



# Prophetic Networks for a Universal Mission

*2<sup>nd</sup> International Jesuit Networking Conference  
Georgetown University 15-17 February 2018*



a Jesuit networking project

In 2008, the 35th General Congregation identified the challenges of globalization to the mission of the Society of Jesus and, at the same time, highlighted the potentialities of being and acting as a universal body. International and interprovincial collaboration have been strengthened to improve the apostolic work and networking has been marked as one of the ways to do it. “We encourage the Society’s government, at all levels, to explore means by which more effective networking might take place between Ignatian and Jesuit apostolic works.”<sup>1</sup> In 2016 the 36th General Congregation continued this reflection highlighting even more the importance of Networking as one of the key perspectives in our contemporary way of proceeding, encouraging the different governing bodies of the Society of Jesus to “actively facilitate, foster, accompany and evaluate international and intersectoral networks.”<sup>2</sup> As GC36 posed it, there is a clear need of research, systematization, and formulation of challenges and potentials of the Jesuit international network of institutions in order to ease and maximize its impact as a transnational body with a clear universal mission.

Five years after the 1st Conference on Jesuit Networking, held in 2012 at Boston College, we decided to organize a second conference from 15 to 17 February 2018 with Georgetown University, in order to continue the conversation and catalyze the connections of the practitioners, researchers and governance officials of the Society of Jesus. This is the final document of this conference.<sup>3</sup>

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1 GC 35, Dec 3, n. 28

2 GC 36, Dec 2, n. 9

3 The conference took place at McDonough School of Business – Georgetown University and it was organized by the Jesuit Networking Initiative together with the office of the President and the McDonough School of Business at Georgetown. See Appendix I for a list of the participants and visit <http://jesuit.network> for more information.

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# 1 | INTRODUCTION

These days we have experienced, once again, the consolation of being a community: a group of diverse people trying to answer together God's call. We feel the joy of the encounter of different people sharing the same identity and spirituality and searching jointly for new and creative ways to carry out the mission that God has granted us. We are grateful for the dynamism that is emerging in so many places to respond to the invitation from the last General Congregations to explore networking as a new way of proceeding.

At the same time, we feel internal difficulties: we are sometimes too self-centered in our own personal or institutional projects; from time to time we experience resistance to embracing the unknown and promoting change; we don't always have the required indifference to approach change in a spirit of openness; many times we don't perceive diversity as an opportunity and a form of richness. And sometimes we experience uncertainty and fear toward the novelties that are emerging, especially as we still do not have all the answers for how best to approach these changes.

Above all these consolations and desolations, we experienced again a strong call of God to explore, with creativity and with the audacity to attempt the impossible, better ways to develop the universal mission. After all we have shared and reflected, we confirm that networks are called to be a powerful means to carry out our mission in an uncertain and complex context, and to be a helpful way to work together as an apostolic body that embraces our diversity. We are still in the process of learning and understanding what it means to work effectively through networks and how are we going to implement this understanding in practice. We see ourselves as pilgrims on a journey towards a new way of proceeding that we are still experiencing and defining.

The process of preparation, dialogue and joint construction of this 2nd International Jesuit Networking Conference has been a beautiful experience of networking. The group of attendees, the majority of whom have been connected through the [Jesuitnetworking.org](http://Jesuitnetworking.org) initiative for years, is becoming a network of networks that studies and stimulates reflection on Jesuit networking, convinced that networks are an important tool for carrying out our mission in a complex and uncertain context, and that they can be one of the keys to working together in a diverse and plural body that seeks to discern and be an instrument of the same mission.

In this process of clarification and communal introspection, this conference has reflected on three concrete topics that are central for networks: strategy, culture, and governance. Around these topics, we have discussed ideas that may help us to define the characteristics of Jesuit networks. We also identified new questions and issues that demand additional reflection and research. Finally, we present a set of recommendations and proposals that may contribute to promoting, nurturing, and stimulating Jesuit networks.

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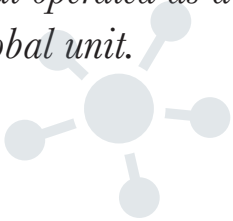
## 2 | THE ERA OF NETWORKS

We are in the midst of incredible transformations that affect all the dimensions of our personal life and the basic ways of proceeding of organizations. We are part of the birth of a new era, a radical transformation of our social, cultural, and economic terrain. All these changes are bringing uncertainty and volatility to our, considered solid, mindset, yet at the same time are opening new scenarios and opportunities to those that are able to go through internal transformation both in persons and institutions.

Among these changes, the irruption of networks in the different spheres of social life is one of the most relevant. Technological changes (in particular the digital revolution), increasing globalization (that goes beyond the boundaries of trade and finance and affects all dimensions of relationships,) and deep cultural transformations (individualism, weak ties, and liquidity brought by post-modernity) have made possible and fueled the expansion of the networks. They are shaping our personal relations, the way institutions are organized and the logic behind the technological progress to an extent that some authors say we live in a networked society.

Many organizations, in particular those operating in a global environment, are going through radical internal transformation to adapt and take advantage of these new contexts. At the same time, new organizations, established recently and shaped by the new cultural and technological environment and inspired by networks, are making the best of the emerging opportunities and leading the future. In a few years, many organizations that were extremely successful in the traditional environment are increasingly irrelevant in the network society, while new initiatives operating with the culture, strategy and structure of networks are rapidly taking their positions.

*The Society of Jesus was one of the early institutions that operated as a global unit.*



450 years of history  
in 112 countries and  
more than 4000 institutions...  
let's keep networking!!

Jesuit Networking [www.jesuitnetworking.org](http://www.jesuitnetworking.org) @jesuitnetwork

The Society of Jesus was one of the early institutions that operated as a global unit. In fact, from the very beginning, St Ignatius included in its way of proceeding many features that remind us of recent networks: centrality of mission which was considered universal; solid nodes (well trained and devoted Jesuits) connected by strong yet flexible bonds (spirituality); mobility and availability; personal and communal discernment combined with authority; ... The first Jesuits soon understood the new globalization that was beginning and the Society of Jesus was conceived for that incoming context and succeeded as a result.

Nowadays we are also in the beginning of a new era and the Society of Jesus possesses the necessary conditions to operate within this new context. It is an international body especially well-endowed for acting within this new global context. Nevertheless, it is aware of the need to adapt itself to the new context and many internal changes have taken place in the last decades. In this process, networks are emerging as one of the key elements of the renewed way of proceeding of the Jesuits to navigate in the incoming world. The last General Congregation confirmed this when it said that “Discernment, collaboration and networking offer three important perspectives on our contemporary way of proceeding. As the Society of Jesus is an “international and multicultural body” in a complex, “fragmented and divided world,” attention to these perspectives helps to streamline governance and make it more flexible and apostolically effective”.<sup>4</sup>

For the Society of Jesus, networking is understood in a particular way. As the final document of the 1<sup>st</sup> Conference on Jesuit Networking explained: “Jesuit networking could be defined as a way of proceeding apostolically that enables better global and regional cooperation at the service of the universal mission, raising the apostolic structures to a new level of agency with global (or regional) impact, and therefore connecting persons and institutions in such a way that they act as a global and interdisciplinary body, in collaboration with others.”<sup>5</sup>



<sup>4</sup> GC36, Dec 2, n.3

<sup>5</sup> International Networking In the Society of Jesus. Challenges from a Universal Mission. Conference at Boston College – 28-30 April 2012 <https://jesuit.network/documents/>



# 3 | PROPHETIC NETWORKS

The basic question behind the conference was: what is that, that the networks offer to the Jesuit Mission? We ended up convinced that networks expand the possibilities of our apostolic body by allowing us to see new configurations and scopes of our mission. It is in this sense that we understand Jesuit networks as “prophetic networks.” The gift of the prophets was to see clearly both the nature of their present world and the direction in which the faithful had to move to bring about a better one. It is this prophetic dimension of Jesuit networks that, building upon what we are today, allow us to have an idea of what we could become tomorrow.

## STRUCTURES FOR A MISSION

Jesuit Networks are created starting from an analysis of reality searching for those apostolic calls that are asking for our creative answer. The Society of Jesus is a body oriented to a mission and it is the mission, and not the structures, that should guide our narrative. Any structural consideration should be analyzed from its contribution to the objectives and content of our common mission. When we discuss networks, it is our mission, and not the structures, that should focus our debate. Networks are a structural response to a renewed mission that needs structures, processes, and strategies to be developed. There can be a creative tension between the provincial level and networks that go beyond our usual structure, opening us to new apostolic dynamics guided more by the causes and challenges than by geographic or functional structures.



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Networking should be understood from the perspective of finding new ways of developing the Society’s mission. Since 2011, we have been witnessing a reconfiguration of the provinces and conferences that looks not only to ease the apostolic life, but also to contribute to a wider universality that fosters boldness and creativity in our apostolic decisions. Proliferation of networks in the last decades should be understood in this wider context of renewing structures in service to the mission.

## IDENTITY AND MISSION, KEY FOR THE SENSE OF BELONGING

Our debates showed that we need to work more and more on an appealing global narrative about our common mission to foster collaboration and network development. Networks are structures that demand connection and listening, conversation and dialogue. In Networks you can find traditionally independent mission units with a horizontality in the relationships that is not mediated by a functional dependence but by a horizon of apostolic synergy. Networking is based, therefore, on the sense of mission and identity that goes beyond the institution or collective. Self-interest and mutual benefit help in the first stage of collaborative work, but in many cases to go beyond the institutional horizon will require narratives that give meaning to the shared mission.

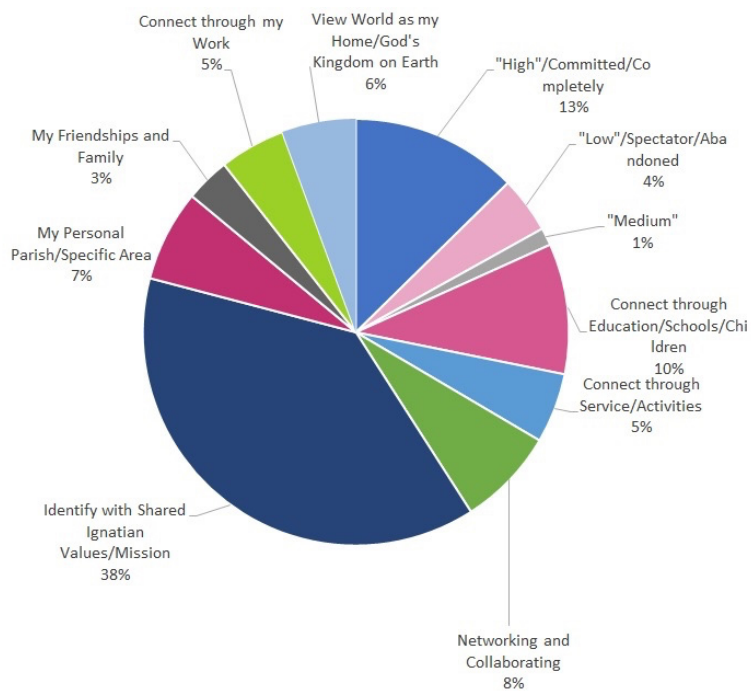


Figure 2. Describe your sense of belonging to "something greater than your institution"

This is especially important in an apostolic body that - in the latest collaborative survey<sup>6</sup> - quantifies your "feeling of being part of something greater than going beyond your institution" with an 8.03 out of 10. The three aspects that most define our sense of belonging to the apostolic body are identity and values, spirituality, and a shared sense of mission. One of the most interesting results is that the feeling of shared mission is the most important predictor of the sense of belonging and connection with the body.

This work on corporate identity is key in our proposed network strategy. Nothing new, but fundamental to be able to reinforce the idea: Identity and mission are key axes for networking. Of course, we cannot be naive about the risk of homogenization present in the horizontality of networks if it is not complemented by an identity well rooted in equally consistent values and principles.

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Networks need not be homogenizing forces, and it is increasingly clear that there is no single model of networking. As we have seen in the previous pages, the structure and strategy of the network depends to a large extent on the causes, objectives, resources, actors, contexts and local cultures involved. It is essential to recognize the importance of internal diversity, the necessary balance between networking and subsidiarity, and the danger of homogenizing structures if internal imbalances in power and resources are not taken into account. Our experience in the survey is that we are not yet connected in a balanced way and that the capacity of coverage and connection when we speak of the global body is very diverse according to countries and available resources.

<sup>6</sup> In May 2017, the Jesuit Networking project launched a global survey to better understand the quality and level of engagement within the Jesuit Network. For 3 months we received more than 2.700 answers from all around the world. Download a report on the results at <https://survey.jesuit.network>

In this sense, networking is a response to an apostolic body that is increasingly diverse and complex, wherein our search for an increasingly universal mission we must be attentive to cultural differences and the importance of local adaptation. The reality is that networking allows for the deployment of new types of strategies that are attentive to local diversity but open to the benefits of international scale and coordination. Clear examples are the Hospitality Campaigns in the Social Sector <sup>7</sup> or the Educate Magis Global Citizenship projects, <sup>8</sup> in secondary education, which, far from homogenizing, offer a framework of meaning for a progressive empowerment of local proposals.



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Networks are structures that recognize diversity while fostering inclusion and a sense of belonging and shared identity. In this sense networks can be fundamental as a means to encourage the union of spirits.

## CREATIVITY, INNOVATION AND OPENNESS

The definition of a network implies the participation of the nodes in a larger whole and requires structures and channels for it. We do not speak here about dialogue between peers but about the necessary openness “to go out of our self-love, will and interest” <sup>9</sup> in order to reach the greater good pursued by the network. Networks provide us new work scenarios where individuals and institutions are part of a “bigger whole” that exceptionally embodies the shared mission and causes an explosion of creativity and innovation without precedent. Experiences <sup>10</sup> such as the IJEP project, HEST, and Educate Magis are examples of innovative proposals based on networking that are, in turn, changing the ecosystem of possibilities among our organizations.

<sup>7</sup> There are currently three hospitality campaigns in the Society of Jesus, organically launched and in a progressive process of international coordination: <http://historiasdehospitalidad.com> (Latin America and Caribe Conference), <https://ignatiansolidarity.net/campaignforhospitality/> (USA and Canada Conference), <https://www.hospitalidad.es/> (Spanish Province)

<sup>8</sup> In 2014 the secondary and pre-secondary education secretariat launched Educate Magis as a collaborative platform to connect educators from our Jesuit and Ignatian schools around the world. <https://www.educatemagis.org/global-citizenship-classroom/>

<sup>9</sup> Spiritual Exercises, 189

<sup>10</sup> International Jesuit Ecology Project (<https://www.luc.edu/ijep/index.shtml>), Higher Education for Social Transformation (<https://www.hestprogramme.eu/>), Educate Magis (<https://www.educatemagis.org/>)

Networks generate the ability to align the efforts of different institutions towards common apostolic challenges; they allow channeling the knowledge and experience that already exists in our own internal diversity; they favor the generation of new ideas in collaboration; they orient our energies toward the greater good and generate learnings at the corporate level. As we see in the previous examples, networks allow us to link communities and groups of institutions in search of new apostolic ventures that are challenging and changing our Society. This is the ability of networks to open up to the new and the different. Networks allow us to deal with external developments, alliances with other bodies from which we can learn about changes in our environments that can be translated into changes

within ourselves. In a body as institutionalized as ours, networks offer greater freedom to experiment and are places of innovation and creativity that allow us to balance our tradition and corporate sense with a necessary entrepreneurial and adaptive spirit. More examples are the participation of the Jesuit Secondary Educational sector in the Global Campaign for Education (CME) through the work of GIAN Education or the progressive participation in summits and reflection spaces on Ecology through GIAN Ecology.<sup>11</sup>

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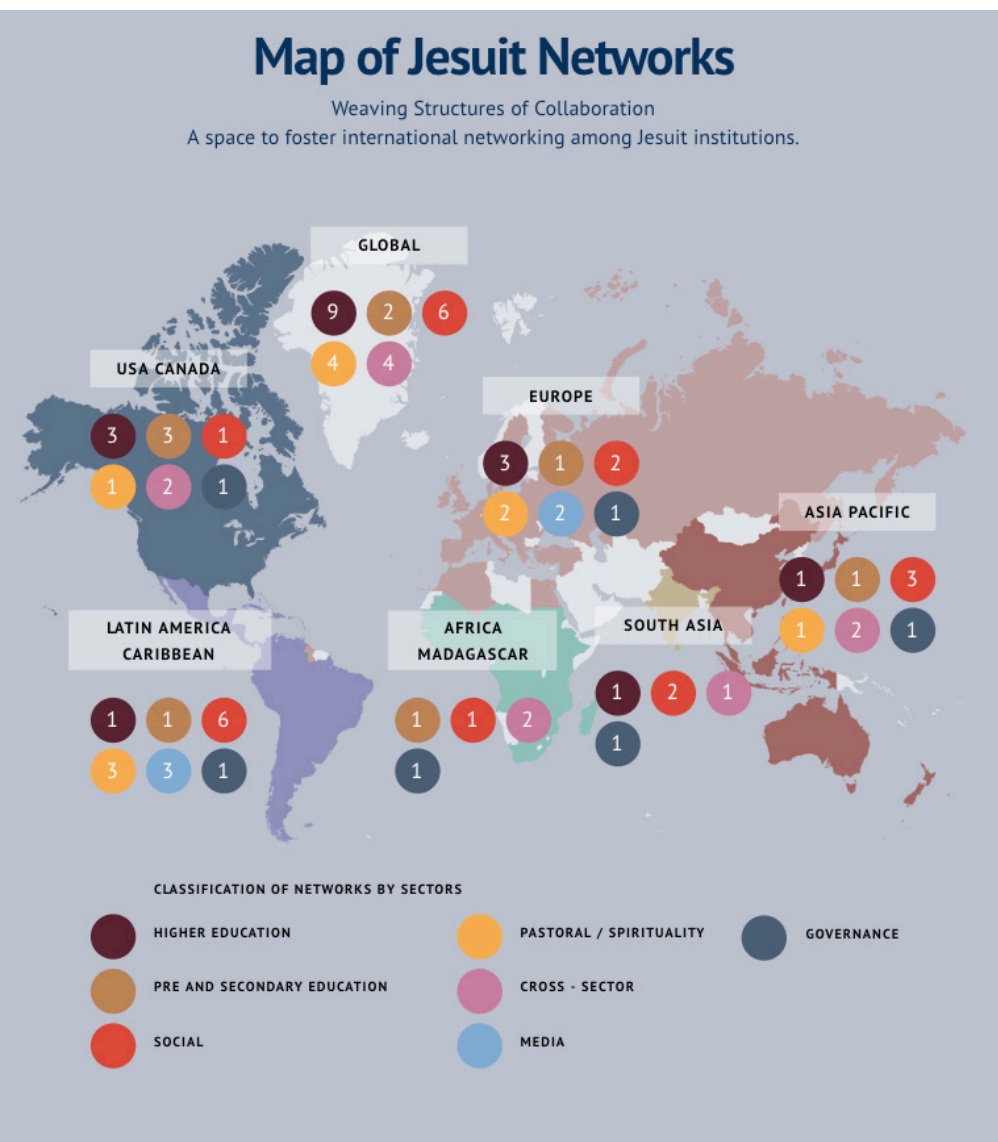
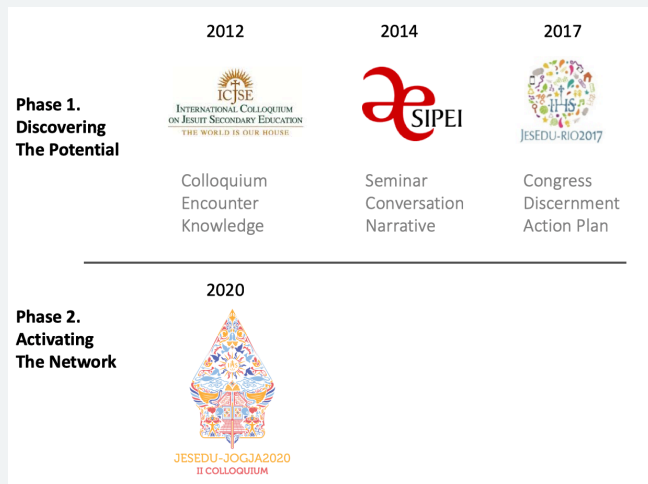


Figure 3. Map of Jesuit Networks by Conference and Apostolic Sector by Feb 2018

<sup>11</sup> The GIAN Education team (<https://edujesuit.org/>) has been participating and promoting the Global Education Campaign within the Jesuit Schools, Fe y Alegría and Jesuit Refugee Networks. The GIAN Ecology team (<http://www.ecojesuit.com/>) has been participating in the UN Climate Change Conferences COP 21 and COP 23 and creating space for dialogue from the Ignatian perspective.

## PARTICIPATION AND DISCERNMENT

Working through networks allows us to collectively construct a strategic vision emerging from the dialogue and participation of their different stakeholders. Transparency, open dialogue, and a shared narrative contribute to the construction of the body and a sense of belonging that goes beyond the individual experience. In this way, specific, individual contributions to the common mission become possible and necessary.



The Secondary Education Secretariat understood this principle very well when it presented its global network strategy based on cycles of (a) colloquium meetings (Boston 2012), (b) seminars (Barcelona 2014) and (c) congresses (Rio 2017), thus promoting the steps of (a) meeting and knowledge, (b) dialogue and shared narrative, and (c) discernment of appropriate framework strategy. A meeting (Boston 2012) followed by a dialogue (SIPEI, Barcelona, 2014) gave rise to a shared narrative that then led to a framework strategy (JESSEDU, Rio, 2017) appropriate for all world education delegates.

*Networks are a facilitating structure of common discernment that allows us to be attentive, listen, and at the same time learn, permeate, and reveal the dynamics of participation and engagement between institutions and people around our shared mission.*



The spiritual correlate is how the Society needs to ensure that the discernment around mission takes into account the motions and intuitions that come from all levels of the apostolic body. Broad-based participation in transparent dialogue on the mission will generate the necessary trust for collaboration on a mission increasingly owned by all levels of the apostolic body. Only in this way will we have space for novelty to arise and for our response to rise to the complexity of present realities. Let us not confuse ourselves: we are referring to a listening and participation that generate the information and empowerment needed for a discernment before the decision-making process, in total harmony with Ignatian obedience.

Therefore, we can affirm that networks can be understood more and more as a facilitating structure of common discernment that allows us to be attentive, listen, and at the same time learn, permeate, and reveal the dynamics of participation and direct engagement between institutions and people around their shared mission. Indeed, inter institutional efforts must also be understood as interpersonal efforts, for collaboration between and within institutions is ultimately a process of individuals engaging with one another to cooperatively participate in the Society's mission. Further, the Jesuit networks that have had the greatest impact are those that have fostered the highest levels of person-to-person engagement.

## NEW LEVEL OF AGENCY

The great novelty that networks bring to our mission is the ability to elevate the level of action beyond the reach of institutions when they act separately. We fall short if we think of networks only as service providers or as facilitators of common projects. We can't forget the real jewel of the networks: collective action.

The networks build new possibilities out of the current institutional configuration of the Society of Jesus. Therefore, they can have an interesting prophetic dimension at this time, since they allow us to revitalize what exists towards what our apostolic body can become if we let the dynamics of our mission transform us. Networks are changing us, challenging us, questioning us, and suggesting new possibilities that are not within the reach of our isolated current structures. We call it a new level of agency because the members coordinate their efforts and act together as a single agent of greater capacity and scope. It is in this sense that the networks open new levels of mission, proposing, channeling, and coordinating a level of synergy that is beyond the scope and influence of separate institutions. These new structures favor that "Jesuit institutions and individuals understand themselves as participants in a greater mission that transcends the borders of their school or country, and wish to offer their talent, their time and their wealth, as part of this wider mission."<sup>12</sup>

*Networks open new levels of mission, proposing, channeling, and coordinating a level of synergy that is beyond the scope and influence of separate institutions.*

Think of Justice in Mining<sup>13</sup>, where the work of our NGOs, universities, and social centers is aligned for advocacy on legislation of European extractive corporations in Africa, thus achieving - together with other civil society organizations - a structural impact on the RDC conflict that was unthinkable previously at the institutional level. Or it is the case of JC-HEM<sup>14</sup> where the conjunction of the distance learning capabilities of Jesuit universities and the presence of the Jesuit Refugee Service at refugee camps across the globe gave rise to a new working model, a new mission area previously unreachable, which today has been institutionalized in the Jesuit Worldwide Learning initiative. These new configurations allow us to open new mission spaces due to a new scale, greater impact, and new intersectoral hybridizations. These newly discovered spaces allow us to respond to the new missionary challenges of our times. In many cases the limit lies in our ability to discover these spaces through innovation, creativity, and the ability to manage the necessary change towards these new configurations.

<sup>12</sup> Lowney, Chris "On Jesuit Networking" paper for the 1st International Networking Conference at Boston College, April 2012. Available at <https://jesuit.network/documents/>

<sup>13</sup> The Justice in Mining Network is the GIAN focused on Governance and Management of Natural and Mineral resources (<https://justiceinmining.com/>).

<sup>14</sup> The Jesuit Common Higher Education at the Margins was the original program from the Jesuit Commons Initiative today known as Jesuit Worldwide Learning (<https://www.jwl.org/>).

The main topics for collaborative endeavors are Peace & Reconciliation (8.93), Education (8.92), Human Rights (8.9), Migrants & Refugees (8.88), Solidarity (8.8) and the Youth (8.71). Clearly social and educational objectives are those that bring more traction for collaboration in the Jesuit apostolic body.



Figure 4. Main topics for collaboration within the Jesuit Network.

It is very interesting to think about how these new initiatives, which have no sense in themselves but as catalysts of collaboration between existing institutions, are an innovative way to take advantage of our current resources and align our works around a renewed mission. We must take these institutions into account when discerning possible sustainable configurations in the future. In the same way networks open possibilities for our discernment as a body, with this new level of agency they now also offer us a new criterion - acting in synergy - as an element to be considered in the discernment of possible apostolic preferences.

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## GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Finally, the great challenge is how to accompany and align these new structures with the Society's mission. The questions we face are: What type of real and specific leadership should be exercised on these new models of horizontal structures? Who should do it? And at what level of Jesuit governance? There are many points of connection with the government of the Society of Jesus at the global level that still need to be clarified, but we are beginning to understand the need for a formal link through which the mission is assigned and a new type of leadership understood as persuasion, animation, and promotion of networks.

It looks like the supra-provincial structures of governance (conferences of provincials, secretariats, central government) are the loci where the globalized mission should be enacted through local realities. These structures should assure an ecosystem to nurture, foster, and stimulate networking. Persuasion and encouragement are needed to act at this level, connecting resources with priorities and combining participation with the strength of a common mission formulated and actualized from a central authority. Only at this level can resources be connected with priorities. The authority of Father General is the link with the universal mission, and subsidiarity is a key concept for deploying the universal mission through a hierarchical apostolic body.

*The question becomes how this new structure of interconnected, bottom-up approaches can be aligned and dynamized towards a coordinated corporate mission while the traditional levels of provincial and conference coordination remain operative across the Society*

This does not mean centralization, but rather points to the centrality of mission. Nor does it clash with global subsidiarity as the organizing principle for Jesuit networking. The question becomes how this new structure of interconnected, bottom-up approaches can be aligned and dynamized towards a coordinated corporate mission while the traditional levels of provincial and conference coordination remain operative across the Society.

The traditional way to coordinate the corporate mission has been done at the provincial level through the coordination of the institutions within local apostolic sectors under the leadership of a delegate that coordinates with the provincial and with the other sectors. The same structure has been developed at conference level, creating a strong coordination between works of the same apostolic sector at both provincial and conference level. At the same time, for the last 40 years, new structures for collaboration and networking have been blooming at the provincial, conference, and global levels. This new “Jesuit wirearchy” complements the hierarchy by providing new flexibility, horizontality, and transversality for complex apostolic answers.

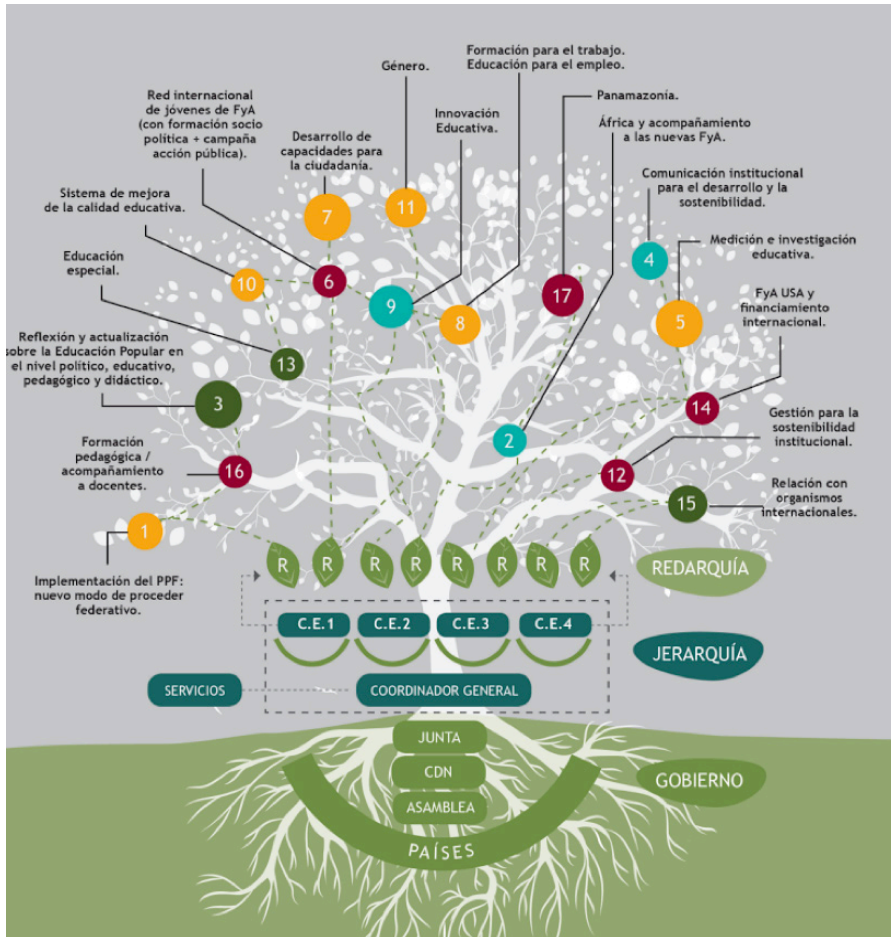
*There is a new “Jesuit wirearchy” which complements the hierarchy by providing new flexibility, horizontality, and transversality for complex apostolic answers.*



Figure 5. Most of our current structures for collaboration and networking have been created in the last 40 years.

Most of the networks are taking place at the conference level, but in the last few years the initiatives with global scope have been growing in number. Yet the interesting thing is that, given the configuration of the General Curia, even global networks such as Fe y Alegría, the Xavier Network, or the GIAN, are being linked to Jesuit governance through a specific conference. The Society is experimenting with its structures by linking global networks to regional governance structures, leading these regional actors to become increasingly prepared for apostolic leadership and more global in their strategic vision. The exceptions are JRS - directly linked to Father General himself – or the Rome Secretariats Networks (IAJU and Educate Magis).

There is also a need to advance a new type of leadership that recognizes the benefits of a synergetic relationship between Jesuit governance structures and Jesuit networks. This leadership model envisions a core element of Society governance as the facilitation, animation, and promotion of networks, rather than as an exercise of authority over functionally dependent networks.



A good example is that the CPAL conference has understood this dynamism well, organizing its structure in networks and not in apostolic sectors. Also, Fe y Alegría's new Federative Priorities Plan is based on the idea of federative networks. Even the strategy of the Secretariats of Rome is increasingly oriented towards the revitalization of global networking in their own apostolic sectors.

Figure 6. The new strategic planning for the International Federation of Fe y Alegría is based on the idea of wirearchy and implemented over current and newly created federative networks.

If we assume that the Society of Jesus now has an apostolic body that is dual in nature - both networked and hierarchical - this should be taken into account for the strategies of deployment of the universal mission. The hierarchy adds the stability, predictability, efficiency, and scale, and the wirearchy provides explorability, adaptability, and learning capacity. While the hierarchy facilitates the synchronization and coordination of the whole body, the wirearchy assures the participation, innovation, and flexibility. It is clear that network dynamics require specific intelligence and leadership to be at the service of the mission, especially if we want to make it a strategic process that adds to the current dynamism of discernment and restructuring that we are currently undertaking within the Society.



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## IT'S NOT EASY

At this point it is also important to recognize the enormous difficulties that the Society of Jesus has in deploying these networks efficiently. Beyond official discourses, a weak sense of universal mission is a barrier when it comes to overcoming self-sufficiency and the individualism within our way of proceeding. On the other hand, the lack of resources leaves us very focused on the urgent, which normally does not go beyond our own institutions and provinces.

Many of the international collaborative efforts do not work because our own organizational culture is hierarchical and composed of very defined working silos that make horizontal relationships very difficult. Finally, our established conception of leadership and obedience complicates the uptake of any new approaches based on implication by influence and persuasion to the mission. None of these obstacles are definitive and unnavigable, but they all must be recognized in order to understand the complexity of the organizational culture change at which we are aiming.

Our most important obstacle to collaboration, by far, is the lack of collaborative culture, followed by the lack of structures, resources, communication, and clarity in the common objectives.

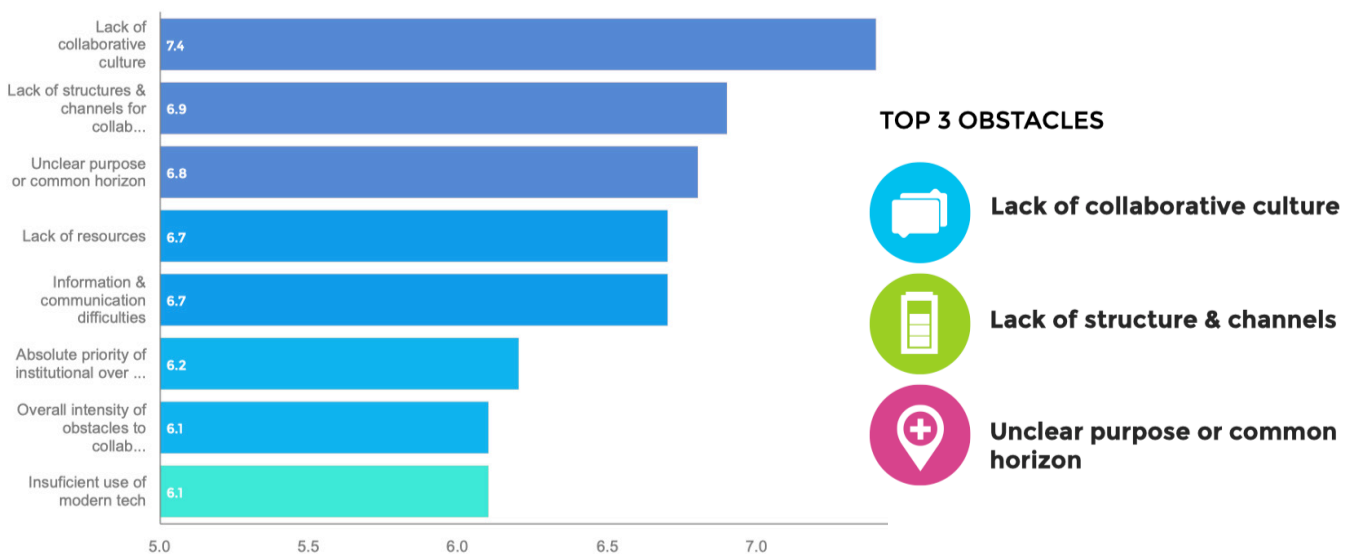


Figure 7. Main obstacles to collaboration

## 4 | CONCLUSIONS

There remains a great deal of reflection to be done on how networks are not only operational structures but opportunities to channel a new culture of collaboration and collective action that helps us grow towards greater and wider achievements in our shared mission. This is precisely one of the greatest strategic challenges we have been facing since GC35. The road traveled since 2008 and the new emphasis acquired by networking in GC36 encourage us to think that, indeed, networks are an interesting and exciting response to our search for structures at the service of the universal mission.

Once we have accepted our call to universality and we are aware of the internationality and diversity of our apostolic body, the Ignatian criteria make the issue of organizational structures a key variable in discernment for the mission.

Criteria such as the urgency or complexity of the problem would be valid in themselves, but it is the criteria of seeking the most universal good and of the absence of other actors that point directly to the main dilemma: What is it that we can do together, that has a more universal reach, and where others are not responding? Does the Society of Jesus have the necessary structures to deploy this renewed mission we are called for in today's globalized context? This is why collaborative organizational development and the adaptation of our mission's structures are increasingly critical issues for our apostolic future.

*Collaborative organizational development and the adaptation of our mission's structures are increasingly critical issues for our apostolic future.*

Jesuit networks must be understood as a structural consequence of being a mission-oriented body, and as innovative ways of responding to new apostolic challenges. In case the point has not already been made clear: Jesuits and our companions in mission only develop networks for the good of the mission, and the growing creation of networks is the fruit of our constant apostolic discernment and our first vocation to universality. We are still far from having finished "weaving" our renewed apostolic body with new

connections and possibilities. We need an ecosystem that encourages collaboration and association on a larger scale and the training of individuals with the necessary skills, vision, and leadership for a universal and collaborative mission. There have been many efforts at the conferences and the apostolic secretaries in recent years and - little by little - these efforts have already begun to bear fruit. We need to guarantee the depth and harmony of this progressive apostolic reconfiguration. This process is emergent, it is undirected, and it is a consequence of continuous dialogues and decentralized experimentation. We should ensure that emerging networks are truly prophetic, and our organizational development at the international level truly responds to that of an apostolic body with a shared mission.

*Jesuit networks must be understood as a structural consequence of being a mission-oriented body, and as innovative ways of responding to new apostolic challenges.*



Networking in the Society of Jesus (a) is a **structural** proposal for the mission, a response to a call that begins with the contemplation of reality, seeking to find the presence and call of the Lord in a communitarian way; (b) builds from the depth of its **identity and values** but (c) does not focus on itself, but on the strength of the **shared mission**; (d) creates opportunities to open up to “the new”, spaces to share, connect, co-create, and generate **new possibilities** with others; (e) is attentive to **diversity** and respects the principle of **global subsidiarity**, complementing, reinforcing, and strengthening local initiatives, instead of replacing them; (f) constructs and promotes a **sense of unity** and community that encourages **participation, transparency**, the construction of corporate identity, and **community discernment**; (g) points to **new levels of agency** or mission areas unattainable by the actors separately; and (h) has a **facilitating leadership** and a **clear link with the universal mission**, concretized through a formal link with the government of the Society.



Do you want to know more about how the Society of Jesus is weaving its structures of collaboration at the international level? For more information about Jesuit networks and Jesuit networking, please visit our site <https://jesuit.network/>, the home of the Jesuit Networking project, a space to raise awareness about, study, systematize and foster international networking among Jesuit institutions.

# APPENDIX I | LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

This document is a consequence of the intense debate and discussions of the 2nd Conference on International Jesuit Networking hold at Georgetown University on February 15-17, 2018. The conference brought together religious and lay people, academics and practitioners from apostolic works and from various different levels of Jesuit structures of governance. The main objective was to continue a line of reflection and research on the opportunities and ways to develop international networking in the Ignatian family. Complete information about the conference can be found at <http://jesuit.network>. Here is the list of participants:

1. Paul Almeida, Dean MSB
2. Fr. Ron Anton, SJ, MSB
3. Luis Arancibia, Fe y Alegría
4. Fr. Robert Ballecer, SJ, General Curia Communications
5. Tom Banchoff, GU Global Engagement
6. José Bento, Business School, Warwick University
7. Bob Bies, Professor of Management and Leadership, MSB
8. Fr. Mark Bosco, SJ, GU VP for Mission and Ministry
9. Ann Marie Brennan, CLC World Executive Council
10. Fr. Charles Currie, SJ, Jesuit Commons
11. Fr. John Dardis, SJ, General Assistant of Discernment and Planning
12. Jack DeGiogia, GU President
13. Alain Deneef, President WUJA
14. Tina Facca, President CJBE
15. Fr. Ed Fasset, SJ, Secretary of Collaboration
16. Fr. Carlos Fritzen, SJ, Fe y Alegría International Coordinator
17. Kate Gaertner, Alpha Sigma Nu Coordinator
18. Fr. Michael Garanzini, SJ, Secretary of Higher Education
19. Fr. David Hollenbach, SJ, SFS
20. Brooks Holtom, Professor of Organizational behavior & HHRR, MSB
21. Fr. Roberto Jaramillo, SJ, President of CEPAL
22. Fr. Xavier Jeyaraj, SJ, Secretary of Social Apostolate
23. Chris Kerr, Director - Ignatian Solidarity Network
24. Fr. Fratern Masawe, SJ Assistant to Fr. General for Africa and Madagascar
25. Eamonn McGuinness, Educate Magis Executive Director
26. Fr. Jose Mesa, SJ , Secretary of Secondary Education
27. Fr. A.E. Orabator, SJ, President JESAM, GU BoD
28. Dr. Joseph Phillips, President IAJSB
29. Drew Rau, GU Global Engagement
30. Chris Rider, Professor of Strategy, MSB
31. Fr. Jean Denis, Saint Felix, SJ Social Justice Coordinator for US Conference
32. Fr. Sam Sawyer, SJ, America Media
33. Fr. Thomas Smolich, SJ, JRS International Director
34. Fr. Antonio Spadaro, SJ, Civiltá Cattolica, GU BoD
35. Fr. Dani Villanueva, SJ, Entreculturas | Jesuit Networking | GU BoD