

Atlas Network's semi-annual review of the worldwide freedom movement

FREEDOM'S CHAMPION

WINTER 2022



The 2022 Templeton
Freedom Award

Alumni
in Focus:
Brooke
Medina

2023 Smart Bets

Nycollas Liberato's prize-winning
project supports young leaders in Brazil

SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

David Thayer

Bottom-Up Change for Liberty in Latin America

Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner 2022



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On the Cover: Nycollas Liberato, executive director of Students for Liberty Brasil, with a resident of the Nova Esperança (“New Hope”) favela outside São Paulo. His organization is a 2023 Smart Bet and the winner of the top prize at the 2022 Investors Summit for Liberty. Turn to page 25 and watch Atlas Network’s virtual reality documentary “New Hope” to find out more about Students for Liberty Brasil, and turn to page 4 to learn about what our partners are accomplishing across Latin America. Photo / Charles Fritschner

MISSION

Atlas Network increases global prosperity by strengthening a network of independent partner organizations that promote individual freedom and are committed to identifying and removing barriers to human flourishing.

VISION

Our vision is of a free, prosperous, and peaceful world where the principles of individual liberty, property rights, limited government, and free markets are secured by the rule of law.

STRATEGY

Atlas Network cultivates a network of partners that share this vision. To accelerate the pace of achievement by our partners in their local communities, Atlas Network’s unique *Coach, Compete, Celebrate™* strategic model inspires our partners to improve performance and achieve extraordinary outcomes.

Coach

Atlas Network provides world-class seminars, workshops, mentoring, and other learning opportunities that inspire professionalism and build community among our independent partners.

Compete

Atlas Network offers grant and prize competitions that fuel our partners’ efforts to develop, innovate, and succeed.

Celebrate

Atlas Network fosters camaraderie and stokes ambitions among our partners by celebrating their greatest accomplishments through events and media outreach.

Atlas Network has been a four-star Charity Navigator member since 2008.

Atlas Network is a GuideStar Exchange Platinum-Level Participant.

Atlas Network’s donation payment processor is certified to PCI Service Provider Level 1, the most stringent level of certification available.



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Courage, wisdom, and generosity



“Putin’s mistake,” said Ukrainian MP Maryan Zablotsky, “was to send slaves to conquer free people.” This sentence, delivered in May at our Europe Liberty Forum in Warsaw, sums up 2022 like none other.

Yes, liberal democracies are reeling from exogenous shocks (and a number of self-inflicted wounds), but the world’s authoritarians have had a worse year still. Xi pursues a mad goal of COVID-Zero for more than a billion increasingly restless Chinese; Iran’s Ayatollahs try to impose rigid “morality rules” on a defiant population; and Putin’s ambitions to reestablish the Soviet empire are in tatters.

The great thing about free societies is that they can self-correct thanks to feedback loops that authoritarians would outlaw and quash. It’s a messy process and bad actors abound. But in free societies, each of us has a say in our future.

That’s really what the entirety of Atlas Network and the worldwide freedom movement is about. Together, we become more effective advocates for individual liberty, limited government, and the social cooperation that flowers when freedom displaces coercion.

We take inspiration from the successes our partners are achieving. Right now, we especially salute Advocata Institute, winner of the 2022 Templeton

Freedom Award for their work to alleviate Sri Lanka’s economic collapse, as highlighted on page 13 of this magazine.

Let’s imagine how the world would change if all 500+ partners of Atlas Network were as impactful as our Templeton Freedom Award finalists! Atlas Network exists to facilitate the idea-sharing that could make this dream a reality.

Of course, making real progress does not happen mechanically by spreading better know-how; it requires that we exhibit specific virtues. We need courage, like that which is exhibited so strongly by our friends in Ukraine as well as by Berta Valle in this issue’s feature story about Latin America. We need wisdom, to keep the focus on real increases in freedom, not gotcha partisan-

ship. And, of course, we depend on your own generosity. Atlas Network is 100% reliant on private philanthropy to undertake the important work you see in these pages, and I thank you for your continued generosity and trust in us.

Brad Lips
Chief Executive Officer,
Atlas Network

Bottom-Up Change for Liberty in Latin America



By **Roberto Salinas-León**
Director, Atlas Network, Center for Latin America

Latin America's current experiment with top-down autocrats is bound to fail. We are demonstrating an alternative: liberating the voluntary sectors of society from the bottom up.



← **Berta Valle**, Nicaraguan human rights activist, speaks at Atlas Network's Latin America Liberty Forum 2022. Her husband, **Félix Maradiaga**, remains in prison for opposing the Ortega regime.

When Berta Valle took the stage at Atlas Network's Liberty Forum on November 17, it had been 526 days since she had last communicated with her husband, Félix Maradiaga. Maradiaga himself attended our Liberty Forum back in 2018, when we launched the Center for Latin America, having worked with Atlas Network for nearly a decade to develop projects to revive civil society in Nicaragua around an appreciation for freedom.

Like seven other Nicaraguans who had the temerity to run for president of the country, Félix Maradiaga was captured and imprisoned in the summer of 2021. Berta Valle explained, "The common denominator of all detentions prior to the November 2021 elections was lack of due process—arbitrary incarcerations and political repression, paving the way for the establishment of a totalitarian regime." Valle gave similar remarks for a different audience convened by Atlas Network—at the 2022 Latin America Liberty Forum in Mexico City—about how dictator Daniel Ortega suppresses dissent via Gestapo-like military and policing powers. In the wake of that speech, Valle gained a prominent spotlight as a human rights advocate. The event's keynote attraction, Ricardo Salinas Pliego, head of

Too many Latin Americans associate our ideas with “neoliberalism.” This slur is used by the region’s illiberal populist leaders to try to discredit open markets and the institutions of liberal democracy.

TV Azteca, was so moved by Valle's remarks that he commissioned a media team to travel incognito to Nicaragua to film a series of media reports that exposed the brutalities of the Ortega regime. These videos by investigative reporter Otoniel Martínez were titled #DueleRespirar, or “Hurts to Breathe.” The title refers

to a young 21-year-old's dying exclamation, who was shot and killed simply for voicing his opposition at a rally against the dictatorship. The reports went viral, even causing diplomatic rifts with the otherwise Ortega-friendly government of López Obrador in Mexico. Valle herself went on to appear on *60 Minutes* in the U.S., as well as other international stages such as the Geneva Summit, the Community of Madrid, and Oslo Freedom Foundation. She has vowed to continue her plea for “proof of life” of her husband, Félix, in addition to over 200 dissenters who have been put in jail (including Catholic priests), and she will not abandon her crusade against torture, repression, and Ortega's brutal dictatorship.

This is one small example of how a message for freedom can “go viral,” thanks to the community of organizations that partner and ally with Atlas Network.

At the inception of the Center for Latin America, which

I have been privileged to lead for the last four years, we set out to reposition the principles of liberty. Too many Latin Americans associate our ideas with “neo-liberalism.” This slur is used by the region’s illiberal populist leaders to try to discredit open markets and the institutions of liberal democracy.

It does not describe us. Ours is a pragmatic and inclusive framework of ideas, with a positive and proactive agenda that emphasizes the core values of dignity, opportunity, social mobility, and equality before the law.

Together with our partners, we denounce cronyism. We reject the idea that prosperity is a zero-sum game. Instead, we celebrate the innovators of the private sector, and the capacity for voluntary society to answer social needs. For example, with support of Atlas Network, several Chilean partners effectively communicated to voters the dangers posed by the proposed constitution to liberal, democratic governance, resulting in a re-

We stand with the great mass of Latin Americans who simply want a fair opportunity to work for a better future for themselves and their families.

sounding 62% of voters rejecting the collectivist constitution. On the other side of the continent, Students for Liberty Brasil is working to promote better property rights to the marginalized population living in the favelas. In Costa Rica, IDEAS Labs is pushing for the elimination of bad policies that stifle entrepreneurship and drive up unemployment with the ultimate aim of creating an environment which unleashes human potential, rather than limiting it.

Investing in bottom-up strategies to increase opportunities for ordinary people puts substance to the messaging challenge we have embraced.

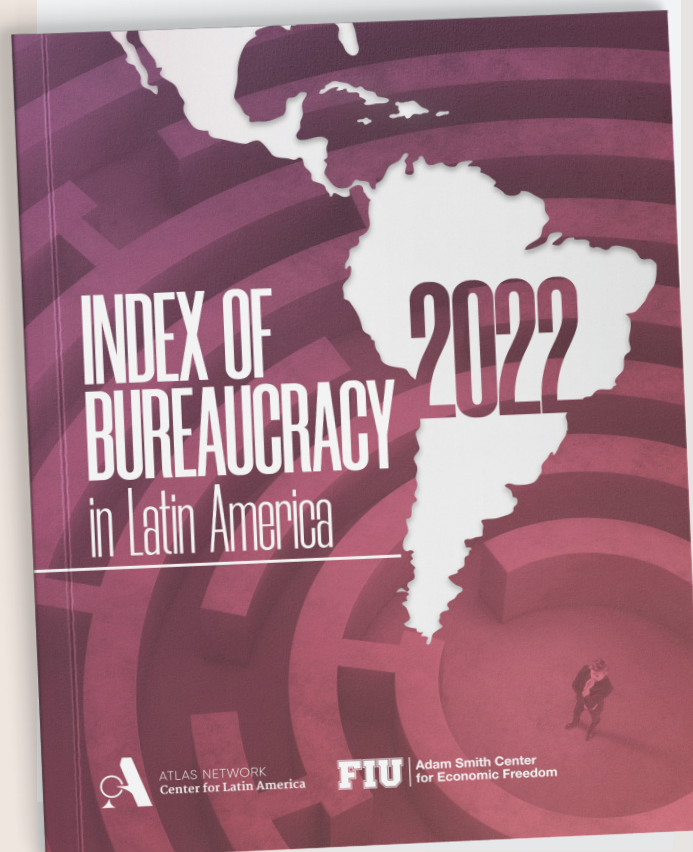
Back at the 2018 Latin America Liberty Forum, Axel Kaiser—now a senior fellow of our Center for Latin America—challenged modern classical liberals to think beyond “old-fashioned free marketeers who are only concerned with evidence-based arguments” and to consider more broadly what is required for “education of new generations.” Axel himself has set a powerful example, not only in his editorial contributions to visible venues such as *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post* but in his latest book, *El Economista Callejero*. It reads like an update to Henry Hazlitt’s classic *Economics in One Lesson*; it instantly became a bestseller in nonfiction books throughout the region. Kaiser ranked third in a Johns Hopkins University study of economic influencers in Latin America with the greatest social media reach.

Our Center also includes the electrifying Antonella Marty, who speaks all over the globe about inclusive prosperity and wealth generation and regularly appears in venues like *Newsweek* and *National Review*. Her Atlas Network podcast, *Hablemos Libertad*, commands a growing presence, not merely among partners and friends of the freedom movement but also within more mainstream public discourse.

We are hopeful that a new era of authentic liberalism can be born out of the hard times now being experienced in countries that have taken roads toward serfdom.

The conventional wisdom suggests Latin America is headed toward another “lost decade” of runaway inflation, economic stagnation, polarization, and despair. Indeed, dictatorships in Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua have proved resilient even in the face of defiant protest. Across the hemisphere, the radical uncertainty of the COVID era has enabled new versions of old-style “caudillismo”: messianic autocrats promise voters instant redemption. It should be no surprise that populist strongmen like Pedro Castillo in Perú, Gustavo

↓ *The Index of Bureaucracy* is a cross-country measure of the time it takes for microenterprises (the main source of legitimate employment in the region) to comply with mounting red tape and barriers to trade



↑ Business leader and philanthropist **Ricardo Salinas Pliego** headlined our 2022 Latin America Liberty Forum and called for more efforts to demonstrate how the ideas of liberty allow all people to thrive.

Petro in Colombia, or Gabriel Boric in Chile, have mostly disappointed their constituencies.

Our Center for Latin America takes the long view that political tides will ebb and flow, and there will be opportunities in the future to advance sound economics and proven classical liberal solutions. In the meantime, we work on repairing the reputation of free markets and individual liberty in Latin America by:

- burnishing our ideas in the most respected academic settings;
- translating them to practical action, powered by our 100+ think tank partners;
- working with a younger generation of dynamic cultural influencers.

We find receptive audiences at important conferences throughout the region and when we have been invited to give congressional testimony in the Peruvian Congress or participate in debate and dialogue at the Federal Reserve of Dallas or the World Bank.

Initiatives we have launched, like *The Index of Bureaucracy*, are now being co-organized by strategic partners like the Adam Smith Center for Economic Freedom at Florida International University. This research project, headed by Venezuelan economist Sary Levy, is a cross-country measure of the time it takes for microenterprises (the main source of legitimate employment in the region) to comply with mounting red tape and barriers to trade. The simple message at its heart is #déjame trabajar (Let me work). Everyday Latin

American citizens are well aware of how bureaucratic regulation and extortion strangle opportunities for growth and how they are an affront to human dignity. We stand with the great mass of Latin Americans who simply want a fair opportunity to work for a better future for themselves and their families.

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When will more countries in Latin America move strongly in the direction of classical liberalism? This is impossible to predict. We take some encouragement from Chile’s recent popular referendum that overwhelmingly rejected a new constitutional proposal laden with woke utopianism and overbearing authoritarianism. We see in Uruguay a positive example of responsible government, embracing the opportunities of global trade while trimming its public sector and removing barriers to opportunity. We will have an opportunity to celebrate this country’s progress at our next Latin America Liberty Forum, to be held in Pun-

ta del Este, Uruguay, on May 23–24, 2023. Among the dignitaries giving featured talks at this event will be Isabel Díaz Ayuso, whose tenure as president of the Community of Madrid has powered revitalization through bold deregulation.

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The hard work of our partners throughout the region, and our efforts to build the credence of the messages of liberty, take inspiration from Winston Churchill's wisdom: "An optimist sees an opportunity in every difficulty." Despite the danger posed by authoritarians rising on the so-called "pink tide" sweeping across Latin America, we will continue working, with Berta Valle and so many other freedom fighters, toward a future of inclusive prosperity, human progress, and the right to be free. I hope you'll join us.



To keep abreast of current events across the Americas—with smart takes by classical liberal experts who work with partners of Atlas Network—subscribe to our free weekly Axios-style newsletter *Mirada Sur*. In less than 10 minutes, we will get you caught up on the most important news between the Rio Grande and Tierra del Fuego!



Subscribe to our free weekly newsletter!

hablemos libertad

con antonella marty

Want a deeper dive with some of the most influential figures in the Latin American freedom movement?

Don't miss our Spanish-language podcast *Hablemos Libertad* with Antonella Marty! Her recent episode with Cuban film producer Asiel Babastro explores why he chose to leave his home country and what inspired his creation of the now-famous "Patria y Vida" video. New episodes of *Hablemos Libertad* are available every two weeks on YouTube, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Google Podcasts.



SAVE THE DATES!

You are invited to Atlas Network's 2023 events

Each year Atlas Network hosts events that convene our partners to learn more from each other and accelerate the sharing of best practices. Join us at one of our upcoming gatherings to be inspired by our network and to learn more about our regional approach to advancing human freedom and dignity.

Latin America Liberty Forum 2023

March 23-24
Punta del Este, Uruguay

Europe Liberty Forum 2023

May 25-26
Prague, Czech Republic

Africa Liberty Forum 2023

July 20-21
Cape Town, South Africa

Asia Liberty Forum 2023

September 7-8
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner 2023

November 15-16, New York

More information: AtlasNetwork.org/Events

The Templeton Freedom Award 2022

ATLAS NETWORK'S TEMPLETON FREEDOM AWARD WINNER

SRI LANKA

Advocata Institute

Advocata Institute has spent years mitigating Sri Lanka's looming economic crisis, arguing for critical free-market reforms. That work—and their frequent appearance in major local and international media outlets—has earned the organization a reputation across the country as a leading and reliable voice on economic analysis. Now that a financial crisis has come and inflation and shortages abound, Advocata is continuing its efforts to advance sound policy. Their work focuses on improving outcomes in both the short and long term. For example, Advocata took the politically unpopular position that price controls were exacerbating shortages of critical goods and encouraged legislators to end them. Lawmakers listened and lifted price controls on everything but medicine, and the shortages lightened in severity. In the long term, the organization is determined to set Sri Lanka on a path out of the financial crisis by reforming the country's tax structure, privatizing the country's loss-incurring state-owned enterprises, and restructuring the public debt. Policymakers across party lines are now open to Advocata's market-based policy recommendations, and the Institute is reaching a growing audience with sound policy that will improve lives for all Sri Lankans.



← Dhananath Fernando, CEO of Advocata Institute (Sri Lanka), receives the 2022 Templeton Freedom Award.

ADVOCATA



↑ Atlas Network's Casey Pifer interviewed representatives from each of this year's finalist organizations at the 2022 Liberty Forum. Left to right: Magno Karl (Livres, Brazil), Steven Anderson (Pacific Legal Foundation, U.S.), Heather Currey (Goldwater Institute, U.S.), Diego Sánchez de la Cruz (Foro Regulación Inteligente, Spain), Morgan Schondelmeier (Adam Smith Institute, U.K.), Dhananath Fernando (Advocata Institute, Sri Lanka), Casey Pifer (Atlas Network).

Organizations from Brazil, Spain, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, and United States have been named as finalists for Atlas Network's 2022 Templeton Freedom Award.

Awarded annually since 2004, Atlas Network's Templeton Freedom Award is named for the late investor and philanthropist Sir John Templeton. This prestigious award honors Sir John's legacy by recognizing Atlas Network's partner organizations for exceptional and innovative contributions to the understanding of free enterprise and the advancement of public policies that encourage prosperity, innovation, and human fulfillment. The award is generously supported by Templeton Religion Trust, and was presented live during Atlas Network's Freedom Dinner 2022 in New York City. This year's winner, Advocata Institute (Sri Lanka), will receive the US\$100,000 grand prize, while each of the five runners-up will receive a US\$20,000 prize.

UNITED KINGDOM

Adam Smith Institute



When COVID-19 reached the United Kingdom and the government began to lock down the country, Adam Smith Institute mobilized to ensure those lockdown policies were both wise and respectful of human freedom. Coordinating with partners in the U.K. and around the world, the Institute worked tirelessly to identify errors in policy that needlessly limited essential rights with little public health benefit. For instance, when the government's contact tracing app forced individuals to isolate even when they had not meaningfully interacted with a person who tested positive, Adam Smith Institute's research and publicity efforts led to public officials revising their COVID rules to allow the country to get moving again. The institute also pushed for the government to loosen isolation requirements for twice-vaccinated individuals, restoring freedom and dignity to millions of people. They advanced market-based reforms to speed the pandemic response and save thousands of lives by helping prevent a National Health Service monopoly over testing and vaccine distribution and involving multiple public and private organizations to decentralize these important services. Adam Smith Institute's efforts protected essential rights and led to a more prudent policy response across the United Kingdom.

UNITED STATES

Goldwater Institute



In the United States, occupational licensing requirements impede or completely prevent many citizens from working in their chosen professions. From dentistry to cosmetology, one in four jobs requires a license, and many of these licenses require hundreds or even thousands of hours of training. Even when aspiring professionals do satisfy these onerous, expensive procedures, they are often forced to repeat the process if they relocate to a different state. Recognizing that these laws often needlessly keep people from achieving a better life, Goldwater Institute's Breaking Down Barriers to Work initiative pushes for state-based licensing reforms across the country. Arguing that workers don't lose skills when they cross borders, Goldwater Institute worked in partnership with like-minded organizations to encourage the adoption of a universal recognition plan honoring out-of-state licenses. Since Arizona became the first state to pass the reform in 2019, 21 states have expanded license recognition based on Goldwater Institute's recommendations, and more states are expected to implement streamlined rules by the end of 2023. Already, nearly 5,000 people have benefited from this reform in Arizona alone, and that number will continue to grow as more states adopt universal license recognition.

SPAIN

Foro Regulación Inteligente



Stifling regulation has long plagued Spain's Madrid region, driving up housing prices, limiting individuals' ability to choose their careers, and increasing taxes. Atlas Network partner Foro Regulación Inteligente is tackling the problem head-on. Their comprehensive efforts have contributed to a number of impressive policy reforms, including the repeal of 170 regulatory restrictions, the passage of three laws eliminating occupational licensing requirements, and the removal of regulatory barriers to new housing development and the simplification of the permitting process. Those housing reforms helped open the door for Madrid Nuevo Norte—among the largest urban regeneration projects in Europe. This deregulation is expected to add US\$5 billion in new economic activity and lead to 50,000 new jobs, a boon for the people of Madrid. Lawmakers and the public alike have taken notice of these exciting developments—the organization's recently published book *Liberalismo a la Madrileña* reached #1 on Amazon's politics list and sparked policy debates across Spain and abroad. Already, regional and local governments have taken inspiration from Madrid's new trajectory and are exploring policies that contribute to greater access to opportunity across Spain.

BRAZIL

Livres



In Brazil, anti-competitive practices and regulations discouraged private investment in the crucial water and sanitation sector. The state-owned enterprises—which had a near monopoly over the system—failed to provide adequate services to the vast majority of the country's inhabitants. This meant that millions of people were forced to live their lives in the midst of open sewage and without access to clean water. Atlas Network partner Livres decided to take action, and they proposed a market-based solution. Convinced that allowing competition would lead to greatly improved and expanded infrastructure, they supported the now-passed New Sanitation Framework bill. This law ends the government's near monopoly over the sanitation and water treatment sectors and opens the door for private investment and public-private partnerships. Thanks to the New Sanitation Framework, since July 2020, about US\$14 billion of private sector investment has been guaranteed, helping to provide clean water, quality sanitation, and the recognition of basic human dignity to nearly 20 million people in over 200 towns and cities. This reform sets Brazil on track to meet its goal of providing clean water and sanitation services to nearly all of its citizens by 2033.

UNITED STATES

Pacific Legal Foundation



In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, governors across the United States issued emergency declarations and seized unilateral power, effectively cutting legislatures out of the lawmaking process. When it became clear that governors would not return responsibility to legislators after the initial virus outbreak, Pacific Legal Foundation (PLF) and a network of state-based think tanks pushed back. PLF helped draft, advance, and defend legislation limiting gubernatorial power in an emergency. Bills based on their work now require ongoing emergency declarations to be approved by a state's legislature after a set number of days. Other provisions were designed to ensure such declarations offer measured responses to well-defined emergencies, preventing sweeping restrictions on human freedom. These bills also ensure that judges decide on legal challenges to emergency declarations in a timely manner. So far, 11 states have implemented legal reforms based on Pacific Legal Foundation's work. In Pennsylvania, the bill bypassed the governor's veto by becoming a state constitutional amendment. In Kentucky, the legislature overrode Governor Beshear's veto, and PLF helped defeat his legal challenge to the law's implementation. The organization's efforts guarantee that governors can effectively respond to future emergent situations while curbing their overreach and enforcing constitutional safeguards.

ALUMNI IN FOCUS

Atlas Network Partners in Their Own Words

Brooke Medina

John Locke Foundation, North Carolina

As a little girl, I frequently encountered sobering and vivid reminders of the high cost of freedom. Living on a military base, with a father who was regularly deployed, I had the privilege of a front row seat to the challenges of defending democracy, both at home and across the world.

As a young teenager, I knew I wanted to serve my country in some capacity, although I struggled to find clarity on what that should look like.

Years later, as a college student, I was sitting in a session on the centrality of free and open markets to human flourishing. I remember the speaker, Magatte Wade, Atlas Network's Director of the Center for African Prosperity, said, "It's not just enough to have a heart for the poor. We must also have a mind for the poor." Those simple words stirred something inside of me. I had spent untold hours over the years working and volunteering at non-profits that were devoted to assisting men, women, and children battling poverty.



↑ Medina presents on "4 Opportunities When Managing a Multi-Generational Team" at Atlas Network's Chief Marketing Officer Summit in 2022.

From working in soup kitchens to helping families file for emergency aid to pay their rent so they weren't evicted, I had seen the dejection and disillusionment poverty brings.

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I had a heart for the poor. I knew that. But I also knew I wanted to apply my knowledge further upstream of the issues, many of which I found originated in poorly crafted public policy. From that day on, I began looking for opportunities to enter the think tank space, where I learned about Atlas Network and the valuable sup-

port, training, and education they provide to those of us in the liberty movement.

Last year, I attended Executive Accelerator, a week-long leadership intensive. I had recently entered a new role at my organization, John Locke Foundation, and the training I received from the Atlas Network team was invaluable to my growth as a leader and manager. I left that week with a fresh perspective on how I could best serve my team, our donors, and the cause of liberty.

Atlas Network's Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) Summit, which I had the honor of attending earlier this year, is another critically valuable training for liberty-minded organizations. The CMO Summit homes in on marketing and communications profes-

sionals' technical expertise, helping them sharpen their skills with experts in their fields. This summit gives CMOs from around the world the opportunity to refine their craft and crowdsource solutions to challenges.

In addition to Atlas Network's management training, their intentionality in facilitating peer-to-peer collaboration with others in the think tank space has expanded my network of friends and colleagues across national borders, allowing me to learn from and share with others in Lithuania, Bosnia, Ecuador, and more. What a gift this is!

Public policy is how we love our neighbors politically. The work we do on behalf of citizens, immigrants, taxpayers, and future generations matters, because people matter. Atlas Network understands the importance of this and continues to be an integral part of the liberty landscape, as it supports the men and women on the ground, advancing freedom all across the world.

↓ Medina moderating a panel discussion on technology at John Locke Foundation's Carolina Liberty Conference.



↓ Medina with Donna King (editor-in-chief, third from right) and reporters from Carolina Journal, a publication of John Locke Foundation, at the 2022 North Carolina Press Association Awards. The Carolina Journal team won nine awards.



2022 Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner

After three years, Atlas Network's Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner returned to New York City this year. On November 16–17, the events brought together over 600 attendees, including representatives from partner organizations around the world. After a year of victories and tragedies, Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner served as a fitting venue to remember and celebrate.

Cornerstone Talks from several of the freedom movement's foremost leaders anchored the discussion during the forum's first morning. Nataliya Melnyk of Bendukidze Free Market Center (Ukraine) spoke on the reality of daily life in Ukraine and the ongoing struggle to defend its independence. She explained that a commitment to the values of liberal democracy are at the heart of why so many Ukrainians are willing to continue the fight for

freedom. Aimable Manirakiza (Centre for Development and Enterprises Great Lakes, Burundi) focused his talk on the imbalance between women making up 90% of Burundi's agricultural workforce, yet representing less than 8% of its landowners, and how his organization is working to improve women's access to property rights. Axel Kaiser (senior fellow, Atlas Network's Center for Latin America) explored the runaway success of his new book *El Economista Callejero*, which explains economics in accessible terms. "We have to meet people where they are," he said. "We have to bring economics to the streets."

Among the breakout sessions that followed, the 2022 Lights, Camera, Liberty Film Festival offered attendees the opportunity to watch all three finalist films for this year's Film Festival Award—which came from The Federalist Society (U.S.), Institute for Justice (U.S.), and Libera Bolivia (Bolivia)—and hear an interview with a representative from each organization.

During the Think Tank Shark Tank luncheon, three contestants pitched their project to a panel of judges in front of a live audience for a US\$25,000 prize. This year's winner was Luis Fernando Sanabria (Fundación

Paraguaya, Paraguay). His project "Poverty Stoplight" will implement the methodology of the same name to take an individualized approach in aiding 300 families of the indigenous Qom tribe to identify and implement a path out of poverty.

An afternoon breakout session explored The Myth of American Inequality by former Senator Phil Gramm. The panel—which included the author—explored dynamics of poverty, social mobility, and income disparities in the U.S., and provided examples of how policy reforms can help make the American Dream a reality for more Americans.

Since 2014, Ukrainians have been fighting to protect their homeland from the Kremlin's aggression. This year, that war entered a new phase with vastly increased intensity. An afternoon breakout session brought together a panel of leaders from three Ukrainian Atlas Network partners, moderated by Dr. Tom Palmer, to discuss the ongoing conflict and explain how the violence that started in 2014 is just another chapter in the country's centuries-long fight to defend not just its territory but its very history, language, and culture.

↑ **Mohamad Machine-Chian** (Iran) celebrates on the life, legacy, and memory of Linda Whetstone.

↵ **Natalia Bruzonc** (Bolivia) delivers her winning pitch at the John Blundell Elevator Pitch Competition.

The evening's Eyes on the Prize Dinner opened with a Celebration of the Life of Linda Whetstone, a dear friend and mentor to many of freedom's champions around the world.

The evening's Eyes on the Prize Dinner opened with a Celebration of the Life of Linda Whetstone, a dear friend and mentor to many of freedom's champions around the world. Mohamad Machine-Chian (Iran), Khalid Ramizy (Afghanistan Economic and Legal Studies Organization), Aimable Manirakiza, and Debbi Gibbs (Atlas Network) each took the stage to deliver their thoughts in memory of Whetstone and her legacy. In keeping with Liberty Forum tradition, the

↓ **Luis Fernando Sanabria** (Paraguay) delivers his winning Think Tank Shark Tank pitch for Poverty Stoplight.

↓ **Gabriel Calzada Álvarez** (Universidad de las Hespérides) delivers the tenth annual Liggio Lecture, "Preserving Liberalism amid Emergencies."

↓ The State of the Movement panel featuring (left to right) **Lawson Bader** (DonorsTrust), **Dr. Lyall Swim** (Atlas Network), **Adam Bartha** (EPICENTER, Belgium), **Dr. Tom Palmer** (Atlas Network), **Magatte Wade** (Atlas Network's Center for African Prosperity), and **Dr. Roberto Salinas** (Atlas Network's Center for Latin America).





↑ Deirdre McCloskey speaks on the history of classical liberal thought with (left to right) Roxana Nicula, Ben Klutsey, and Matt Warner.



↑ Members of the Advocata Institute team at Freedom Dinner 2022 after the organization was announced the winner of this year's award.

after-dinner program featured the John Blundell Elevator Pitch Competition, during which several Leader Lab attendees delivered their 60-second pitches on stage. The audience selected Natalia Bruzonic (Libera Bolivia) as this year's winner.

During Liberty Forum's second morning, Gabriel Calzada Álvarez, rector of the Universidad Francisco Marroquín, gave the tenth annual Liggio Lecture, "Preserving Liberalism amid Emergencies." We must proceed from the question, he said, "Do we prefer the risks of the emergency in front of us, or do we prefer the risks of the government's response to the emergency?"

During lunch, a panel of speakers—each representing a region in which Atlas Network partners work—discussed the current state of the freedom movement and the specific challenges and opportunities each region faces. One key insight was voiced by Magatte Wade, director of Atlas Network's Center for African Prosperity. She pointed out that while classical liberals have powerful intellectual arguments at their disposal, we now need to be on the cutting edge of showing the world how deeply we care about people.

One afternoon concurrent breakout session focused on how Atlas Network partners keep the light of liberty alive in some of the world's most dangerous places. Khalid Ramizy described his escape from Kabul in 2021, Mohamad Machine-Chian described his efforts within the underground freedom movement in Iran, and Li Schoolland (Acton Institute, U.S.) described

her involvement in bringing alternative ideas to China, based on her own experience as a young victim of China's Cultural Revolution.

Another breakout session featured Deirdre McCloskey (University of Illinois at Chicago), Ben Klutsey (Mercatus Center, U.S.), Roxana Nicula (Fundación para el Avance de la Libertad, Spain), and Matt Warner (Atlas Network) discussing how to repair the rhetoric of classical liberalism and free societies. Klutsey stated that pluralism, a core tenet of liberalism, has two essential features: inclusivity and dissent. We must ensure that both are valued and defended, he said.

Freedom Dinner 2022 capped off the two-day gathering with a fitting sense of celebration and remembrance. The dinner program included a celebration of Ukrainian resilience and the life-saving efforts of our partners throughout the conflict. Elena Leontjeva (Lithuanian Free Market Institute, Lithuania) was recognized as the 2022 recipient of the Sir Anthony Fisher Achievement Award. Finally, Advocata Institute (Sri Lanka) was announced as the winner of the 2022 Templeton Freedom Award and its US\$100,000 prize. Their efforts to address Sri Lanka's economic collapse—both before its arrival and since—have had a profound impact in creating a path out of the crisis and toward a future of prosperity.

We hope you were able to join us in New York City for Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner 2022. Put one of next year's events on your calendar today!



FINDING NEW IDEAS IN OLD ONES

TEN YEARS OF ATLAS NETWORK'S LEONARD LIGGIO LECTURE SERIES

Leonard Liggio (1933–2014) is remembered as one of the key thought leaders and movement builders who revived classical liberalism in the second half of the twentieth century.



For ten years, Atlas Network has sustained a lecture series in Leonard Liggio's name, to energize new audiences with challenging ideas, surprising historical insights, and reflections on the virtues that made Leonard a quiet but effective force for good in the world.

Atlas Network CEO **Brad Lips** has edited this collection from the first decade of the Liggio Lecture Series, so readers can share this experience—and find new ideas in old ones. It includes a foreword by Atlas Network Executive VP **Tom G. Palmer** and features contributions from **Randy Barnett** (Georgetown University), **Peter Boettke** (George Mason University), **Judge Douglas Ginsburg** (U.S. Court of Appeals, DC Circuit) and many more!



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2023 COMING IN 2023



SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

David Thayer

Interview by Atlas Network's **Jennifer Porter**

What really sets Atlas Network apart are ALL of the events where we're given the opportunity to rub shoulders with a steady stream of freedom fighters from around the world.

Jennifer Porter: How did you get involved in the freedom movement?

David Thayer: Well, first, I am obliged to mention that these are my own thoughts and not those of my employer, but to paraphrase Ernest Hemingway, I got involved in the cause gradually, then suddenly. I had been hovering around the margins of the freedom movement since college, supporting a patchwork of various liberty-oriented efforts, then several years later my fellow Penn alumnus Thor Halvorssen offered me some advice: pick just a few worthy organizations, screen them carefully, then support them meaningfully.

Jennifer: What was your introduction to Atlas Network, and why did you choose to support us?

David: I had been previously aware and supportive of Atlas Network's work, but what really hit home for me during the pandemic was the catastrophic effect that lockdowns were having upon the world's poor, which unfortunately seemed to be of limited interest to most Western leaders. I wanted to ensure that the liberty movement would be well positioned to help those less fortunate once lockdowns were lifted, and I knew that Atlas Network would be the ideal springboard from which to do this.

Jennifer: What excites you most about your involvement with Atlas Network and the role we play in the worldwide liberty movement?

David: Much as many of us find ourselves slapping our foreheads in the U.S., the fact remains that most of the

world suffers under much less enlightened public policies than even our own. So knowing that Atlas Network is actively seeding and cultivating the fruits of freedom around the globe is really encouraging. Although, as we all know, there is still so much work left to do.

Jennifer: How do you think Atlas Network differs from other organizations in the U.S. liberty movement?

David: The name "Atlas Network" pretty much says it all: an organization devoted to supporting and connecting liberty-minded groups from around the world, enabling them to learn from, inspire, and encourage one another as they advance the cause of freedom. Among a range of really noble efforts within the liberty movement, Atlas Network is unique.

Jennifer: What is your fondest memory at an Atlas Network event?

David: There are many, but few events can compare to a dinner celebrating freedom on a professional baseball field! And while that night last year was magical, what really sets Atlas Network apart are ALL of the events where we're given the opportunity to rub shoulders with a steady stream of freedom fighters from around the world.

Jennifer: You've been a supporter of Atlas Network for several years. How has the organization grown and changed during your involvement?

David: I have been impressed with how professionally it's run. It's clear that Brad Lips and the entire team spend a lot of time engaging in thoughtful reflection, doing what they can to continually improve the organization strategically, but also tactically, as when Atlas Network swung into action to help those stranded in Afghanistan after the slapdash departure of U.S. forces.

Jennifer: How do you hope blockchain technology and Atlas Network's new Project on Decentralizing Technologies will help those in developing countries?

David: Truly decentralized technologies like bitcoin could be revolutionary—and are already helping dissidents in countries like Nigeria and Belarus by enabling anonymous financial assistance from sympathetic donors abroad. Beyond this, transfer payments are made dramatically faster and cheaper using digital currency. Not least, technologies like bitcoin can also compete with central banks who have for decades been devaluing national currencies, sometimes dramatically so, as in Zimbabwe and Venezuela.



↑ **David Thayer** and his wife **Laura** celebrate Freedom Dinner 2022 with Atlas Network CEO **Brad Lips**.

The name "Atlas Network" pretty much says it all: an organization devoted to supporting and connecting liberty-minded groups from around the world, enabling them to learn from, inspire, and encourage one another as they advance the cause of freedom.

Jennifer: What do you think is the biggest threat to liberty in the European Union?

David: There are many: the consolidation of power in Brussels, a growing regulatory hairball, unsustainable debt levels spread unevenly across the continent—but to me the greatest threat is the idea of a Central Bank Digital Currency. CBDCs are as popular among Europe's leaders as they are dangerous to Europe's citizens, since they could easily expand the scope of government power over individual choice like never before.

Jennifer: You've served for decades in the U.S. Army. How has that shaped you into who you are today?

David: Well, you can take the guy out of the army, but maybe you can't take the army out of the guy. Just ask my wife, Laura! But seriously—much as I was really proud to have served in uniform, doing so also makes it a bit easier to instinctively recognize command-and-control systems that tend to snuff out individual initiative. This, of course, has a place in wartime but has almost no place in civil society. I believe God gave us each a divine spark, so we should have free rein to be His co-creators—so long as we don't infringe upon the freedom of others who are endeavoring to do just the same.



← Representatives of all ten 2023 Smart Bets organizations at Investors Summit for Liberty 2022. Back row: (left to right) **Jordan Williams** (New Zealand Taxpayers Union), **Casey Given** (Young Voices), **Nycollas Liberato** (Students for Liberty Brasil), and **Blazej Lenkowski** (Fundacja Liberté!). Front row: (left to right) **Aimable Manirakiza** (Centre for Development and Enterprises Great Lakes), **Aneta Vainė** (Lithuanian Free Market Institute), **Basanta Adhikari** (Bikalpa—An Alternative), **Kendall Cotton** (Frontier Institute), **Roxana Nicula** (Fundación para el Avance de la Libertad), and **Donald Bryson** (John Locke Foundation).



LIBERTÉ!

Atlas Network's 2023 Smart Bets

One of the most exciting opportunities Atlas Network offers is our Smart Bets program, which implements all three components of our *Coach, Compete, Celebrate™* strategic model. The 2023 Smart Bets class represents ten partner organizations that have been selected for their proven ability to go above and beyond to generate positive change in their communities.

During the Investors Summit for Liberty at Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner 2022, a representative from each partner pitched to donors their organization's plans for the coming year. Students for Liberty Brasil took home the US\$50,000 grand prize, while Lithuanian Free Market Institute and Centre for Development and Enterprises Great Lakes each won a US\$25,000 runner-up award.

Organizations in the 2023 Smart Bets class will also have the opportunity to work closely with the Atlas Network team as well as both past and present Smart Bets organizations through consultations, collaborative meetings, and engagements with prospective donors. Finally, the partners from the Smart Bets class will be eligible for a US\$25,000 prize awarded to the grantee that achieves the greatest impact over the course of 2023.

Read on to learn more about Atlas Network's 2023 Smart Bets!

↓ Representatives of the 2022 Investors Summit for Liberty winner and runners-up (left to right): **Nycollas Liberato** (Students for Liberty Brasil, Brazil, winner), **Aimable Manirakiza** (Centre for Development and Enterprises Great Lakes, Burundi, runner-up), **Aneta Vainė** (Lithuanian Free Market Institute, Lithuania, runner-up).





↑ **Kristelle Mardini** is director of Lebanon Institute for Market Studies, part of this past year's class of Smart Bets grantees. LIMS received the Smart Bets Impact Award for their success during 2022 in launching Lebanon NOW—which publishes data and analysis of economic topics that are poorly covered by state-owned media outlets.

NEPAL

Bikalpa—an Alternative Countering Populism, Promoting Freedom



The majority of political parties in Nepal are left-leaning, with many policy makers and government authorities subscribing to populist ideologies. The media has likewise been criticized for politicization and bias, with populist news dominating the headlines. Without a diversity of options for receiving news, this system creates an environment where populism and nationalism become the predominant political ideology shaping the average Nepalese perspective. Bikalpa—an Alternative saw the need for a neutral news source that would provide an alternate discourse and promote the values of freedom and democracy in Nepal, and thus started a news portal to do just that called Bikalpa Khabar.

BURUNDI

Centre for Development and Enterprises Great Lakes Harageze (“It is time”)



Street trading is the main source of income for 57% of the Burundian population. It is an accessible, low-cost entrepreneurial opportunity, but it is also an occupation which leaves individuals with few economic and property rights. Street traders operate at risk of abuse by municipal authorities, including threat of eviction, seizure of agricultural assets, and arbitrary fines. In effort to address this reality, the Centre for Development and Enterprises Great Lakes launched “Harageze” (“It is time”), a project that seeks to reform street trade laws as a means of promoting economic progress in Burundi.

POLAND

Fundacja Liberté! Freedom Games



In a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected and facing populist and illiberal tendencies, Fundacja Liberté! sees not only potential but a need for interdisciplinary and cross-cultural conversation and debate to promote liberty, democracy, free markets, and open society. This is why they created Freedom Games, a forum based in Poland that aims to offer a creative and engaging space for individuals from sectors of culture, business, public affairs, and more to challenge and inspire one another in a network-building space. Not only does the event bring together leading intellectuals and decision-makers from around the world, but it also engages over 1 million viewers online.

SPAIN

Fundación para el Avance de la Libertad Taxes Down, Citizens Up!



In Spain, the national, regional, and municipal levels of government overlap in different areas, while still each requiring a significant budget, incurring high taxes for citizens. With the current climate of high inflation and significant economic stress for citizens, there has been increasing social demand for more government austerity and less non-essential expenditures. Fundación para el Avance de la Libertad (Fundalib) works to contribute to tax policy reform, and so far has seen victory with 25 improvements in tax law. A central component to this work is FundaLib's annual production of the Regional Tax Competitiveness Index and the Index for Economic Freedom.

UNITED STATES

Frontier Institute Big Sky, Big Opportunity



Elections are forecasted to deliver Republicans a supermajority for the 2025 legislature in Montana, opening the possibility for constitutional revisions for powerful policy reforms. Frontier Institute aims to shape the policy agenda for this supermajority with an expansion of their policy capabilities by launching the Center for New Frontiers. The Center will be dedicated to opening new opportunities for freedom and innovation in Montana, with primary policy aims including constitutional reforms to encourage economic dynamism, establishing permanent red tape reduction measures, enabling cryptocurrency and blockchain innovation, eliminating policy barriers to energy abundance, and developing human-first environmental policy.

UNITED STATES

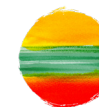
John Locke Foundation Empowering North Carolinians to Escape Poverty Project



We measure poverty rates in percentage points, but the people behind those statistics have a common desire: freedom to pursue a better life. That means breaking the cycle of poverty, providing for their families, and reducing dependence on government. Government intervention has made the vicious cycle of poverty even more difficult to escape. The John Locke Foundation's Empowering North Carolinians to Escape Poverty project is tackling the leading causes of poverty in North Carolina and beyond, including economic opportunity, overcriminalization, affordable housing, energy affordability, and mental health and substance abuse. The research and policy recommendations from this project stand to be transformative in changing the conversation around poverty alleviation policy from “What can government do to help?” to “How can government remove barriers so men and women can pursue economic independence?”

LITHUANIA

Lithuanian Free Market Institute Economics, Civics, and Liberty for Early Teenage Learners



Neuroscience and psychology show us that the early teenage years are a crucial time for shaping an individual's social and civic attitudes and beliefs. Lithuanian Free Market Institute aims to embrace this stage of development to foster value-based economic and civic learning that is grounded in the ideas of liberty and agency-based social skills. Lithuanian Free Market Institute has created an interdisciplinary course which currently reaches six in ten high school students in Lithuania, and marries together the ideas of citizenship and sound economic reasoning, and economics and ethics.

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand Taxpayers' Union



Leading the World from the Bottom of the World

In the 1980s, New Zealand's economic reform and deregulation set a precedent that would eventually lead to Reagan/Thatcher-style liberalism spreading throughout the West. New Zealand Taxpayers' Union hopes to work to reestablish New Zealand as a leader of freedom and become one of the most popularly supported taxpayer group in the world. They aim to take advantage of the upcoming general election and subsequent new government in New Zealand and formulate policy platforms that focus on improving New Zealand's overall economic freedom.



BRAZIL

Students for Liberty Brasil LibertyLab

Within Brazilian public schools and universities, students have few opportunities to learn about liberty, due to an emphasis on collectivism and the importance of government, and they lack learning opportunities presented from the perspective of free-market policies and entrepreneurship. Students for Liberty Brasil (SFLB) aims to change this reality by reaching students throughout Brazil and instilling the values of liberty and entrepreneurship. SFLB's approach is twofold. Within a decade of its existence, several organizations have sprouted from SFLB and now operate to directly impact public policy. SFLB now turns its attention more directly toward students, offering courses and training to foster a commitment to liberty and prosperity that will make students today the pro-liberty leaders of the next generation.

UNITED STATES

Young Voices Young Voices Level Up Initiative



Talent development, particularly of young people who can appeal to and engage with other young people, is a massively overlooked component of any sustainable political movement. Young Voices recognized this, and over the past decade has worked with over 400 rising libertarian leaders in industries ranging from think tanks to media. Young Voices is becoming the premier talent pipeline in the liberty movement, and their work centers on three primary programs: the Regional Leaders Program, the Accelerator Program, and the Dissident Project.

In Ukraine, a Network Responds to Crisis

Whether they're responding directly to the crisis by sourcing medical supplies or addressing propaganda, looking ahead to craft policies to guide Ukraine's post-war recovery, or continuing the hard work of reforming regulations, Atlas Network partners are shaping a better future.



On October 27, 2022, *Newsweek* published an op-ed titled "Ukraine Needs the West, But the West Needs Ukraine Too." The article made the straightforward case that greater integration of Ukraine into the European Union is a win-win for both parties, both economically and in terms of security and defense. This piece is more than an everyday op-ed, however. It represents the ongoing strength and resilience of Atlas Network's Ukrainian partner organizations and shows the power of long-term work by champions of freedom.

The article published by *Newsweek* was written by Dmytro Lyvch and Kate Shapovalenko, CEO and head of the think tank department at EasyBusiness, respectively. A longtime Atlas Network partner, EasyBusiness helped usher in one of the most significant economic reforms in Ukraine's recent history—the dismantling of a Soviet-era restriction to allow landowners to freely use (and particularly sell) their land as they saw fit. Despite the difficulties, disruptions, and tragedies of the Kremlin's invasion, the organization has continued its work. EasyBusiness is setting its sights even higher: Ukraine as a full member of the European Union.

EasyBusiness sees greater Ukrainian integration into Europe's economic and security networks as key to the country's continued independence and its future economic success. Their work in this area goes far beyond publishing an op-ed. Since the war broke out, EasyBusi-

ness has worked with allied non-governmental organizations Civitta and Center for Economic Recovery to evaluate the invasion's economic cost and plan a way forward. During a joint webinar in early October, they presented two essential steps forward: increase the efficacy of sanctions on Russia and continue Ukraine's steps toward full European Union membership.

For EasyBusiness, a key part of the drive for EU membership is a recognition of the value of open trade and a commitment to liberal democracy. In the research the organization presented via webinar, they pointed out that Ukraine has gradually reduced its tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade to bring its policy in line with the EU. A continued dismantling of these barriers would allow better outcomes in the short run and would ideally help shorten the time before Ukraine is accepted as a full EU member.



→ You can watch the story of EasyBusiness's work to free Ukraine's land market and the impact of their success in Atlas Network's 2020 documentary *Opening Up the Land Market in Ukraine*, available on YouTube.

This inspiring group of organizations and their exciting results did not appear overnight. Many of them have spent years of effort guiding the country toward liberal democracy and free markets. Now, their work is paying dividends.



They also hope that Ukraine's example of commitment to democratic principles will have a positive impact on other European Union candidate countries in the region, namely Serbia and Turkey, which have seen a weakening of democratic principles since becoming EU candidates.

EasyBusiness is far from the only Atlas Network partner in Ukraine continuing to operate. Supported by the Ukraine Freedom Fund, all nine partners are continuing to lay the groundwork for a better future after the current conflict ends. For some organizations, that means taking a long-term approach to protecting Ukraine's independence or its commitment to individual rights. For example, Open Minds Institute aims to counter the Kremlin's propaganda and show Russians the reality of the invasion. Ukrainian Students for Freedom won this year's Smith Student Outreach Award for their work training young people how to advocate for the ideas of a free society.

Other partners take a more direct approach, speaking directly on policy issues. Shortly after the invasion began, Institute for Economic Leadership successfully pushed for a loosening of restrictions on goods crossing the border into Ukraine, easing the flow of desperately needed supplies such as medical equipment. *Ekonomichna Pravda* has worked to make



↑ **Nataliya Melnyk** (Bendukidze Free Market Center) gives a Cornerstone Talk at Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner 2022, highlighting what life is like for everyday Ukrainians and why they're still fighting for their freedom.

economic data and analysis available to everyday citizens, equipping them with the tools to cast more informed votes.

Whether they're responding directly to the crisis by sourcing medical supplies or addressing propaganda, looking ahead to craft policies to guide Ukraine's post-war recovery, or continuing the hard work of reforming regulations, Atlas Network partners are shaping a better future. This inspiring group of organizations and their exciting results did not appear overnight. Many of them have spent years of effort guiding the country toward liberal democracy and free markets. Now, their work is paying dividends, speaking volumes on the power of local problem-solving, long-term commitment, and a network of allies. Despite the devastation of war, our partners are ensuring a bright future for Ukraine.

↓ Representatives from several of Atlas Network's Ukrainian partners speak at Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner 2022 on the history and ongoing reality of the country's struggle for independence. Left to right: **Maria Repko** (Center for Economic Strategy), **Kate Shapovalenko** (EasyBusiness), **Daniil Lubkin** (Ukrainian Students for Freedom), **Dr. Tom Palmer** (Atlas Network), **Sviatoslav Hnizdovskyi** (Open Minds Institute), **Oksana Kuziakiv** (Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting), and **Mykhailo Lavroskyi** (Institute for Economic Leadership).





Africa Liberty Forum 2022

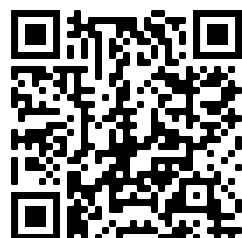
On August 25–26, 178 students, professionals, and think tank leaders from 31 countries joined Atlas Network and co-host Audace Institut Afrique (Côte d'Ivoire) online for Africa Liberty Forum 2022. This year's program was presented in both English and French, allowing for greater participation and engagement from every attendee.

Atlas Network CEO Brad Lips and Audace Institut Afrique Director Gisèle Dutheil welcomed attendees and honored the memories of two beloved freedom champions and dear friends to the African Freedom Movement: Ghanaian economist and advocate of the "cheetah generation" Dr. George B. N. Ayittey, and Linda Whetstone, who personally impacted and inspired many colleagues from partner organizations across Africa. After this welcome, several cornerstone speakers set the tone for the conference by highlighting reforms that are boosting entrepreneurship throughout Africa. These reforms range from the adoption of a flat tax in Mauritius to the creation of a dynamic entrepreneurial environment in Nigeria, thanks to the implementation of the charter cities concept.

The conference continued with a series of panel discussions featuring key members of the African Freedom Movement. During one of the sessions, speakers ana-

lyzed the resurgence of coups that Africa has seen in the past two years and considered contributing factors, including the inconsistencies of the African Union and public discontent with governments' inability to provide adequate security and basic social services. Panelists argued that military coups can be viewed as an accountability mechanism, and discussed how civil society organizations can play a part in strengthening non-violent accountability mechanisms to reinvigorate liberal democracy within the African context.

Day one rounded out with the annual Think Tank Shark Tank pitch competition, where judges named Evans Exaud (Liberty Sparks, Tanzania) this year's winner. Exaud took home the prize of a US\$5,000 grant to support his plan to encourage trade regulation



➤ Did you miss Africa Liberty Forum 2022? Recordings of most sessions are available now on YouTube! Scan the QR code to watch them today.



↑ **Fri Asanga** of Nkafu Policy Institute, winner of the 2022 Africa Liberty Award.

reform in Tanzania, building on Liberty Sparks' existing work on the country's trade policy.

The forum's second day opened with a panel discussion on how technology can be leveraged to solve problems in Africa, within transportation and agriculture, to expand the scope of data for more informed policy creation, and as a means of connection that transcends the traditional barriers of geography. The group also addressed the nuanced challenges of technology, noting that in the example of promoting stronger governance, technology can be used to improve processes through enhanced transparency and accountability, but it cannot change people or instill values.

"Africa Liberty Forum 2022 was an exciting and rewarding experience. From the deep insights from speakers to the highly relevant topics and discourses, learning, discovery, and connections were made possible in an amazing manner."

— TEGHEN VICTOR, ALLIED AFRICA (CAMEROON)

One of the attendee-favorite sessions of this year's conference brought together female leaders to discuss unleashing women's potential on the continent. The panelists maintained that any movement concerning the development of the continent is inherently limited if half of its population is kept in the margins. The difficulties highlighted included cultural traditions that enforce gender norms, economic limitations that stem from legal barriers, and unequal access to education. Despite these challeng-



↑ **Magatte Wade**, director of Atlas Network's Center for African Prosperity.

es, the speakers thoughtfully reported some of the recent wins that give them hope. In Kenya, recent general elections voted over 35 women into various posts, providing unprecedented elected female representation; in Cameroon, the minister of secondary education issued a decree that states that any female student who becomes pregnant should be allowed to carry on with school; and in the DRC popular support is growing for a new project that aims to reduce the number of documents required for a woman to start a business.

After a full afternoon of sessions, the conference concluded with the Africa Liberty Award ceremony. Nkafu Policy Institute (Cameroon) was announced as the winner of the 2022 Africa Liberty Award, and will take home the US\$7,000 prize for their ongoing work to lift women out of poverty by educating them on their property rights and challenging the cultural biases that discourage them from exercising those rights. The ceremony concluded with a special preview for the first of three Atlas Network documentaries filmed in Burundi with the Centre for Development and Enterprises Great Lakes. All three documentaries have now been released.



➤ Watch the documentaries now by scanning the QR code.

↓ Left to right: **Leonard Ogunweide** (Face of Liberty International, Nigeria), **Aimable Manirakiza** (Centre for Development and Enterprises Great Lakes, Burundi), and **Nyasha Freeman Musikambesa** (The Eastern Caucasus, Zimbabwe).





Asia Liberty Forum 2022

On September 29–30, 2022, some 147 Atlas Network partners and friends from 22 countries gathered in Manila, Philippines, for the annual Asia Liberty Forum, co-hosted this year with Foundation for Economic Freedom (Philippines). The event kicked off with welcome remarks from Dr. Tom Palmer (Atlas Network) and Roberto de Ocampo (Foundation for Economic Freedom) and an announcement of Atlas Network’s Center for Asia and Oceania’s newest senior fellow: Dhananath Fernando.

Concurrent breakout sessions followed, including “Labor Markets & Migration Restrictions—Implications for Asia’s Economies,” featuring Dr. Vicente Paqueo (Foundation for Economic Freedom), Jazreen Jefri (IDEAS, Malaysia), and Eirene Aguila (educator and attorney, Philippines). They discussed how reducing the regulatory burden on migrant labor can maximize economic potential and benefit every party involved. The second session, “Reaching Larger Audiences,” explored how think tanks and nonprofits can scale up their marketing approach to engage and mobilize supporters. Speakers Basanta Adhikari (Bikalpa—an Alternative, Nepal) and Khalid Ramizy (Afghanistan Economic & Legal Studies Organization, Afghanistan) addressed how multimedia strategies are used to amplify the message of freedom and counter populism.

The rest of the forum’s first day featured a variety of breakout sessions, including one centered on women’s economic rights in Asia. Moderator Dr. Ayemen Fatima (Students for Liberty, India) and speakers Sumhiya Sallay (Advocata Institute, Sri Lanka), Anu Maria Francis (Centre for Public Policy Research, India), and Sarvni-pur Kaur (Trayas Foundation, India) highlighted areas of both policy and culture in Asia that continue to present a barrier to women’s economic rights and broader prosperity. They described the work that Atlas Network partners are doing to promote women’s freedom and

↓ During lunch, **Simon Lee** (middle, unsubject.me, Hong Kong) and **Professor Victor Andres Manhit** (right, Stratbase, Philippines) joined **Dr. Tom Palmer** (left) on stage to discuss “Liberty and Self-Determination vs. Statist Autocracies” and how authoritarian states present a threat to liberal values in other countries



↑ **Dr. Ayemen Fatima** (Students for Liberty, India) and speakers **Sumhiya Sallay** (Advocata Institute, Sri Lanka), **Anu Maria Francis** (Centre for Public Policy Research, India) at the “Women’s Economic Rights in Asia” panel discussion.

↗ **Dhananath Fernando** of Advocata Institute (center), accepts the 2022 Asia Liberty Award from Atlas Network’s **Dr. Tom Palmer** (left) and **Dr. Lyall Swim** (right).

← The Ramon Obusan Folkloric Group performs traditional Filipino dances during the Asia Liberty Awards Dinner.

→ **Anu Maria Francis**, winner of this year’s Think Tank Shark Tank competition, delivers her pitch to judges and the audience.

autonomy in the region, such as improving access to sanitary products and increasing the number of career options available to women.

In another session, Atlas Network Academy hosted several strategic planning breakout groups. The first, led by Sujan Regmi (Pokhara Research Centre, Nepal), focused on how to use a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis in developing a new strategic plan. Another, facilitated by Anthea Haryoko (Center for Indonesian Policy Studies, Indonesia), explored using a target audience matrix in planning a marketing approach.

“This is my first event with Atlas Network, and I am greatly inspired by young advocates like me. I hope that as I grow as a development communicator, I can better myself, in all aspects, with resources, networks, and friends I have been able to familiarize myself with through Atlas Network”

— JAMIL CREADO, FOUNDATION FOR ECONOMIC FREEDOM (PHILIPPINES)

The third featured Jordan Williams (New Zealand Taxpayers Union, New Zealand) on how to get stakeholder buy-in using the “architect, translator, doer” model.

The first day concluded with the Asia Liberty Awards Dinner, which included a performance of traditional



Filipino dances by the Ramon Obusan Folkloric Group. Romeo Bernardo (Foundation for Economic Freedom) interviewed Dr. Raul Fabella, economist and professor emeritus at University of Philippines, on how we can defend freedom, growth, and inclusion in an age of inequality. Following dinner, Advocata Institute was announced as the winner of the 2022 Asia Liberty Award for their impact promoting free-market reforms as a means to alleviate Sri Lanka’s current economic crisis.

The second day of the Asia Liberty Forum began with a panel discussion on “The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework & the Advancement of Freedom in Asia,” moderated by Dr. Lyall Swim. Panelists included Philip Thompson (Tholos Foundation, United States), Dr. Ashish Bharadwaj (Jindal Global University, India), and Richard Heydarian (University of the Philippines, Philippines). They focused on the potential offered by more open trade and increased international investment to unleash growing prosperity across the region.

At Think Tank Shark Tank, Anu Maria Francis (Centre for Public Policy Research) delivered the winning pitch. Her project is aimed at increasing women’s economic participation and choice in India by addressing the state of Kerala’s arbitrary rules against women serving alcohol within the hospitality market.



Knowing that Atlas Network is actively seeding and cultivating the fruits of freedom around the globe is really encouraging. Although, as we all know, there is still so much work left to do.



DAVID THAYER