

# 2019

ANNUAL REPORT

ATLAS  
NETWORK



## MISSION

Atlas Network increases global prosperity by strengthening a network of independent partner organizations that promote individual freedom and are committed to identifying and removing barriers to human flourishing.

## VISION

Our vision is of a free, prosperous, and peaceful world where the principles of individual liberty, property rights, limited government, and free markets are secured by the rule of law.

## STRATEGY

Atlas Network cultivates a network of partners that share this vision. To accelerate the pace of achievement by our partners in their local communities, Atlas Network's unique "Coach, Compete, Celebrate!" strategic model inspires our partners to improve performance and achieve extraordinary outcomes.

### COACH

Atlas Network provides world-class seminars, workshops, mentoring, and other learning opportunities that inspire professionalism and build community among our independent partners.

### COMPETE

Atlas Network offers grant and prize competitions that fuel our partners' efforts to develop, innovate, and succeed.

### CELEBRATE!

Atlas Network fosters camaraderie and stokes ambitions among our partners by celebrating their greatest accomplishments through events and media outreach.



Atlas Network has been a four-star Charity Navigator member since 2008.



Atlas Network is a GuideStar Exchange Platinum-Level Participant.



Atlas Network's donation payment processor is certified to PCI Service Provider Level 1, the most stringent level of certification available.

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Cover: Faces of Atlas Network leaders from around the world.

# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Thank you for teaming up with Atlas Network in 2019 to increase global prosperity through the promotion of freedom!

We closed the year celebrating a major milestone: our partner network now encompasses 502 organizations in 99 countries.

Nearly 40 percent of those partners are located here in the United States. The establishment of our new Center for the U.S. and Canada reflects our belief that it's critical to repair and sustain the institutions of freedom at home so that our continent can remain a shining beacon for the rest of the world.

At the same time, however, the courage and tenacity of our partners in unfree countries around the world is an incredible source of inspiration. Their fight for freedom is our fight for freedom, and our regional centers

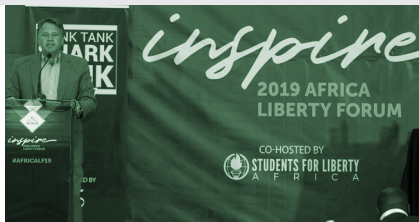
in Latin America and Africa support emerging markets for the ideas of liberty.

The worldwide nature of Atlas Network's mission reminds all of us that we own the moral high ground in the critical debates of our time. Let's remember this as we work together to achieve new victories for liberty.

I hope this report on our work in 2019 makes you proud to be part of an optimistic social movement that is growing in numbers and in effectiveness. With your help, the 2020s can be a new era of freedom, producing an expansion of peace and prosperity.

Brad Lips  
Chief Executive Officer, Atlas Network

With your help, the 2020s can be a new era of freedom, producing an expansion of peace and prosperity.”





# THE WORLDWIDE FREEDOM MOVEMENT

As of December 31, 2019, Atlas Network had 502 independent partner think tanks in 99 countries. We distributed \$5,654,872 in grants supporting work in 91 countries.



## 5.65M

Atlas Network **awarded in grants** supporting work in 91 countries.







### Europe Liberty Forum

Athens, Greece – May

RUSSIA

KAZAKHSTAN

MONGOLIA

CHINA

INDIA

AUSTRALIA

### Africa Liberty Forum

Nairobi, Kenya – August

### Asia Liberty Forum

Colombo, Sri Lanka – February



**502**

Independent  
Partner **Think Tanks**



**99**

**Countries** Represented by  
Atlas Network Partners

ATLAS  
NETWORK

## TIMELINE

# 2019 AT A GLANCE

 **1,246**

**Individuals** from 56 countries participated in our educational programs

 **14**

Foundational, Leadership, and Skills-based Trainings held in 10 countries

 **22** **Events** around the world

 **10** **Videos** in the Poverty & Freedom series

### Regional Liberty Forums

Making new connections is at the core of our Regional Liberty Forums, which were held in Sri Lanka, Greece, Dominican Republic, and Kenya. Nearly 900 think tank leaders from 89 countries came together to learn, network, and build new opportunities for liberty to thrive.

### Lights, Camera, Liberty Workshop

Got an iPhone? You can make a movie! But how can you tell a great story that showcases your message? During the Lights, Camera, Liberty film and messaging workshop in Los Angeles, directors, producers, and marketing experts worked with 54 aspiring filmmakers from 16 countries, all eager to learn how their stories of freedom might translate into compelling films.

### Economic Freedom Audits

Held in partnership with the Fraser Institute, Atlas Network sponsored Economic Freedom Audits in Côte d'Ivoire, South Africa, Lebanon, Bosnia, and Ecuador. The audits assess local data, policies, and opportunities for greater economic freedom so that partners can use this information to develop and share practical policy reform ideas with policymakers, media, and the general public.

## January

Economic Freedom Audit in Côte d'Ivoire

Smith Fellowship: Elena Toledo (Honduras)

## February

Asia Liberty Forum

Think Tank Essentials Training in Colombo, Sri Lanka

Global Policy Perspectives: Overcoming Poverty in Central America, New York City, New York

## March

Lights, Camera, Liberty Workshop in Los Angeles, California

## April

MarCom 360 Training in Sydney, Australia

Think Tank Essentials Training in Belgrade, Serbia

Think Tank Essentials Training in Montreal, Canada

Global Policy Perspectives: Venezuela, Mexico, Brazil: Currents of Major Changes in Latin America, New York City, New York

## May

Europe Liberty Forum

5th Annual Transatlantic CEO Summit in Athens, Greece

Launch of Atlas Network's Center for African Prosperity

Smith Fellowship: Bhakti Patil (India)

Global Policy Perspectives: Social Change through Public Policy in India, New York City, New York

## June

Latin America Liberty Forum

Inaugural InterAmerican CEO Summit in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Think Tank Essentials Training in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Global Policy Perspectives: Turning the Lights on in Lebanon, New York City, New York

## Leadership Trainings

Atlas Network rolled out new leadership training programs that meet the needs of think tank staff at all career levels:

- **Leader Lab:** This hands-on leadership development workshop equips emerging think tank leaders with an understanding of how to manage a think tank, including research, operations, communications, coalitions, fundraising, and management.
- **Executive Accelerator:** Building on administrative skills and assessing leadership strengths is the next step for think tank executives, who use data-driven insights to understand strategic planning, team management, and entrepreneurial thinking.
- **Global Influencer Summit:** Senior think tank leaders work together to focus on “big-picture” strategies, drawing from the insights of business and non-profit thought leaders outside of the think tank world.
- **CEO Summits:** During these two day-summits, chief executives from around the world focus on strategy, methods, and common challenges as they network on ways to increase the global impact of the freedom movement.

## Smith Fellowships

Smith Fellows are up-and-coming leaders from around the world who come to Washington D.C. to learn about marketing, fundraising, management, and more. Smith Fellows from Nepal, Honduras, India, Argentina, and Lithuania spent time with Atlas Network in 2019.

## Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner

Held annually in New York City, Liberty Forum brings together hundreds of freedom champions to exchange ideas, share strategies, and celebrate successes that create the conditions for liberty to thrive. The gala Freedom Dinner celebrates heroes of the freedom movement and the principles that Atlas Network’s partners are advancing worldwide.



← Top left: Dr. Tom G. Palmer receives an appreciation letter and Afghan Chapan at Ranna University during his speaking tour in Afghanistan.

↪ Top right: Olumayowa Okediran welcomes attendees to the 2019 Africa Liberty Forum in Nairobi, Kenya.



↙ Bottom: The inaugural cohort of Executive Accelerator in Fairfax, Virginia.

July

Smith Fellowship:  
Aneta Vainė  
(Lithuania)  
  
Economic Freedom  
Audit in South Africa

August

Africa Liberty Forum  
  
Think Tank Essentials  
Training in Nairobi,  
Kenya

September

Executive  
Accelerator  
  
Smith Fellowship:  
Candelaria de  
Elizalde (Argentina)

October

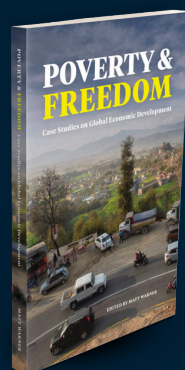
Leader Lab  
  
Global Influencer  
Summit  
  
Release of *Poverty &  
Freedom* book  
  
Launch of Atlas  
Network’s Center for  
U.S. and Canada

November

Liberty Forum &  
Freedom Dinner  
  
Inaugural U.S.  
Investors Summit for  
Liberty in New York  
City, New York  
  
Economic Freedom  
Audits in Bosnia and  
Lebanon  
  
Smith Fellowship:  
Deependra  
Chaulagain (Nepal)

December

Think Tank Essentials  
Training in Lima, Peru  
  
Economic Freedom  
Audit in Ecuador  
  
Dr. Tom G. Palmer  
speaking tour in  
Afghanistan





# CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

Thanks to the generosity of the John Templeton Foundation and Templeton Religion Trust, Atlas Network celebrates outstanding accomplishments by our network with competitive award programs that inspire our grantees to achieve extraordinary outcomes.

## Templeton Freedom Awards

The \$100,000 Templeton Freedom Award is given annually to a think tank that has made important contributions to the understanding of free enterprise and the public policies that encourage prosperity, innovation, and human fulfillment via free competition. Winners of the \$25,000 Regional Liberty Awards share their projects and are honored at Regional Liberty Forums around the world.

### 2019 TEMPLETON FREEDOM AWARD

#### **Foundation for Economic Freedom, Philippines**

*Enabling millions of agricultural patent holders to sell their land legally*

### 2019 REGIONAL LIBERTY AWARD WINNERS

#### AFRICA

##### **Audace Institut Afrique, Cote d'Ivoire**

*Formalizing property rights for rural landowners*

#### ASIA

##### **Bikalpa—An Alternative, Nepal**

*Reaching millions of organic viewers with a video series on freedom*

#### EUROPE

##### **EasyBusiness, Ukraine**

*Working to end a ban on agricultural land sales*

#### LATIN AMERICA

##### **Fundación Eléutera, Honduras**

*Creating new opportunities for entrepreneurs via tax reform*

#### NORTH AMERICA

##### **Pacific Legal Foundation, United States**

*Advancing strategic anti-regulatory litigation*

#### MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA

##### **Lebanese Institute for Market Studies, Lebanon**

*Ending the government monopoly on electricity provision*

## Think Tank Shark Tank

Atlas Network's popular competition is global! Atlas Leadership Academy graduates from around the world compete at Regional Liberty Forums in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. Three contestants pitch their innovative projects before a panel of local philanthropists for the chance to win \$10,000, with the top prize at Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner taking home \$25,000.

The 2019 Think Tank Shark Tank winners were:

### LIBERTY FORUM & FREEDOM DINNER

#### **Connor Boyack**

*Libertas Institute, United States — Creating a free-market educational curriculum*

#### AFRICA

##### **John Mustapha Kutiyote**

*Students' Organization for Liberty and Entrepreneurship, South Sudan  
Educating women on property rights*

#### EUROPE

##### **Nataliya Melnyk**

*Bendukidze Free Market Center, Ukraine  
Creating an economics course for middle schoolers in Ukraine's curriculum*



↑ Top: John Mustapha Kutiyote accepts the 2019 Africa Think Tank Shark prize from Atlas Network's Lyall Swim, Brad Lips, and Tarun Vats.

↓ Bottom: Basanta Adhikari of Bikalpa—An Alternative accepts the 2019 Asia Liberty Award.



# PLATTE INSTITUTE

📍 Nebraska, United States

Nebraska is one of many states that have made it difficult to earn a living with burdensome licensure laws that protect entrenched special interests at the expense of both consumers and aspiring entrepreneurs. The Platte Institute in Omaha is playing a central role in reducing these laws and setting precedents that can be used as a regulatory reform model across the United States.

“The Atlas Network has been a tremendous partner for the Platte Institute,” said Adam Weinberg, communications and outreach director at Platte Institute. “Atlas Network training and resources have helped us achieve our organizational goals and has brought our work to the attention of national and international audiences.”

With Platte’s advocacy leading the way, the Nebraska legislature has adopted licensing reforms for more than fifteen professions, including barbers, cosmetologists, car salesmen, hair braiders, and others. Their efforts are also helping Nebraskans with past criminal convictions find out if they are eligible for licensure before wasting time and money on training. Platte’s signature model legislation has been praised by *The Wall Street Journal* editorial board as a standard for the nation.

In 2016, the Platte Institute became involved in occupational licensing reform by supporting a movement to exempt natural hair braiding from cosmetology licensure. With their help, a reform bill was passed, but nearly 200 other professions in Nebraska still required state licensing, including some occupations not directly identified in state statutes.

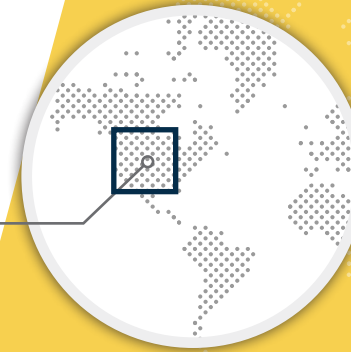
Each reduced licensing requirement means new opportunities for everyday Nebraskans to make a living by pursuing their passions. In 2018, Nebraska adopted the Occupational Board Reform Act, a comprehensive review of all state occupational licensing laws. Each state license must be scrutinized at least once every five years, in order to identify potential regulatory alternatives that would be less restrictive than licensing.

In 2019, the Nebraska Legislature adopted a waiver for first-time occupational licensing fees for many low-income workers, military families, and young people, and more bills to reform or repeal individual licensing requirements have been heard in committee.

Other states are beginning to take notice of “The Nebraska Model” for occupational licensing reform. Under the direction of two former state legislators, both of whom have led the fight for reform, Platte’s leadership is helping to raise national awareness of this challenge.

The Platte Institute’s work on occupational licensing was a finalist for the 2019 Templeton Freedom Award.

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# CENTER FOR INDONESIAN POLICY STUDIES

## Indonesia

Indonesia's rich and abundant farmland produces more than 30 million metric tons of rice annually, and yet 30 percent of Indonesian children suffer from malnutrition and other lingering effects of food insecurity. Why? The country's protectionist trade policies have pushed local prices out of the reach of many low-income consumers, who simply cannot afford to buy enough rice to feed their families.

The Center for Indonesian Policy Studies (CIPS) has been instrumental in combatting an entrenched culture of bias against free markets in the food sector, especially after food prices spiked in the country. Their advocacy caught the attention of President Joko Widodo, who had rejected the idea of rice imports after his initial election in 2014. But with prices rising and more families suffering, Indonesia's Ministry of Trade used CIPS' research to make the case for removing restrictions on imports, opening up the market for consumers.

CIPS' HakMakMur campaign, which brings together experts in food security, poverty alleviation, nutrition, farming, and shipping, is reaching millions with the message of free trade. Using research to measure and track consumer food costs, CIPS shows how liberalized trade policies can help ensure access to affordable food. Bakoel Kosong (Empty Bowl), a new film on food insecurity inspired by Atlas Network's Lights, Camera, Liberty workshop, jumpstarted discussions among young people, and CIPS' media presence, with more than 1,300 articles between 2017-2019, are key to keeping the issue in the public consciousness.

“CIPS spent years on research and advocacy against protectionist trade restrictions that disproportionately harm the poor. Atlas Network has been at our side throughout the process with fruitful advice and resources.”

- Rainer Heufers,  
Executive Director, CIPS





# FUNDACIÓN ELÉUTERA

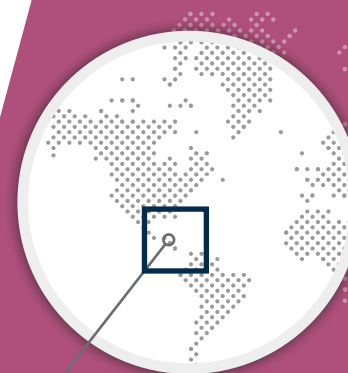
## Honduras

When the Honduran government began revising its tax code in 2014, Fundación Eléutera contributed fifteen different reforms that reinforce the rule of law and that protect the rights of Hondurans—specifically small business owners—by reducing arbitrary government intervention. Before these reforms, a business could be searched and shut down for almost any reason at any time, and the owners had to pay 100 percent of the fines levied against them before they could even have the chance of disputing the charges before a judge. As of now, large businesses have to pay 20 percent of the fine to take the dispute to court, and medium and small enterprises pay 10 percent and 5 percent respectively. Eléutera has also challenged this economic barrier to justice in the Supreme Court, with the final decision pending.

Now, government agencies are required to obtain warrants before searching or suspending a business and follow strict due process. Additionally, businesses can only be shut down for breaking Honduran laws, not for violating administrative regulations (which can change rapidly and on short notice). And, if a business wishes to go to court and fight charges made against them by any government agencies, they only pay a fraction of the total fines. Over 2,200,000 Hondurans have benefitted from these reforms in just a short period of time. For their work to strengthen the rule of law in Honduras, Fundación Eléutera won the 2019 Latin America Liberty Award.

“As Eléutera has gained traction and credibility in a country with limited experience in dealing with policy think tanks, the Atlas Network has helped us to train our team, connected us to many other organizations which can share their experiences, as well as boosted our effort through grants that help us fight above our weight class,” said Guillermo Peña Panting, president of Eléutera. “There is no other organization that has been better to ‘show us the way’ in this adventure.”

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# STUDENTS' ORGANIZATION FOR LIBERTY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP (SOLE)

## 📍 South Sudan

Land is one of South Sudan's most precious—and most disputed—resources, but for most women, cultural norms have pushed landownership out of reach. Although the country has adopted legal protections that explicitly recognize the rights of women, the laws are often ignored in more isolated areas of the country, and a lack of knowledge fuels this deeply entrenched discrimination.

Students' Organization for Liberty and Entrepreneurship (SOLE), under the leadership of executive director John Mustapha Kutiyote, is laying the foundations for change to a system that continues to push women out of home ownership and onto the streets.

At Atlas Network's 2019 Africa Think Tank Shark Tank, Kutiyote's winning project shared the stories of women treated as *dee mara saki*, or "she's just a woman," a phrase that embodies the cultural prejudice that keeps women from asserting their private property rights. With the support of Atlas Network, SOLE launched an awareness campaign that includes special workshops, community meetings, and radio outreach to help women understand and assert their legal status.

To date, more than 500 women have attended one of SOLE's workshops in Yambio and Nzara, located in the country's Western Equatoria state on the border of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In bringing together women who have been affected by this harmful custom, Kutiyote has also sought to share positive growth that will inspire others.

One enterprising woman told the audience that she had created a successful business that enabled her to send her children to school and feed her family. "I have 8 plots which I bought. I have put up some structures which are being used for renting. This training has confirmed to me that I was on the right track, but I have learned that obtaining a land lease is very important if I am to obtain loans from the bank."

With the goal of training at least 1,500 women and engaging another 8,000 people through community outreach and media, Kutiyote is making plans for the project to continue through the first half of 2020. "With Atlas Network's support," he says, "we can together change the culture of *dee mara saki* into *dee maa mara saki*: she is not 'just' a woman, but a woman who has the right and ability to own private property for prosperity."

” More than 500 women have attended one of SOLE's workshops in Yambio and Nzara





# LIBERTARIAN CLUB LIBEK

📍 Serbia

Libertarian Club Libek in Serbia won the 2018 Think Tank Shark Tank competition to create a news platform to inform the country's contemporary political debate with daily political opinion and a classical liberal perspective on developments in the region. The seed funding from the Think Tank Shark Tank has made a world of difference for the success of the project, as Talas has become one of the leading independent outlets in Serbia, read on daily basis by political opinion leaders in media, political parties, government, and the opposition, as well as by business leaders and civil society leaders. Several thought leaders have even publicly stated that Talas is their favorite outlet for political commentary.

"The funding from the Think Tank Shark Tank really planted the seed for the growth of our media outlet and the success it had in 2019," said Petar Čekerevac, executive manager of Libek. "But equally important for our success in 2019 were

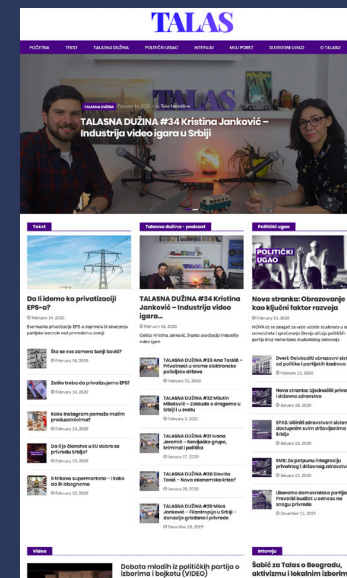
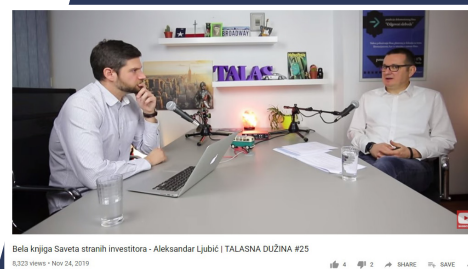
Even the Prime Minister of Serbia, who Libek often criticizes, started following Talas from her personal Twitter account and gave an exclusive statement for Talas in August 2019.

Atlas Network training programs and networking opportunities, which helped us focus, avoid mistakes and secure additional funding. The Smith Fellowship in which I participated in 2018, and the Liberty Forum events were of fundamental importance to our work in 2019."

In November 2019 Libek had record-breaking website traffic of 500,000 website hits a month by over 372,000 users, and over 700,000 unique users visited the website in 2019. The growth in reach is followed by a steady growth of their community on social media, where they make over half a million impressions a month. Even the Prime Minister of Serbia, who Libek often criticizes, started following Talas from her personal Twitter account and gave an exclusive statement for Talas in August 2019.

Talas content was quoted by the mainstream, independent, and local media in Serbia over 50 times in 2019, including the most popular political websites, TV, and print media in the country.

Libek seeks to grow Talas into the most popular non-mainstream media online political outlet in Serbia and to continue to build their brand as the go-to place for quality political content. Talas has brought the classical liberal perspective on political and economic topics to all of those who value individual liberty, free markets, entrepreneurship, and peace in the Balkans.





# FINANCES

## REVENUE

|                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Contributions        | \$15,266,000        |
| Other Income         | \$308,000           |
| <b>Total Revenue</b> | <b>\$15,575,000</b> |

## EXPENSES

|                       |                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Programs              | \$12,338,000        |
| Management            | \$607,000           |
| Development           | \$1,286,000         |
| <b>Total Expenses</b> | <b>\$14,231,000</b> |

## ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

|                                       |                     |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Cash and Investments                  | \$5,216,000         |
| Pledges and Receivables               | \$6,282,000         |
| Other Assets                          | \$964,000           |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                   | <b>\$12,463,000</b> |
| Liabilities                           | \$1,198,000         |
| Net Assets                            | \$11,265,000        |
| <b>Total Liabilities + Net Assets</b> | <b>\$12,463,000</b> |

## EXPENSES BREAKDOWN

Programs

**12,338,000**

Development

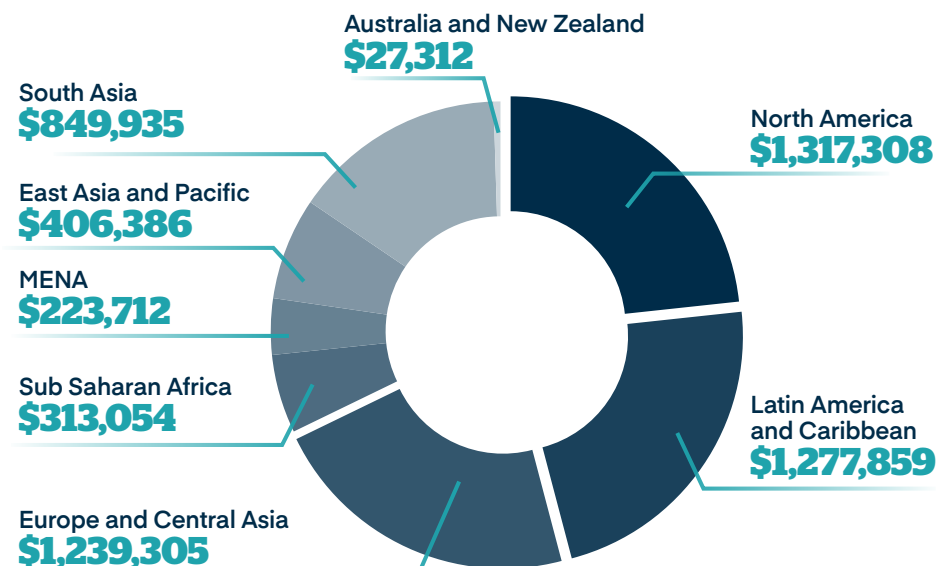
**1,286,000**

Management

**607,000**



## GRANT INVESTMENT BREAKDOWN BY REGION



# 2019 ATLAS NETWORK TEAM



## Advisory Council

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