



International Networking In the Society of Jesus

Challenges from a Universal Mission

Conference at Boston College – 28-30 April 2012

From 28th – 30th April 2012, encouraged by the call made by the 35th General Congregation to promote international networking, a group of Jesuits and lay partners from all over the world, with a variety of backgrounds and positions in the Society of Jesus, gathered at Boston College to reflect on this matter.¹ The group reviewed the concept and current experience of networking, its relationship to the universal mission of the Society of Jesus, its spiritual foundations and heritage, its organizational and governance mechanisms, and the challenges that it poses to the present structure and way of proceeding.

This document shares some of the movements of the Spirit generated by this topic among the conference’s participants, summarizes the main conclusions and agreements reached, presents some proposals and open questions for the future, and makes a few recommendations that might further foster international networking in the Society of Jesus.²

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¹ The conference was organized by the Jesuit Institute, the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work and Entreculturas – Fe y Alegría Foundation. See Appendix I for a list of the participants.

² Most of the reflections presented in this document are taken from the papers and presentations prepared for the conference, and enriched by the dialogue of the group. A more complete and detailed presentation of those ideas can be found in the different papers available for download at the website: www.jesuitnetworking.org. See Appendix II for a list of the papers.

Executive Summary

International networking has already been happening in the Society of Jesus (§10-14), for which it is a source of profound consolation. Still there is a strong sense that the Lord is calling us towards even greater collaboration, providing a potentially powerful and contemporary way of proceeding that can give new energy to Jesuit mission. Consolation and desolation work together as a wake-up call to move forward (§1-5). **International networking is urgently needed for our mission in the twenty-first century.** It demands cultural (§23-24) and organizational (§25) transformation at both the personal and institutional levels, and challenges the Society of Jesus and its collaborators not to give in to the temptation to avoid those changes, to stay idle, or to postpone indefinitely. We feel that in the context of the urgency of God's call, inaction is not an option.

In today's context of global changes (§6-9), **Jesuit networking could be defined** as a way of proceeding apostolically that enables better global and regional cooperation at the service of the universal mission, raising the apostolic structures to a new level of agency with global (or regional) impact, and therefore connecting persons and institutions in such a way that they act as a global and interdisciplinary body, in collaboration with others (§15-16).

The Society of Jesus is a mission-oriented body. For Jesuits identity is inseparable from mission, whose centrality shapes all dimensions of life and structures. This is why networking can only be understood from the perspective of finding innovative ways to embrace our mission. **We develop networks for the good of the mission.** Our adaptive spirituality and our tradition of dialogue with the world urge us to re-imagine existing structures so as to find better answers to global challenges and international problems from a collaborative approach involving concerted action with a wider scope. (§20-22)

Jesuit networking is deeply grounded in Ignatian spirituality (§17), and it has common organizational characteristics (§18), but not all networks contribute equally to the development of the universal mission (§19). Some networks simply provide support for individual works by centralizing and mainstreaming services and common tools. Others, however, can be considered agency networks in which members coordinate their efforts and act together as single agent. This is the desired **new level of agency** for Jesuit networking, moving from symbiotic to synergic relationships and from transactional to transformational networking, where institutions and individuals understand themselves as participating in a wider mission that transcends the boundaries of their institution or region, so that they are willing to contribute their talent, time, or treasure to further this broader mission (§26).

To this end, Jesuits need **first to integrate and then encourage** the wider Ignatian family, including institutions and persons. Greater efforts must be made to engage individuals (Jesuits, collaborators, students, and alumni) regionally and not just institutionally. There is also a need to deconstruct the centrality of particular

missions in order to begin to see them as integral parts of broader networks for action and the transformation of reality (§27-29).

We detect a need of research about where networking has worked well for the Society of Jesus, where it has failed, what lessons might be **learned from these experiences**, and how networking has actually contributed to the Jesuit mission. (§30). The breadth and complexity of a topic like networking moved us to propose a set of **research projects** that could be addressed individually in order to help toward the general clarification of the subject (§31).

Networking, as a new apostolic way of proceeding, requires a cultural change in the Society of Jesus in order to develop (1) a new “ecosystem” favorable to collaboration and partnership in the mission on a wider scale, and (2) agents with the new skills needed to provide vision and leadership in a universal and collaborative mission (§32). For this we state four **general recommendations**:

- a) Promote the implementation of the common mission through the setting up of structures to help the achievement of the common mission, like strengthening the general curia secretariats to nurture, accompany and evaluate international network dynamics, and setting up a fund, depending on Father General, to promote international networks. (§32a)
- b) Increase the quality of leadership creating a program of international leadership strengthening a global vision in Jesuits and collaborators not only encouraging formation and training, but also exchange of personnel and sharing of knowledge (§32b).
- c) Strengthen the international use of new technologies of information and communications naming a commission to rethink in a comprehensive way the use of IT at the international (regional and global) level, generating unique global informational hubs, facilitating the knowledge and identification of Jesuits and works, and preparing broadcasting strategies to reach segmented groups of our apostolic body and the wider Ignatian family (§32c).
- d) Encourage reflection on Jesuit networking at all levels, naming a task force to take responsibility for the promotion of this document and empower it to develop these recommendations with a proper mandate (§32d).

Final Document

PART I. Movements of the Spirit

1. **International networking** has already been happening in the Society of Jesus, for which it is a **source of profound consolation**. Still, there is a strong sense that the Lord is calling us towards even greater collaboration, if we are to labor more effectively as a universal body in an increasingly globalized and networked world.

2. This **movement of the Spirit was felt vividly during the conference**, not only in the presentation of the papers and the sharing of experiences, but also in the interest expressed by all the participants. Indeed, this is a confirmation of some of the ideas presented in various Jesuit documents in the last 30 years, and particularly GC35: *“In this global context it is important to highlight the extraordinary potential we possess as an international and multicultural body. Acting consistently with this character can not only enhance the apostolic effectiveness of our work but in a fragmented and divided world it can witness to the reconciliation in solidarity of all the children of God.”*³

3. This is a time when complex external challenges seem so overwhelming (e.g. secularization, human rights violations, structural inequalities, environmental destruction). These are further complicated by internal difficulties within the Society of Jesus (e.g., demographic change, internal shifts and imbalances). In this context of fast paced changes, **collaboration provides a potential, powerful and contemporary way of proceeding that can give new energy to Jesuit mission**. There is great satisfaction felt, along with enthusiasm and hope, both when we realize the vibrant initiatives already set in place and when we imagine new possibilities of increased international and interprovincial networking. There is deep confirmation felt as its deep roots in Ignatian spirituality are traced, its clear connections with traditional Jesuit ways of proceeding are drawn, and its relevance in the contemporary world is highlighted. The importance of networking in order to increase apostolic impact at the regional⁴ and global levels can no longer be denied, even as it consolidates unity and companionship among Jesuits and with their collaborators, flowing out of a shared mission.

4. **Other feelings** likewise came into play: fear about the future, about not being able to live up to the challenges and circumstances of the present moment; dejection at the prospect of not being able to adequately respond to the changes that the mission requires, and instead, being trapped in routine, continuing to do the same tasks in the same old-fashioned way; and dismay at the slow pace of innovation in the structures of the Society of Jesus that can at times be burdensome.

³ GC35, decree 3, no. 43

⁴ The term regional is used in this document to refer to a group of provinces in the same geographical region, usually the Conference of Major Superiors.

5. Consolation and desolation work together as a wake-up call to move forward. **International networking is urgently needed for mission in the twenty-first century.** It demands cultural and organizational transformation at both the personal and institutional levels, and challenges the Society of Jesus and its collaborators not to give in to the temptation to avoid those changes, stay idle, or postpone indefinitely. We feel that in the context of the urgency of God's call, inaction is not an option.

PART II. Main Conclusions

A. Context of Networking

6. The world is changing at a pace much faster than we could have ever imagined. **Great transformations are taking place** in all spheres of human life, generating "conspicuous ethical, cultural and environmental problems [and] conflicts of all kinds; yet [there is] also [promise] of more intense communication between peoples, of new possibilities for knowledge and dialogue, of profound aspirations for peace."⁵

7. Globalization is intensifying. It challenges the old structures based still on nation-states, including that of the conventional Jesuit "provinces". New information and communication technologies are reshaping relationships and transforming traditional ways of learning, thinking, and managing knowledge; they are also generating profound cultural and anthropological changes in individuals from all societies, including Jesuits and collaborators. **The emergence of "the network society"⁶ is transforming both the cultures and the structures of societies and organizations, emphasizing connectivity, flexibility, and innovation.**

8. **The Society of Jesus is deeply affected by all these transformations.** On the one hand, it is weakened, due to demographic changes, local-oriented structures, and diminished influence in the intellectual, political, and cultural spheres. Yet on the other hand, the Society seems to be extremely well prepared to adapt to an era of globalization, technological innovation, and networking due to its globally shared spirituality, its transnational and interdisciplinary apostolic body, its innovative and adaptive tradition, and its accumulated experience over more than 450 years of history.

9. **This is a *kairos* moment that demands greater collaboration and networking,** which can be achieved by tapping into the enormous universe of persons and institutions within the Ignatian family and taking advantage of their distinctly universal character.

⁵ Benedict XVI, Address to the 35th General Congregation (21 February 2008).

⁶ Manuel Castells first used the term in his trilogy, "The Information Age," to define our world, which "is structured in its dominant functions and processes around networks." It emphasizes the fact that forms and processes in every realm of economy, society, and culture are built as networks.

B. Networking in the Jesuit tradition

10. **Throughout history, networking has been a central, albeit implicit, feature of the Jesuit way of proceeding.** Its origins can be traced back to the experience of Ignatius and the multi-national first companions in their search for a universal vision:

- (a) the Spiritual Exercises that led to Ignatius' desire to embrace the entirety of humankind;
- (b) the sense of apostolic mission central to Jesuit identity that led to availability and mobility as key characteristics;
- (c) the corporate sense, built on a union of minds and hearts, even in dispersion;
- (d) a strong sense of obedience, seeking to discover the will of God, discerned through communal deliberation and then confirmed by authority;
- (e) the constant search of the universal good that fueled Ignatius to explore new frontiers.

11. In the last forty years, **the Society of Jesus has grown in this sense of corporate mission**⁷. It has rediscovered her vocation to universality and moved towards more global and regional cooperation. International networking and collaboration have been increasingly stressed in Jesuit documents since GC32, and given flesh in concrete examples of supra-provincial and international works. GC 34 explicitly recognized the need for networking to carry out the common mission and urged that it be developed as a way of unleashing the untapped potential of being a universal body.

12. **GC35 confirmed this ideas and acknowledged the growing interconnectedness** of Jesuits and described the development of supra-provincial structures of cooperation as an "undeniable necessity."⁸ Jesuit government was asked to "explore means by which more effective networking might take place among all apostolic works associated with the Society of Jesus."⁹ Thus GC 35 even adds new elements that enrich Jesuit international networking:

- (a) The words of the Pope, as well as the decrees on identity and mission highlight the images of bridges and frontiers to describe the contemporary mission of the Society from a networking perspective.
- (b) The renewed emphasis on the universality of the mission reactivates the debate about the capacity of the Society to face global challenges and the need for structures and means for doing so.
- (c) The decree on governance made structural space for universality by reinforcing the role of Fr. General, confirming the global priorities, and empowering the role of the conferences of major superiors as structures oriented for mission, not just for coordination.

⁷ A detailed presentation of this process can be found in the conference's paper entitled: "Previous on Jesuit networking." See Appendix II.

⁸ "We hold the conviction that today cooperation among provinces and regions to realize the apostolic mission of the Society is an undeniable necessity." GC 35, decree 5, no. 17

⁹ GC 35, decree 6, no. 29

13. Since GC35, many international networking initiatives are taking shape making flesh these reflections and, at the same time, facing the difficulties that these changes mean.

- (a) A few of them already present good examples of the benefits of collaboration, whilst many others are still trying to articulate goals and resources, or seeking the active commitment of their constituents.
- (b) Even where there is a rich complex of institutions, works, and persons that are potential nodes of Jesuit networks, the links have just started to be established.
- (c) Most of these networks operate at the regional/conference level, and global initiatives are still very limited.
- (d) Networks have been set up among universities, high schools, and especially in the social apostolate. There are few initiatives connecting institutions and persons from different apostolic sectors so far.

14. In all this, **two trends** can be seen:

- (a) There seems to be enthusiasm, energy, readiness, and a sense of urgency to intensify this process among Jesuits and their collaborators.¹⁰
- (b) At the same time, there is also some “inertia” and a non-collaborative culture, partly from a lack of resources for international initiatives (human, economic, and technological), and partly from inadequate interprovincial structures, resulting in a slowing down of processes that could realize potentials.

C. Jesuit networks: concept, characteristics, and types

15. **Network theory** has developed extraordinarily in the last few years, and its study spans various disciplines, offering many insights into how networks operate. Classically, a network is said to consist of a set of nodes (sometimes called actors) along with a set of ties of a specified type, which link the nodes. Socio-economic networks are characterized by their flexibility and adaptability; they are self-organized or have lean coordination bodies; they employ horizontal decision-making processes; and they make efficient use of information technology.

16. In Jesuit documents network is a term that must be understood as a metaphor rather than a theoretical concept: *“Networking in the Society of Jesus may be summed up as a style of working apostolically, carrying out our apostolate across many of the lines which, until now, have delimited our Jesuit activities and jurisdictions.”*¹¹ Today **Jesuit networking could be defined** as a way of proceeding apostolically that enables better global and regional cooperation at the service of the universal mission, raising the apostolic structures to a new level of agency with global (or regional) impact, and therefore connecting persons and

¹⁰ From a survey conducted to 45 leaders of international Jesuit networks. The main conclusions of this survey can be found in the paper “Current status of international networking in the SJ”, prepared for this conference. See Appendix II.

¹¹ Social Justice Secretariat. *Guidelines for Networking in the Social Area*. Rome, 2002.

institutions in such a way that they act as a global and interdisciplinary body, in collaboration with others.

17. Jesuit networking is deeply **grounded in Ignatian spirituality**, differentiating it from other ways of networking: (a) it finds its deepest root in the Trinitarian inspiration, contemplating and being sent to the whole world; (b) it is initiated by the contemplation of reality, seeking to identify the presence and call of the Lord in a communal way; (c) it expresses Ignatian hospitality, opening spaces to welcome, meet, share, connect, and generate new possibilities; (d) it promotes a sense of union and community going beyond superficial relationships and encouraging communal discernment; (e) it has depth of analysis, drawn from learned ministry, and including rootedness, values, and principles; (f) it is not self-centered but focused on the common mission, ultimately seeking the building of the Kingdom of God; (g) it reflects internal solidarity and provides for a way of sharing ideas, expertise, resources, and creativity; (h) it respects subsidiarity, by complementing, strengthening and tapping local initiative rather than replacing it.

18. While existing in various forms, Jesuit networks also have **common organizational characteristics**: (a) a sense of shared mission and identity nurtures connections among members; (b) despite its horizontal decision-making processes, adequate leadership is crucial and a clear link with Jesuit governance is essential; (c) they have specific and clear purposes that require common planning, sustainability and evaluation; (d) they employ as much as possible a multi-tracking and cross-sectorial approach; (e) they promote internal participation and are open to collaboration with others; and (f) they have sufficient resources to carry out their goals, sharing and tapping the existing resources of their members.

19. There are several **types of Jesuit networks**. All of them contribute in different ways to carrying out the universal mission of the Society. Yet they have different characteristics and purposes:

- (a) Inter-personal networks. These networks promote relationships among Jesuits, collaborators, and friends of the Ignatian family. They provide a promising way of enhancing relationships within the larger Ignatian family, including alumni, friends, and others. Inter-personal networks are very flexible and open, facilitating exchange and communication, and contributing to the strengthening of a sense of unity and community.
- (b) Inter-institutional networks. These networks are made up of institutions working together towards a common goal. There are different models according to goals and structures of the networks:
 - 1) the *international networked organization*, like Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), combining elements of networks and international organizations such as a more centralised structure and less autonomy of members;
 - 2) the *institutional alliance network*, in which independent members are fully and institutionally committed under a common brand, and common strategic options, as in Fe y Alegría or African Jesuit AIDS Network (AJAN);
 - 3) the *purpose network*, created by autonomous works collaborating to achieve together a common goal (as in the case of the Global Ignatian

Advocacy Network¹²) or common projects (such as the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities in the US or the Asociación de Universidades Jesuitas de América Latina –AUSJAL), or a concrete event, like the MAGIS experience created around the World Youth Day; and

- 4) the *exchange network*, aiming to be a space simply for communication of information and exchange of experiences, such as the Clavius group of Jesuit mathematicians.

D. Mission, Structures, and Governance

20. The Society of Jesus is a mission-oriented body. For Jesuits identity is inseparable from mission,¹³ whose centrality shapes all dimensions of life and structures. This is why networking, as a way of proceeding, can only be understood from the perspective of finding innovative ways to embrace our mission.¹⁴ **We develop networks for the good of the mission.** Our adaptive spirituality and our tradition of dialogue with the world urge us to re-imagine existing structures so as to find better answers to global challenges and international problems from a collaborative approach involving concerted action on a wider scope.

21. Since the Society is primarily an apostolic body, the **priority of the mission precedes any structure**,¹⁵ so that any structural consideration needs to account for its contribution to the goals and contents of the common mission. Jesuit networking can happen at all levels and in all apostolic fields, but the integrative principle of justice, as well as the drive towards learned ministry, provide obvious venues where networking can contribute most to mission. It is the educational and social sectors that can benefit most from networking in terms of use of resources, shared expertise, advocacy impact, and common identity.

22. Given Ignatius' criteria for discerning mission, once the priority is identified, the structural dimension becomes critical.¹⁶ The Magis principle, together with its vocation as a worldwide interdisciplinary body, leads the Society of Jesus to maximize its potential as an apostolic body. Not to do all in its power to nurture and build upon this potential would be to underutilize an apostolic tool of unprecedented nature and scope. That is why a key criterion for discerning mission is **acting in synergy**,¹⁷ creating, strengthening, and developing webs of

¹² The Secretariat for Social Justice and Ecology and the group of Delegates of the Social Apostolate worldwide are the umbrella that really allows GIAN to work as network or autonomous institutions, lying on the structure of the social apostolate organized in the provinces, conferences and at a global level.

¹³ GC 34, decree 2, no. 4

¹⁴ "Thus as this world changes, so does the context of our mission; and new frontiers beckon that we must be willing to embrace" GC 35, decree 2, 24. New challenges of our time: GC35, decree 3, nos. 8-11

¹⁵ One of the criteria is "Priority of the mission that precedes to any structure." Cf. *Post-GC 35 commission report, "The Renewal of Province Structures in the Service of Universal Mission," Sept. 2011, 1.*

¹⁶ Once we have a global vision, the key Ignatian criteria of urgency, the complexity of the problem, and especially the lack of others to attend to the need and the greater universal good (Constitutions [622-623]) transform the organizational question into a key variable for discerning the mission.

¹⁷ Social Justice Secretariat. *Globalization and Marginalization: Our Global Apostolic Answer*. Rome: Social Justice Secretariat, 2006, 22.

relationships that build up the possibilities and the realities of new levels of agency.

23. But networking demands that the Society of Jesus undergo a **cultural change**: from institutional and provincial frameworks to regional and global visions, from individual approaches to a teamwork mentality, and from sectorial division to collaboration in diversity. Such a cultural change engenders conflict, as the flexible, horizontal, fluid, and almost liquid structure of the network comes into play together with the more centralizing conventional and hierarchical structure of the Society of Jesus. In practical terms, the tension is between horizontal, communal discernment and the acceptance of authority in the mission received. As in every cultural change, there is a period of confusion, adjustment, and creativity, in which resistance gives rise to conflicts, even as it also sparks innovation.

24. The very existence of networks cuts through local boundaries and raises countless questions for the more static structures of authority. As regards networking and governance, our structures need a **complementary approach**:

(a) The supra-provincial structures of governance (conferences of provincials, secretariats, central government) combined with the provinces are the loci where the globalized mission should be enacted through local realities.¹⁸ These structures should assure an ecosystem to nurture, foster and stimulate networking.¹⁹ Persuasion and encouragement are needed to act at this level, connecting resources with priorities and combining participation with the strength of a common mission formulated and actualized from a central authority. The authority of Father General is the link with the universal mission, and subsidiarity²⁰ is a key concept for deploying the universal mission through a hierarchical body.

(b) This does not mean centralization, but rather points to the centrality of mission. Nor does it clash with global subsidiarity as the organizing principle for Jesuit networking.²¹ From a bottom-up perspective, animated by an incarnated spirituality, personal and local initiatives lead to imaginative responses to reality as they did for Ignatius.

25. Some aids for **supporting this new organizational challenge** are the following: (a) developing a sense of corporate identity and common mission in our works as strands uniting the network nodes; (b) promoting dialogue, consensus, and functional autonomy at appropriate levels; (c) drawing up participatory

¹⁸ Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, "*Corresponsible in service of Christ's mission*," Opening talk of Father General in the Loyola 2000 meeting of provincials, September 22, 2000.

¹⁹ The Jesuit Conferences could assume a more critical role in this effort. They could first articulate cross-province needs through dialogue, and later direct resources to identified priority areas. For example, some conferences, such as JCAP, JCSA (Jesuit Conference of South Asia), have developed "circles" of cross-province networking for key concerns (formation, treasurers, development offices, migration, indigenous, environment).

²⁰ Subordination in the Society is the expression of governance that respects at every level the apostolic plan elaborated at a superior level. Cfr. Const. 206, 662, 668, 791, 821. In Arrupe, "Nuestra respuesta al desafío," 78.

²¹ Social Justice Secretariat, *Guidelines*, 11.

strategic plans with clear goal, means, and ways of proceeding, including methodologies of planning and community discernment; (d) promoting strategic and inspiring leadership, managing authority in an inclusive manner, and employing participatory procedures; and (e) using adequate communication technologies, allowing horizontal communication open to dialogue, and promoting fraternity through liberty and equality.

26. Not all networks contribute equally to the development of the universal mission. Some networks simply provide support for individual works by centralizing and mainstreaming services and common tools. Others, however, can be considered agency networks in which members coordinate their efforts and act together as single agent. This is the desired **new level of agency** for Jesuit networking, moving from symbiotic to synergic relationships and from transactional to transformational networking, where institutions and individuals understand themselves as participating in a wider mission that transcends the boundaries of their institution or region, so that they are willing to contribute their talent, time, or treasure to further this broader mission.

27. Jesuits are sent to the frontiers, to set up bridges, to dialogue, to network and to collaborate with others with whom they share the mission. Networking as a style of working apostolically likewise demands **openness and readiness to work with others**. To this end, Jesuits need first to integrate and then encourage the wider Ignatian family, including institutions and persons.²² Greater efforts must be made to engage individuals (Jesuits, collaborators, students, and alumni) regionally and not just institutionally. There is also a need to deconstruct the centrality of particular missions in order to begin to see them as integral parts of broader networks for action and the transformation of reality.

28. Caution is needed, as not all networking is proper to the Society and beneficial for her mission. **Reductionisms** must be avoided, that are founded on inequality or that promote superficiality. That is why Jesuit structures of governance in a globalized world need to: (a) promote a space for networking with depth of thought and imagination in the Ignatian tradition, involving a profound engagement with the real;²³ (b) assure mutuality by paying attention to ethical questions like inequalities of access to resources; (c) overcome the tendency to gather like-minded people or institutions by fostering a networking of solidarity²⁴ sharing different information, resources, and services; and (d) assure subsidiarity by maintaining a healthy balance between (global) authority and (local) initiative, thus strengthening capabilities at the local level while guaranteeing speed and a global mindset from a centralized authority.

²² Decree 6 of GC35 "Collaboration at the Heart of Mission," delineates already many key aspects of genuine collaboration.

²³ Only if identity and mission are rooted and assured, networking will be possible in a Jesuit way. Adolfo Nicolás, "Depth, Universality, and Learned Ministry." The quest for a broader worldview or space must be complemented by an equally consistent pursuit of rootedness, values, and principles.

²⁴ Benedict XVI, *Globalization of Solidarity, Africae Munus*, Post-synodal Apostolic exhortation no. 87 (November 2011).

29. There is no doubt that networking and international cooperation are needed to carry out mission. Jesuit networking is happening already. *Fe y Alegría* and the Jesuit Refugee Service are clear examples of the immense possibilities of such networking. But given the complexity and wide range of variables, there is need for a more systematic approach to this new phenomenon in order to learn from our experience and plan or strategize its development. It is for this purpose that this conference sought to identify some specific topics for further research in order to advance discussion of the whole subject. These are outlined in the following section.

Part III. Open Questions for Further Analysis

30. **Learning from our experience.** Networking has already been happening within the Jesuit world even before the word came into current usage. Most of the discussions in this conference were moving in the direction of recommending research about where networking has worked well for the Society of Jesus and what lessons might be learned from these experiences. The following were among the recommendations:

- 1) Gather **narratives of successful networking** experiences in order to “celebrate the victories,” using examples from all levels, from local to international, while also commenting on the possible actors and degree of involvement. Document and share best practices as a way to inspire sectors to adopt networking as a methodology.
- 2) Develop an initial **in-depth evaluation** of how networking has contributed to mission. Elaborate a methodology and specific metrics for evaluating networks in relationship with Jesuit mission.²⁵
- 3) Engage in a more elaborate study of cases. Some examples are:
 - a. a **conference of major superiors** that has successfully nurtured networking. Invite some conferences to reflect on the nature, meaning, practice, and experience of successful networking in their jurisdiction, and share that reflection with a wider audience.
 - b. an example of **cycle of the mission** for a collaborative and intersectorial project highlighting the steps needed to build, develop, and evaluate an integral and collaborative apostolic response.
 - c. a comparative study of homologous networks in different assistancies, such as the **networks of social centers** in Latin America, India, and Africa.
 - d. A study of **Fe y Alegría** as an outstanding example of successful Jesuit core-periphery networking, using network analysis tools in order to articulate the strengths and challenges of this model.²⁶
- 4) Study **failed attempts** of Jesuit networking in order to identify and analyze the critical role of elements like leadership, the distribution of resources, clarity of purpose, right prioritization, shared ownership, etc.

²⁵ GC 35, decree 6, no. 14c. “We encourage Major Superiors (and Conferences, where appropriate) to develop tools to evaluate the effectiveness of Jesuit ministries in accomplishing their mission.”

²⁶ An interesting first approach to this can be found in the conference’s paper entitled “How to network without getting diluted.”

31. **Projects for further research.** The breadth and complexity of a topic like networking calls for further study and reflection. Here, some research projects are proposed that could be addressed individually in order to help toward the general clarification of the subject.

- 1) Work on a **systematic approach to Jesuit networking** with a clear definition and a more expansive typology of networks, clearly linked with purpose, function, and scope. Include a set of recommendations for Jesuit networking, clarifying concepts and questions that need to be dealt with to assure viability and to discern purpose and scope.
- 2) Reflect on the **Jesuit potential for networking**, in terms of motivations to encourage collaborative action built from a sense of mission. Highlight aspects like the common mission, international presence, multidisciplinary and cross-sector approaches, the high degree of institutionalization, and shared identity and spirituality. Explore possible new levels of networked agency, moving from symbiotic to synergic, from transactional to transformational networking.
- 3) Study in detail the **Ignatian values of networking** based on our spirituality and history. Examples are: a global perspective from the Trinitarian inspiration of the mission, mobility, availability, union of hearts, hospitality, subsidiarity, mutuality, and solidarity.
- 4) Research new types of **leadership for a networked world**, integrating Jesuit structures of authority with horizontally networked dynamics. Examine how to exercise and promote responsibility for mission through persuasion and negotiation.
 - a. Integrating dimensions of *communal discernment* of the mission in a horizontal and fragmented world. The challenges of networking for the traditional Jesuit decision making process.
 - b. Reflecting on the role of governance and leadership structures in the *promotion of networking*. Recommendations to create the right ecosystem for networking. Roles and strategies at different levels of governance.
- 5) Study the role of **mission and identity in networks**. Examine how to promote the Jesuit identity and mission when networking within the Society and in collaboration with others.
 - a. Strategies to promote *corporate identity and common mission* in the local mindset. What does it mean for a local Jesuit and a local institution? How is our universal mission owned and implemented?
 - b. Specific reflection on *Jesuit networking and partnership with others*. The role of the Ignatian family as a platform to foster new and closer forms of collaboration locally, regionally, and internationally. How can Jesuits learn from and with others how to network better?
 - c. Role of the mission framework in collaborating with *networks beyond the Jesuit world*, with women and men of goodwill.²⁷
- 6) Reflect on the **ethical questions** raised by the practice of networking: networks and inequality; imbalanced use of resources, information, and technology; intercultural tensions; and power relations within networks.

²⁷ GC 34, decree 23, no 14

- 7) Study **networking among universities**, learning from the Mexico²⁸ experience. Develop a clearer approach to networking-with-depth from the contributions of the intellectual dimension. In think-tank style, generate spaces for new ideas regarding faith & justice and faith & culture.
- 8) Reflect on **areas of our mission that demand networking** and why. Identify apostolic areas or specific challenges that are better faced through networking solutions. Determine how to set the appropriate strategy and scope.
- 9) Consider the usefulness of **network analysis tools** for more effective Jesuit networking. Use them in a specific, carefully framed case to generate reflections on what the Society could learn from this type of exercise, with a view toward the possibility of using these tools on a wider level. Examples of areas for use are (a) the relation between interpersonal networks in the Society and inter-organizational ones, (b) identification of key players in the international arena, (c) mapping of some apostolic sectors, and (d) identification of the strategic information that could be gathered from data mining.

Part IV. Recommendations and Proposals

32. Networking as a new apostolic way of proceeding requires a **cultural change in the Society of Jesus** in order to develop (1) a new “ecosystem” favorable to collaboration and partnership in the mission on a wider scale, and (2) agents with the new skills needed to provide vision and leadership in a universal and collaborative mission. During the conference ideas arose as general recommendations²⁹ and as examples of specific proposals to be considered:

(a) Promote the implementation of the common mission. The global agenda is being developed with a clear sense of universal mission, but the evolution of the structures of governance proceeds at a slower pace. The international governing bodies of the Society should be aware of their responsibility for stimulating, rather than creating or establishing, initiatives of networking. Provincials, Conferences, and the General Curia may need to play a more active role in facilitating, fostering, accompanying, and evaluating international networks.³⁰

Even when networking happens at the institutional level, there are conditions for the possibility for networking that can be facilitated only from a higher level of governance. The orientation towards Society-wide initiatives can be promoted by supra-provincial structures based on global priorities, but the needed resources

²⁸ “Shaping the Future, Networking Jesuit Higher Education for a Globalizing World,” Mexico City Conference, April 2010.

²⁹ The intention of the conference with these recommendations is to contribute to the remarkable effort of renewal of the structures of governance in the line of mission and collaboration that after GC35 is being led by Father General and the curia, together with the presidents of conferences and provincials.

³⁰ The last document on provincial structures clearly states the need for “structures able to animate the mission.” *Renewal of the Provincial Structures at the Service of the Universal Mission, Post-GC 35 commission report*, 27 Sept 2011.

are not always there, and the dynamics of individual institutions are not easily brought together. In this sense we need to:

- 1) Set up structures to help in the achievement of the common mission, like strengthening the general curia secretariats to nurture, accompany and evaluate the international networking dynamics, or setting up a fund, depending on Father General, to promote international networks, especially at the initial stages, and giving priority support to global and cross-sector initiatives that will be harder to initiate than intra-conference or intra-sector ones.
- 2) Implement supra provincial strategies to establish priorities, work on operative plans at a higher level, reallocate resources, improve information sharing, and promote the link with the universal mission.³¹
- 3) Consider the reflection on the Conferences as networks – structures of governance based on networking among provinces –, in search of insights regarding type of structures, common procedures and leadership style.
- 4) Develop strategies to stimulate collaboration, openness, and generosity among our functional units, such as internal recognition, celebration, and visibility of successful experiences.
- 5) Care for the already existing initiatives of international networking: nurture and enhance them, allocate adequate resources, give them recognition and visibility, secure their proper leadership, and evaluate them.³²

(b) Promote the quality of the international leadership. New levels of mission require structures with multiple institutions, diverse planes of authority, interdisciplinary approaches, and different levels of involvement. Leading in this networked world requires, apart from the classic leadership skills, mastering the art of persuasion, ability for negotiation, intercultural skills, information communication technology, and a global perspective. We need to focus on both the international positions within the Society and the leading positions of international networks already in place. Special attention should be given to the new generations of Jesuits and lay people in positions of leadership. Examples of how to move forward include:

- 6) Create a program for international leadership, not only to promote formation and training, but also to facilitate the exchange of personnel and sharing of knowledge. Consider here the possibility of synergy among business schools and schools of spirituality.
- 7) Incorporate more experiences and a stronger orientation towards international and collaborative mission at all levels of Jesuit formation, fostering a global vision and “molding our identity as men for others who are also men with others.”³³

³¹ GC 35, decree 6, no. 14 recommends the review of our structures of collaboration, the development of guidelines, and the evaluation of their effectiveness regarding mission.

³² GC 35, decree 6, no. 29 urges the Society to explore means to develop more effective networking among all apostolic works associated with it.

³³ GC 35, decree 6, no.16 and GC 35, decree 6, no. 21 reference the need of scholastics to have experience and be trained in collaborative ministry.

- 8) Consider establishing international centers for alumni/ae in major world capitals, which could serve as the actual physical focal points for networking opportunities and resources (e.g. New York, London, Santiago, Nairobi, Mumbai, Sao Paulo, Paris, Madrid, etc.)
- 9) Continue prioritizing the care and attention in the recruitment for international positions in the SJ (both at conference and global level) with special attention to the needed profiles and long-term solutions.

(c) Promote the use of new technologies of information and communications.

The wider the scope of the mission, the more important are the technologies of information that can foster, facilitate, and simplify communication, coordination and joint ventures. Jesuit international networking relies³⁴ heavily on the capacity and ability to use communication technologies to assure unity in dispersion and to carry out our common mission while promoting participation.³⁵ Specific steps could include:

- 10) Offer a better preparation for using these technologies by training scholastics, relying on external experts and widening the scope of information technologies beyond communication to collaborative tools in areas such as apostolic planning, corporate identity, advocacy, pastoral work, etc.
- 11) Name a commission to rethink in a comprehensive way the use of IT at the international (regional and global) level, designing and developing needed platforms for internal and external communication, generating unique global informational hubs, facilitate the knowledge and identification of Jesuits and works, and preparing broadcasting strategies to reach segmented groups of our apostolic body and the wider Ignatian family.
- 12) Promote supra-provincial structures for collaboration of Jesuits and collaborators experts in communication and Information technology as a way of raising the level of the Jesuit reflection on digital and international communication tools. Encourage Rome and the Conferences to actually use this level of expertise for advice and know-how for supporting coordination and joint ventures.

(d) Promote and encourage reflection on Jesuit networking at all levels, but especially at the supra-provincial ones: conferences, secretariats, and central government.

- 13) Disseminate this document through the right channels so that it reaches all leaders responsible for common areas of the mission, and facilitate the space and canal for dialogue and common reflection.

³⁴ Information Technologies “can be powerful instruments for building and supporting international networks, in our advocacy, in our work of education, and in our sharing of our spirituality and our faith. This Congregation urges Jesuit institutions to put these new technologies at the service of those at the margins” GC 35, decree 3, no. 29

³⁵ “Invited to collaborate,” SJES, 2011.

- 14) Promote continuous learning through experience and reflection on networking in planning and evaluations, studying successful experiences, promoting case studies, and learning from known failures.³⁶
- 15) Promote and support scholars (and scholastics) in research and publication on this subject or suggested topics for further research.³⁷
- 16) Identify people as catalyzers for networking and potential assets for future initiatives. Detect sources of expertise within our groups of Jesuits and collaborators. Set up contacts and channels for enhancing conversation and the learning process. Pay attention to younger actors and experts.
- 17) Name a commission or task force to take responsibility for the promotion of this reflection, and empower it to develop these recommendations with a proper mandate.

More information and papers on this topic at
www.jesuitnetworking.org

A.M.D.G.

³⁶ See Part III n.30 of this document.

³⁷ See Part III n.31 of this document.

Appendix I. List of Participants

This document is a consequence of the intense debate and discussions of the Conference on International Jesuit Networking held at Boston College on April 28-30, 2012. The conference brought together religious and lay people, academics and practitioners from apostolic works and from various different levels of Jesuit structures of governance. The main objective was to initiate a line of reflection and research on the opportunities and ways to develop international networking in the Ignatian family; given the challenges that globalization poses to the universal body of the Society of Jesus. Complete information about the conference can be found at www.jesuitnetworking.org. Here is the list of participants:

1. Luis Arancibia, Entreculturas executive director - BC visiting scholar. (Keynote)
2. Gerry Blaszczak sj, Secretary for the promotion of Faith, General Curia. (Presenter)
3. Michael Boughton sj, Center for Ignatian Spirituality, Boston College. (Participant)
4. Frank Brennan sj, Australia National University and Australian Catholic University. (Keynote)
5. Rocio Calvo, Faculty, Graduate School of Social Work, Boston College. (Participant)
6. Jorge Cela sj, President CPAL – Latin America and Caribbean Jesuit Conference. (Keynote)
7. Anthony da Silva sj, Secretary for Collaboration, General Curia. (Participant)
8. Philip Endean sj, Faculty, Oxford University. (Keynote)
9. Tomeu Estelrich, University Mission and Ministry, Boston College. (Presenter)
10. Alberto Godenzi, Dean Graduate School Social Work, Boston College. (Presenter)
11. Dan Halgin, Faculty, University of Kentucky. (Keynote)
12. David Hollenbach sj, Faculty and Director of Centre for Human Rights and International Justice, Boston College. (Presenter)
13. Xavier Jeyaraj sj, Assistant Secretary for Social Justice and ecology, General Curia. (Keynote)
14. Gregory Kalscheur sj, Faculty, School of Law, Boston College. (Participant)
15. Gerald Kane, Faculty, Carroll Business School, Boston College. (Keynote)
16. Jim Keenan sj, Faculty, Department of Theology, Boston College. (Keynote)
17. T. Frank Kennedy sj, Director Jesuit Institute, Boston College. (Presenter)
18. William Leahy sj, President, Boston College. (Keynote)
19. Maryanne Loughry rsm, Faculty, Graduate School of Social Work, Boston College – JRS Australia. (Participant)
20. Chris Lowney, President, Jesuit Commons. (Participant)
21. Gregory F. Lucey sj, President Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities. (Participant)
22. Jose Magadia sj, Provincial of Philippines. (Keynote)
23. René Michalief sj, STM, Boston College. (Participant)
24. Gustavo Morello sj, Faculty, Department of Sociology, Boston College. (Participant)
25. Agbonkhanmeghe Orobator sj, Provincial of AOR. (Keynote)
26. Tom Regan sj, Loyola University Chicago and former provincial of NEN. (Keynote)
27. Travis Russell sj, California Province. (Participant)

28. Jose María Segura sj, STM, Boston College. (Participant)
29. Myles Sheehan sj, Provincial of NEN. (Participant)
30. Tom Smolich sj, President USA Jesuit Conference. (Participant)
31. Gonzalo Villagran sj, STM, Boston College. (Participant)
32. Daniel Villanueva sj, Entreculturas Assistant Director. (Keynote)
33. Jeremy Zipple sj, STM, Boston College. (Participant)

Appendix II. Papers on International Jesuit Networking

Most of the reflections presented in this document are taken from the papers and presentations prepared for the conference. Here it is a list of the papers produced in the order they were presented. All of them can be downloaded at www.jesuitnetworking.org

1. *Previous on Jesuit Networking*, Daniel Villanueva, SJ.
2. *An Interpretation and a Raincheck on GC35's Call to Develop International and Interprovincial Collaboration*, Frank Brennan, SJ.
3. *Social Network Theory*, Dan Halguin.
4. *An Analysis of the Current State of the International Networking in the SJ*, Luis Arancibia.
5. *Notes and Ideas on Mission*, Jose Magadía, SJ.
6. *Ideas On Jesuit Networking*, Chris Lowney.
7. *Jesuit Networking Internationally and the Charisms that Animate Us*, Jim Keenan, SJ.
8. *Ignatian Antecedents on Jesuit Networking*, Philip Endean, SJ.
9. *How to Network without Getting Diluted in the Attempt*, Jorge Cela, SJ.
10. *Everything I Needed to Know about Social Media, I Learned from Church Work*, Gerald Kane
11. *Notes on Governance*. Tom Regan, SJ.
12. *The Man in Google Glasses*, Agbonkhianmeghe Orobator, SJ.