



GFCC

Global Federation of
Competitiveness Councils

University and Research Leadership Forum

An Initiative of the Global Federation of
Competitiveness Councils

Goals

Identify global trends, emerging issues and new models in higher education and research, through a lens of global competitiveness and economic transformation.

Systematize and disseminate information on game-changing initiatives in the education and research space around the globe.

Catalyze new connections among entrepreneurial, high-performing education and research organizations.

Provide global visibility to Forum member initiatives.



Introduction

Universities and research organizations are key components of innovation ecosystems and play different roles in economic and social development – they are indispensable for competitiveness and the achievement of improved standards of living and prosperity, at all levels. They are essential for building talent; achieving scientific breakthroughs; creating new technologies, products, companies and industries; and developing the local economy. But those roles are not static.

A rapidly transforming world is putting pressure on all the roles that universities and research organizations play. Challenges and opportunities arise when the economy becomes more complex and digital; innovation ecosystems become more sophisticated; new business models emerge; the needs for education, training and workforce development shift; and communities connect globally around the clock and across cultures, geographies and even languages. These transitions change the nature of innovation itself. In response, new models for universities and research organizations are bubbling up all around the globe.

Understanding, anticipating and promoting change in the current models for higher education and research is imperative for competitiveness in the 21st Century. The GFCC aims to frame and catalyze in 2016 a global discussion on this topic through the University and Research Leadership Forum.

University and Research Leadership Forum

The GFCC University and Research Leadership Forum will serve as a living think-tank for identification and discussion of trends in and the generation of ideas for optimizing education and research enterprises. Through this initiative, the GFCC will develop a better understanding of the contributions by global education/research institutions to innovation and competitiveness; facilitate new collaboration; and provide global visibility to relevant experiences and original thought in the field.

Presidents, chancellors, executive directors, rectors, CEOs and directors of prominent universities, laboratories and research organizations from around the globe will comprise the Forum. The GFCC Executive Team will serve as the Secretariat. The Forum will develop an annual work plan and carry it out with the assistance of the Secretariat.

The GFCC University and Research Leadership Forum annual work plan will result from conversation among the Forum and include a primary research question to address over the year. Forum members and the GFCC Executive Team will work over the year to explore the research question. The GFCC will publish an annual report – Higher Education and Research as Drivers of Competitiveness – that will include the findings of the collaborative research effort carried out by the Board, and feature the initiatives of Forum members and other leading education and research organizations. Potential topics to be discussed by the Forum



include university-industry partnerships, how to foster entrepreneurship, new models for intellectual property management and engagement with society.

Every year, the Forum will convene once for a two-day moderated conversation to review research findings and plan for the coming year. Activities over the year will be coordinated online and through a series of teleconferences. The GFCC will provide the necessary project management infrastructure for Board activities, as well as some research. Forum members will provide resources for implementation of its research agenda.

Context and Initial Discussion Questions

Universities and research organizations play an integral role in driving regional, national, and global competitiveness. Through the central roles they play in innovation and value creation, they truly constitute the key economic growth engines of the knowledge economy. Indeed, at the same time universities drive innovation, they are being completely transformed by it.

Higher education around the world is trending toward the adoption of new educational strategies such as adaptive learning, the flipped classroom, and peer-to-peer learning. Technology is enabling many of these new strategies and leaders are increasingly aware that education models without problem solving and conceptual learning components are limited in their impact.

Simultaneously, examples from around the world

challenge what we understand as the main roles universities and research organizations play in societies. Beyond providing education and creating knowledge, these organizations are facing new demands to integrate seamlessly with business and national strategies, maintaining and expanding their relevance as contemporary economic growth engines. To cope with that challenge, new models are being experimented with worldwide.

As new models for research and education emerge, the roles of different types of organizations are blurred and the need for an improved understanding of the existing/emerging models, their characteristics and enabling conditions comes to the forefront.

Left image: Researcher at University of California, San Diego (UC San Diego) conducting research experiment.

Right image: Lecture class at UC San Diego.

UC San Diego is a founding member of the Forum. Credit: Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications.



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About the GFCC

WHO WE ARE

The Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils is a network of leaders and organizations from around the world committed to the implementation of competitiveness strategies to drive innovation, productivity and prosperity for their nations, regions and cities.

The GFCC develops and implements ideas, concepts, initiatives and tools to understand and navigate the complex competitiveness landscape.

CONTACT

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