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# Project Summaries



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# Security in Property

Joshua Thompson, United States

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## Background

Governments at all levels are increasingly using their regulatory powers to gain physical access to inspect and search private property. As agencies gain regulatory power, individuals and families are less and less secure in their own home. For example, agencies tasked with protecting children enter homes without warrants and remove children without any judicial oversight. Unannounced and warrantless government search powers are attached to activities like installing a new air conditioner in your own home, building a storage unit on your property, using your garage for carpentry or upholstery, or just owning a certain number of dogs. Any one of these warrantless searches can result in fines or even time in jail. Unchecked agency abuse, coupled with the growing list of regulated activities for which governments attach search conditions, subject individuals and their homes to government searches and erode individuals' security in property.

At the Pacific Legal Foundation, our Security in Property Project will roll back warrantless search powers that subject US homes and businesses to intrusive government inspection regimes. In the short term, the goal is for parents, businesses, and property owners to have the privacy and security to live their lives without worry or undue surveillance, search, or inspection. In the long term, the goal is to shift public opinion in favor of the sanctity and security of private property and away from a view of government that has the right to search, inspect, and observe all aspects of private behavior.

## What is the timeframe to accomplishing this?

We will begin to see impact through legislation and court victories in the first two to three years. Cementing a property-based view of the Fourth Amendment and upending the narrative about government searches and inspections will be accomplished in ten to fifteen years.

## What is the obstacle you must overcome?

We face three big hurdles. The first is public perception. Most people view government searches as acceptable law enforcement tools to root out illicit behavior, and we need to challenge that perception. The second is legal. Many people "accept" search conditions in order to get an occupational license or permit. We (likely) need to reach individuals before they accept search conditions. The third hurdle—which we need to address now—is finding a steady stream of cases that show that the problem is big, compelling, and in need of major reform.

## What do you want to take from the Antigua Forum?

We're asking the Antigua Forum brain trust to help us identify the best targets – cases that can win and have an impact – then build a strategy that delivers our message and changes hearts and minds.

## What resources are available to you?

Pacific Legal Foundation is the US' preeminent defender of private property. Our institutional knowledge and expertise give us instant credibility on property rights issues. PLF has a growing staff and budget that allow us to devote significant resources to the project. At its outset we can assign two full-time attorneys to the project as well as utilize PLF's Communications, Strategic Research, and Legal Policy teams. We have a robust infrastructure to see it through.

# Economic Fundamentals Initiative (EFI)

Eleanor Hammond, Eastern Europe & countries of the former Soviet Union

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## Background

Most of the native languages in post-communist countries do not have a language of economics. The consequences are profound. Today, youth unemployment in Kosovo is close to 40%. In Uzbekistan the *very first* dialogue between the head of state and the country's entrepreneurs only took place in 2022! Examples such as this abound.

Our mission is to improve economic literacy in countries historically deprived of that knowledge, by translating and disseminating educational materials in multimedia format, working with local partners who oversee and deliver engaging programs to reach students, teachers, and influencers of public conversation. The project is already present in ten countries (within three years): Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Subject to new funding, we may expand to more countries in the post-communist space.

The foundation of our activity is the translation and distribution of "Common Sense Economics" by James Gwartney et al (available in 9 languages to date). Promotional activities began in 2020 with presentations in schools and universities, library donations, podcasts, social media campaigns, and essay competitions. This has evolved organically to the point where we are now developing a Teacher Toolkit, delivering training workshops for journalists and other key social influencers, and cooperating from 2023 with a Czech NGO to bring Economics Olympiads to high schoolers in eight of our countries.

## What do you want or need to accomplish?

To inspire people, especially young people, to learn and apply the language of basic economics, thereby enabling them to make more informed personal and professional decisions, and to become more engaged citizens. If, for example, in two years even ten percent of the high school students in our countries understand the benefits of saving or the value and impact of free trade, we will have achieved a lot. The Economics Olympiad will help us measure that. If education ministries consider introducing economics into the high school curriculum, the ripple effects will be stunning.

## What is the timeframe for accomplishing this?

Our project should have no sunset. Economic literacy is a long-term aspiration that impinges on so many social, economic, and political aspects of life. But our goal is to develop and implement a sustainable funding strategy by the end of 2025, with our country partners securing a significant proportion of their funding requirements through local sources, and EFI expanding to new countries across the post-communist space.

## What's stopping you? What's the obstacle you must overcome?

We've grown fast and we've grown very organically, during pandemic, social unrest and war. Now we need to consolidate and evaluate before we formalize our activities. We are lucky to have ideas and opportunities coming our way faster than we can triage them. We need help in peeling away the layers and identifying the concrete initiatives with the highest value for the project overall and for our countries specifically. We're looking for independent and experienced outsiders to support us in this quest.

## What do you want to take from the Antigua Forum?

- Ideas to develop a robust model for long-term sustainable growth;
- Meet with education innovators interested in contributing to our fast-evolving initiative;
- Potential mentors, champions, and board advisors.

## What resources are available to you

- Funding (for now);
- Local and economic expertise of our country partners and their networks;
- Strategic like-minded supporters;
- Cooperation from universities and institutions in the countries where we are present.

In short, we are well-resourced—and need now to find the most effective way to harness these resources.

# Doing Business 2.0: A Better Guide for Policy Makers

Simeon Djankov, United Kingdom and Global

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## Background

For eighteen years, the World Bank's Doing Business (DB) project provided real encouragement for countries to reform bad regulations. Prior to the publication of DB, policy makers were often unaware of the quality of their regulatory environment. The study provided clear guidance on which policies inhibited development and on how to improve the business climate.

DB quickly became the predominant global information source on the business environment, accounting for 65 percent of media and public citations in the area according to a Harvard study. This publicity resulted in nearly four thousand regulatory reforms across the world that made it cheaper, faster or easier to conduct business. For example, countries like Georgia and Togo, in part by reviewing the DB measures, figured out what policies were failing and then reformed, with real results to help spur growth and reduce poverty.

DB also fueled research. By end-2022, about 21,500 research publications had cited the report. Twenty data projects and indices, including the Fraser Institute's Economic Freedom of the World, employed its data.

Then it all ended. Beset by political interference in this project, the World Bank canceled it in 2021. We aim to restart the DB publication by engaging a top academic institution and upgrading the methodology to serve as a better guide to policy makers.

## What's the obstacle you must overcome?

Producing a report of this quality and magnitude will not be easy. We will not have the reach, nor the budget, of the World Bank. The first big obstacle is that logistics are very hard to handle for a worldwide project like this, especially when quality data are needed. The second obstacle is that politics will inevitably be nearby, and the organization needs to be insulated from any influence that could distort the quality of the analysis.

## What's the timeframe for accomplishing this?

We will build a pilot project for one geographical region (for example Latin America) or a set of regulatory topics to start in June 2023. For this region, a potential data collection partner has been identified. Full global coverage will start in February 2024.

## What do you want to take from the Antigua Forum?

We need the help of the Antigua Forum brain trust to develop a strategy, including how to build a constellation of institutions that will successfully implement the project. A top research entity (for instance, the Hoover Institution at Stanford) can do the analysis but will need logistical support to collect data globally. Also, the dissemination of results requires a media organization familiar with the global information landscape. In short, one institution may not have the width of experience to handle it alone. (Prior conversations with Hoover have led us to believe that a cooperation agreement is possible. This cooperation also may involve Harvard and LSE, which on their own do not believe they can implement a project of this magnitude.) So far we have been unable to identify a possible media/communications partner. Talks with Foreign Policy and The Economist Intelligence Unit quickly came up against the enormity of the task and stalled.

We also need help to develop clear governance mechanisms for such an undertaking with multiple possible participants. The initial DB project was subject to intense political pressures from some governments and the World Bank Board, pressure that ultimately led to its closure. A new governance mechanism should ensure that such pressures are adequately neutralized.

## What resources are available to you?

I am one of the founders of the original project and have deep familiarity with the methodology and process of the original project. Several other former members of the DB team have lent a hand in developing improved methodology and data collection methods. A detailed description of the undertaking was published in September 2022 by the Fraser Institute and is available [here](#).

Preliminary discussions have been held with several top research entities (Harvard, LSE, Stanford); the Templeton Foundation is potentially interested in funding a share of the project and may guide the team towards sponsors to cover some portion of the remaining financing.

In terms of data, the original data and data contributors are accessible publicly and thus can provide continuity. An ongoing Templeton Foundation-funded research project has expanded the data in two areas (starting a business and labor regulation) and provides a template of how to go forward.

Several think tanks in the economic freedom field (Cato Institute; Atlas Network) have been active proponents on the restart of DB and have expressed interest in helping with dissemination.

# Prosperity Greenlight: Luces de Desarrollo

Daniela Méndez, Guatemala

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## Background

Universidad Francisco Marroquín (UFM) has acquired the rights to a tool that is especially good at using agency and individual liberty to fight poverty.

In Guatemala, like many places, poverty is usually defined by a person's income. Solutions include intervention by governments, donations of money and time by nonprofit organizations, and so on. They tend to be a top-down approach and they tend not to work well. We want to change the narrative around poverty to focus on what works: a bottom-up approach at the center of which are individual liberty and agency.

Do we need to develop an entirely new model? We don't have to. One already exists.

It's called Poverty Stoplight, developed by Fundación Paraguaya.

Poverty Stoplight is both a tool and a methodology. It starts with a survey of 50 indicators in six dimensions of multidimensional poverty: Income & Employment, Health & Environment, Housing & Infrastructure, Education & Culture, Organization & Participation, and Interiority & Motivation. Families can self-diagnose their personal level of poverty in their local context. Based on the results of the survey and with the support of a mentor, participants can look for sustainable ways to improve in the indicators they prioritize.

The tool has been used around the world, in 47 countries, implemented more than 200,000 times.

Now it's time to start a movement. We call our project **Luces de Desarrollo** and we want to promote a bottom-up approach in which each person decides how to improve their current situation based on the analysis made with the Poverty Stoplight tool. UFM will create a network of organizations who implement the tool and share best practices. We want the narrative around poverty to change so that liberty, responsibility, and agency play a role.

## What do you want or need to accomplish?

Create a movement (and a narrative) in which poverty is addressed – and significantly reduced – by promoting individual liberty, agency, and responsibility.

## What is the time frame for accomplishing this?

Help 1,000 families achieve their self-defined goals for overcoming poverty within two years (by December 2024).

## What's the obstacle you must overcome?

We don't know what's the best way to launch our project to organizations and scale it quickly.

## What do you want to take from the Antigua Forum?

We want to create a launch plan or program, and scale it quickly. This should include:

- Business model
- Communication and marketing strategy

## What resources are available to you?

- UFM knowledge and staff:
  - Professors from different disciplines (medicine, psychology, business, politics, law, data analytics, among others).
  - Students
  - Faculty staff
- UFM resources:
  - Marketing team
  - IT

## Fundación Paraguaya's Poverty Stoplight:

<https://www.povertystoplight.org>

# Project on Decentralized Technologies

Petar Cekerevac, United States and Global

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## Background

Bitcoin and Decentralized Finance have enabled financial sovereignty, freedom to transact, and access to global capital to hundreds of millions of people living in disadvantaged areas where they have no bank accounts, or where they need to protect themselves from inflation, liberate themselves from rent-seeking intermediaries, or escape confiscation, oppression, or war. These use cases are not hypothetical, rather, they show the potential of this decentralized technology to change the lives of billions of people, and significantly improve financial systems worldwide.

But all of this is threatened by misguided government regulation. Excessive regulation could stifle innovation and entrepreneurship in this field, while privacy-threatening government projects such as Central Bank Digital Currencies would enable governments to increase financial surveillance worldwide. If those who value freedom and free markets do not respond, the promise that decentralized technology has for the future could be replaced by a world of continued exclusion, oppression, and increasing financial surveillance and control.

Atlas Network started the Project on Decentralized Technology to help the global freedom movement protect privacy, entrepreneurship, innovation, and promote self-regulation based on market principles, and sensible policies based on the principles of individual freedom and the rule of law.

## What do you need to accomplish?

We want to provide **training, funding, and a support network** to free-market think tanks that we support, in order to ensure that the global community of free-market organizations has an impact on the future regulation of Bitcoin and Decentralized Finance, so that they can protect entrepreneurship, innovation, and privacy in Bitcoin, and Decentralized Finance from harmful regulation.

## What is the time frame for accomplishing this?

Three years (February 1st, 2026)

## What's your biggest obstacle?

The think tanks that we support need **more opportunities to convene, more funding for their research and advocacy work, and stronger partnerships with leaders in the technology space** who could provide advice and funding.

The think tanks that we support also need **an international knowledge** base with newest research, and access to thought leaders in decentralized technology.

## What do you want to take from the Antigua Forum?

An **action plan and strategy on how to effectively build bridges** between leaders in technology and leaders in the liberty movement who work to ensure that regulation protects innovation, entrepreneurship, privacy, and individual freedom.

## What resources are available to you?

Social capital of Atlas Network, acquired over 40 years of work on supporting the global freedom movement, including 500+ organizations around the world with specific local knowledge from 100+ countries.

# Louisiana Comeback Story

James Baehr, United States

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## Background

The Pelican Institute has a proven track record in advancing freedom and opportunity, garnering policy and communications wins throughout the state of Louisiana. Examples include major criminal justice reforms signed into law in 2017, a sales tax simplification plan passed in 2021, and educational savings accounts passed in 2022. One major victory last legislative cycle was the passage of a Right to Earn a Living Act (RTEAL), the first step in addressing overly regulated occupational licensing in Louisiana.

That's the good news. Here's the bad: Louisiana requires workers in 77 low-income professions to obtain a license before offering their services. That's the most in the US! Louisiana is the only state in the US that requires florists to get a license to arrange flowers, one of only three jurisdictions that requires interior designers to do so, and one of only five that requires a license for a public school teacher's aide. Even after licensing is achieved, over 500 state boards and commissions heap additional, arcane requirements on licensed professionals that make operating a business highly difficult.

And here lies the opportunity. The RTEAL Act shifts the burden in court so that a challenger of a licensing regulation wins unless the board or commission can show their regulation is necessary and narrowly tailored to advance a health, safety, welfare, or fiduciary purpose.

## What do you want or need to accomplish?

The Pelican Institute wants to expand freedom and opportunity in Louisiana by challenging occupational licensing restrictions effectively in court.

## What is the time frame for accomplishing this?

By March 2023, find a plaintiff ready to challenge a state board or commission's unreasonable licensing restriction in court.

By 2024, win a court challenge based on our new law – and win the battle in the court of public opinion by raising awareness on the issue.

By 2025, get additional policy improvements through the legislature and signed by the governor diminishing further the power of boards and commissions.

By 2028, become one of the best states in the US for occupational freedom and opportunity.

## What's stopping you? What's the obstacle you must overcome?

Finding plaintiffs willing to challenge the powerful boards or commissions—who hold their future in their hands with licensing and enforcement decisions—has proven to be a tall task.

## What do you want to take from the Antigua Forum?

Coordinate with leaders of the freedom movement to come up with an actionable plan to go from one of the worst states for occupational licensing opportunity to one of the best within five years.

## What resources are available to you?

Pelican Institute has an amazing network in the state, communications capacity, and credibility with lawmakers who can help us find a plaintiff.

Our legal center has strong relationships with other state based public interest legal centers who can help us with our substantive legal challenge.

I have significant policy and legal connections through my time in the legal conservative movement as a past Federalist Society president and at the White House. We should be able to leverage these resources and relationships to fast track success for this project.



# Low-cost Private Schools: Enhancing Freedom in India and Nigeria

Andreea Dogar, United Kingdom

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## Background

In India and Nigeria, low-cost private schools educate 40 percent or more of school-going children. These schools are set up for the very poor by local entrepreneurs who are responding to the lack and low quality of the government education in their community. Their schools show great promise in educating the next generation in many parts of the developing world. But they face two major challenges: low quality, and lack of teacher accreditation.

On quality, these low-cost private schools are generally better than local government schools, but they are not great. There is a crisis whereby children are in school but not learning, something that needs to be addressed through improvements in teaching quality, as many of the teachers in these schools have had little or no training. School owners struggle to find good teachers that are trained and accredited, and they often don't have the time, resources or skills to train them. Local training is costly, lengthy, with high entry barriers, and too theoretical, unrelated to the daily challenges schools face.

We found that many school owners therefore run schools where the majority of their teachers are not trained or accredited by the government. This is because their teachers do not have the teaching qualifications necessary to meet the accreditation requirements by the government. In effect, they and their teachers are working illegally. School inspectors threaten school owners to close their schools if they don't meet the government requirements, and unregistered teachers face fines or up to two years in prison for doing "the job of a teacher" illegally!

At the University of Buckingham (UoB), we've developed a solution to both problems: a teacher training program, the International Diploma in Education (iDE), which offers school owners, and their teachers, affordable and practical training that fits within their work schedules. The program is taught on a mobile-app and is supported by experienced local mentors who encourage and help trainees to apply and implement the learning in their classrooms.

## What is the obstacle you must overcome?

The iDE leads to a professional, post-secondary diploma granted by the UoB, but despite some positive initial meetings with government officials, they have not been able to accommodate our program as an alternative pathway to accreditation. This is because our program is a pre-higher education diploma, and we don't require teachers to have a degree to enroll. Until we overcome this obstacle, low-cost private schools will continue to face the threat of being closed, and the teachers in these schools will not be able to gain the accreditation they need to serve the next generation of children without fear of harassment by the government.

So, how can we help practicing teachers become accredited while not compromising the vital practical emphasis and accessibility of our program?

After two years of running the iDE and three hundred and thirty trainees, we've proven that our approach is effective at improving teacher quality. Now our challenge is to scale the program to reach many more schools and their teachers, and to ensure its sustainability. We have not been able to find an example in education of taking something like this to scale.

## What do you want to take from the Antigua Forum?

At the Antigua Forum, we want to brainstorm a strategy for gaining government recognition and develop a business model to scale our program.

## What is the timeframe for accomplishing this?

The timeframe for achieving these goals is December 2025.

## What resources are available to you?

The project benefits from the support and assistance of Prof. James Tooley and the University of Buckingham for granting of certificates; connections and contacts with local experts, government officials, low-cost private schools' associations, and local entrepreneurs in India and Nigeria.

## Additional links

Visit our website [www.ubttp.com](http://www.ubttp.com).

**Download the Brochure for the International Diploma in Education.**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/119ycq9yAR36G8r71b10iWCNMEjUI\\_D5W/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/119ycq9yAR36G8r71b10iWCNMEjUI_D5W/view)

**Watch Testimonial videos from our teachers.**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Z\\_KvKgRfntE7VCAAeW9cQzrGD4Q0Y0uo](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Z_KvKgRfntE7VCAAeW9cQzrGD4Q0Y0uo)

**Go through a sample of our content on the 'All children have potential' module.**

<https://buckingham.talentlms.com/unit/view/id:2912>

# The Lyceum Movement

Nathan Beacom, United States

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## Background

We are living in a time with greater levels of loneliness, polarization, and mistrust among neighbors than we have seen in decades. We have fewer friends, know fewer of our neighbors' names, and hate our political opponents more than at any point in living memory. More and more, we spend our time in the confines of our own homes, behind our digital screens, engaging in superficial and hyper-partisan environments.

A slew of organizations have emerged for "building bridges across divides" as polarization and mistrust have continued to rise in the last decade. But these projects, admirable as they might be, don't get at the root problems of our public culture. Rather than "democracy building" programs produced in think tanks and universities, we need grassroots gatherings of local communities rebuilding a culture of healthy learning together.

The Lyceum Movement offers a remedy to our present isolation, polarization, and a harmful lack of trust between fellow citizens. Indeed, we take our name from the historical movement begun by the farmer and educator Josiah Holbrook in 1826. Holbrook believed that, in order for citizens to participate well in a free government, those citizens needed to be cultivated intellectually and morally. By creating spaces for working people of all kinds to learn philosophy, history, literature, government, and more, he sought to form good citizens ready to participate well in democratic government.

Holbrook's idea spread like wildfire, with over 13,000 Lyceums at the height of the movement, featuring the likes of Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony, and many more as speakers. If you had something important to say, you would say it at the Lyceum, and Americans came out in droves to pack lecture halls and then join the conversation about the enduring questions of human life.

These movements of American public learning faded away with the prominence of mass media. But, while media technology brings benefits in scale and access to information, it cannot replace the formation we receive from learning together in person with our neighbors. Indeed, a lot of media technology – Facebook, TikTok, etc. – may make the problems worse.

## What is the time frame?

We are reviving the Lyceum Movement for today in response to the hunger for a place to engage with big ideas in a serious, generous, neighborly way. In our first year, we have grown to eight chapter cities, where panels, lectures, conversations, and classes on art, history, philosophy, and more, take place over beer, wine, and food. In the coming year, we intend to deepen our impact in our focus city, Des Moines, in order to continue to sharpen and prove our model for scale and replication. This means gathering more resources to experiment, study, and test which kind of programmatic offerings are most attractive to audiences and impactful in pursuit of our aims.

## What's the obstacle you must overcome?

One of our obstacles is positioning the Lyceum Movement given the nature of the media economy, which provides our potential audience with a host of easy entertainment options at the swipe of a screen or click of a link, and also generates isolation and apathy for community events.

Another obstacle is developing a business model. In Des Moines and our other Midwest communities, we are far from the world of large family foundations and philanthropists, and we have operated on small grants and small dollar donations. We need the funding to bring on fully dedicated staff and to be able to dedicate the time and resources to refining our activities as well to spread the word and get greater buy-in from the public.

In overcoming the two obstacles mentioned above, we hope to provide this rich community learning experience that cannot be found elsewhere.

## What do you want to take from the Antigua Forum?

Success for the Lyceum looks like cultivating a growing audience, with over 5,000 people in our test city, Des Moines, participating in Lyceum activities in 2023. This will help us to deepen our impact, refine our model and activities, and sharpen our ability to scale and replicate what we are creating. Success also looks like developing a model for financial stability, where earned revenue can provide a stable ballast to philanthropic moneys, freeing the organization from the irregularities of the grant cycle, while ensuring a long term future.

At the Antigua forum, I am looking for insights into the questions of marketing, fundraising and development, and organizational strategy that will help us to reach our goals.

# The Dissident Project

Grace Bydalek, United States

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## Brief project background

The Dissident Project aims to do what our education system won't: warn young people about the incredible dangers of socialism. My organization, Young Voices brings speakers from authoritarian countries together under one banner and connects them to high school classrooms where they provide compelling testimonials about their personal experience, free of charge. Students hear first-hand accounts of the consequences of government despotism and the importance of the free society.

The Dissident Project makes it easy for all to find freedom advocates willing to tell their stories and give their expertise. Parents, teachers, event organizers, school representatives, media outlets can go to our website ([dissidentproject.org](https://dissidentproject.org)), view our roster of speakers with bios and video examples of their past work, and request a talk at no charge. We currently have five speakers who are from a wide variety of countries, including Hong Kong, Venezuela, Eritrea, and North Korea. They've already spoken at almost twenty schools and institutions — and more are soon to come.

Our first speaker class underwent extensive speaker training at a summit in Washington, DC. Our demand for speakers has already outpaced our supply, necessitating that we bring on ten additional dissidents. This class will be fully onboarded and ready to begin speaking by March.

## What do you want to accomplish?

We will become the premier speakers' bureau for young dissident speakers in the United States. Additionally, the Dissident Project will create a curriculum and curate conferences in the future. We will also hone our speaker training process to develop fifteen new speakers and manage their engagements.

## What is the timeframe for accomplishing this?

The timeframe for Phase II of the Dissident Project will be complete by the beginning of the 2023-2024 academic year, or September 2023.

## What's stopping you?

Our most complicated challenges are: subverting the ideological barriers that keep us from certain classrooms (or using them to our advantage); becoming a global organization with a premier speakers bureau and conferences for victims of socialism; and building not just a program but a movement of liberty-minded young people.

## What do you want to take from the Antigua Forum?

How do we subvert the ideological barriers that keep us from certain classrooms - or use those barriers to our advantage? How do we build not just a program or community, but a movement of liberty-minded educators and young people? How do we become a global organization with conferences for victims of authoritarianism and those who fight for freedom?

## What resources are available to you?

We have been generously supported by small dollar donors and large contributors alike. Additionally, we have Young Voices' capabilities at our fingertips. Young Voices has two full-time media coaches on staff to conduct mock interviews, to pitch our contributors for broadcast opportunities, and to provide feedback after media hits.

## Additional links:

Socials (Twitter and Instagram): [@dissidentproj](https://twitter.com/dissidentproj), <https://www.dissidentproject.org>

# Center for Public Health Innovation

Carl Schramm, United States

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## Background

With the coming of COVID-19, many unexpected insights emerged. One important revelation was that the Center for Disease Control (CDC) is a broken government institution. The CDC's policies and management protocols were suddenly shown to be woefully outdated. Its data resources are antique and will not support fundamental tasks such as forecasting the course of a highly contagious pathogen. These weaknesses help explain why the agency's recommendations during the pandemic proved ineffective and often dangerous.

But what alternative did the US have to a government institution established as a public monopoly—one that operates with police powers? It is this bureaucratic environment that allows the CDC to refuse to share data or enter into debate with highly respected non-governmental scientific authorities about its methods and approaches to controlling COVID-19. Worse, officials actively attempted to destroy the reputations of civilian experts who dissented. The self-inflicted damage the CDC has done to itself will live on. Polling data show that half of Americans will avoid vaccines in the future. Imagine: the nation's public health agency seems to have effectively promoted the anti-vax movement!

Contrary to Washington's solution of giving the CDC new money and more power, it is impossible to imagine a public agency reforming itself. The reality of being insulated from market tests by public budgets, coupled with its deeply embedded bureaucratic culture, demonstrate the impossibility of the CDC managing its own renewal.

## What do you need to accomplish?

What is needed is to devise an innovative private sector alternative to the CDC—one where state-of-the-art information technology supports the largest public health data asset possible to serve as the engine of analysis and advice.

## What is the time frame for accomplishing this?

It will take ten years to achieve a robust alternative to the CDC. The Center for Public Health Innovation (CPHI) anticipates getting underway by July 2023.

## What's the obstacle you must overcome?

To be successful, we have to overcome the deeply ingrained view that only the government is competent to operate in the realm of public health. The first focus of CPHI will be building clusters of local health departments as joint owners of shared data systems where experimental efforts as interoperability can be worked through.

## What do you want to take from the Antigua Forum?

We hope to take from the Forum a critical examination of the premises under every aspect of our plan.

## What resources are available to you?

The project can draw on several resources. We have access and support from many experts, including highly visible scientists shunned by the CDC and National Institutes of Health (NIH) hierarchy. One example is Marty Makary, professor of surgery at Johns Hopkins. We anticipate enthusiastic support from a group of regional and local public health officers. Our data architecture advisors hail from MIT, UC Davis, and Hopkins.

## Articles of interest

### CDC Needs Serious Scrutiny to Restore Americans' Trust in Science

(<https://thehill.com/opinion/healthcare/597393-cdc-needs-serious-scrutiny-to-restore-americans-trust-in-science/>)

### The CDC Is Broken and Apologies Can't Fix it.

(<https://thehill.com/opinion/healthcare/3612085-the-cdc-is-broken-and-apologies-cant-fix-it/>)

### What Does Walensky's Apology Really Mean

(<https://www.city-journal.org/what-does-walenskys-apology-really-mean>)

### Reform the CDC Before Another Pandemic Hits

(<https://www.city-journal.org/reform-the-cdc-before-another-pandemic-hits>)

# Restoring Civil Associations and Building Social Capital

Michael Matheson Miller, United States

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## Background

Although free markets have dramatically improved the material well-being of individuals across the globe, one in five people in the United States is subsidized by government transfers. This is both unsustainable and exacerbates dependency, social and family breakdown, and a sense of stagnation and despair. Men are opting out of work, life expectancy among the poor and working class is dropping.

While the United States has decreased inequality through transfer payments, maintaining equality through government transfers and inflationary monetary policy or a universal basic income is unsustainable and leads to long term pauperism, political centralization, a weakening of the commercial society, and ultimately to social unrest.

Local charities that provide substantial short-term benefits for those in need find themselves caught in this false dichotomy: help the poor through handouts (either private or government) or toss them into the marketplace and hope for the best.

Markets and commerce are essential, but they cannot solve many of the social problems that underlie poverty and social dysfunction. Nor can the state do this. These require participatory social capital including the family. In the developing world, poor people lack access to institutions of justice like clear title to land, access to justice in the courts, and the ability to participate in the formal economy. In the United States, poverty is often the result of deprivation of social and cultural capital.

## What do you need to accomplish?

- Articulating a vision of decentralization that builds social and cultural capital
- Identifying a prototype that will link those served by social service groups to opportunities to gain social and cultural capital
- Creating tools and practical implementation guidance to build new associations through social, legal, technological innovation

## What is the timeframe for accomplishing this?

We have already begun to build a network of organizations and leaders. We will run a first test educational training in April 2023 with two more in 2024. We officially launch the new center in fall 2023, and our goal for the practical implementation tools and network prototype is the first quarter of 2025.

## What is the obstacle you need to overcome?

We are early in the concept exploration phase and are seeking feedback and critique from a variety of perspectives. We expect obstacles related to existing social service providers that are uncomfortable with new approaches and/or wary of associations that build social and cultural capital.

## What do you want to take from the Antigua Forum?

We want to, first, better articulate the problem we want to solve, and second, build an educational model and put it into practice. This means we need a plan to create a model, or prototype, and test it in one city, followed by a plan to take what works to other cities. Just as a successful software provides a user-friendly application to solve accounting or data management, we want to create a user-friendly model that helps organizations shift to more participatory, mutual aid models that strengthen civil society and in turn create more opportunities for commercial and other social access.

## What resources are available to you?

With its strong ties to social and religious organizations, Acton Institute is ideally placed to tackle the issue of encouraging alternative support networks as opposed to those from the state.

# Contentus

Isabel Contreras, Guatemala

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## Background

In Guatemala today, the public education system is a disaster. Among the worst of its problems:

1) The quality of education is appalling. This has only gotten worse since the pandemic started (since March 2020, children in the public school system *still* have not been allowed to return to class). 2) The mandatory curriculum of social studies portrays the entrepreneur as a person who damages and takes from society instead of contributing to it. The curriculum is mandated by the government and uses books from a committed socialist publisher.

Contentus aims to disrupt and innovate the public education system in Guatemala by developing a privately-owned quality solution, based on market principles. Contentus will provide an accessible, online, flexible, customizable curriculum option that can directly compete with the public education system without having to change the laws and regulations bound to said system. This curriculum will not only provide an alternative solution to those bound to the public school programs, but it will also disseminate the ideas of individual liberty and economic freedom through a free-market approach. The project aims to serve Guatemalan teenagers that dropout of high school or aren't satisfied with the education they are receiving from public schools. This program would allow them to learn the skills they need to get better paying jobs much faster than it would take them on the traditional route, as well as become a network that encourages entrepreneurship.

## What do you want or need to accomplish?

I want to create an accessible, online, flexible and customizable market-based educational program that is highly scalable, and can be replicated at many levels.

## What is the time frame for accomplishing this?

2023 - Find strategic partners, develop digital platform, and develop curriculum

2024 - Run a friends and family trial, find program ambassadors in different industry sectors, and start with the first cohort

2025 - Launch program nationally and iterate as needed to grow number of users

## What's the obstacle you must overcome?

The biggest obstacle Contentus faces is designing a way to bypass the public education system without altering governmental regulations. Challenging the mercantilist system – just like Uber did with the taxi industry – is the main objective, and the main dare.

## What do you want to take from the Antigua Forum?

My main objective is to find a partner that can help develop a curriculum that is flexible, disruptive, based on skills, and disseminates market principles at its core. If possible, I would also like to:

(i) find strategic partners that can provide or help develop an educational platform with a customizable and flexible algorithm and (ii) brainstorm innovative ways to build a sustainable business model.

## What resources are available to you?

All resources available to UFM are available to me as well:

- Professors
- Filming studio
- Project managers

I would need:

- A partner for curriculum development
- Editorial partner for new social and economic textbooks
- Platform developers