

MIT LIFT LAB RESEARCH FEST

South America

Hosted by ITBA



Empowering the Foundations of the Latin American Economy to Tackle Regional and Global Challenges


**Instituto Tecnológico de
Buenos Aires - ITBA**
Buenos Aires, April 24-26, 2025

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Join us from April 24-26 2025, in Buenos Aires for the First International Colloquium, hosted by ITBA in collaboration with the MIT Low-Income Firms Transformation (LIFT) Lab. With the theme *"Empowering the Foundations of the Latin American Economy to Tackle Regional and Global Challenges,"* this **Research Fest** aims to create a collaborative platform for scholars, researchers, and practitioners to exchange ideas, share insights, and drive innovation.

Latin America, a region shaped by its diverse economic landscape and environmental challenges, faces unique obstacles, from economic crises to climate disruptions. These pressures disproportionately impact small and microenterprises—businesses that account for over 90% of the region's enterprises and sustain more than half its population. Supporting their growth and resilience is not just essential for regional economic stability but also critical for achieving broader sustainable development goals.

The colloquium will explore the pillars of resilience, innovation, and sustainability, addressing pressing issues in finance, logistics, governance, and beyond. Through dynamic exchanges and thought-provoking discussions, we aim to uncover actionable strategies to help small and microenterprises adapt to global crises, thrive in competitive environments, and contribute meaningfully to economic and social progress.



What lessons can Latin America offer the world? How can we foster greater innovation, adaptability, and resilience in this critical sector? Join us to explore these questions, exchange research and practical insights, and help shape the future of sustainable development.

We welcome submissions of abstracts (max 200 words) and extended abstracts (max 1500 words) for the following thematic sessions:

1.

Micro-Retailing Ecosystem Challenges, Practices & Opportunities:

This session explores the micro-retailing ecosystem, focusing on the interconnections among three primary stakeholders: micro-retailers, last-mile logistics operators, and end consumers. Emphasis will be placed on regional insights from developing and emerging economies, highlighting challenges, opportunities, and innovative business and supply chain practices. Contributions from student-led projects are also welcome.

2.


AI and Tech-Based Solutions for the Micro-Retailing Ecosystem:

This session delves into the transformative role of artificial intelligence and technology-driven solutions in empowering small-scale businesses within the micro-retailing ecosystem. Discussions will focus on innovative tools and platforms that enhance operational efficiency, customer engagement, and decision-making for micro-retailers, as well as their integration with last-mile logistics and consumer interactions. Contributions showcasing regional applications, success stories, and challenges in adopting these technologies are particularly encouraged. Student-led projects exploring tech-based solutions are also welcome.

3.

Ecosystems and Institutional Support for Micro-Entrepreneurship:

This session focuses on the systemic role of ecosystems and institutional frameworks in fostering micro-entrepreneurship. It aims to highlight how collaborative networks, policy interventions, financial inclusion initiatives, and capacity-building programs can empower micro-entrepreneurs to thrive in competitive markets. Discussions will explore successful models of institutional support and strategies to address barriers faced by micro enterprises. Contributions examining public-private partnerships, community-driven initiatives, and cross-sector collaboration to enhance entrepreneurial resilience and sustainability are highly encouraged. Projects or case studies offering practical insights into ecosystem-building efforts are welcome.





4.

Systemic Innovation in Micro-Enterprises:

This session delves into the transformative potential of systemic innovation within micro-enterprises and its impact on economies, social structures, and environmental sustainability. It seeks to explore how micro-enterprises can drive meaningful change by adopting innovative practices, leveraging emerging technologies, and aligning with sustainability goals. Discussions will focus on the integration of circular economy principles, scalable business models, and community-driven innovation. Insights into how systemic changes in policy, education, and infrastructure can empower micro-enterprises to act as catalysts for sustainable development are particularly welcomed. Case studies, research findings, and actionable strategies highlighting these transformative opportunities are invited.




About the organizers:

The MIT Low-Income Firms Transformation (LIFT) Lab

Founded in 2022 and led by Dr. Josué C. Velázquez Martínez at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the MIT LIFT Lab focuses on alleviating poverty in developing countries and improving the lives of the bottom billion. The lab supports low-income and vulnerable populations by enhancing the survival and growth of micro and small enterprises (MSEs) through applied research that strengthens their supply chain management (SCM) capabilities.

LIFT Lab combines descriptive and inferential statistical analysis with advanced machine learning techniques to address real-world challenges. Its work is grounded in empirical research, using real data from nanostores and incorporating large-scale analyses and field interventions. By developing a comprehensive, model-based theory informed by both data and community context, the lab generates actionable insights that remain applicable as conditions evolve.





The Directorate of Research in Economic Sciences, Society, and Management

Led by Dr. Marcelo S. Tedesco, this Directorate operates within the Research and Doctoral Studies Department at the Instituto Tecnológico de Buenos Aires (ITBA). Its mission is to advance knowledge in economics, business management, technology, and related social sciences, with a focus on innovation and sustainable development. The goal is to address Argentina and the region's critical challenges through rigorous academic research, free from ideological distortions, while fostering solutions grounded in empirical evidence.

As one of Latin America's leading universities, ITBA is dedicated to societal progress through engineering, technological innovation, and impactful business practices. Its commitment to empirical truth and sustainability drives efforts to create a brighter, more resilient future for Argentina and the region.

Key Highlights of the MIT LIFT Lab Research Fest – Latin America

Program Features


- ✓ Academic sessions led by MIT and researchers from universities across Latin America.
- ✓ Plenary conferences.
- ✓ Engaging discussion panels.

Call for Contributions

Ph.D. students, researchers, and participants in the MIT LIFT Lab projects from South America and the LATAM region are invited to share their work. Contributions do not need to be final or completed; however, full papers are welcome for submission if researchers wish to present them.

Publication Opportunities

Extended abstracts will be included in the **Research Fest Proceedings**, and top proposals, as evaluated by the Scientific Committee, will be invited to submit full papers for a special issue of the journal **Management Research: Journal of the Iberoamerican Academy of Management**: [Emerald Journal - MRJAM](#).



Take advantage of this opportunity to discuss your research progress with leading scholars from renowned institutions!

Languages and Presentation Details

+ Languages

All written communications will be accepted in English or Spanish.

+ Thematic Sessions

- » Sessions 1 and 2 will be conducted in English.
- » Other sessions will be held in either English or Spanish, based on the presenter's preference.

+ Translation

No simultaneous translation will be provided.

+ Presentations

All presentations will take place in person, with no video streaming available.

+ Deadlines

- + **Call for Abstracts:** November 25, 2024
- + **Abstract Submission Deadline:** March 14, 2025
- + **Abstract Acceptance Notification:** March 30, 2025

+ Executive Committee | co-chaired by

Dr. Josué C. Velázquez Martínez, MIT

Dr. Marcelo S. Tedesco, ITBA

- Dr. Raúl Marino, ITBA
- Juan Vidaguren, ITBA
- María José Chiang Rebatta, MIT
- Graciela Guzmán, ITBA
- Dr. Sreedevi Rajagopalan, MIT

- Gabriela Bordoy, ITBA
- Sebastián Civallero, UBA
- Dr. Victor Sánchez, GED
- Germán Moyano, ITBA
- Dr. Rifat Lelic, ITBA

+ Scientific Committee | co-chaired by

Dr. Josué C. Velázquez Martínez, MIT

Dr. Marcelo S. Tedesco, ITBA

- Dr. Sreedevi Rajagopalan, MIT
- Dr. Camilo Mora Quinones, MIT
- Dr. Rifat Lelic, ITBA
- Dr. Daniel Ryan, ITBA
- Dr. Carlos Osario, UdeSA
- Dr. Noel Elman, MIT
- Dr. Victor Sánchez, GED

Abstract / Extended Abstract Submission

To submit your abstract / extended abstract, please complete the attached document. You may choose to present your work either orally during the thematic sessions or as a poster.

Each session will feature up to 15 oral presentations and up to 2 posters.

Submissions can include both ongoing and completed research. Once the document is finalized, please send it to rlelic@itba.edu.ar.