



## **Guyana Diaspora and Entrepreneurship Conference**

**June 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Ramada Georgetown Princess**

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### **Cultural Diversity and Innovation: Engaging the Diaspora for an Enhanced Caribbean Competitive Landscape Call for Papers/Panels/Participation**

#### **Co-Chairs:**

Dr. Fitzgerald Yaw, *Director of Strategic Initiatives, Vice Chancellery, University of Guyana*

Prof. Leyland M. Lucas, *Dean, School of Entrepreneurship & Business Innovation, University of Guyana*

The University of Guyana welcomes you to the 2019 Diaspora and Entrepreneurship conference as we explore Cultural Diversity and Innovation: Engaging the Diaspora for an Enhanced Caribbean Competitive Landscape. The 2019 theme will touch on many timely issues including best practices in leadership, technology, entrepreneurship, innovation, economic growth, diversity and inclusion and the role of the millennial Diaspora.

Our second Diaspora conference seeks to build on the success of the 2017 event as well as the 2018 School of Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation (SEBI) Entrepreneurial conference to facilitate further dialogue and spark innovative collaborations and discussions at an international level, in a dynamic and interactive setting, to identify areas to be subsequently explored in further depth and to generate collaborative action that will lead to real, lasting change in diaspora engagement and entrepreneurship.

Thus, we welcome participants from all relevant disciplines, professions and vocations (NGO personnel, aid workers, researchers, mental and physical health professionals, educators, human rights activists, counselors, social workers, policy makers, journalists, lawyers, politicians, business owners, labor specialists, sociologists, psychologists, economists, anthropologists, social media experts, artists etc.).

## **Objective: Engaging the Diaspora for an Enhanced Caribbean Competitive Landscape**

Under the above-mentioned theme, **Cultural Diversity and Innovation: Engaging the Diaspora for an Enhanced Caribbean Competitive Landscape** the conference aims to enhance our understanding of the ways in which skills within the Diaspora can contribute to the development of Guyana and the wider Caribbean.

A fusion of ideas and collaboration between diaspora and local populations will foster the growth of networks, which would result in innovations, expansion of existing businesses, modernization of governmental and non-governmental institutions, and the creation of new ones

As has been seen through lens of the Mexican, Irish, Jamaican and other countries' experiences, migration paths become increasingly important for traditional economies to be transformed to rapidly improve the quality of life of their citizens and residents and become great places to live and work. Above all else, this conference aims to strengthen the ties between the diaspora and local counterparts.

## **Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Youth, Women, Indigenous Communities, and Diaspora**

This focus on entrepreneurial activity is of significance to the youth, women, indigenous, and diaspora populations, whose ideas and initiatives will serve as the foundation for new ventures and innovations. Yet, as we have seen, current initiatives to support these groups are often stymied by the absence of funding, lack of adequate training, and non-access to critical social, human, and other networks. These facts suggest that there is the need for the Diaspora to lend their expertise in an organized manner for the benefit of Guyana and the Caribbean.

It is time to move beyond remittances and create areas and approaches that will allow the Diaspora to become more engaged by bringing the knowledge and expertise gained in global business, global education in all fields, modern ways of organizing society and institutions, connections, access to critical resources, and ideas to support business, social, cultural and societal development in Guyana and the Caribbean. Through effective collaboration between the diaspora and local institutions, we can usher in a new 'brain gain' process working towards cultural diversity and innovation.

## **Preparing for Oil and Gas: What can we do?**

As we observe the economic challenges in the region and prepare, for example, for the emergence of the Oil & Gas sector in Guyana, it is becoming increasingly obvious that the traditional ways of doing business cannot yield success. Economic and social development continue to be constrained by the 'brain drain' of the past decades and the absence of critical skills within the Caribbean society. The gaps in skills and competencies necessary to spur local involvement are clear. This is reflected not only in the lack of opportunities from which local companies, governmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals can benefit, but also in the need for rapid efforts at training within multiple technical and management sectors of the economy. This occurs at a time when the strategic implications of the shift away from the sugar industry are becoming more evident, and the movement towards greater entrepreneurial activity is being advocated. Members of the Diaspora are encouraged to bring their human, cultural, social, knowledge and financial capital to the Caribbean region.

## Conference Topics

The 2019 Diaspora & Entrepreneurship Conference is intended to provide a forum for interdisciplinary debates and action to address various issues relevant to academics, researchers, practitioners, policy makers and civic society. We invite participation of groups, institutions, and individuals. If you are working on a project and have ideas which you think can be usefully applied for community and national development, this conference offers the opportunity for engagement. From this standpoint, this conference intends to cover, but is not limited to, the following topics:

Diaspora Entrepreneurship & Local Business Development: Motivation, Governance, and Trust

The role of Hometown Associations (HTAs) in social entrepreneurship to enhance local communities' capacity to invest in projects

Diaspora Engagement in Crisis Situations

Youth Entrepreneurship: Keys/challenges to success

Diaspora Partnerships and Engagement in the Health Sector

Diaspora Partnerships and Engagement in the Education Sector

Indigenous entrepreneurship and Community Development

Women entrepreneurship: societal challenges, barriers, and keys to success

Refugee Entrepreneurs: Opportunities and challenges to success

Brain Gain: Ideas, opportunities, and innovations.

Competitiveness of Caribbean entrepreneurs compared to foreign direct investors  
Diaspora Tourism – The value and development potential

Business model/structure/mechanism of Diaspora entrepreneurs

Open ICT Ecosystems as Catalysts for collaboration, growth and innovation -The Diaspora as “Local Content”.

## Abstracts: Paper Presentations, Panels, Lightning Ted type Talks

Potential participants should submit abstracts of presentations, posters, and/or lightning Ted-type talks - Please indicate your preference. Participants are also free to organize panels and mobilize panel members for joint presentations. Abstracts should be limited 150-200 words (maximum).

Abstract Submission: by email: [diaspora-entrepreneurship@uog.edu.gy](mailto:diaspora-entrepreneurship@uog.edu.gy)

### Important Dates:

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| ✓ Conference dates                    | June 16 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> , 2019 |
| ✓ Abstract submission deadline        | Feb 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2019                    |
| ✓ Notification of abstract acceptance | Mar 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2019                    |
| ✓ Full paper/poster due for review    | April 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2019                  |

- ✓ Notice of paper/poster acceptance decision      April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018
- ✓ Early Bird registration ends      April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019
- ✓ Final submission due      May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019
- ✓ First author registration deadline      May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Kindly share this call for papers with members of your family, your community and your networks.