



# GLOBAL INNOVATION SERIES

2018–2019

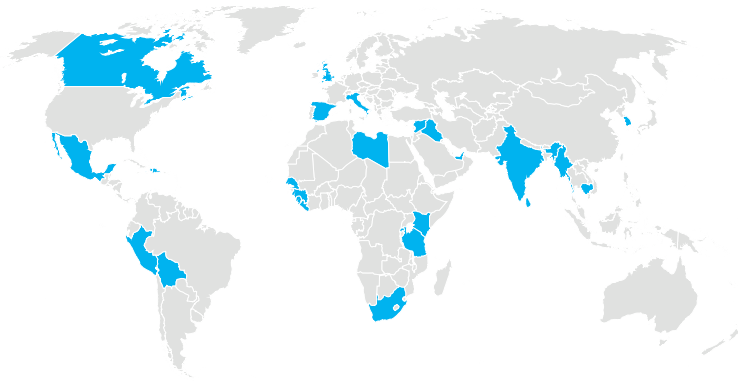
**Yale** *Maurice R. Greenberg  
World Fellows Program*

KNOWLEDGE  
EQUITY



Information Society Project  
Yale Law School

TSAI  
CENTER for  
INNOVATIVE  
THINKING at  
YALE



# Introduction to the Series

The Global Innovation Series is an exciting new partnership between Yale's Maurice R. Greenberg World Fellows Program and the Tsai Center for Innovative Thinking at Yale (Tsai CITY), established by 2017 World Fellow and Tsai CITY Innovator in Residence Baljeet Sandhu. As part of the Knowledge Equity Initiative, the series involves a set of events and discussions hosted around Yale's campus to explore and celebrate the innovative work of groundbreaking global changemakers across industries, geographies, and cultures. Each event is built in partnership with other centers and faculties across the university to connect world leaders with the Yale and New Haven communities and beyond, and to encourage multidisciplinary debate and knowledge exchange.

The events in the inaugural season of the series encompassed a range of topics and themes, including the value of lived experience; the importance of diverse and interdisciplinary perspectives for innovation; how communities around the world are leading radical change across sectors; the need for equitable, contextual approaches to partnership and collaboration in social change work; the role that technology can play in equitable innovation; the importance of resilience when working to address pressing real-world problems; and the many forms that leadership can take in driving change from the ground up, and from within and across existing organizations and institutions. Emma Sky, Director of the World Fellows Program, noted about the series, "I am delighted to see a fruitful partnership between our World Fellows and Tsai Center for Innovative Thinking at Yale. The Global Innovation Series has shown that innovation can come in many forms across many sectors. World Fellows are leaders in their fields and the knowledge they have been able to share with the Yale community will hopefully lead to more creative and inventive solutions to the world's problems."



## Baljeet Sandhu

### TSAI CITY INNOVATOR IN RESIDENCE

Baljeet Sandhu is an award-winning UK human rights attorney, social entrepreneur, educator, and pioneer of the global knowledge equity movement, centering the value of both lived and learned experience to drive innovation, entrepreneurship, and social impact work. She is a visiting fellow at the Information Society Project at Yale Law School and Founder of the Knowledge Equity Initiative at the Tsai Center for Innovative Thinking at Yale. Baljeet's work has recently inspired the development of cutting edge funding and leadership pilots for lived experience leaders and entrepreneurs working across the UK. She is a founding partner of the [2027 Programme](#) and a specialist adviser to the [Clare Social Leadership Programme](#). Previously, Baljeet was the founding director of the [Migrant & Refugee Children's Legal Unit \(MiCLU\)](#) and founding partner of [Kids In Need of Defense UK](#). She has served as a Special Adviser to the UK Children's Commissioner; the UK Home Office Children's Asylum and Immigration sub-committee and has also served as an Expert Advisor to the Strategic Legal Fund for Vulnerable Young Migrants. Baljeet was the recipient of the UK Young Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year award in 2011; 2014 UK Clare Social Leadership Fellowship; 2017 Yale World Fellowship and is a fellow of the Vital Voices Female Global Leaders Partnership. In April 2017, she was honored with the DVF International Award during the Women in the World Conference at the United Nations.

# 14

EVENTS

# 409

ATTENDEES

# 9.1/10

SATISFACTION RATING

## FEEDBACK FROM ATTENDEES

“Loved the on-the-ground perspectives from people who have faced really challenging scenarios.”

“Really moved by the World Fellows’ perspectives on participation and ownership.”

“I loved learning about promoting large-scale change through empowering local communities.”

## Our Partners and Guests

Thank you so much to all of the wonderful partners and guests without whom the inaugural season of the Global Innovation Series would not have been possible: the Maurice R. Greenberg World Fellows Program, Yale Law School's Information Society Project, Yale School of Architecture, Dwight Hall the Center for Public Service and Social Justice, the Asian American Cultural Center, the Asian Network at Yale, the South Asian Club, the Center for Collaborative Arts and Media, the Council on Latin American and Iberian Studies, La Casa Cultural, the Afro-American Cultural Center, Tanya Sharma, Shruthi Basavaraj, Daphnée Charles, Louino Robillard, Susan Harris, Virginia Spell, Mohamad Hafez, and Maria Adebawale-Schawarte.



South  
Asian  
Club



Yale *Maurice R. Greenberg  
World Fellows Program*



Information Society Project  
Yale Law School

Yale MACMILLAN CENTER  
*Council on Latin American and Iberian Studies*



Dwight Hall at Yale

Yale University  
CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE  
ARTS AND MEDIA



# Featured World Fellows



## Fauziya Ali

PRESIDENT, WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL SECURITY - HORN OF AFRICA

Fauziya Abdi Ali is a devoted advocate for the engagement of women in peace and security issues. She works with government and non-governmental actors to develop regional and national strategies to address violent extremism in Africa. She is the founder and President of Women in International Security-Horn of Africa (WIIS-HoA), a Kenyan-based organization that works towards gender, peace and security initiatives. Fauziya has over 10 years' experience working on security and governance reform. She took a year off from managing WIIS-HOA to coordinate the Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) regional Program for Africa under the UNDP Regional Service Centre for Africa. At UNDP she supported the ground-breaking study "Journey to Extremism – Drivers, Incentives and the Tipping Point for Recruitment." Fauziya also chairs Sisters without Borders, a network of Kenyan organizations devoted to the prevention of violent extremism. Due to her work in preventing violent extremism she has been named a "leading woman" in PVE by News Deeply, a Women and Girls independent news and information platform covering issues of females in the developing world.



## Major Dongyoun Cho

POLICY BRIEFING OFFICER, REPUBLIC OF KOREA ARMY HEADQUARTERS

Dongyoun Cho is an army major in the South Korean Ministry of National Defense. She also served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a project manager of the NAPCI (The Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative) Task Force. NAPCI engages in meaningful work building trust and initiating cooperation among participating nations in Northeast Asia that are fraught with tension, shedding light on the multifaceted dimensions of national security policies, including issues such as nuclear safety, energy security, environmental protection, climate change, disaster relief, and drug trafficking. While the South Korean army is still mainly focused on war and weapons-based security, Dongyoun's own experience during peacekeeping operations in Iraq has taught her that the traditional concept of security is not enough to ensure peace and stability. Through her 17 years of military experience collaborating with governmental, national, and regional entities, Dongyoun hopes to contribute to promoting sustainable peace by addressing the root causes of violent conflict in the Korean peninsula in the foreseeable future. Dongyoun earned an M.P.A. degree from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.



## ElsaMarie D'Silva

FOUNDER & CEO, RED DOT FOUNDATION (SAFECITY)

ElsaMarie D'Silva is an Indian gender activist and is the Founder and CEO of Red Dot Foundation (Safecity) and is President of Red Dot Foundation Global. Safecity is a platform that crowdsources personal stories of sexual harassment and abuse in public spaces. This data gets aggregated as hot spots on a map indicating trends at a local level. Since Safecity started in December 2012, it has become the largest crowd map on the issue in India, Kenya, Cameroon and Nepal. ElsaMarie is listed as one of BBC Hindi's 100 Women and has won the Vital Voices Global Leadership Award, Female Entrepreneur of the Year Award, Niti Aayog's #WomenTransformingIndia award and SheThePeople's Digital Woman Award in Social Impact. Prior to Safecity, ElsaMarie worked in the aviation industry for 20 years as Vice President of Network Planning and Charters for Jet Airways and Kingfisher Airlines.





## Ralph François

FOUNDER & CEO, COCREAD

Ralph François is a Disaster Risk Resilience (DRR) Management and Climate Resilience Specialist with over 10 years of experience working with communities in Haiti. In 2015, Ralph founded Cocread, a social enterprise and community incubator that creates self-sustainable communities using art and technology. As CEO of Cocread, Ralph was first-runner up at the singularity Global Impact Challenge for the Caribbean and a guest speaker at the first Haiti Tech summit. Through his recent initiative, called VR for Resilience, Ralph is currently using virtual reality to educate girls in disaster-prone areas about climate change and coding. During the course of his career in private, international and government agencies, Ralph has contributed to key research studies and developed methodologies and toolkits in the DRR field, including the first evacuation guidelines, the disaster response experiences during the January 12, 2010 earthquake, and research on risk ecology. Ralph studied sociology in Haiti and went to CATIE in Costa-Rica for an integrated risk management and technology program.



## Sylvia Aguilera García

FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CENTRO DE COLABORACIÓN CÍVICA

Sylvia Aguilera García is a Mexican with more than two decades of experience working in human rights and peace-building. During the past 14 years she has focused her work on developing new ways to approach public conflicts in Mexico, mainly those related to land and natural resource management, as well as those associated with the advancement of human rights, the justice system and victims' rights. Part of her work has been focused on strengthening civil society coalitions and in developing collaborative and negotiation capabilities. During the last three years she has been working with the national Movement of Relatives of Disappeared Persons in Mexico. She is a former Director of the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights, and from 2012-2018 was the Executive Director of the Center for Civic Collaboration, a Mexican organization focused on the design and development of multi stakeholder dialogues. She has been consultant of the Inter American Commission of Human Rights since 2013, working to strengthen its Friendly Settlements Agreement process. She is also part of the roster of experts in mediation for the Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism (MICI) – Inter American Development Bank. Sylvia holds a BA in Social Psychology from the Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana, a MA in Peace Studies from the University of Bradford, UK and a specialization on Working with Conflict.



## Julio Guzman

FOUNDER, PURPLE PARTY

Julio Guzman is a Peruvian politician, leader and founder of the Partido Morado (The Purple Party), a centrist-political national party. He ran for President in the 2016 Elections, climbing to second place with more than 20% of the voting intention, before he was excluded from the race because of “administrative issues” regarding the registration of his candidacy. Previously, Julio was a Partner at Deloitte Peru. He served as Vice Minister of Industry and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and as Secretary General at the Office of the Prime Minister. In that role, he was President of the Council of Vice Ministers, responsible for the coordination of multi-sectorial policies. Before joining the Government, Julio worked for a decade at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in Washington, DC. He holds a PhD in Public Policy at the University of Maryland, a Master's in Public Policy from Georgetown University, and a bachelor degree in Economics from Universidad Catolica, Peru. Also, Julio participated in an International Banking Summer Program at Trinity College at the University of Oxford. During his tenure at the IDB, he was adjunct professor at both the University of Maryland and Georgetown University.



## Thynn Thynn Hlaing

FORMER COUNTRY DIRECTOR, SIERRA LEONE, OXFAM INTERNATIONAL

Thynn Thynn Hlaing is a development professional who has been working in humanitarian and long-term development programs for more than 15 years. Her primary focus is on women's rights and women's empowerment issues. She worked as the Country Director of Oxfam International in Sierra Leone over 4 years from 2013 to 2018. She has previously worked in Myanmar, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Liberia. Thynn Thynn was selected as the best INGO Woman Leader for 2017 in Sierra Leone by the INGO Watchdog Association in Africa. She is passionate about helping impoverished women overcome their social, political and economic barriers by bringing about tangible and social change. She has championed women rights by supporting a transformative political leadership journey for women leaders in Sierra Leone. During the Ebola crisis, she led and successfully implemented Oxfam's emergency response which was staffed by 400 employees to fight against the global threat. A native of Myanmar, Thynn Thynn holds a master in Public Administration degree from Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore.



## Abdul-Rehman Malik

POSTGRADUATE ASSOCIATE, YALE COUNCIL ON MIDDLE EAST STUDIES

Abdul-Rehman Malik is an award winning journalist, educator and cultural organizer. He is currently a Postgraduate Associate at Yale University's Council on Middle East Studies, a Mentor-in-Residence at Tsai Center for Innovative Thinking at Yale, and directs the Yale Muslim Leadership Lab, currently incubated at Yale's Dwight Hall Center for Social Justice and Public Service. He is the programs manager for the Radical Middle Way, which offers powerful, faith-inspired guidance and tools to enable change, combat exclusion and violence and promote social justice for all. Abdul-Rehman is a journalist for BBC Radio, offering documentaries, programs, and contemporary perspectives on spirituality for Radio 4, Radio 2 and the World Service. He is the director of the Insight Film Festival, which celebrates the intersection between faith and film and in 2017, he was creative advisor to English Touring Theatre's acclaimed, radical reimagining of Othello and continues to curate The Othello Project. In June 2018, he was artist-in-residence at the Doris Duke Foundation's Shangri La Museum of Islamic Art, Design and Culture. Abdul-Rehman works to establish a global network of Muslim cultural leaders committed to building cultural capital and supporting cutting-edge artistic production and serves on the advisory board of the Said Foundation's Amal Muslim Cultures & Arts programme fund.



## Michael Kalisa

LEGAL SPECIALIST, ABA - RULE OF LAW INITIATIVE  
IN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Michael Kalisa is a Rwandan lawyer and transitional justice expert. Over the last twenty years, Michael has worked to restore the rule of law in post-conflict countries across sub-Saharan Africa. Repatriating immediately after the Tutsi Genocide of 1994, Michael worked as a Special Assistant to the Prosecutor General of Rwanda, contributing to the rebuilding of criminal legal infrastructure and developing mechanisms to protect the rights of all citizens, including genocide victims and perpetrators. At the international level, Michael served five years on the prosecutorial team of the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. He is currently working as a Legal Specialist with the American Bar Association- Rule of Law Initiative in Central African Republic where he designs capacity building programs to improve the skills of local justice actors and promote responsive governance. Michael is co-founder of Protect Citizen, an organization which supports Rwandan's rights to access justice. He's also a criminal justice lecturer at ILPD, a post-graduate legal institute. Michael holds a Master's degree in Government Law and Policy and a specialized certificate in Gender-based violence. He was a 2016 Transitional Justice Awards Fellow with the Australian Department of Defense.



## Ibrahima Amadou Niang

HEAD OF GUINEA COUNTRY OFFICE, OPEN SOCIETY INITIATIVE  
FOR WEST AFRICA (OSIWA)

Ibrahima Amadou Niang, “Ibou”, is the Head of the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) Guinea country office and a creative activist, researcher, and published author. For over ten years he has been striving to advance democracy and human rights across Africa. A native of Senegal, he has worked on social justice issues as an NGO activist, a democracy and electoral assistance provider, a grantmaker, a political writer, and translated poet. Ibou holds a Ph.D. in Political Science, an MA in International Governance and an MA in International Public Law from Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal. He also holds a BA in International Relations and Economics from the University of Reading, England. As a creative activist, he uses his power of words and imagery to move people from awareness to action. These messages are disseminated across the world to a diverse audience through his books and performances at international festivals. In 2016, he was awarded a certificate from the School of Creative Activism in Brooklyn, New York. In 2017, he was invited to perform at two major literary festivals: Festival Voix Vives de Méditerranée en Méditerranée (Sète, France) and Festival Paroles Indigo (Arles, France).



## Joy Olivier

FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IKAMVAYOUTH

Joy is a social entrepreneur with 15 years’ experience building and running IkamvaYouth; a South African non-profit, which enables youth to pull themselves and each other out of poverty through education. Having recently handed over to IkamvaYouth’s new ED, she is spending the rest of 2018 at Yale, as a World Fellow. Her academic background is in Psychology, Education and ICT. Joy co-founded IkamvaYouth in 2003; what began as a very small, unfunded, volunteer-driven initiative in a library in Khayelitsha is today one of the largest nationally operating education non-profits in South Africa. Despite the significant scale, the organisation has continued to deliver great matric results year-on-year, with over 80% of learners accessing post-school opportunities. Joy is passionate about learning, and finding innovative solutions to big social problems. She’s intrigued by the power of collaboration, the conversion of challenges into opportunities, and is committed to doing all she can to fight inequality and promote access to opportunities that change lives. Joy is an Africa Leadership Initiative (ALI), YALI and Ashoka fellow, and won the civil society category for the Most Influential Women in Business & Government in the SADC region in 2013.



## Elpida Rouka

FORMER CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED NATIONS OFFICE  
OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY FOR SYRIA

Elpida Rouka has most recently served as Chief of Staff a.i. to the UN Special Envoy on Syria whom she joined in September 2014. She remains part of his core good offices team to date. Previously, she was in Jerusalem where she led the political team for the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, an office which was set up after the Oslo Accords. She has worked for the United Nations for over 15 years and has most recently served as Principal Political Adviser for the UN’s Special Political Missions both in Iraq (2007-2009) and in Afghanistan (2010-2012) where she has dealt with aspects of facilitating peace and political processes, advancing regional dialogue, promoting human rights and assisting with the framework of electoral preparations. Previously she has held various positions in the United Nations Headquarters in New York, including in the Office of the Iraq Program, which oversaw the sale of Iraqi oil and the delivery of aid to that country, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations during the surge in multidimensional operations and the Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations under the administrations of both Kofi Annan and then Ban Ki-moon. During that time she took part in various good office and mediation initiatives. A Greek national, Elpida is a graduate of the American High School of Thessaloniki, Columbia College (Political Science and East Asian/Chinese studies) and SIPA/Harriman Institute in New York (Economic and political development program and Russian/Central Asian Studies).





## Sultan Sooud Al Qassemi

FOUNDER, BARJEEL ART FOUNDATION

Sultan Sooud Al Qassemi is a United Arab Emirates-based columnist and researcher on social, political and cultural affairs in the Arab Gulf States. Sultan rose in prominence during the Arab Spring when his tweets became a major news source, rivaling news networks at the time, until TIME magazine listed him in the “140 Best Twitter Feeds of 2011.” In 2018 Sultan ranked 19th on the “Arabic Thought Leader Index” by Swiss think tank Gottlieb Duttweiler Institute. Sultan was an MIT Media Lab Director’s Fellow from 2014-2016, and in the spring of 2017 he was a practitioner in residence at the Hagop Kevorkian Center of Near East Studies at New York University, where he offered a special course on Politics of Middle Eastern Art. Sultan is currently conducting research for a book that documents the modern architecture of the city of Sharjah in the UAE. In 2010 Sultan established the Barjeel Art Foundation that aims to contribute to the intellectual development of the art scene in the Arab region by building an extensive and publicly accessible art collection. In 2018, 100 works from the collection were hosted on a long-term basis at the Sharjah Art Museum.



## Rita Sciarra

STRATEGIC ADVISOR FOR INNOVATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND ECONOMIC INCLUSION, UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME MEXICO

Rita Sciarra is an expert in international development. Most recently she served as the Head of Poverty Reduction with the United Nations Development Programme in Haiti. She has managed a portfolio of projects to ensure the transition from emergency to development, with a special focus on economic development and social inclusion, improving the lives and opportunities of thousands of people. Originally from Italy, she is fluent in four languages, with more than 14 years of experience in three different continents, in post-conflict and normal development conditions. Sciarra began her career in 2003, in India and Bolivia, working for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy and in Tanzania with the Ivo de Carneri Foundation. From 2007-2011, Rita worked with UNDP in the Dominican Republic on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), early recovery, and monitoring and evaluation. Sciarra holds a master of advanced studies in public law and international relations from the University of Zaragoza (Spain, 2008), a master’s degree in European economic studies from the College of Europe (Bruges, Belgium, 2006) and a master’s degree in economics and international relations from the Università L. Bocconi (Milan, 2004).



## Pilar Velasco

INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER, CADENA SER/PRISA RADIO

Pilar Velasco is a Spanish journalist currently working at Cadena SER (Prisa Group), the radio network leader in Spain. Specializing in investigative and data journalism, she has exposed political and economic malpractices in Spain and uncovered high profile international corruption cases. Her reports have focused on revealing unlawful and unethical activities of the powerful against the public interest. Pilar is the author of two books, one about social change in Spain; and another one about the rise of indignados (Occupy) movement, both of which have been translated into several languages. She has also published two essays in Germany about the challenges of democracy in Europe in the context of the economic crisis, and how new models of citizen participation are emerging. She is a member of the Strategy Group ‘A Soul of Europe’, a European Union initiative to strengthen and connect communities through different frames of discussion. She collaborates with several digital media platforms, radio stations and TV channels in Spain and Latin America. Pilar teaches investigative journalism in Madrid and presents at conferences across Europe and Latin America. She is also the Founder and a Board Member of the Spanish Association of Investigative Journalists (2017) with the aim of promoting cross-border investigative journalism and reinforcing freedom of expression.



## Blue Innovation: Innovations within UN Work That You Hear Little About

**OCTOBER 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2018**

To begin to illuminate the innovations within UN work that aren't well-known, UN leader Elpida Rouka discussed technological innovations used to improve political dialogue across conflict zones, whilst UN leader Rita Sciarra described the UN's efforts in Haiti in 2010, focusing on the essential role that lived experience played in finding effective solutions to local issues.

In 2010, community-driven innovation defined the most successful UN recovery efforts in Haiti following the magnitude-7.0 earthquake. Sciarra, the Strategic Advisor for Innovation, Partnerships and Economic Inclusion for UNDP Mexico, emphasized the role that local mothers played in shaping payment plans and partnerships for Haitian women working with the UN. The UN had originally paid them by the day, but with families to support and children to feed, these women were not earning enough to cover all of their essential expenses. As a result, the women proposed a new payment plan that was based on the amount of rubble they removed, rather than the number of days they worked. This learning also reshaped later economic empowerment efforts of the UN to focus social entrepreneurship education and support for female entrepreneurs.

Rouka supported Sciarra's position and emphasized that local innovation not only aided the UN recovery efforts but also led to the most effective solution possible. Lived experience is at the heart of revolutionary innovation.



## Boundary Breaker ElsaMarie D'Silva

**OCTOBER 25<sup>TH</sup>, 2018**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ASIAN AMERICAN  
CULTURAL CENTER & THE ASIAN NETWORK @ YALE

"Data is one way of giving power back to the community." Founder and CEO of the Red Dot Foundation, ElsaMarie D'Silva outlined the power of data to uplift communities during this Global Innovation Series event. In D'Silva's words, "we don't need big data; we need relevant data at the community level." Red Dot Foundation aims to deliver this data by collecting personal experiences of sexual assault, helping to track local trends to establish relevant protection interventions. The platform gives power to sexual assault survivors by providing a safe space to speak out collectively. This work is essential

**"There was no  
concrete data in the  
public domain, and  
yet we all had  
stories to share."**

in places like India, D'Silva's home, where sexual assault is often overlooked or ignored; Red Dot Foundation pushes forward important evidence by hosting lived experience data.

Gathering this experiential data together is a form of empowerment because communities retain ownership and autonomy over those experiences—and how they choose to respond to them.



## Boundary Breaker Major Cho

**NOVEMBER 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2018**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ASIAN AMERICAN  
CULTURAL CENTER & THE ASIAN NETWORK @ YALE

Navigating bureaucracy requires time and commitment, but “at some point you will have an opportunity to use your own perspective.” Major for the South Korean Ministry of National Defense, Dongyoun Cho shared her own story of resilience and leadership, from her childhood experiences of poverty and adversity to taking on leadership roles in the military. Four years after enrolling in the Korean Military Academy, Dongyoun was placed in her first leadership position as Second Lieutenant (the first woman to take such a role), working to train enlisted soldiers. At the time, Dongyoun did not agree with the military’s rigid culture, so she found ways to work within the bounds of her role to create positive change. Dongyoun saw a need to create a more nurturing, calm environment and culture that could combat isolation and trauma, so she created innovations to inspire courage and resilience in those she worked with. One such innovation was a library filled with books from local academic institutions to create a foundation of hope for a positive future. Dongyoun has continued this work over the last fourteen years to ensure that soldiers feel safe, accepted, and supported during their mandatory service with the military. As a result of her creative and innovative leadership, she has since been chosen as a policy advisor to imagine the future of the military.

**“Don’t evade  
the reality,  
face it and  
persevere.”**



## Boundary Breaker Thynn Thynn Hlaing

**NOVEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2018**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ASIAN-AMERICAN  
CULTURAL CENTER & THE ASIAN NETWORK @ YALE

Innovators frequently want immediate results. All too often, they tackle pressing issues, then pack up and leave. Thynn Thynn Hlaing, the former Director of Oxfam International in Sierra Leone, believes there’s a better way to operate. Focusing on the impact that educational pedagogy has on innovation, Hlaing emphasizes the importance of breaking past memorization and creating environments where there is “permission to think critically.” Raised in Southeast Asia, Thynn Thynn experienced firsthand a memorization-dependant education system. Today, Hlaing utilizes this lived experience in her work, empowering communities to independently tackle local problems. During the 2014 ebola crisis in West Africa, for example, rather than delivering an Oxfam-calculated solution, Hlaing worked with local community figures to combat the outbreak, creating an environment where individuals could think creatively and critically. In nurturing this type of environment, she ensured that the community was equipped to independently develop future innovations. “Knowledge is there” in the community; this is why teaching how to innovate is more important than presenting pre-developed innovations. Lived experience is the most sustainable source for innovation, and every community is capable of innovation.





## Inclusive Place-Making and the Value of Lived Experience

**APRIL 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2019**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE YALE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

“Place is political,” was Maria Adebawale-Schawarte’s opening statement of a panel featuring speakers whose work spans architecture, art, and urban planning—and all of whom engage with questions of place-making and inclusive design. Adebawale-Schawarte is the Executive Director for the Foundation for Future London. She described her work in the UK to “speak up” about what architecture and urban planning should be, and about who we choose to include, collaborate with, and value in the design and development of new spaces. World Fellow Sultan Sooud Al Qassemi, founder of Barjeel Art Foundation, spoke of how struck he was by the lack of diversity in museums and galleries, especially when these institutions are a metaphor for and an indicator of all public spaces. Mohamad Hafez, an inspiring Syrian artist and architect based in New Haven, continued to build on how important inclusion is in the ways that we think about space—and how he works as an artist and architect to use built creations about the immigrant experience to “change and challenge the status quo.” Through their conversations, the panelists explored what it means to create places where people get to share in the economic and social value of a space, and where there can be co-development and co-ownership with communities. Maria concluded the conversation with her definition of place-making, where we “create place and space together.”



## Innovations in Technology and Visualization for Human Rights

**OCTOBER 31<sup>ST</sup>, 2018**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE ARTS + MEDIA

Those who have access to technology will shape the future. World Fellows ElsaMarie D'Silva and Ralph François are creating a future that will be built by all by increasing equitable access to technology. Elsa's startup,

the Red Dot Foundation, provides a digital platform to uplift the voices of sexual assault survivors. The Red Dot platform uses technology to enable sexual assault survivors to harness the power of their lived experiences for social good. In the words of Ralph, “technology is at the core” of creating an

**“We focus at an early age because of the exponential speed of tech innovation—we need more creators questioning how technology is impacting us.”**

equitable future, “but is not the solution.” Instead, like D'Silva, François uses technology to invest in individuals who have the power to create change. His social enterprise startup and community incubator, Cocread, gives communities the technology to create contextually specific and ingenious solutions to local problems. Giving communities access to technology places the future in their hands—and through that process, technology can be a bridge towards equity.



## Learning from Innovative African Leaders

**DECEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2018**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE  
AFRO-AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER

“Africa shouldn’t be seen as only a place of challenges, but a place of opportunity.” Michael Kalisa and Ibou Niang discussed their current work and their views on the state of innovation in Africa. As a lawyer, transitional justice expert, and Legal Specialist with the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative in the Central African Republic, Kalisa understands innovation as “a continuous process” where “innovation is about new opportunities for new contexts.” Niang is dedicated to spearheading this process; as the Head of the Open Society Initiative for West Africa Guinea office, Niang creates alternative spaces for young Africans to come together and develop grassroots solutions to local social

issues. Niang and Kalisa both find that community-based solutions are crucial to sustainable change because they foster community accountability. Also in alignment with this commitment, Fauziya Ali highlighted her time as a

**“Innovation is about new opportunities for new contexts.”**

governance coordinator of the New Partnership for Africa’s development, where “African solutions to African problems [were] at the heart of our work.” Kalisa, Niang, and Ali will continue to champion innovations developed by local communities, that draw on a vast and untapped pool of lived experience knowledge. As Ali noted, “Africa is not dark, [it] is full of light and we just have to see it. Innovation is necessary for survival. Innovation is a process. Innovation is Africa.”



## Learning from Innovative Latin American Leaders

**NOVEMBER 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2018**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH YALE’S COUNCIL ON  
LATIN AMERICAN AND IBERIAN STUDIES (CLAIS) &  
LA CASA: THE LATIN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER

Innovation relies on trust. World Fellows Sylvia Aguilera Garcia and Julio Guzman emphasized trust as a core component of successful innovation during this installment of the Global Innovation Series. In Garcia’s words, innovators “need the humility to say ‘I need help from others’ in order to build something bigger.” From her position as the former Executive Director at the Center for Civic Collaboration in Mexico, Sylvia sees changemaking as a process driven by individual passion and curiosity, but fundamentally supported by partnerships with and consultation from others. Innovation often stems from collaborations, which in turn rely on the trust that Julio also finds so essential to changemakers’ work. As the leader and founder of Peru’s Partido Morado and former Secretary General at the Office of the Prime Minister, Julio has seen that, contrary to popular belief, it is possible to implement new changes in the political sphere, but one must build trust first. From his experience, progress comes from having leadership not just at the top, but at every level because “politics is about engaging emotionally with people.” Changemakers in politics not only have to be humble and flexible, but they also have to be comfortable with showing their vulnerabilities. His message is simple but important: don’t lie to people. “They can absorb bad news if you’re transparent with them,” Guzman said—and from that transparency, comes trust.



## Lessons from Africa: Moving from Civic Engagement to Active Participation and Leadership

**NOVEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup>, 2018**

“If you haven’t lived it, you’re not the expert.” In this Global Innovation Series event, community organizers and activists Joy Olivier and Fauziya Ali worked to disentangle the web of narratives surrounding security and civic disengagement. Ali is the founder and President of a Kenyan-based organization that works on regional gender, peace, and security initiatives and Olivier is the founder of IkamvaYouth, one of the largest education nonprofits in South Africa. Both strive to understand local perspectives and actively develop initiatives to support local, youth, and female leadership for change. To combat local and regional tensions, they believe that we cannot continue to craft solutions to problems we do not understand—we must actively engage and work to understand local communities. Both experts also agree that “how you enter a community can make or break you.” Leaders and innovators must enter communities respecting customs, valuing the lived experiences of locals, and aiming to create long term impact.

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## Learning from Innovative Asian Leaders: Promoting Peace and Social Change

**NOVEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2018**

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ASIAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER & THE ASIAN NETWORK @ YALE**

“Governments are so disconnected with their citizens on the ground that they’re creating laws that don’t make sense.” World Fellows ElsaMarie D’Silva, Founder and CEO of Red Dot Foundation, and Thynn Thynn Hlaing, former Director of Oxfam International in Sierra Leone, discussed the key role groundwork plays in forming effective innovations during this Global Innovation Series event. Only nuanced local perspectives or thorough research on local trends can create properly contextualized laws, policies, or innovations. Elsa described the recent case of a girl who was gang-raped on a bus in Delhi and immediately died from her injuries. This incident not only sparked conversations about sexual violence throughout India, but also shed light on horrendous abuses of power by the police. Indian police forces had been pressuring survivors to report cases of sexual violence as non-cognoscible offenses—offenses that would not be tracked or require additional investigation by the police force. This controversy and Elsa’s work with the Red Dot Foundation, both of which uplift the voices of sexual assault survivors, have informed citizens about the police’s abuse of power and educated them on their rights under the law. This is powerful innovation—it’s simple but effective. It also wouldn’t have been possible without understanding citizens’ lived experiences within India’s social and cultural contexts. Effective innovation is contextualized and nuanced—it is based in lived experience and shaped to the contours of everyday life.





## The Politics of Storytelling

**MARCH 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2019**

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH DWIGHT HALL**

As part of the Knowledge Equity Intensive, this session featured 2017 World Fellow Abdul-Rehman Malik, 2019 Neighbors in Residence Susan Harris and Virginia Spell, and Nadir Nahdi, founder of BENI (a creative platform amplifying stories by cultural producers and changemakers) and YouTube Creator for Change. The speakers reflected on the medium of storytelling as a key part of social impact work, but also as a medium that is sometimes insufficient, misleading, and/or polarizing. Susan and Virginia shared their experiences of using story as a unifying force in social impact work and Nadir described how his own creative approaches to storytelling have allowed him to work from an embodied approach to identity and to represent his life experiences as interconnected, rather than forcing him to focus on siloed issues. The group discussed the politics of storytelling, exploring how sometimes external stakeholders or others take the stories of those with lived experience and monopolize, twist, or exploit those stories for their own agendas, rather than ensuring that stories are owned by the people and communities who've experienced those social issues. Malik, reflecting on his recent Google.org-funded work building new shared civic identities in the aftermath of conflict in Indonesia, emphasized that it is often the process of building, constructing, and developing stories during which transformation, innovative co-creation, and new forms of solidarity appear and form. Overall, the speakers reflected storytelling's power to support learning, connection, and vulnerability, but that organizations must ensure that stories are utilized in a way that maintains personal agency, and that supports impact.



## Sustainable Funding Models for Social Enterprises

**NOVEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup>, 2018**

"If the community can pull together to build this large library, they can also come together to build the country without depending on international help." Led by Daphnée Charles, Louino Robillard, and World Fellow Fauziya Ali, this event for the Global Innovation Series focused on the importance of community engagement for lasting and impactful change, and how funding can support that change. For example, in response to the state of higher education in Haiti, Charles created the Haitian Education and Leadership Program (HELP) to provide scholarships for Haitians to attend college, increasing buy-in for the education system and investing in future innovators. Similarly, Robillard's current crowdfunding work to build Haiti's largest public library increases community engagement with development processes, planting the seeds for future innovation. Charles and Robillard have created work that not only involves the Haitian community, but also creates space for anyone to become an innovator and to take ownership of their community institutions. In her discussion of working with donors, Fauziya also emphasized the benefits received when communities are empowered by the innovative process to become changemakers themselves: "By coming in with an open mind to learn about the context of the community and how it does things, the donor can extend her adventure even longer." Donors and innovators can create more impactful change by meaningfully engaging communities and enabling them to create their own change.



## Women Innovators Breakfast: Government, Society, & Innovation

SEPTEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2018

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WE@YALE

As a woman working in a male-dominated society, it is crucial to “bring knowledge, experience and evidence-based information to discussions, and really articulate the value of female empowerment in advancing our work.” Kicking off the second year of the Women Entrepreneurs and Innovators Initiative at Yale (WE@Yale) Breakfast Series, three World Fellows gathered to discuss innovative approaches to female leadership. As a Policy Briefing Officer of the Republic of Korea Army, Major Dongyoun Cho found it most effective to pioneer her own approach to leadership. In her work, traditional expectations of military leaders had been built on a male-dominated system; women needed to redefine those expectations to work for them. But at the same time, the system needs to accept and encourage female participation; when Pilar Velasco first began as an investigative journalist in Spain, there were no other women in the investigative unit. Increasing participation meant innovating new procedures in the newsroom where everyone had the opportunity to propose themes and approaches for coverage. Thynn Thynn Hlaing, former Sierra Leone country director of Oxfam International, agreed with both Major Cho and Velasco, saying that “addressing the issue of women empowers us to bring about more change.”

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## Women’s Rights in India

OCTOBER 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2018

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH YALE’S SOUTH ASIAN CLUB

“We need to activate technological innovations to address human rights.” In other words, data is necessary for change. ElsaMarie D’Silva, Founder and CEO of Red Dot Foundation, together with Tanya Sharma (Yale School of Management ’20) and Shruthi Basavaraj (School of Management ’19), spoke on a panel about innovative ways to advance women’s rights and gender equality in India. For Elsa, this means working closely with data to bring awareness to sexual harassment in India. Her tech platform gathers anonymous sexual violence data in order to encourage the police to modify their patrol routes. Agreeing with her approach, Tanya Sharma believes that measuring outcomes is more important than outputs. Sharma helped develop a Women’s Empowerment Index for Indian state governments to track outcomes. Although one might think that the number of female police officers would directly correlate to less sexual harassment, Sharma argued that this is an ineffective indicator—it doesn’t necessarily translate into better safety. Instead, we need to be tracking outcome indicators, like the actual number of sexual harassment cases per 100k women. Elsa agreed, stating that her mission in the next ten years is to put gender on the agenda of institutions and people.

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