and more sustainable future. In order to take advantage of this opportunity, think tanks must ask themselves how they can be 'do tanks' and not merely think tanks.

The issue of pensions systems was also discussed. As it is now, pension systems are strained in several countries and the general populace is increasingly questioning the viability of the systems in place due to the uncertainty of available resources. Increased automation threatens nearly 50% of Latin America’s workforce which is major issue especially for pension systems that are already lacking sufficient funding. There are a number of solutions that are starting to be implemented, such as retirement savings and contributive coverage. However, more will need to be done to ensure economic and social stability.
Challenges

- Latin American countries face many challenges in pursuing and achieving these goals, some of which include: climate change, corruption, lack of resources and inaction on behalf of governments. Despite the importance of SDGs for many countries, there is a lack of guidance on how these goals should be pursued.

- The automation of the workforce drives up the unemployment rate which places more stress on government-funded pension programs. There are three factors placing tension on the future of pensions: sufficiency, sustainability, and coverage. Governments must find a balance between sufficiency and sustainability.

- Corruption is a disruptive factor in the implementation of SDGs. They are an opportunity to uplift large portions of populations out of poverty, but they also present an opportunity for corrupt officials to take advantage and benefit from them.

- It will be a challenge to find a balance between a solvent pension system and a system that serves the needs of the people, especially in light of increased automation.

Recommendations

- Think tanks have the capacity to research and understand the indicators and provide alternative options to achieving the goals.

- In order to make progress, think tanks need to make connections and work with policy makers.

- Evaluations of public policies and how they are implemented in connection to SDGs will need to be conducted to ensure that countries are on the right path to achieving them.

- Establish connections between human rights and SDGs to ensure that the pursuit of SDGs will not infringe upon the human rights of citizens.

- Many think tanks may not have sufficient resources in order to effectively research and provide consultation on SDG implementation. They will need to cooperate with other think tanks, institutions and civil society actors in order to achieve them.

- Alternative forms of financing for pensions need to be investigated, such as internal revenues. Taxes will be insufficient in fully covering increases in demand. Think tanks should investigate new models of pension contributions and how those pensions are spent - who is covered by them and how they are funded by taxes.
Policy Directions

The Rise of Populism and Presidential Elections in Latin America

Populism is understood as an enemy to pluralism and an irresponsible economic actor, dismissive of political tolerance and hostile towards those who are different. Populism emerges as a solution to negative social, political and economic situations in a given country. It is supported by a discontented populace that is tired of corruption, governmental incapacity and slow economic growth, among other factors. It is a movement born from malicious motives and is a consequence of a troubling climate, not the cause.

Our understanding of populism is skewed and needs to be studied within the history and context of Latin America specifically.

Populist leaders are described as outsiders who disrupt the status quo through a sensationalist and charismatic approach to attract more followers. The new populist leaders in Latin America such as Evo Morales and Néstor Kirchner, among others, are prime examples of this “outsider” tendency, as they were not a part of any prominent political scenarios before. There needs to be acceptance of the transformations in politics that are happening in order to be prepared and find solutions for the wellbeing of our citizens. Along this line, Latin America and Latin American think tanks need to present themselves to the world as a global open community that is in favor of cooperation.

Challenges

- With the emergence of populist movements, local governments are having a hard time getting the public to trust them, which obstructs think tanks’ role in the reestablishment of trusted relationships between the public and government.

- Corruption scandals and economic crises have been catalysts in the region...
for both right and left populist leaders, and it is here where the lack of confidence in democracy is truly felt.

- Democracy as a political regime is in crisis, not just in Latin America, but globally. Populism acts as a destroyer for democratic institutions putting civil liberties and rights at their most vulnerable state.

**Recommendations**

- Create institutions that the government or any oppressive force can appropriate. Reestablish confident relations between institutions, governments and the general public. The first step for these institutions is to continue to preserve citizens’ civil rights and liberties.

- Reevaluate our understanding of populism within the context of Latin America. This can be done by studying populism as a post war phenomena. In understanding the appropriate definition, think tanks need to assess what their role is in combating populism.

- Think tanks should investigate if there is a correlation between the partisan crisis and populism. Institutions (as well as civil society more generally), should clearly define their role and act as inhibitors to populistic movements.

- The value and perseverance of our democracies needs to be revalued, and think tanks need to play an active role in understanding if free and fair elections are an avenue that can continue to assure a stable regime.
## Agenda

**Wednesday, September 12 – Hotel Hyatt Centric Montevideo (Rambla Rep. del Perú 1479)**

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08.00 – 17.00</td>
<td>Participants arrive in Montevideo</td>
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<tr>
<td>18.00 – 18.30</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>18.30 – 18.45</td>
<td>Welcome Summit Hosts and Organizers</td>
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<tr>
<td>18.45 – 19.15</td>
<td><strong>Latin America Think Tank President’s Panel</strong></td>
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A group of Chief Executive officers from across Latin America will discuss the key policy issues confronting their countries and the organization challenges facing their respective think tanks. The discussion will focus on the key policy issues, strategies, plans and programs that each CEO have developed to meet both the challenges and opportunities presented by this new and complex environment in which all think tanks must operate.

**CHAIR:** Adolfo Pérez Piera, President, Universidad CLAEH (Uruguay)

**Panelists:**

- **Andressa Caldas**, Director, Instituto de Políticas Públicas en Derechos Humanos del MERCOSUR (Argentina)
- **Daniel García**, Director Ejecutivo, Fundación Espacio Público Santiago (Chile)
**Emmanuel Justima**, Co-Chairman and President of the Executive Committee, Modricenir (Haiti)

**Giulia De Sanctis**, President, Centro de Iniciativas Democráticas (Panama)

**José María Lladós**, Executive Director, Consejo Argentino para las Relaciones Internacionales (Argentina)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>19.15</td>
<td><strong>Keynote Address: «Latin American Political and Economic Challenges»</strong>&lt;br&gt;&lt;i&gt;Enrique Iglesias, President Astur Foundation&lt;/i&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.45</td>
<td>Cocktail Reception</td>
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**Thursday, September 13 – Hilton Garden Inn Montevideo (Dr. Luis Bonavita 1315)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08.30</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.00</td>
<td>Formal Opening Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.15</td>
<td>T20 Summit (Argentina, Japan and Saudi Arabia)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>James McGann</strong>, Director, Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program, University of Pennsylvania (United States)</td>
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<td><strong>José María Lladós</strong>, Executive Director, Consejo Argentino para las Relaciones Internacionales (Argentina)</td>
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<td><strong>Julia Pomares</strong>, Executive Director, Centre for the Implementation of Public Policies for Equity and Growth (Argentina)</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.15</td>
<td><strong>New Faces and New Ideas: The Future of Think Tanks and Policy Advice in Latin America</strong></td>
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<td>The Panel will feature women, young scholars and executives from think tanks from across Latin America. The panelists have been asked to address the following questions: Why did you chose to work at a think tank? How do you assess the current state of think tanks and policy advice in the region? What specific recommendations would you suggest to improve the role and impact of think tanks? Finally, and most importantly what recommendations would you make to improve the careers of women, young scholars and executives at think tanks?</td>
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<td><strong>CHAIR:</strong> <strong>Klaus Alexander de Freitas Stier</strong>, International Manager, Getulio Vargas Foundation (Brazil)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Panelists:</strong> <strong>Jose Luis Chicoma</strong>, Executive Director, Ethos Laboratorio de Políticas Públicas (Mexico)</td>
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</table>
Plenary Panel and Roundtable Discussion I:

«Digitalization in Latin America: Threat or Opportunity? »

Latin America is at a crossroads in the age of digital transformation. Opportunities abound to digitally leapfrog old ways of doing things thanks to the large mobile penetration of its 600 million inhabitants. There is big potential for advances in e-commerce, fintech, smart-city applications and other areas. The digital economy and internet of things is not without a downside as the recent hacking, invasion of privacy and cyber-attacks have amply demonstrated. In addition, the potential impact on careers and employment are real and need to be carefully considered. A panel of experts will explore the challenges and opportunities of the digital age and its potential impact on the region.

CHAIR: Sebastian Sperling, Resident Representative, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (Uruguay)

Panelists:

Elaine Ann Ford Deza, Director and Founder, Democracia & Desarrollo Internacional (Peru)

Andrés Lalanne, Rector, CLAEH University (Uruguay)

Plenary Panel and Roundtable Discussion II:

«New Roadmap for Latin-American Integration»

Clearly, the time for new ideas and a new direction for greater economic integration in Latin America is upon us. LA is faced with increased global competition from Asia on one level and massive structural and situational challenges within the region. The time has come for Latin America to chart a new course if it hopes to reverse the structural erosion of competitiveness that has led to a progressive loss of global market share. According to the IDB, LA must strive for greater integration as a hedge against a “global economy that is increasingly characterized by competition between major economic powerhouses or mega-agreements and by the threat of proliferation of global barriers”. The panel will explore strategies for increasing the integration and cooperation in the region through new partnerships and alliances around the world.
CHAIR: José María Lladós, Executive Director, Consejo Argentino para las Relaciones Internacionales (Argentina)

Panelists:

Leonardo Villar, Executive Director, Fedesarrollo (Colombia)

Mario Napoleón Pacheco, Executive Director, Fundación Milenio (Bolivia)

Sergio Abreu, President, Consejo Uruguayo para las Relaciones Internacionales (Uruguay)

Marianne Fay, Chief Economist of the Sustainable Development Vice President, World Bank

14:15 – 15.15 Panel and Roundtable Discussion III:
«Being Fit for the Future: Think Tanks in an Era of Digital and Political Disruptions»

This panel will explore the opportunities created for think tanks by the current digital and political disruptions in Latin America and other regions of the world. Each panel member will then provide examples of the digital and political disruptions that have created new opportunities for think tanks. They will also explore how some think tanks have adapted by developing new products and programs and reaching new audiences in new ways in an effort to respond to the new operating environment.

CHAIR: Tatiana García, Deputy Executive Director, Instituto de Ciencia Política Hernán Echavarría (Colombia)

Panelists:

Josué Martínez-Castillo, Research Economist, Academia de Centroamérica (Costa Rica)

Luciana Gama Muniz, Executive Manager, Brazilian Center for International Relations (Brazil)

James McGann, Director, Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program, Lauder Institute, University of Pennsylvania (United States)

15.15 – 17.45 Breakout Sessions I (3 Concurrent Sessions):

The Break Out Sessions will include a set of critical policy issues facing think tanks and policy makers as well as the challenges facing think tank scholars and executives. These sessions are intended to be inactive and focused on sharing best practices and the transfers of strategies, best practices and innovative approaches. Participants can select one of the three concurrent sessions listed below.
Session A: «Think Tanks and the Media: Collaboration or Competition?»

As the think tanks strive for relevance and accessibility some have suggested that think tanks are competing for the same audience and space as print and electronic journalists. In addition, as print journalism continues to lose revenue and readers, some have said that think tanks must fill the critical role that reporters and editorials have played in democratic societies around the world. A panel of think tanks and journalists will explore to what extent this is true and if think tanks are partners or competitors.

CHAIR: Andrés Lalanne, Rector, CLAEH University (Uruguay)

Panelists:
Hernán Alberro, Program Director, Centro para la Apertura y el Desarrollo de América Latina (Argentina)
Dalila Rodríguez, Coordinadora, Instituto Patmos (Cuba)
Gerardo Bongiovanni, Presidente, Fundación Libertad (Argentina)

Session B: «Effective Approaches to Deterring Organized Crime and Corruption in Latin America»

Corruption has solidified its place at the top of the agenda for policymakers and citizens across Latin America and the Caribbean, yet it persists and is growing in many countries. Experts agree that organized crime and corruption are shaped by the lack of strength of the control mechanisms of the State and civil society in Latin America. The panel will discuss some of the strategies for combating organized crime and corruption in the region.

CHAIR: José Luis Chicoma, Executive Director, Ethos Laboratorio de Políticas Públicas (Mexico)

Panelists:
Maria Victoria Llorente Sardi, Executive Director, Fundación Ideas para la Paz (Colombia)
Michael Frietas Mohallem, Head of the Center for Justice and Society, FGV (Brazil)

Session C: «Economic, Political and Security Implications of Mass Migration in Latin America»

The gradual migration of citizens moving from rural areas to cities has been a pattern in Latin America for a number of years yet the challenges of providing employment, schools and health and human services remains a challenge in many countries in the region. The economic and political crisis in Venezuela and Nicaragua have created a flood of refugees and has served to bring new attention to the migration issue and added new
dimensions to it. As these crises grow, the economic, national security, and health implications become more prevalent. What can countries in the region do to address the issues raised by the migration of people in the region? What measures can countries take to mitigate the political, economic, and humanitarian consequences of a mass migration of people from rural areas to cities and the more problematic cross border migration.

CHAIR: Victor Vázquez, Executive Director, Investigación para el Desarrollo (Paraguay)

Panelists:
Daniel Garcia, Executive Director, Fundación Espacio Público (Chile)
Andressa Caldas, Director, Institute of Public Policies on Human Rights of MERCOSUR (Argentina)
Pablo Hurtado, Executive Secretary, Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales (Guatemala)

20:00 – 22.00   Dinner at Jacinto restaurant

Friday, September 14 – Hilton Garden Inn Montevideo (Dr. Luis Bonavita 1315)

09.00 – 09.30   Keynote Address: The Pension System in Latin America
Morgan Doyle, Representative, IABD Uruguay

09.30 – 10.00   Keynote Address: The Implementation of SDGs by Uruguay
Álvaro García, Director of the Office of Budget and Planning (OPP), Office of the President of the Republic (Uruguay)

10:00 – 12:00   Breakout Sessions II (3 Concurrent Sessions):
Session A: «New Sources and Strategies for Raising Funds for Think Tanks»
The traditional funding from national government and public and private donors is changing and forcing think tanks to explore new ways to fund their research and operations. The panel will explore the challenges and opportunities associated with raising funds from corporations, crowd sourcing, consulting and the need to assure the quality, independence and integrity of a think tank.

CHAIR: Guillermo Tolosa, Director Académico, Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Económica y Social (Uruguay)
Panelists:

James McGann, Director, Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program, Lauder Institute, University of Pennsylvania (United States)

Klaus Alexander de Freitas Stier, International Manager, Getulio Vargas Foundation (Brazil)

Luciana Gama Muniz, Executive Manager, Brazilian Center for International Relations (Brazil)

Felipe Hurtado, Academic Director, Corporación de Estudios para el Desarrollo (Ecuador)

Session B: «Think Tanks and the SDGs : Catalysts for Ideas, Analysis and Implementation»

Think tanks can play a critical role in advancing the 2013 Agenda by serving as a catalyst for ideas, innovation and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Think tanks are uniquely positioned to help foster a multi-stakeholder approach at the country and global levels. A panel of think tank scholars and executives will discuss the importance of the SDGs to the region and how their respective institutions are advancing the 2030 Agenda.

CHAIR: Winfried Weck, Head of Team Agenda 2030, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (Germany)

Panelists:

Mauricio Díaz Burdett, Director, Social Forum of External Debt and Development of Honduras (Honduras)

Jorge Schiavon, Professor and Coordinator, Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (Mexico)

Santiago Cueto, Executive Director, Grupo de Análisis para el Desarrollo (Peru)

Session C: «The Rise of Populism and Presidential Elections in Latin America: Left or Right Turn»

In 2018, nearly two out of every three Latin Americans will head to the polls to elect new leaders, and the fight against corruption, inefficient and ineffective governments will be high on their agenda. The desire to oust entrenched parties and politicians could be a harbinger of cleaner and brighter future. Unfortunately, it is impossible to know which way the political winds are blowing but elections and political polarization appear to point to a revival of the region’s tradition of populism and extremism that could threaten the nascent institutions and consolidated democracies. The whip lash associated with a hard populist turn to the right or the left could radically change policies toward security, trade, the economy, and Latin America’s relationships with the world — including the United States and
Europe. A panel of experts from Latin America and Europe will explore these trends and discuss their potential implications for upcoming elections.

CHAIR: Giulia De Sanctis, President, Centro de Iniciativas Democráticas (Panama)

Panelists:
Carlos Mascareño, Director, Instituto de Estudios Parlamentarios Fermin Toro (Venezuela)
Armando Rodriguez, Lawyer General, Fundación Rafael Preciado Hernández, A.C. (Mexico)

12:00 – 13:00 Closing Plenary Session: Discussion, Conclusions and Action Agenda for 2019

13:00 – 13.30 Closing Remarks Summit Hosts and Organizers
Andrés Lalanne, Rector, CLAEH University (Uruguay)
Peter Fischer-Bollin, Deputy Head of International Cooperation, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, (Germany)
James McGann, Director, Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program, Lauder Institute, University of Pennsylvania (United States)

13:30 – 15:00 Lunch and Networking

16:00 – 18:00 Optional City Tour
List of Participants

Dr. Diego Aboal
Director
Centro de Investigaciones Económicas

Dr. Sergio Abreu
President
Consejo Uruguayo para las Relaciones Internacionales

Mr. Hernan Alberro
Programs Director
Centro para la Apertura y el Desarrollo de América Latina

Ms. María Dolores Benavente
President
Pharos/Academia Nacional de Economía

Mr. Gerardo Bongiovanni
President
Fundacion Libertad

Mr. Hernán Bonilla
Executive Director
Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo

Dr. Juan Luis Bour
Director
Fundación de Investigaciones Económicas Latinoamericanas

Ms. Andressa Caldas
Director
Instituto de Políticas Públicas en Derechos Humanos del MERCOSUR

Ms. Carla Chiappara
Sec. Gral.
CLAEH University

Mr. Jose Luis Chicoma
Executive Director
Ethos Laboratorio de Políticas Públicas

Mr. Nathanael Concepcion
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Social Forum of Debt and Development of Honduras

Dr. Peter Fischer-Bollin  
Deputy Head of International Cooperation  
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

Mr. Leopoldo Font Echarte  
Development Director  
CLAEH University

Ms. Elaine Ann Ford Deza  
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Ms. Luciana Gama Muniz  
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Brazilian Center for International Relations

Dr. Adolfo Garcé  
Professor  
Universidad de la República

Ms. Tatiana Garcia  
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Instituto de Ciencia Política Hernán Echavarría Olózaga

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Dr. Pablo Genta  
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Mr. Juan Miguel González Bibolini  
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Institute of Public Policies on Human Rights of MERCOSUR

Mr. Rocio Guijarro  
General Manager  
Centro de Divulgación del Conocimiento Económico para la Libertad

Mr. Pablo Hurtado  
Executive Secretary  
Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales

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Corporación de Estudios para el Desarrollo

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Co-Chairman and President of the Executive Committee  
Modricenir

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Rector  
CLAEH University

Dr. José María Lladós  
Executive Director  
Consejo Argentino para las Relaciones Internacionales

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Executive Director  
Fundación Ideas para la Paz

Dr. Gustavo Martínez  
Managing Director  
Consejo Argentino para las Relaciones Internacionales

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Research Economist  
Academia de Centroamérica
Dr. Carlos Mascareño
Director
Instituto de Estudios Parlamentarios
Fermín Toro

Dr. James McGann
Director
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Prof. Antonella Mori
Head, Latin America Program
Italian Institute for International Political Studies

Mr. Mauricio Ovalle
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Centro Democracia y Comunidad

Mr. Mario Napoleón Pacheco
Executive Director
Fundación Alternativas

Mr. Vicente Palacio de Oteyza
Director del Observatorio de Política Exterior
Fundación Alternativas

Dr. Adolfo Pérez Piera
President
CLAEH University

Ms. Dalila Rodríguez
Coordinator
Instituto Patmos

Mr. Armando Rodríguez Cervantes
Abogado General
Fundacion Rafael Preciado Hernandez, A.C.

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Dean at the School of Engineering
Universidad de Montevideo

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Member of the Board
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Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas

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Resident Representative
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

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Fundación Alternativas

Mr. Klaus Alexander de Freitas Stier
International Manager
Getulio Vargas Foundation (Brazil)

Mr. Guillermo Tolosa
Academic Director
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Mr. Victor Ignacio Vazquez Aranda
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Investigacion para el Desarrollo

Mr. Leonardo Villar
Executive Director
Fedesarrollo

Mr. Winifried Weck
Head of Team Agenda 2030
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
Summit Partners

**Summit Co-Hosts and Co-Organizers:**
CLAEH University (Uruguay)
Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (Germany)
Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program, Lauder Institute, University of Pennsylvania (United States)

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Brazilian Center for International Relations (Brazil)
Center for the Study of Economic and Social Reality (Uruguay)
Center for Economic Research and Teaching (Mexico)
CLAEH University (Uruguay)
Democracy and Community Center (Chile)
Ethos Public Policy Laboratory (Mexico)
Fedesarrollo (Colombia)
Foundation for Democracy and Development (Dominican Republic)
Getulio Vargas Foundation (Brazil)
Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (Germany and Uruguay)
Research and Social Studies Association (Guatemala)
Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program, Lauder Institute, University of Pennsylvania (United States)

**Summit Report Sponsor:**
Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (Germany)

**Additional Thanks to:**
The Latin America team at the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP), and for this report especially:
Laura Whelan (Project Lead)
Rachel Abrams
Mariana Garcia
Daniel Jarrad
Montgomery Ngan
Gabriela Ramirez
2018-19 TTCSP Think Tank Summit and Fora Schedule*

August 28, 2018 Book Launch “Think Tanks the New Policy Advisers in Asia” by James G. McGann, Tokyo, Japan
Partners: Johns Hopkins University SAIS, Lauder Institute, TTCSP University of Pennsylvania and Asia Development Bank Institute

September 12-14, 2018 Latin America Think Tank Summit, Montevideo, Uruguay
TTCSP Partners Universidad Centro Latinoamericano de Economía Humana (CLAEH), Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

October 4-6, 2018 MENA Think Tank Summit, Tunis, Tunisia
TTCSP Partners: Centre for Mediterranean and International Studies (CEMI), Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI)

November 7-9, 2018 Global Think Tank Summit, Brussels Belgium
TTCSP Partner: Bruegel

November 21-23, 2018 Asia Think Tank Summit, Bali, Indonesia
TTCSP Partner: Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (EIRA)

December 13 & 14, 2018 India Think Tank Forum, Mumbai, India
TTCSP Partners: Observer Research Foundation
January 31, 2019 2018 Global Go To Think Tank Launch and Why Think Tanks and Facts Matter Events, Washington, DC and New York—join over 200 think tanks world wide for this year’s theme; “Why Facts and Think Tanks Matter”

February or March 2019  Africa Think Tank Summit

March 4-6 2019  MENA Public Policy and Organizational Innovations Forum
TTCSP Partners: TBD

March 26-28, 2019  North America Think Tank Summit, Washington, DC
TTCSP Partners: Urban Institute, Peterson Institute for International Economics

April 10-12, 2019  Europe Think Tank Summit, Madrid, Spain
TTCSP Partners: Elcano Royal Institute, Fundación Alternativas

May 20-21, 2019  China Think Tank Innovation Forum
TTCSP Partner: Center for China and Globalization, China

*Summits and Fora dates are subject to change but are confirmed unless otherwise indicated
About TTCSP

Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program, Lauder Institute, University of Pennsylvania:

The Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP) of the Lauder Institute at the University of Pennsylvania conducts research on the role policy institutes play in governments and civil societies around the world. Often referred to as the "think tanks' think tank," TTCSP examines the evolving role and character of public policy research organizations. Over the last 25 years, the TTCSP has developed and led a series of global initiatives that have helped bridge the gap between knowledge and policy in critical policy areas such as international peace and security, globalization and governance, international economics, environmental issues, information and society, poverty alleviation, and healthcare and global health. These international collaborative efforts are designed to establish regional and international networks of policy institutes and communities that improve policy making while strengthening democratic institutions and civil societies around the world.

The TTCSP works with leading scholars and practitioners from think tanks and universities in a variety of collaborative efforts and programs, and produces the annual Global Go To Think Tank Index that ranks the world's leading think tanks in a variety of categories. This is achieved with the help of a panel of over 1,900 peer institutions and experts from the print and electronic media, academia, public and private donor institutions, and governments around the world. We have strong relationships with leading think tanks around the world, and our annual Think Tank Index is used by academics, journalists, donors and the public to locate and connect with the leading centers of public policy research around the world. Our goal is to increase the profile and performance of think tanks and raise the public awareness of the important role think tanks play in governments and civil societies around the globe.

Since its inception in 1989, the TTCSP has focused on collecting data and conducting research on think tank trends and the role think tanks play as civil society actors in the policymaking process. In 2007, the TTCSP developed and launched the global index of think tanks, which is designed to identify and recognize centers of excellence in all the major areas of public policy research and in every region of the world. To date TTCSP has provided technical assistance and capacity building programs in 81 countries. We are now working to create regional and global networks of think tanks in an effort to facilitate collaboration and the production of a modest yet achievable set of global public goods. Our goal is to create lasting institutional and state-level partnerships by engaging and mobilizing think tanks that have demonstrated their ability to produce high quality policy research and shape popular and elite opinion and actions for public good.

* All requests, questions, and comments should be directed to: James G. McGann, Ph.D., Senior Lecturer, International Studies; Director, Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program, The Lauder Institute University of Pennsylvania
Email: jmcgann@wharton.upenn.edu