



## **Veracruz Declaration**

June 1, 2017

The Talloires Network is an international network of universities dedicated to strengthening the civic roles and social responsibilities of higher education institutions.

We believe that higher education institutions exist to serve and to foster relationships with the society and communities of which they are part. As institutions, we are a dynamic force in society and serve to provide critical perspectives to protect and promote the common good in society. We incorporate civic engagement with our communities as core to our research, teaching, and cultural outreach in order to contribute to social harmony and stability.

We, leaders from [insert #] universities and higher education partner institutions from [insert #] countries around the globe, gathered in Xalapa, Veracruz, Mexico, to learn from and share experiences of building and embedding the civic roles and social responsibilities of higher education within our societies.

We gathered at a time when our societies as a whole, and universities as social institutions, are experiencing challenges such as racial injustice, material and spiritual poverty, illiteracy that limits cultural development, the breakdown of social structures, and actions which threaten the sustainability of our environment. We acknowledged that these challenges require collaborative efforts to explore alternative approaches to progress and to human well-being.

In this context, we declare:

- Universities have the responsibility to promote education as a universal human right to aid in addressing the aforementioned challenges;
- Universities have the responsibility to promote sustainable communities and societies with leadership opportunities for development, the equitable distribution of resources, and collaboration with community organizations, government agencies, private companies and non-profit organizations;
- Universities have the responsibility to promote access to knowledge and technology for creating prosperous communities and societies
- Universities have the responsibility to promote productive scholarship with and among communities to contribute to the strengthening of culture, social stability and harmony, social inclusion, and collaboration towards the common good

We understand that the above is related to three particular rights and their associated responsibilities:

(1) The right to education - the responsibility to be socially inclusive and to promote quality education for all;

(2) The right to leadership opportunities and economic mobility - the responsibility to create prosperous communities and societies; and

(3) The right to a livelihood - the responsibility to prepare people for employment and entrepreneurship, and to contribute to economic development.

We believe that universities have a unique role in bringing global networks to bear on local and regional issues. We recognize that cultural diversity exists within different countries and understand that we share similar challenges. We recognize that in order to promote and devise new ways for leaders to thrive, we must: learn and develop skills to encourage supportive and inclusive learning environments, have the ingenuity to overcome obstacles, and actively exchange knowledge in dialogue across differences.

We understand that these responsibilities derived from the rights above rest upon heads of institutions, academics, students, administrators as well as the governmental bodies and communities of which they are a part.

We hereby reaffirm and expand the Talloires Declaration of 2005 and in the Talloires Network Call to Action of 2014. With the passage of the Veracruz Declaration of 2017, we emphasize the need to advance social responsibility and human dignity through higher education engagement. This begins, we agree, with the conviction that education is a human right, and that with rights come responsibilities.

We invite students, heads of institutions, professors and academics, alumni, philanthropists, members of governmental bodies, and citizens from around the globe to join in this Declaration and to collaborate in this work.

*Adopted by Talloires Network Leadership Conference participants, in Xalapa, Veracruz, Mexico, June 2017*