



*The Premier Economic Development,
Innovation, and Entrepreneurial
Network of the Americas.*

www.riacevents.org/ACE



INTERNATIONAL
TRADE
ADMINISTRATION



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THE ACE

The Premier Economic
Development, Innovation
and Entrepreneurial
Network of the Americas



The ACE is the Premier Economic Development, Innovation, and Entrepreneurial Network of the Americas that aims to boost international and regional partnerships, increase trade and investment, strengthen innovation and competitiveness, and foster inclusive economic development in the region.

The ACE successfully connects decision-makers from the Americas and beyond and is a catalyst for enhanced economic development and commercial ties in the Americas.

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PARTNERS

Created in 2014 by the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Department of State and the Organization of American States (OAS).

The ACE is convened by the Organization of American States (OAS) through the Inter-American Competitiveness Network (RIAC) <http://riacevents.org/ace/>



THE RIAC

The ACE program is one of the core initiatives of the Inter-American Competitiveness Network (RIAC), for which the OAS serves as the Technical Secretariat.

The Inter-American Competitiveness Network (RIAC) is a regional platform that brings together High-Level Authorities and other key stakeholders leading the Competitiveness, Innovation, and Economic Development agendas of the 34 Member States of the Organization of American States (OAS).

The RIAC promotes policy dialogue, exchange of experiences and collaborative initiatives among decision-makers from the public, private, and academic sectors to foster inclusive and sustainable economic development in the Americas. In the context of RIAC, the OAS convenes the Americas Competitiveness Forum (ACF), the Americas Competitiveness Exchange (ACE), and the Group of Experts on Subnational Competitiveness (GTECS).



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

ACE is convened in the context of the RIAC by its Chair Pro Tempore (revolving every two years); the Government of the United States, through the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of State; and the General Secretariat of the OAS as the RIAC Technical Secretariat. These institutions constitute the standing ACE Coordinating Committee for programs hosted in the United States.

For ACE events held outside the United States, the ACE Coordinating Committee is adjusted to include representatives from the ACE Host Country (the coordinating team and a representative from the Permanent Mission of the host country to the OAS).

- Under the MOC between the U.S. Department of Commerce and the OAS dated April 2016, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) formally represents and leads the U.S. Government for the process of coordinating all activities to support ACE programs hosted in the United States.
- **For ACE events hosted in the United States, the Chair of the ACE Committee is EDA.**
- For ACE events hosted outside the United States, the Chair of the ACE Committee is the Organization of American States.



BENEFITS OF ACE

The ACEs are designed to build cooperation networks throughout the Americas and beyond to promote economic development, innovation, and entrepreneurship efforts that promote sustainable and inclusive economic development and increased trade.

- Opens dialogue for trade & investment
- Encourages global and regional inter-connected networks
- Attracts and stimulates investment
- Promotes coordinated economic development strategies
- Opportunity to showcase community assets to attract more investment.



ACE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES



- Promoting long-term multilateral commercial, trade, and investment partnerships among decision-makers of the Americas and beyond;
- Identifying and sharing best practices in economic development, including public private partnerships, building local assets that grow businesses, cluster development, promoting entrepreneurship, and coordinating regional economic development strategies;
- Stimulating capital investment and job creation in the region;
- Fostering an environment for innovative companies to startup and expand.

ACE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES



- Bringing together universities, industries, and governments to solve complex, multisectoral challenges that business could not address on their own;
- Facilitating commerce and trade;
- Promoting economic resiliency; and
- Enhancing opportunities for underrepresented populations

AREAS OF FOCUS

ACE Committee identified the following as areas of focus for the ACE programs between 2021 and 2025:

- Equity;
- Recovery & Resilience;
- Workforce Development;
- Manufacturing;
- Technology-Based Economic Development;
- Environmentally-Sustainable Development;
- Exports & FDI;
- Business Creation and Development; and
- Integrated Economic Development.



THE EXCHANGE

- 1** Week
- 50** Participants
- 40+** Sites and projects



PARTICIPANTS

The 50 ACE participants are decision makers from the OAS Member States and, as relevant, OAS Permanent Observer Countries including:

- Ministers/Vice Ministers or equivalent
- Members of Congress/Parliament
- Mayors or Senior Leaders from cities/provinces
- Chancellors/VP of Universities
- Presidents/VP of Competitiveness Councils
- Presidents/VP of Chambers of Commerce
- Secretaries and Directors of Innovation
- Private Sector Leaders
- Top entrepreneurs



ACE FORMER PARTICIPANTS



Kris Khalil
President
New Orleans
BioInnovation
Center
United States



**Gale Tracy
Rigobert**
Minister of
Education,
Innovation, Gender
Relations and
Sustainable
Development
St. Lucia



**Mayor
Darrell
Hinnant**
Mayor of
Kannapolis,
North Carolina
United States



**Caroline
Wedmore**
Head of
Strategy Unit
Department for
International
Trade
UK



**Ole Johann
Janssen**
Deputy Director
General
Innovation and
Technology Policy
Ministry of
Economic Affairs
and Energy
Germany



Israel Shamay
Executive Director
Americas
Operations, Israel
Innovation
Authority
Israel



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EXAMPLE OF ACE RESULTS

- ✓ The consolidation of a \$10M research and development program to support innovation ventures between Brazil and Israel
- ✓ The launch of Haiti's first Incubator Center for Technological Innovation (ALPHA Haiti) modeled after U.S. and Mexico incubators and supported by ACE leaders
- ✓ The incorporation of a new aerospace company called Aerospacefy LLC in Puerto Rico, subsidiary to Orbital Engenharia S.A. from Brazil
- ✓ The creation of a Corporate Venture called Amberes Ventures in Medellin, Colombia, to provide smart funding to food and beverage startups in Latin America
- ✓ Multiple Colombia companies soft landing into Puerto Rico.
- ✓ Helped drive Chapter 6 of USMCA using U.S Canada and Mexico: US Clustermapping methodology.
- ✓ New agreement between UNITEC Honduras and University of California San Diego: Entrepreneurship Soft Landing



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EXAMPLE OF ACE RESULTS

- ✓ Collaboration between MARS (Toronto) and the Colombian Federation of Software and IT Industry (FEDESOFIT) on capacity building for SMEs in Colombia and soft-landing services for Colombian companies to scale-up into Canada.
- ✓ Based on the experience at Water Tab in the ACE 6 in Canada, the Aqueduct Company of Medellin redesigned the technological approach and startup investment structure for water management technologies.
- ✓ After ACE Canada, technical assistance from Vineland Research Center (Niagara) and Niagara College to Barbados to collaborate on greenhouses and food testing facilities.
- ✓ After ACE Canada, Vineland Research Center collaborated with experts for Wine and Grape Growers from Wisconsin, United States.
- ✓ CORFO Chile entered into a partnership with Germany to send companies to Germany to open new market opportunities and also for training. It is an ongoing effort.
- ✓ Increased funding allocated for R&D cooperation between SME and Research Institutes of Canada and Germany.



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RECOGNITION AND ADOPTION

ACE was recognized as part of the 2016 North American Competitiveness Work Plan, agreed to by Presidents Obama and Peña Nieto and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, at the North American Leaders Summit (NALS) held in Ottawa, Canada's capital.

The United States Conference of Mayors urges communities across the US to host and participate in the ACE program. The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) of the United States adopted a resolution in support of the expansion of ACE.

The ACE Network was featured by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) by the Global Partnership Initiative (GPI) on Effective Triangular Co-operation in their report "Triangular Co-operation in the Era of the 2030 Agenda".



14 PROGRAMS SINCE 2014

2 ACEs per year

- ✓ ACE 1 in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia – **United States**
- ✓ ACE 2 in Mexico DF, Guadalajara, and Aguas Calientes – **Mexico**
- ✓ ACE 3 in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois – **United States**
- ✓ ACE 4 in Province of Cordoba – **Argentina**
- ✓ ACE 5 in Arizona and Southern California – **United States**
- ✓ ACE 6 in Ontario – **Canada**
- ✓ ACE 7 in Texas – **United States**
- ✓ ACE 8 in Florida – **United States**
- ✓ ACE 9 in **Israel and Germany** (Special Edition)
- ✓ ACE 10 in Northern California – **United States**
- ✓ ACE 11 in Puerto Rico – **United States**
- ✓ ACE 12 in Santiago de Chile – **Chile**
- ✓ ACE 13 in Colorado – **United States**
- ✓ ACE 14 in Louisiana – **United States**
- ✓ Upcoming ACE 15 in Quito and Guayaquil – **Ecuador**
- ✓ Next ACE 16 in Seattle - **United States**



PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS



- Have a professional and academic background that facilitates inter- and intra-country based development such as foreign direct investment, trade, exports, supply chain linkages, shared technology, etc.
- Be able to allocate resources, propose and adopt policies, and collaborate with other countries.
- All ACE activities are carried out in English.
- Have a valid visa (if necessary) to enter the United States and be able to provide visa, passport, photo, and other necessary information to complete travel procedures.
- Ability to participate in the entire six-day program. Partial participation will not be allowed.
- The ability to cover the cost of airfare and hotel accommodation will be an essential point of consideration for the ACE Selection Committee.

SELECTION CRITERIA



- Public, private, and academic sector senior leadership
- Diversity: geographical, sectoral, and gender balance
- Capacity to cover the cost of their participation
- Ability to create long-term economic connections
- Top entrepreneurs and innovators



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APPLY TO HOST

First Step

Submission of a Letter of Intent to the OAS:
Exploratory phase

Second Step

Submission of a Detailed Application to Host/proposal:
At least 9 months prior to the program - Official request

Third Step

Selection and Announcement:
At the preceding ACE or ACF

Fourth Step

Implementation Agenda and Itinerary:
In collaboration with the OAS and ACE Committee

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO HOST

- The Local Host are top officials for the region or country
- The proposed sites have enough economic and commercial drivers that can act as a single region or unit
- Urban and rural economic assets with the capacity to develop commercial networks
- Be an OAS Member State, or OAS Permanent Observers for Special Editions
- Sufficient national or regional level budget allocation to host and support the design, planning, and execution of the program.
- * Support travel of key stakeholders is optional but encouraged due to past experiences



APPLICATION STRUCTURE

Three tier process – Letter of Intent, Full Application, Announcement

- Economic Background:
- SWOT Analysis:
- Strategic Direction/Action Plan;
- Outline of prior engagement with OAS member countries;
- Market fit:
- Key ACE host partners and their host responsibilities;
- Airport information;
- Urban and crucial rural anchor sites;
- Hotel information:

NOTES: All U.S. Host regions must have a CEDS or similar economic development plan and tie ACE and ACE outcomes back to that plan.

For applications hosted outside of the United States: bids must be coordinated by the Organization of the American States as the RIAC Technical Secretariat before being submitted to the ACE Coordinating Committee.

For applications hosted in the United States: bids must be coordinated and submitted by representatives of the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Permanent Mission to the Organization of American States of the U.S. Department of State.



BUDGET STRUCTURE (APPROX)

Domestic:

EDA- \$200k-\$300k – PPE, bus, travel, staffing, metrics reports, ACE main and US local websites, etc.

OAS- \$150k-\$200k – Travel, staffing, etc.

Local Host - \$100k – Event space, local security, local food.

State Department- - \$85k – Foreign Leaders Cost such as flights, etc.

Foreign:

EDA- \$0

State Department- \$100k - Foreign Leaders Cost such as flights, etc.

OAS- \$150k-\$200k – Travel, staffing, etc.

Host Country - \$200k-\$300k – PPE, bus, travel, staffing, local website, local events, etc.

EDA provides the U.S. national government level “buy in” to host an ACE in the U.S. in addition to programmatic consistency and stability.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

EMAIL

riac@oas.org

WEBSITE

<http://riacevents.org/ACE>

ACE COLORADO SUMMARY VIDEO EXAMPLE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgEfydQuXtg&list=PLCFmKgqkdz0EwYYIbgESGznGPtoAVDpcv&index=7>

SOCIAL MEDIA

 [@riacnetorg](https://twitter.com/riacnetorg)

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