



PRESS RELEASE

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NEW ACTION AGENDA TO SUPPORT TRANSDISCIPLINARY AND TRANSNATIONAL RESEARCH TO SOLVE GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Washington, DC – Looking to address looming global grand challenges ranging from climate change to human migration, graduate education leaders from 15 countries released a [new action agenda and guiding principles](#) for conducting transdisciplinary and transnational research to address these issues at the Council of Graduate Schools' (CGS) annual Strategic Leaders Global Summit.

The summit was convened in October 2024 at the University of Guadalajara, Mexico, and was co-hosted with Consejo Mexicano de Estudios de Posgrado A.C. (COMPEPO), with financial support from Educational Testing Service (ETS).

Water management and climate change are examples of the types of grand challenges that will require researchers with multi-disciplinary backgrounds and the ability to work across borders. Global Summit participants wanted to build consensus around principles of conducting transdisciplinary and transnational research to foster the types of researchers and frameworks needed to successfully tackle grand challenges.

For transdisciplinary research to succeed, however, it needs to be supported and recognized within a university system that is currently focused on disciplines. Transnational research requires international collaboration between scholars and the ability to create projects that are not limited to a single national perspective or approach, so they are able to scale an issue over multiple nations or regions.

Suzanne Ortega, president of CGS, said that addressing these goals and utilizing the action agenda will help graduate deans create programs that will foster transdisciplinary scholarship and center transnational research around those most affected by issues.

"This year's participants worked hard on developing an action agenda to help universities foster curricular innovations, support collaborative research models and establish new metrics for evaluating impact," Ortega said. "Transnational research must prioritize inclusivity, ensuring equal participation from historically excluded groups, to be effective. We thank COMPEPO and the University of Guadalajara for hosting us and helping us to explore these complex topics."

"The interaction with leaders and experts in postgraduate and research programs from 15 different countries, offered an opportunity to generate dialogue at the highest level," Ana Marcela Torres Hernández, President of COMPEPO, said. "Regardless of the type of institution or the country, there was much agreement on actions, programs or models to improve the transdisciplinary and transnational research needed to solve global grand challenges."

"The CGS Global Summit provides an extraordinary opportunity to collaborate with academic thought leaders and align graduate education to evolving economies and community needs," Ken Eisner, Managing Director, Global Higher Education to Workforce at ETS. "ETS wants to extend our

appreciation to CGS's leadership for convening this collaborative network and fostering the innovation and cooperation needed to address the world's most pressing issues."

Next year's Global Summit will be held September 28-30 at the Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS), Quebec City, Canada, in partnership with Fonds de recherche du Québec and Université du Québec. The topic will be, "AI and Emerging Technology to Support Student Success."

Hosted by CGS and international partners since 2007, the summit seeks to identify differences and commonalities among leaders in graduate education globally and to develop best practices around shared priorities.

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About CGS

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of approximately 460 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.