



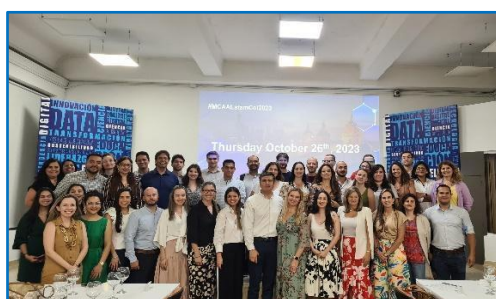
2023

MCAA Latam Conference

# SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION IN LATIN AMERICA

## MCAA Latam Conference 2023 *Scientific Cooperation in Latin America* Conference Report

This document summarises the sessions covered during the MCAA Latam Conference 2023 and comprises the conclusions and recommendations derived from such sessions around Scientific Cooperation in Latin America.



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## 1. Introduction

The Marie Curie Alumni Association (MCAA) Andean-Caribbean Chapter, together with the rest of the MCAA Latam Chapters, in cooperation with EURAXESS LAC, MSCA Colombia NCPs Network and Colombia Challenge Your Knowledge (CCYK) Association, co-organized this year's version of the MCAA Latam Conference (3<sup>rd</sup> edition), which took place on October 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023 (preceded by pre-conference workshops on October 26<sup>th</sup> afternoon), hosted by the Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar (UTB) -MSCA NCP Coordinator- in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia.

This conference served as a venue for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) current and former fellows from the Latin American region, to get together with internationalisation and research management representatives from Colombian universities to discuss Scientific Cooperation in Latin America, the core theme of the event. It was a forum for networking and collaboration, as well as for promoting MSCA and EU funding opportunities in the region. The 2.5 days included different sessions around Scientific Cooperation for Regional Development and SDGs, Science Diplomacy, Smart Specialisation and Citizen Science, among others, as well as talks/workshops on MSCA and Horizon Europe funding opportunities, research proposals and grant writing tips and tricks. Main conference language was Spanish.

## 2. Highlights

- The conference successful organisation was the result of a fruitful partnership among Marie Curie Alumni Association (MCAA) Latam Chapters led by the MCAA Andean-Caribbean Chapter, EURAXESS LAC, Colombia Challenge your Knowledge (CCYK) Network and MSCA National Contact Points (NCPs) Colombia Network.
  - [Agenda Day 0.](#)
  - [Agenda Days 1 and 2.](#)
- The conference gathered 77 on-site participants:
  - 18 researchers of MCAA Latam chapters from Mexico, Argentina, Chile and Brazil, as well as from Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela and other countries grouped in the Andean-Caribbean chapter. Such MCAA members represented various disciplines such as Social Sciences, Economics, Health Sciences, Natural Sciences and Engineering.
  - 20+ internationalisation and research managers from Colombian universities linked to CCYK Network.
  - 6 MSCA Colombia NCPs Network representatives.



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- Local and regional actors, including representatives from Cartagena Chamber of Commerce, Bucaramanga Chamber of Commerce and Cartagena City Hall.
- Local researchers, students and professors.
- The conference Days 1 and 2 were broadcasted via YouTube, counting with 200+ visualisations both days:
  - [Link to Conference Day 1 YouTube Video.](#)
  - [Link to Conference Day 2 YouTube Video.](#)
- Gathering such an audience allowed to bring together the perspective of different sectors for discussing and debating Scientific Cooperation in Latin America, which proved to be a fruitful exercise and a benchmark for future activities and events.
- The conference also counted with sessions for researchers to present their work and advise other academics on grant writing and research proposals preparation.
- The MCAA Latam Conference 2023 served as a space for officialising the launch of the recently created MCAA Andean-Caribbean Chapter.

## 3. Day 0 – Thursday October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023

This day served as an introductory space for MCAA, CCYK and MSCA NCPs representatives to get to know each other and start discussing ideas -in rather an informal way- around the conference theme.

### 3.1. MCAA Latam Chapters Meeting

[1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Local Time]



Being the first gathering of MCAA Latam members in a long time, Day 0 kicked off with an informal meeting among MCAA members from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Andean-Caribbean





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chapters. The session counted with both board and regular members from such chapters. After an introduction from **Sergio Manrique** (Andean-Caribbean Chapter) about the conference goals and the Andean-Caribbean chapter priorities, other chapters' chairs had the chance to intervene: **Daniel Ríos** (Mexico Chapter), **Jochen Junker** (Brazil Chapter), **Virginia Albarracin** (Argentina Chapter) and **Alejandro Tapia** (Chile Chapter) took the lead and presented recent activities/initiatives, the history and goals of their Latam chapters. The session finalised with an open discussion about how to attract more MSCA fellows into our group and how we can make our Latam chapters' communities last in time, learning from the experience of the most experienced chapters in our region.

## 3.2. Strengthening Research Internationalisation at CCYK Institutions

[1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Local Time]



A workshop was held with the Directors of Research and International Relations of the member universities of the CCYK network. A "World Café" methodology was used to discuss institutional strategies for strengthening the internationalization of research, based on the management model proposed by [MIMIR Andino Project](#) (*Modernization of the Institutional Management of Research and Innovation in the Andean and Latin American Region*). The conversation was divided into four thematic tables according to the components proposed by the model: strategic, execution, relationships, and management.

### Strategic

Participants discussed and reflected on good practices and the status of their institutional strategies from the internationalisation and research units to strengthen the internationalisation of research in their universities. It became evident that in most universities there is no clear, defined and declared path that facilitates the structured integration between the Research Directorate and the International Relations Office. Although the universities have an internationalisation policy and a research policy, there is no document that sets out a roadmap with clear objectives and goals that



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consciously involve both units. The importance and the need to work on a common strategy between the two offices to enhance the internationalization of research was recognized.

## ***Execution and Implementation***

Regarding this component, the discussion focused on how to implement the strategic guidelines of the internationalisation of Research, sharing good practices, experiences, needs, expectations and barriers of an ideal implementation initiatives. Important conclusions such as training, capacity building activities, toolbox building, and knowledge management are highlighted in the 4 groups of CCYK. Moreover, important opportunities of development between CCYK institutions had important attention in the discussions as knowledge transfer policy enhanced, coordination of human resources from diverse areas of management and support to the researchers and a strengthening of evaluation, monitoring and feedback process through more robust, innovative and real indicators batteries.

## **Relationship**

The focus on strategic relationships highlighted the importance of selecting partners according to specific criteria to ensure alignment with institutional interests. It was emphasised that universities should extend their relationships with partners beyond the teaching role and effectively identify and retain collaborators. The importance of communicating institutional achievements both externally and internally, facilitating understanding of projects and streamlining internal processes was mentioned. Similarly, providing researchers with tools that allow them to have a complete vision of the institution will facilitate their stay or relationship and promote connections in different areas of institutional interest.

## ***Management***

The guiding question of this table was: What are the main challenges that HEIs face from the administrative management of international projects? The answers were grouped into 3 components: participation of researchers, administrative management and risk management. The discussion included aspects on how to face the challenge of bilingualism in researchers, how to generate a culture for participation in international calls, in addition to mentioning that in many HEIs there is a lack of sufficient and qualified personnel to manage international projects. On the other hand, it is a challenge to align the accounting, financial and project areas for the effective and efficient management of resources.

Finally, risk management regarding exchange rates and the lack of conciliation between the financial systems of HEIs and external funders were other topics discussed. As opportunities for improvement, the alignment of the areas that participate in project management, such as the legal, accounting, purchasing and project areas, is proposed, and directing the administrative management models of the universities towards a more comprehensive model.



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## 3.3. Joint Initiatives among MCAA Latam and CCYK

[4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Local Time]



The session opened with the welcome words of **Alberto Roa Valero**, Rector of Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar. After MCAA Latam and CCYK Colombia audiences had met separately, it was time to go into a **Round Table** moderated by **Catherine Fonseca** (UTB – MSCA NCP Coordinator) and **Sergio Manrique** (MCAA Andean-Caribbean Chapter) for exploring potential cross-sectorial collaborations and initiatives between MCAA and CCYK, with focus on three questions:

- What advantages and strengths do we have in Latam for developing scientific cooperation initiatives and partnerships?
- What challenges and obstacles must we overcome in Latam for developing scientific cooperation initiatives and partnerships?
- What international scientific cooperation project/initiative idea can you think of?

There were 5 tables composed by MCAA Latam fellows split based on their discipline and 5 groups composed by CCYK representatives from Colombian universities rotating around the fellows' tables for discussing the above questions. Each CCYK group counted with one moderator and one rapporteur. This enriching exercise helped us to recognize that we, as Latin American countries, are similar and share common challenges, including political, economic, educational and public health conjunctures.

In this sense, these conjunctures invite us to define a consensus the need for:

- Defining regional scientific priorities in line with global agendas
- Creating common and transnational narratives on the importance of research
- Improving the communication of science for decision making and funding.
- Identifying resources for science and research.

To this end, it was concluded that it is important to work towards the creation of a multi-regional agency for the promotion, development and destination of science.





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## 3.4. Horizon Europe and MSCA Latest Calls Latam Results and Metrics

[5:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Local Time]



Day 0 pre-conference meetings closed with the presentation of Horizon Europe by **Viktoria Bodnarova** (EURAXESS LAC) and MSCA latest calls Latam results by **Catherine Fonseca** (UTB – MSCA NCP Coordinator). Viktoria Bodnarova shared general information about the portfolio and various opportunities offered by the EURAXESS platform. She also introduced the European Commission's Horizon Europe framework program, along with the latest statistics of the participation of Latin American researchers and organisations in this program.

Catherine Fonseca, on the other hand, presented overall statistics for the 2021 and 2022 periods regarding Colombia's participation in the Marie Curie program. She emphasized that Colombia holds the third position in Latin America in terms of participation in MSCA (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions). Additionally, she highlighted that since 2014, over 560 Colombian researchers at various career stages have participated in MSCA. Furthermore, more than 180 European researchers have undertaken research and innovation projects while receiving training in Colombia.

This session underscored the importance of continuing to promote these programs in Latin America, as they not only support the career development of researchers but also facilitate the increase of international scientific collaboration.

## 4. Day 1 – Friday October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023

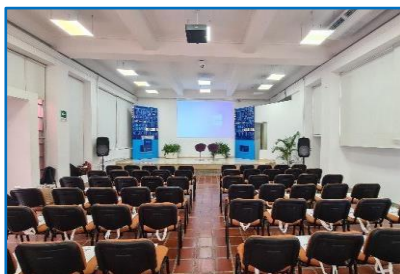
This was formally the first day of the conference and had various sessions about topics of transversal interest such as Citizen Science, Smart Specialization and SDGs, as well as an open session on MSCA promotion and testimonials including the EURAXESS platform and Horizon Europe.



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## 4.1. Conference Launch and Opening Keynote Lecture

[8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Local Time]



The conference opening counted with the welcome words and moderation of **Viktoria Bodnarova** (EURAXESS LAC) followed by interventions and introductions from **Carolina Santacruz-Pérez** (International Science Council LAC), **Sergio Manrique** (MCAA Andean-Caribbean Chapter) and **Giovanni Anzola-Pardo** (Chair of CCYK Colombia Network).

The Opening Keynote Lecture was in charge of **Simone Sasso** (EU's Joint Research Centre), who presented JRC's research work on **Smart Specialisation Strategies and Experiences in Latin America**. Simone explained to the audience the concept of Smart Specialisation and introduced it as a tool for enabling growth and development in regions based on competitive advantages in specific sectors according to each region's strengths. Then, he showcased results from some Latam countries highlighting the sectors in which there were more opportunities to exploit existent competitive advantages.

## 4.2. Scientific Cooperation in Latam for Regional Development

[9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Local Time]



This **Panel Session** was moderated by **Camilo Puerto** (CCYK Colombia Network) and counted with MCAA Latam chapters' chairs **Virginia Albarracin** (MCAA Argentina Chapter), **Jochen Junker** (MCAA Brazil Chapter), **Alejandro Tapia** (MCAA Brazil Chapter), **Sergio Manrique** (MCAA





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Andean-Caribbean Chapter) and **Daniel Ríos** (MCAA Mexico Chapter) as panellists. The discussion revolved around two questions:

- How can scientific cooperation in the Latin American Region have a positive impact in its development and growth?
- What can Latam (HEIs, government, industry) learn from the scientific cooperation in Europe for regional development and vice versa?

With regards to the first question, panellists highlighted concepts like Regional Innovations Systems, Open Innovation and the Triple Helix of Innovation as representative for showcasing the potential impact of scientific cooperation in the regional context and reinforced the importance of researchers' awareness about the potential impact their research work can have on society. For the second question, discussion focused on the challenges Latam faces for enhancing the research collaboration with European countries, in terms of funding and scientific cooperation.

Some important conclusions were reached regarding the above:

- There is a need to reflect on the relevance, purpose and opportunities of research to return to local communities in Latam.
- There is a need to build wider and stronger connections among researchers outside and within Latam.
- There is great potential to position Latam as a hub that attracts researchers from all over the world, taking advantage of its unique characteristics in terms of biodiversity and its unique ethnic, racial, historical, political and social composition.
- There is a need for strengthening research networks and infrastructure in Latam for boosting innovative and impactful research.

The panel concluded with ideas around how universities can have an impact in their regions by pursuing global research excellence for tackling regional/local issues. These were some of the proposals discussed:

- Consolidating the Latin American universities as institutions with multiple voices and scientific ambassadors, who connect the needs and interests of society to research communities.
- Enhancing the role of universities as actors that promote a culture of research towards regional cooperation and integration.
- Promoting transdisciplinarity in order to generate spaces and mechanisms for different actors to collaborate and work towards innovation.
- Consolidating Latin American universities as key actors whose research is focused, with method and rigour, supportive and open.
- Strengthening strategies at universities to attract young people to research.
- Adapting universities as entities that act as anchors to strengthen the business-government-academia relationship.



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## 4.3. International Scientific Cooperation for Achieving SDGs in Latam

[11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Local Time]



The day continued with a session showcasing the role Scientific Cooperation plays for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Latin America, organized by MCAA Mexico Chapter in cooperation with the International Cooperation Office of Cartagena City Hall. It counted with **Daniel Ríos**, **Diana Ceapa** and **Ana María Sanchez** (MCAA Mexico Chapter) and **Miguel Manga Quintana** (Cartagena City Hall) as speakers.

As background, Euraxess LAC, the MCAA North America Chapter and the Mexican Centre for Philanthropy (CEMEFI) organized in 2022 a gathering titled *“Urgent Alliances for Saving the Planet”* for launching the MCAA Mexico Chapter. In 2023, with the MCAA Mexico Chapter already being confirmed, a second gathering was organized together with other academic and civil society actors, this time with focus on SDGs measurement. This session in Cartagena frames MCAA’s interdisciplinary scientific work on SDGs as a fertile space to foster collaboration. The main goal of this session was to address the 2030 Agenda and its relevance in scientific cooperation; the 17 objectives establish a reference framework that focuses its remit on people and planet care. The session followed three different slots described next:

1. The first slot was a brief review of the SDGs based on the agenda objective number 17 on building alliances. A [set of videos](#) was displayed for showcasing the aforementioned gatherings and the open discussion with a wide audience, in which each person interviewed was asked whether they knew what the SDGs are about and if they are taking any action for saving the planet.
2. The second slot counted with the participation of Cartagena City Hall representatives, who presented the action the city is carrying out as part of its internationalisation plan for accomplishing the SDGs. This plan includes and recognises multiculturalism, education, climate change and the promotion of diversity and equity in labour competitiveness.
3. The third slot was interactive, openly formulating the following questions to the session audience [\[Link to Poll Results\]](#):
  - I. Do you know what SDGs are?



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- II. Can you name any of the SDGs?
- III. Which SDGs do your actions contribute most to?
- IV. Can you provide an example of scientific cooperation in benefit of SDGs? [[Link to Examples Responses](#)]
- V. How can you contribute to the advancement of SDGs?
- VI. With what word(s) would you summarize this session?

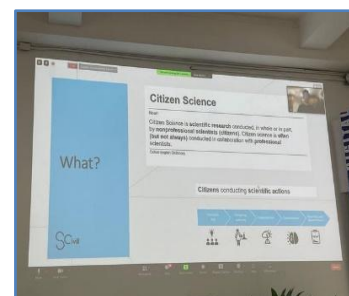
Attendants seemed to know the SDGs and highlighted Zero Hunger, End of Poverty, Health and Ecosystems Life, among others. The second question refers to the contribution to SDGs from each of the attendants' areas, having Objective 4 – Quality Education and Objective 17 – Building Alliances as the two most mentioned ones. Participants addressed the following concerns:

- Science uses jargon that does not contribute to society's understanding of the scientific community work.
- It is important to highlight that the agenda is broad and includes social, economic and environmental development.
- The SDGs are interconnected and represent a path to rethink the role of science.
- Finally, the scientific community can contribute a lot to accomplishing SDGs by promoting initiatives from the academic field that help articulate the objectives, integrating the knowledge of indigenous groups into the scientific community, and identifying multiplier actions towards SDGs accomplishment.

In summary, MCAA community should recognise itself as co-responsible for accomplishing the 2030 Agenda, given that our actions as researchers/academics have an impact on society.

## 4.4. Citizen Science: Involving Latam Society in Research

[2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Local Time]



The MCAA Brazil Chapter organized a session to discuss "Citizen Science: Involving LATAM Society in Research". The session was organized as a round-table with mediation by the chair of the Brazilian Chapter **Jochen Junker**. It featured four speakers: **Ana María Guerra Bernal** from





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Universidad de los Andes (Colombia); **Karen Soacha** from Red Iberoamericana de Ciencia Participativa (Spain); **Leonardo Dall'Agnol** from Universidade Federal do Maranhão (Brazil) and **Jef Van Laer** from Scivil (Belgium).

During the roundtable, the speakers presented different experiences and tried to answer the following questions:

- I. What is the outlook for citizen science?
- II. How to increase society's engagement in science projects?
- III. What are the biggest challenges and pitfalls?

In the beginning, it was pointed out that the Brazilian Government just created the National Program for the Popularization of Science, which will support science literacy and citizen science initiatives, especially involving the youth. A growing interest in citizen science approaches has been observed and it was discussed how this is important to increase society's trust in science and researchers. It was highlighted that civil society can participate in any step of science production, not only in data collection and analysis. It was also pointed out how important local connections are, to learn the context and reality of the participants of the projects, and to give them proper feedback and training. Authenticity of data, data privacy, ethical constraints and communication efforts can be an issue and not all research can be properly implemented with a citizen science approach.

## 4.5. MSCA Promotion and Testimonials

[4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Local Time]



Day 1 closed with an open session on MSCA promotion and testimonials, in which local and regional academics interested in such opportunities were invited to attend both on-site and remotely. The session counted with a EURAXESS & Horizon Europe presentation by **Viktoría Bodnarova** (EURAXESS LAC) followed by a presentation on MSCA funding schemes and opportunities by **Laura Peña** (Universidad de Medellín – MSCA NCP) and **Claudia Molina** (Universidad Autónoma de Bucaramanga – MSCA NCP).



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Next, there was an introduction of the International Science Council LAC by **Carolina Santacruz-Pérez** (ISC LAC). Finally, we counted with MSCA testimonials from former fellows **Sergio Manrique** (MCAA Andean-Caribbean Chapter), **Juan Carlos Muñoz** (EAFIT Colombia – MCAA Andean-Caribbean Chapter) and **Raphael Ocelli** (MCAA Brazil Chapter).

## 5. Day 2 – Saturday October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

The last day of the conference started with a panel session on Science Diplomacy and then focused on research presentations and tips/advice by MCAA members.

### 5.1. Science Diplomacy in Colombia and Latin America

[8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Local Time]



This panel session was organized by the CCYK Colombia Network and the MCAA Andean-Caribbean Chapter, which counted with **Viktoria Bodnarova** (EURAXESS LAC) as moderator. It also counted with **Jose Julian Prieto** (WEF Nexus Alliance – Fulbright Fellow), **Sergio Manrique** (MCAA Andean-Caribbean Chapter), **Juan David Reina Roza** (IDEAM), **Luisa Fernanda Echevarría King** (Universidad Simon Bolivar) and **Alejandra Gonzalez Penagos** (Universidad de la Sabana – International Relations Direction) as panellists.

In order to advance Colombia's positioning as an academic and scientific destination, it was concluded that it is necessary to focus on the following aspects:

1. **National cooperation:** it is important to collaborate with local and national partners in the area of knowledge/topic of the panellists, in order to meet other actors that allow us to advance on a common topic/area and who can be allies in (research) calls.
2. **Internal diagnosis:** you need to know what STI capabilities you have and what your needs and interests are in terms of international scientific cooperation processes. The key idea here is complementarity.



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3. **University's social responsibility on the global level:** Currently the impact and social projection of HEIs goes beyond the local context, which is why universities must prepare to have a broader impact at a global level, recognizing global challenges from the local level.
4. **Strategic relationship with the scientific diaspora:** it is key to have a mapping of the students/researchers who are abroad doing science and have a stimulus plan for a more strategic connection with their home HEIs and governments. These bridges help us position the institutional capabilities and also harness resources and experts.
5. **Influence and incidence:** Researchers should join associations, boards, international networks of interest to be able to influence their science internationally.
6. **Capacities:** it is important to develop skills (communication, negotiation, etc.) and transversal knowledge about the global agenda for young researchers as well as include scientific diplomacy as a career option for researchers (foster interdisciplinarity).

## 5.2. Research Proposals Tips and Tricks

[10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Local Time]



Conference day 2 continued with a session in which **Virginia Albarracin** (MCAA Argentina Chapter) and **Angelica Cuapio** (MCAA Mexico Chapter) offered valuable advice to the audience on the grant writing and the preparation of research proposals based on their broad experience with MSCA calls.

These were some of the aspects highlighted during these presentations as success factors when preparing research proposals, focusing on the case of MSCA calls:

- **Time management:** Prepare your proposal with enough time in advance; study the call.
- **Content quality:** Prioritize quality over quantity; develop a solid story.
- **Completeness:** Fill all the requested sections without exceeding the page limit.
- **Terms and titles:** Use adequate, comprehensive, balanced and clear titles. Avoid uncommon terminology.
- **Formatting:** Exploit bold, underline and italic without abusing; structure paragraphs and sections.
- **Training:** Look for grant writing courses/advisory at the destination institution.





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## 5.3. Your Research in 3 Minutes!

[11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Local Time]



Before moving to the conference closing, we had a 1-hour session organized by MCAA Argentina and Chile Chapters, in which 12+ MCAA members and local researchers had the chance -and challenge- of showcasing their research in 3 minutes or less [[Link to Poster Abstracts Booklet](#)]. Moderated by **Virginia Albarracin** (MCAA Argentina Chapter) and **Alejandro Tapia** (MCAA Chile Chapter), this session counted with presentations of researchers from various disciplines such as Natural and Exact Sciences, Science Diplomacy, Open Science and Outreach, Social Sciences/Humanities, and Technology, Entrepreneurship and Innovation. After all the presentations, on-site and remote audiences were able to vote for their favourite presentation, having **Daniel Finkelstein-Shapiro** (MCAA Mexico Chapter – UNAM Mexico) as winner with his flash talk on “*Cohabiting with Molecules*”.

## 5.4. Conference Closing

[12:15 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. Local Time]



Conference final session counted with **Camilo Puerto** (CCYK Colombia Network) as moderator. Firstly, **Joaquin Capablo** (MCAA Spain-Portugal Chapter) announced Juan Rivera (MCAA Andean-Caribbean Chapter) as winner, and Katia Villavicencio (MCAA Mexico Chapter) and Angélica Cuapio (MCAA Mexico Chapter) as runners-up, of the Short Story Competition organised



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by MCAA Spain-Portugal Chapter for this conference [[Link to Short Stories Booklet](#)]. Then, **Ericka Duncan** (UTB Internationalisation Direction) offered some conclusions and farewell words.

**Daniel Ríos** (MCAA Mexico Chapter) presented his farewell words, highlighting the conference success and announcing that the next MCAA Latam Conference will take place in Mexico. **Sergio Manrique** (MCAA Andean-Caribbean Chapter) took the work to offer special acknowledgements to organisers and officially announce the launch of MCAA Andean-Caribbean Chapter. **Viktoria Bodnarova** (EURAXESS LAC) was in charge of the final reflection and farewell, highlighting how cooperation based on people-to-people relationships, trust and consistency are the basis for materialising events like this and ultimately, scientific cooperation within and between the two regions.

## 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The MCAA Latam Conference 2023 was the propitious stage for promoting collaboration among researchers, research and international managers, and other stakeholders from industry and the innovation ecosystem on initiatives with focus on developing impactful research for tackling regional and global needs, in the shape of projects/consortiums subject to different funding schemes like EU's MSCA. The event's main output is positioning scientific cooperation as a key mechanism for approaching issues of regional and global interest.

The collaborative synergy among the Colombian NCPs Network for MSCA, alongside MCAA, EURAXESS, and CCYK, exemplifies the strength found in unified efforts. By weaving a culture rooted in networking strategies, this conference stands as a testament to the collective dedication towards fostering innovation and knowledge exchange. The success achieved in this event does not only signify the culmination of meticulous planning but also sets a precedent for future endeavours. This collaborative model serves as a blueprint for nurturing future events, ensuring that their execution mirrors the excellence and collective spirit demonstrated in this conference.







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Additionally, another distinguishing factor of this conference was the harmonious collaboration among diverse stakeholders. Scientific advancement embodies a collective effort involving various actors whose interconnectedness, united by shared objectives, enables an understanding of the diverse realms within the field of science and technology. Working together facilitates empathy and comprehension of each dimension of science, acknowledging that scientific progress thrives through the collaboration and synergy of these distinct yet interrelated worlds.

Expanding on the significance of collaborative efforts, the seamless interaction among heterogeneous entities during this conference underscores the significance of interdisciplinary cooperation in scientific development. The mosaic of perspectives, woven together by a shared purpose, elucidates the intricate tapestry of scientific exploration. Recognizing the symbiotic relationship between these multifaceted dimensions of science, collaborative endeavours foster an environment conducive to holistic comprehension and innovation. Embracing the diversity of approaches and perspectives cultivates an inclusive space where empathy and mutual understanding flourish, empowering each stakeholder to contribute meaningfully to the collective advancement of science and technology.

The main focus of the MCAA Latam Conference 2023 was Scientific Cooperation in Latin America. It is important to highlight that this event contributed to the global discussion on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) since emphasized and promoted spaces for international collaboration among different stakeholders for the creation of synergies to tackle complex challenges in Latin America, in addition to contributing to the generation and transfer of knowledge to improve education and the exchange of experiences around sustainability.

Finally, and bearing in mind that MCAA Latam Conference 2023 served as the venue for formalising the launch of the recently created MCAA Andean-Caribbean Chapter, it must be recognised that MCAA Latin American chapters, and researchers/alumni communities as such, must serve as integration mechanisms for gathering audiences of the research and innovation landscape and promoting the discussion and debate on scientific cooperation as means for tackling regional and global challenges, as well as for supporting and accompanying academics aiming at participating in funding schemes like MSCA.

## #MCAALatamCol2023







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## Acknowledgments

The MCAA Latam Conference 2023 organizing team, composed by Marie Curie Alumni Association (MCAA) Latam Chapters led by the MCAA Andean-Caribbean Chapter, EURAXESS LAC, Colombia Challenge your Knowledge (CCYK) Network and the MSCA National Contact Points (NCPs) Colombia Network, wishes to express its gratitude to all the partners that supported and contributed to the successful organization and materialization of this event, as well as to all the on-site and remote attendants for their valuable participation throughout the different discussions and debates. Special thanks to Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar (UTB) for hosting this unforgettable event at beautiful Cartagena de Indias in Colombia.



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