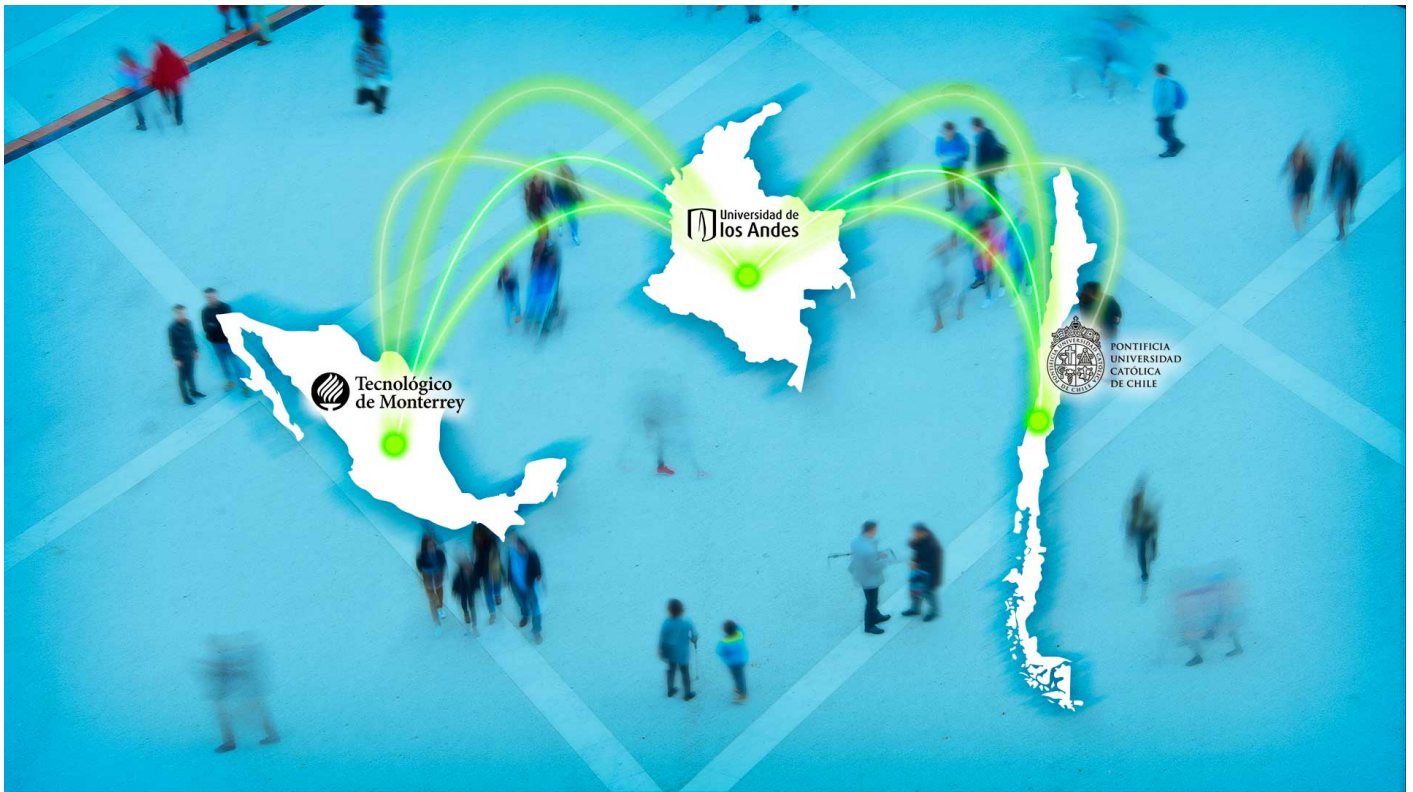


# 3 universities in Latin America on forging hope (opinion)



The rectors of the **top three private universities in Latin America**, which form **La Triada**, have issued a joint statement two years into the existence of this partnership.

This statement was signed by **David Garza**, Rector and Executive President of [Tecnológico de Monterrey](#); **Ignacio Sánchez**, Rector of the **Pontifical Catholic University of Chile**; and **Alejandro Gaviria**, Rector of the **University of Los Andes**.



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You can read the **entire statement** below\*:

### **Three Universities in Latin America: On Forging Hope.**

**Universities** have a **dual responsibility**: responding to the **challenges of the present** and helping to **build a better future**. This is no easy task at the best of times, but our current circumstances in the midst of one of the **worst crises** in recent history have made it harder. More than ever, this situation calls for us to increase our **capacity** for **transformation** and **innovation**, our solidarity, and our commitment to knowledge.

At the **Pontifical Catholic University of Chile**, the **University of Los Andes**, and **Tecnológico de Monterrey**, we are making efforts to find ways to tackle the **pandemic**, transform our educational models, and contribute ideas, actions, and knowledge. The **medical treatment crisis** means that we are contributing, among other things, designs and production of **ventilators** and **personal protection equipment**, research on detection testing and preparation of reagents for analysis of samples, laboratories for detecting contagion, and traceability studies, as well as **philanthropic** platforms. Being aware of the importance of spiritual, ethical, and welfare elements, we have strengthened our connections with the **humanities** and **social science areas** so that dealing with the crisis can in turn become a **pathway to a better society**.

**La Triada** is an initiative for collaboration between our universities -- ranked the top three nongovernmental universities in Latin America --, an initiative that allows us to act together to take advantage of the opportunities and confront the challenges of our region. Over the past **two years** of this **partnership**, we have been able to set up **55 joint projects** in areas such as educational

innovation, creative industries, health, sustainable cities, combating corruption, nanotechnology, biotechnology, water, diet, and environmental impact. Over the months of the pandemic, we have **increased the number of projects by 30%**. For instance, we have more than **75 online courses with free certification** on the [Coursera](#) platform, which have been especially useful at this time.

With enthusiasm and confidence in the future, we **three universities agree** that **Latin America** has **extraordinary potential**. We also recognize that our region's great challenge stems from a combination of the **historical issues** of insecurity, impunity, poverty, inequality, and exclusion. Close to **190 million Latin Americans** live in poverty, 30% of the population. More than a third of these live in conditions of extreme poverty. What's more, **Latin America** is the **region** with the biggest **inequality of income** in the world. These setbacks have been exacerbated by the crisis caused by the pandemic. We are tasked with urgent responsibility of building a new consensus that allows these challenges to be confronted and the **social fabric** to be repaired.

The pandemic has amplified social differences, affecting to a greater extent the lives and opportunities of those who have the least. **Education** and **knowledge** are the only way to **overcome** social divisions, political polarization, and general distrust. Our nature is that of a **generous and amiable people**. That is what makes us who we are in the world. We should **harness the potential** of that spirit. It's up to us to form leaders who are a **force for change**, who tackle our most pressing problems without sacrificing our **identity**. This is a time for compassion, for forming better connections with communities, for sustainability, generating opportunities for all, and critical yet constructive thinking.

In this time of crisis, faced with a panorama of uncertainty and anxiety, it's worth remembering that a **blessing** and a **hope** can be found in the midst of every tragedy. We shall encounter them together.

### **Ignacio Sánchez Díaz**

Rector of the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile

### **David Garza Salazar**

Rector and Executive President of Tecnológico de Monterrey

### **Alejandro Gaviria Uribe**

Rector of the University of Los Andes

\* Words in bold have been selected by the editors of CONECTA.

**YOU'LL DEFINITELY WANT TO READ THIS TOO:**

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