



# INTERNATIONALIZATION AND THE Sustainable Development Goals

September 29, 2020  
Virtual interactive panel discussions

Presented by the International Relations Professional Learning Community (IR-PLC),  
Canadian Bureau for International Education



Canadian Bureau for  
International Education

**SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

## WELCOME

On behalf of the International Relations Professional Learning Community in Canada, we are pleased to welcome you to the Internationalization and the SDGs event. This gathering aims to provide a forum for universities and their collaborators to exchange ideas, experiences and strategies around the challenges and opportunities involved in international collaboration to advance the UN 2030 SDGs Agenda.

We are delighted to have in attendance guests from different universities, governments and foreign representatives from various countries. We hope you will have the opportunity to network and learn more about how you can further advance Internationalization and the SDGs. We wish you an informative and fruitful event!

## CONTEXT

The [United Nations \(UN\) Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\) 2030 Agenda](#) is a global framework between 193 UN Member States. Composed of 17 goals, 169 targets, and 223 indicators, the SDGs aim to tackle the world's most pressing challenges including poverty, hunger, and inequality, while ensuring social inclusion, environmental sustainability, economic prosperity, peace and good governance. Universities are hubs for knowledge, discovery, and innovation that can provide the expertise, resources, and know-how to contribute and move the UN 2030 Agenda forward. In this context, International Offices within universities are particularly well positioned to serve as active agents and contributors to both local and global communities.

In an effort to recognize and capture the universities' impact on society, the Times Higher Education (THE) has recently launched the Impact Rankings, which measure progress made by universities on delivering on the SDGs. While acknowledging the debates around rankings and methodologies, it does offer a tool by which universities are assessed on their efforts and ability to reflect and act on their own commitments to address global challenges.

Most recently, the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has exposed huge inequalities - which have always existed - both between and within countries, and at the same time, has opened a deeper discussion on the role universities play in contributing to the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda. This pandemic has shown that addressing global challenges requires universities to dedicate their efforts collectively, using creative and innovative approaches, as no single country, institution or individual can address them alone. The SDGs can serve as a set of guiding principles that guide universities in translating their core values, missions, and aspirations into measurable, comparable, and sustainable impacts, leading to more equitable outcomes. This approach would allow universities to embed our practices within a humanitarian context, ensuring that "no one is left behind".



# AGENDA

- 11:00 am  
EDT
- Welcome**
- **Mr. Julio Sevilla**, Co-Chair, International Relations Professional Learning Community, Canadian Bureau for International Education and Responsible for International Projects at Concordia University, Canada
- Welcome and Introduction of Keynote Speaker
- **Ms. Larissa Bezo**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Bureau for International Education, Canada
- 11:15 am  
EDT
- Opening Remarks**
- **Dr. Alex Awiti**, Vice Provost, Aga Khan University, Kenya
- 11:40 am  
EDT
- Panel I: Strategies in Internationalizing the SDGs in Higher Education Institutions**
- **Moderator: Dr. Rajesh Tandon**, UNESCO Co-Chair on Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education; Founder, Society for Participatory Research in Asia, India
  - **Dr. Greg Moran**, Executive Director, Academics Without Borders, Canada
  - **Dr. Meghna Ramaswamy**, Director, International Office, University of Saskatchewan, Canada
  - **Mr. Duncan Ross**, Chief Data Officer, Times Higher Education (THE), UK
- 12:40 pm  
EDT
- Panel II: Case Studies: Universities as the Engine of Transformation to achieve the SDGs**
- **Moderator: Ms. Shaheen Nanji**, Acting Executive Director, SFU International, Simon Fraser University, Canada
  - **Ambassador Miguel Ruiz Cabañas**, SDGs Initiative, Director, Tec de Monterrey, Mexico
  - **Mr. Jon Beale, Manager**, Sustainable Development Solutions Network Canada, University of Waterloo, Canada
  - **Prof. Jonathan Grant**, Professor of Public Policy, Policy Institute, King's College London, UK
- 1:40 pm  
EDT
- Next steps and Wrap up**
- Community discussion on potential initiatives to strengthen links between universities on international cooperation and the SDGs
- Discussion and consultation
- Ms. Nathalie Pelletier, International Project Manager, Université de Montréal, Canada
- 2:00 pm  
EDT
- End of program**

## Keynote Speaker

**Alex Awiti,**

Vice Provost, Aga Khan University, Kenya



Alex O. Awiti was appointed Vice Provost at Aga Khan University in 2018. He has also served as the interim Dean of the Graduate School of Media and Communications in 2019. Before assuming the role of Vice Provost, Awiti was the Founding Director of the East Africa Institute of Aga Khan University.

Awiti is an interdisciplinary scholar, whose research intersects agriculture, ecology, education, climate and society, health policy and the economy. As one of Kenya's leading public intellectuals he has written over 700 opinion articles published in local, regional and international publications, including the International Policy Digest and The Conversation. He is a regular and commentator on public policy issues on news networks in East Africa and international media such as CNBC, CGTN, Bloomberg News and Al Jazeera TV.

Awiti is an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Geography and Environment at University of the Fraser Valley in BC, Canada. He is also a Governor of the Board of Governors of the IDRC (International Development Research Centre), a Crown corporation of the Canadian government that funds research in developing countries. Prior to joining the Aga Khan University, Awiti was a postdoctoral fellow at the Earth Institute at Columbia University in the City of New York. He was also an adjunct assistant professor at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs.

Awiti was a scientist at the World Agroforestry Centre in Nairobi for 9 years where with colleagues he pioneered the application of infrared spectroscopy for diagnostic surveillance of soil quality at the farm and landscape scale.

Awiti is an alumnus of the CSC Leaders program, a global leadership program for exceptional leaders from the Commonwealth, run in partnership with the Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conference. He is an Associate Professor and holds a PhD in Ecosystems Ecology.

## Event MC

### Mr. Julio Sevilla,

Co-Chair, International Relations Professional Learning Community, Bureau for International Education & Responsible for International Projects, Concordia University, Canada



Julio Sevilla, MBA, is an International Projects Manager at Concordia International. He formally served as Director for Research Partnerships at the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR) and as a Senior Advisor for International Relations at the National Research Council of Canada (NRC), where he managed the Canadian membership for the International Council for Science (ISCU) and supported Canada's participation in EUREKA, the G8 Head of Research Councils (G8-HORCS) and diverse bilateral initiatives for Europe, North America and Latin America. His background and training are in the fields of international relations, diplomacy, and science and technology.

He is currently serving as Co-Chair of the CBIE International Relations Professional Learning Community (IR-PLC), a cross-Canadian network of over 200 professionals dedicated to supporting and advancing their universities' international activities.

### Larissa Bezo

President and Chief Executive Officer



Larissa Bezo presently serves as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Bureau for International Education.

Ms. Bezo has served in senior leadership positions in both the public and not-for-profit sectors, including as the youngest Deputy Clerk in the history of Saskatchewan, Senior Advisor to a Federal Royal Commission and most recently, as Interim President and Chief Executive Officer for the Canadian Bureau for International Development. After a distinguished public service career, Larissa pursued her longstanding commitment to international development and solidarity through senior-level assignments with the World Bank and the International Centre for Policy Studies in Ukraine.

Larissa Bezo has worked successfully with Boards of Directors and Executive Committees to define strategic priorities and oversee their implementation. She possesses 25 years of professional experience, including 15 years in the international development and education sector.

Ms. Bezo is an accomplished senior executive with a proven ability to provide effective leadership to build organizational capacity and resilience, foster durable partnerships, navigate sensitive political, intercultural and international issues and mobilize resources to achieve organizational priorities.

## PANEL I: PANELISTS

### Moderator:

**Dr. Rajesh Tandon,**

UNESCO Co-Chair on Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education; Founder, Society for Participatory Research in Asia, India



Dr Rajesh Tandon is an internationally acclaimed leader and practitioner of participatory research and development. He is Founder-President of Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), global centre for participatory research & training since 1982. He is also Co-Chair of the UNESCO Chair on Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education since 2012. The UNESCO Chair grows out of and supports UNESCO's global lead to play 'a key role in assisting countries to build knowledge societies'.

A pioneer of participatory research, Rajesh Tandon has given new meaning to academic research by redefining the relationship between the researcher and the researched. He has championed the cause of building organisations and capacities of the marginalised through their knowledge, learning and empowerment, contributing to the emergence of several local, national and international groups and initiatives to promote authentic and participatory development of societies.

Dr Tandon has served on numerous expert committees of Govt of India, UGC, UN, Commonwealth & World Bank. In 2015, the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA) awarded Dr Tandon the Nehru Literacy Award. For his distinguished work on gender issues, the Government of India honoured him with the prestigious Award in Social Justice in March 2007. The University of Victoria, Canada, awarded Dr Tandon the degree of Doctor of Law (Honoris Causa) in June 2008. He is the first Indian to be inducted to the International Adult and Continuing Education (IACE) Hall of Fame (class of 2011).<sup>1</sup> He is first Indian scholar to be inducted in Academy of Engagement Scholarship in 2019



**Duncan Ross,**

Chief Data Officer, Times Higher Education (THE), UK



Duncan Ross has been a data miner since the mid-1990s. As Chief Data Officer at THE, he oversees a team that generates university rankings, including the Impact Rankings, and related data products. Prior to this, he led Teradata's data science team in Europe and Asia, where he was responsible for developing analytical solutions across a number of industries, including warranty and root-cause analysis in manufacturing and social network analysis in telecommunications.

The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings were launched in 2018 to try to evaluate the important role that universities were working towards Agenda 2030 and delivering on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. With 860 universities participating in 2019 from across the world, the rankings give universities a unique opportunity to showcase their work in a way that is often not seen in more traditional assessments. Duncan will introduce the Impact Rankings, and will talk about some of the ways that universities have chosen to use the results as part of their sustainability strategy.



**Greg Moran,**

Executive Director, Academics Without Borders, Canada



Dr. Greg Moran became Executive Director of Academics Without Borders in October 2017 after serving on the Board of Directors for the previous two years.

Immediately prior to taking on the executive director role, Dr. Moran was the Director, Special Projects at the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario for two years. He served as Provost and Chief Academic Officer of Aga Khan University (AKU) from 2011-2015 and was based in Nairobi, Kenya, for three of those years. AKU is an international institution of higher learning operating in eight countries on three continents, with campuses in Pakistan, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, England, and Afghanistan. Greg is Professor Emeritus and Provost Emeritus at Western University in London, Ontario, Canada, where he held an appointment from 1977 through 2015.

At Western, Greg served as Chair of the Department of Psychology, Dean of Graduate Studies, and for 10 years as Provost and Vice President (Academic). As a developmental/clinical psychologist and professor for over three decades, he has pursued a better understanding of the nature, origins, and developmental consequences of the first relationship between an infant and his or her mother. Greg, with his graduate students and collaborators, has been involved in a series of diverse but interrelated programs of research, including: studies of adolescent mothers and their children; intervention for families with infants at high risk for poor developmental outcomes; comparative study of the development of siblings within a family; and studies of the neurobiological, genetic, and psychophysiological correlates of early social interaction and relationships. His research has been generously supported by several national granting agencies throughout his career and has been published regularly in leading journals in the field.

Greg Moran co-authored a book on the state and future of higher education in Ontario, *Academic Transformation: The Forces Reshaping Higher Education*.

**Meghna Ramaswamy,**

Director, International Office, Saskatchewan University, Canada



Dr. Meghna Ramaswamy is the Director of the International Office and leads the University of Saskatchewan's internationalization strategy and the institution's development in international research and partnerships. She oversees a team of international research and partnership specialists, who facilitate and support international and SDG-related activities for faculty, staff and students. In her role as Director of International, Meghna has oversight of the annual People Around the World conference, themed around the SDGs. She recently published a book chapter on Interdisciplinary Research Teams for the SDGs, in the Encyclopedia of the UN Sustainable Development Goals - Volume 17: Partnerships for the Goals by Springer Nature.

Meghna is an elected Executive Committee member of the Commission of International Initiatives (CII) at the Association of Public Land Universities (APLU), Steering Committee Member of the International Relations (IR) Learning Community (PLC) at the Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE), and a member of the Education and Academia Stakeholder Group anchored to the United Nations (2013 Resolution A/RES/67/290) to address the UN Sustainable Development Goals on SDG 4: Quality Education. She also serves on the International Education Strategy group for the SaskAlliance, a provincial government initiative of the Ministry of Advanced Education, in Saskatchewan, Canada.

Prior to joining the University of Saskatchewan in 2018, she led the Centre for AIDS Reagents in the UK, the only HIV repository in Europe, where she developed global scientific projects and international partnerships with key organizations such as the World Health Organization, the European Commission, the National Institute of Health, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. She has served as an Expert Advisor to the World Health Organization, the European Commission and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Over the course of her scientific career, she attracted over \$19 million in funding as a Principal Investigator.

She was an adjunct lecturer in Kings College London where she taught courses on Infection and Disease in the Modern World to medical undergraduate students. Dr. Ramaswamy earned her BSc in Microbiology from Kings College London, MSc in Virology from The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and PhD in Clinical Infection from University College London in the United Kingdom. She lives in Saskatoon, with her husband and her St. Bernard.

## PANEL II: PANELISTS

### Moderator:

**Shaheen Nanji,**

Acting Executive Director, SFU International, Simon Fraser University, Canada



Shaheen Nanji (MA, International Studies) is acting Executive Director, SFU International and is responsible for faculty engagement and the collaborative development and implementation of the University's international engagement and faculty engagement.

As a convener of engagement and dialogue on global issues, she is committed to collaboration between diverse disciplines, sectors, cultures, perspectives and interests for deeper impact. She has worked on development projects in the areas of the sustainable development goals; refugees and immigration; equity, diversity and inclusion; education; diaspora; public health; and environment policy. Her international work has been focused in Africa and Asia. Shaheen is on the Board of the Proteknon Foundation for Innovation and Learning, a member of the Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table, and an Associate of the SFU Centre for Dialogue.



## Jon Beale

Manager, Sustainable Development Solutions Network Canada, University of Waterloo, Canada



Jon Beale is the Manager of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) of Canada, hosted at the University of Waterloo. SDSN Canada is part of a global SDSN movement to build a network of universities, colleges, and knowledge institutions working together to create practical solutions to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Jon's experience comes from a variety of community and economic development roles throughout his career. This includes starting new agricultural businesses with farmer cooperatives in Zambia, leading tourism and climate change research with Inuit and Métis communities in Labrador, and working with municipal leaders throughout North America to identify and highlight economic opportunities with clear pathways for action. Jon's academic background is in Economics and International Development, with degrees from Queen's University and the London School of Economics.



**Jonathan Grant,**

Professor of Public Policy, Policy Institute, King's College London, UK



Jonathan's research interests are in biomedical and health R&D policy, research impact assessment, the use of research and evidence in policy and decision-taking, and the social purpose of universities in the 21st century. He is passionate about coupling creative thinking with in-depth analysis to challenge existing assumptions and orthodoxies, generating new insights, and stimulating productive debate. Jonathan has significant international experience, having helped formulate and implement R&D and other strategies in, for example, the UK, Greece, Norway, Qatar, Oman, Australia, Canada and the USA.

Jonathan was formerly Vice President & Vice Principal (Service) at King's College London. Service is King's award-winning and unique commitment to social responsibility and covers a range of activities including social reform, research impact, service-led learning, volunteering, and environment sustainability. It is one of King's five strategic priorities and encapsulates King's commitment to society beyond education and research.

Jonathan joined King's in 2014 to set up the ground-breaking Policy Institute at King's, and was its Director until 2017, when he stepped down to 'hold the pen' on developing King's Strategic Vision 2029. He continues to work on a part time basis at the Policy Institute, where he is Professor of Public Policy and leads several research projects. For the other half of his time he runs a small consultancy business, Different Angles, that focus on the social impact of research and universities.

Prior to joining King's, Jonathan was President of RAND Europe between June 2006 and October 2012, where he oversaw the doubling of the organisation's activity in Europe and the establishment of the Cambridge Centre for Health Services Research, a joint venture with the University of Cambridge. Before joining RAND in 2002, he was Head of Policy at the Wellcome Trust.

Jonathan's new book, *The New Power University. The social purpose of higher education in the 21st Century*, will be published by Pearson in February 2021.

## Concluding Discussion:

**Nathalie Pelletier,**

International Project Manager, Université de Montréal, Canada



Mrs. Nathalie PELLETIER has completed her Master of Arts, with a major in International Communication and Development. She has also completed a Bachelor Degree in Psychology. Ms. PELLETIER has twenty year experience in the field of international development, with the last ten years being on the education scene.

As a Gender Equality Expert, Ms. PELLETIER has conducted several field missions in Latin America, North Africa and Asia Pacific to promote the participation of women and social responsibility in various projects. During her career, Ms. PELLETIER has designed, coordinated and participated in numerous international development projects, financed by international donor agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

In 2010, Ms. PELLETIER has joined Polytechnique Montréal as responsible for international project development and outreach activities, liaison and coordination with international donors and funding agencies, and counterpart universities and organizations. She has been the coordinator for the Mining School of Mauritania, in which Polytechnique was the main technical partner for curriculum and pedagogical material development, capacity building of professors, equipment purchasing and administrative and academic systems implementation.

Since joining Université de Montréal in March 2020, Ms. PELLETIER, as an International Project Manager, has conducted a mapping exercise of international development projects activities in order to develop a strategy and better highlight the university's contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals.

