

## Report on the Organization of ICSB 2017 World Conference

to be presented at the ICSB Board Meeting

by

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### 1- General description of the Conference

The **World Conference** will be hosted by the Argentinean Catholic University (hereafter, UCA) from Thursday June 29<sup>th</sup> until Saturday July 1<sup>st</sup> in its campus in Puerto Madero. Puerto Madero is one of the newest and modern neighborhoods in Buenos Aires, in front of the river. To organize the World Conference we hired the Argentinean affiliate of the MCI Group, an international firm that has already organized some previous ICSB World Conferences, like the one in Sweden. They will be in charge of all the logistics and organizational duties in site during the Conference as well as the Social Events and the Gala Dinner.

The **Conference theme** is *“Towards a new world mobilized by entrepreneurship & innovative SMEs”* and there will be 13 different topics (or tracks). Presentations in Spanish and Portuguese will be also accepted as a way of attracting more people from Brazil and other South American countries to the Conference and to ICSB. We are responsible of the evaluation of the Spanish and Portuguese abstracts as well as the entire submission system in both languages. ICSB, through its IO, is responsible of the evaluation of the submissions in English.

The **Welcome Reception** will be on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon. The Venue for the Reception – still to be confirmed would be a French-style little palace at the heart of Buenos Aires downtown: The Palacio San Martín. This would be part of the contribution of the National Secretariat of SMEs & Entrepreneurs to the organization of this Conference. We have made all the necessary requests and we are waiting for the final approval by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is the responsible for this building.

Also, on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> we include a Celebration of the UN-SME Day. Following what happened in 2016 at UN, we organize a **SMEs Ministerial Round**, hosted by our SME Secretary, Mr. Mariano Mayer. This Celebration would be lead by our President, Mr. Mauricio Macri and will have the participation of several Ministers and Secretaries of State from different countries, in particular from Latin America. We have made the necessary formal invitation to the Argentinean President, but his presence is not confirmed, yet. Mr. Mayer, has assumed the commitment to have our President in the opening ceremony of this Ministerial Round on Thursday as **keynote speaker**.

Other **keynote speakers** that we have already invited are Dr. Colin Mason (University of Glasgow, UK), Dr. David Audretsch (Indiana University, USA) and Dr. Anne Lee Saxenian (UC Berkeley, USA) who has confirmed her acceptance. So, we are still waiting for Mason and Audretsch confirmation.

Finally, we include a plenary session with some **remarkable entrepreneurs** from Argentina. Hernan Kazah (co-founder of Mercadolibre) and some member of the founding team of Globant are the proposed names to be in this panel. In this regard, the cooperation of the Secretariat of SMEs is key to invite these entrepreneurs.

## 2- Preliminary program – Draft version

WEDNESDAY, 28		Place	Observations - comments
18.00 – 19.00	PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION (by invitation only)	Palacio San Martin	Small cocktail to some VIP
19.00 – 21.00	ICSB WELCOME RECEPTION	Palacio San Martin	Cocktail and some musical attraction (tango) or show Keynote speaker to be defined
THURSDAY, 29			
8.00 – 9.00	REGISTRATION	UCA	
9.00 – 9.30	OPENING PLENARY	UCA	
9.30 – 11.30	SME'S MINISTERIAL ROUND	UCA	With the presence of the Argentinean President and other Ministers and SME Authorities
11.30 – 13.00	PLENARY SESSION 1	UCA	KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Dr. David Audretsch (Indiana University)
13.00 – 14.00	LUNCH	UCA	
14.00 – 16.00	PARALLEL SESSIONS 1	UCA	About 8 papers (15 minutes each) in each Room
16.00 – 16.30	COFFEE BREAK & NETWORKING		
16.30 – 18.00	PARALLEL SESSIONS 2	UCA	About 8 papers (15 minutes each) in each Room
19.00 -	FREE NIGHT		We will suggest Tango lessons and/or some sightseeing
FRIDAY, 30			
8.00 – 10.00	PARALLEL SESSIONS 3	UCA	About 8 papers (15 minutes each) in each Room
10.00 – 10.30	COFFEE BREAK & NETWORKING		Please, include some fruits and juices in the coffee break
10.30 – 11.30	PLENARY SESSION 1	UCA	KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Anne Lee Saxenian (UC Berkeley)
11.30 – 13.00	PARALLEL SESSIONS 3	UCA	About 6 papers (15 minutes each) in each Room
13.00 – 14.30	LUNCH		
14.30 – 15.30	PLENARY SESSION 2	UCA	KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Colin Mason (University of Glasgow)
15.30 – 16.00	COFFEE BREAK & NETWORKING		

16.00 – 18.00	PARALLEL SESSIONS 4	UCA	About 8 papers (15 minutes each) in each Room
20.00 -	GALA DINNER & AWARDS		Tango show and DJ in Puerto Madero (close to the Venue)
SATURDAY, 1			
9.00 – 11.00	PARALLEL SESSIONS 5	UCA	About 8 papers (15 minutes each) in each Room
11.00 – 11.30	COFEE BREAK & NETWORKING		
11.30 -12.30	PLENARY SESSION 3	UCA	Panel with local entrepreneurs
12.30 - 13.30	Closing Plenary	UCA	
15.00 – 17.00	ICSB Board Meeting		

### 3- ICSB Academy

We were forced to change the venue of ICSB Academy because in last December the UCA decided not to organize it. The new venue for the Academy is the Council of Graduates in Economic Sciences. So, we need to rearrange the organization of this event in terms of logistics, lunches and so on. We are working to get a single hotel where accommodate all the participants together. In addition, we will suggest cheap accommodation for students in hostels near the new venue.

Some visits to local accelerators (NEXTPLabs and/or Wayra) and to the public business incubator (CMD) are planned and we will invite one entrepreneur for each day of the Academy. We expect to define the name of the entrepreneurs as well as the agenda for the visits within the next month.

Students from Latin American and particularly, Argentinean Universities are being invited but in most countries (mostly in South America) Universities are closed in January and most academic activities will start in late February. Nevertheless, we are doing the necessary contacts to launch the invitations as soon as possible.

### 4- ICSB Policy Forum

The Policy Forum will be hosted on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> by the National University of General Sarmiento in its campus located in the outskirts of Buenos Aires city. Buses will depart from designated hotels in the morning and will leave participants at the same hotels in the afternoon. This event needs previous registration. The program is going to be designed in cooperation with the National Secretariat of SMEs & Entrepreneurs and will include some panels about common challenges of the implementation of SME & entrepreneurial policies as well as a single topic of interest presented by a keynote speaker.

## **5- Communication & diffusion**

Thanks to the great cooperation of Michael Battaglia we have a sound website of the Conference. This was launched in November and includes all the information regarding the call for abstracts, the submission system (in all the languages) and the updated information about hotels and accommodation as well as tourism opportunities in Argentina. Visa requirements were also included. Hotel reservations can be made directly from the website and also tourism packages can be hidden from there through the MCI representative.

In terms of mailing campaigns we launch two different campaigns in addition to the one launched from the IO. One launched to MCI global database and the other one, to our mailing of Latin American universities and academics. These campaigns will be intensified during these days in order to get the maximum number of submissions.

Complementary, we will make some customized messages to the Brazilian academics through our partners from ANEGEPE – the Brazilian National Association of Research about Entrepreneurship and SME Management. Also, we will launch these days a similar customized emailing campaign to the members of ACEDE – the Spanish Association of Business Economics. Finally, we count with the cooperation of ICSB Mexico to attract participants from this country.

Precisely, in Mexico some promotional activities have been made in October. In addition, a promotional booth has been installed at 2016 RENT Conference in Antwerp and thanks to Luca Landoli intervention, I could be there to invite RENT participants to the World Conference.

## **6- Sponsorships and other sources of financing**

In terms of financing, up to now only the two organizing universities have paid their contributions. These funds have been devoted to pay half of the fee to ICSB for organizing the World Conference and to cover travel expenses and promotional materials.

The main sponsor will be the National Government of Argentina, through its National Secretariat of SMEs. The final amount of its contribution and the legal form under which the with Government will support the Conference are currently being defined by the Secretariat of SMEs and we expect to have a final decision by February.

In addition to the National Secretariat of SMEs, we get a small financial support from the National Agency for Science and Technology. The National Tourism Authority also helps us to cover some tickets and gave us some promotional brochures to distribute in the last World Conference in NJ as well as in RENT and also in USASBE 2017. Finally, we have ongoing negotiations with the National Bank of Argentina and with the Chamber of SMEs (CAME).

Regarding private companies, the MCI group is working on a list of around 50 local potential sponsors of which between 5 and 10 have already show their interest in contributing with some funds. Now we are trying to advance the conversations and close the deals. However, most managers at those companies are on vacations, so we expect more activity in February.

### ***7- Main issues/challenges that require the Board's action***

One main issue nowadays is to secure the support of the Argentinean Government to the Conference. Although we have sound channels of communication and we had a lot of meetings, the IO could help us to close the deal by exercising some pressure from outside the country. Another issue in which the Board could help us significantly is to look for potential international sponsors to the Conference. Additionally, the IO could also help us to define a list of potential participants of the Ministerial Round based on their experience from last year.

Finally, the most important challenge we have and where the Board could also support us is – by far - to get participants to the Conference. In particular, people from distant regions such as Asia, Africa, Australia & New Zealand and also Europe.