

CASE InsightsSM on Philanthropy, Latin America

in partnership with



Santander

UNIVERSIDADES

2024 OBSERVATIONS

COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT
AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION



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Original publication date: December 2025

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ABOUT CASE

CASE—the Council for Advancement and Support of Education—is a global, not-for-profit membership association with a vision to advance education to transform lives and society.

CASE is the home for advancement professionals, inspiring, challenging, and equipping them to act effectively and with integrity to champion the success of their institutions. CASE defines the competencies and standards for the profession of advancement, leading and championing their dissemination and application for more than 91,000 advancement professionals at 3,100 member institutions in 80 countries. Broad and growing communities of professionals gather under the global CASE umbrella. Currently, these professionals include individuals working in alumni relations, development and advancement services, communications, fundraising, government relations, and marketing. These professionals are at all stages of their careers and may be working at schools, colleges, universities, cultural institutions, or other not-for-profit organizations.

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., CASE works across all continents from its regional offices in London, Singapore, and Mexico City to achieve a seamless experience for all of its stakeholders, particularly its members, volunteers, and staff.



COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT
AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION

Advancing education to transform lives and society.

case.org

London Mexico City Singapore Washington, D.C.

ABOUT SANTANDER UNIVERSIDADES

Banco Santander maintains a pioneering and long-standing commitment to education, employability and entrepreneurship, consolidated through 30 years of collaboration with higher education institutions. Santander has allocated more than €2.4 billion to these initiatives and has supported over 3.7 million people and businesses through partnerships with nearly 1,100 universities and institutions around the globe.



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report depends on the advancement leaders at Latin American universities who generously share detailed information about their programs. Because of their efforts, we are able to begin to document the impact that philanthropy makes to Latin American institutions.

Framework for Measuring CASE InsightsSM on Philanthropy

Educational philanthropy

is the **voluntary act** of providing private **financial support** to **nonprofit educational institutions**. Financial support must be provided for the **sole purpose of benefiting the institution's mission and its social impact**, without the expressed or implied expectation that the donor will receive anything more than recognition and stewardship as the result of such support.

CASE Global Reporting Standards, 2nd Edition

Key Definitions



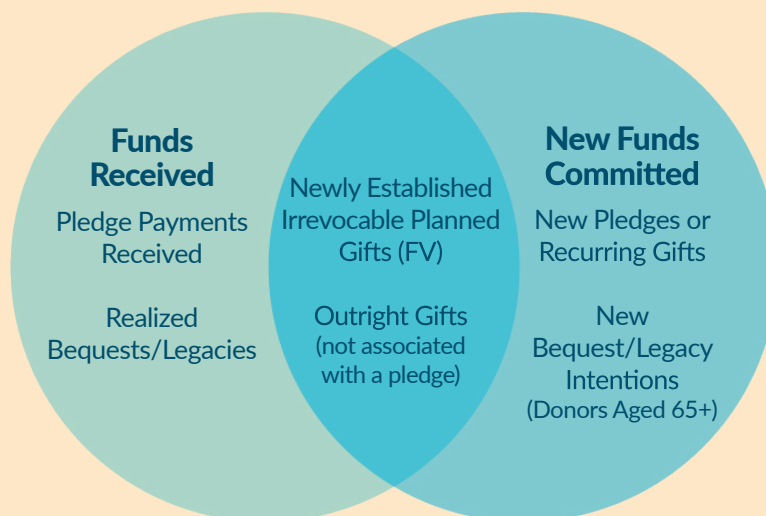
Funds Received

A measure of money in the bank. Funds Received are monies and property received within the reporting year.

New Funds Committed

Measures the impact of fundraising efforts. New monies and property committed in the reporting year.

Two Lenses on Philanthropy



CASE InsightsSM Surveys

- Philanthropy (Australia/New Zealand)
- Philanthropy (Canada) with CCAE
- Philanthropy (United Kingdom/Ireland)
- Voluntary Support of Education (United States)
- Philanthropy Independent Schools (United States) with NAIS
- Philanthropy (Latin America)
- Philanthropy International and Independent Schools



Foreword from CASE President and CEO

The launch of the first *CASE Insights en Filantropía en América Latina* report marks a significant milestone, not only for CASE, but for the advancement profession across the region. This achievement would not have been possible without the steadfast collaboration of Santander Universidades, whose team has worked alongside us as true partners. From the very beginning, colleagues at Santander Universidades, led by Arturo Cherbowski, Director Ejecutivo of Santander Universidades, and Santander Universidades, México, have embraced our shared mission and invested fully in this work and in our growing CASE community across Latin America.

Our partnership with Santander Universidades is grounded in a shared commitment to expanding educational opportunity across the continent. Together, we launched a suite of Diplomado programs, the first online trainings ever offered by CASE, delivered in both English and Spanish, equipping leaders across the region with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to strengthen institutional advancement. As the profession has evolved, so too has the call from our members and from our colleagues at Santander Universidades for the tools to benchmark progress and measure success.

In response, we undertook a two-year pilot project, engaging some of the region's most established advancement teams. We worked side-by-side, delivering trainings in English and Spanish, aligning with the *CASE Global Reporting Standards*, and bringing participants together at the *CASE Congreso* to analyze findings, surface challenges, and chart a shared path forward. This collaborative process underscored both the appetite for meaningful, comparable insights and the power of reliable information to inspire action.

“This study reveals the tremendous opportunity we have as a region to strengthen our data collection capabilities and mature our advancement programs. Having access to comparative philanthropic metrics will enable us to better understand our performance, identify best practices, and elevate the overall sophistication of educational fundraising across Latin America.”

Catalina Rizo,
Director of Advancement at
Universidad de los Andes

The findings from this pilot are striking. Fifty-five percent of all funds raised go directly to students. Nine percent supports social impact initiatives, institutions giving back to their communities in ways that address pressing local needs and fuel regional growth. And forty-one percent of all philanthropic support comes from individuals, placing Latin America on par with the United States in this respect. These results speak to the promise of the work already underway and shine a light on the fact that, where fundraising is taking place, it is thriving.

At the same time, the survey highlights the opportunities ahead. In Latin America, the median advancement team number is just three. With further investment, and with more institutions participating in this important work, the potential for growth is extraordinary.

This report is not simply about data; it is about impact. More institutions actively fundraising means more scholarships, more community programmes, and more lives transformed.

“*May this initiative be just the beginning of a continuous and ever-expanding effort, with the conviction that promoting educational philanthropy means investing in a better future for all.*”

Germán Campos Valle,
Director of the Anáhuac Social Foundation
Universidad Anáhuac México

As we move from pilot to a full, ongoing benchmarking report, your participation will be essential. Your insights will help build a global repository of data that strengthens education in Latin America and beyond.

To all who took part in this pilot, thank you. You have laid the groundwork for a stronger, more connected advancement community in Latin America, one that will continue to shape the future of education across the region. This is only the beginning.



Sue Cunningham
President and CEO, CASE

A Note from Santander Universidades Executive Director

The CASE Insights en Filantropía en América Latina report seeks to provide a clear and comprehensive view of how universities are developing sustainable fundraising strategies, mobilizing resources, and building long-term relationships that reinforce their educational mission and social commitment.

In a global context where higher education institutions are compelled to reflect deeply on their role in society, while also facing increasing social and financial pressures, **philanthropy emerges not only as a source of financial support but as a strategic instrument to promote equity, innovation, and social transformation.** For **thirty years, Santander Universidades** has maintained a steadfast commitment to higher education, supporting universities and students through **financial resources, training programs, and the creation of partnerships that strengthen the academic and social fabric.** Over these three decades, we have stood alongside institutions in their evolution, convinced that their development is key to the progress of our communities and the future of our societies.

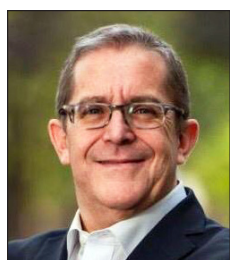
On this journey, our collaboration with **CASE** has been fundamental. Together, we have brought universities in Mexico and Latin America closer to a **forward-looking vision of institutional advancement,** and to a deeper understanding of the **importance of diversifying funding sources** to ensure sustainability and autonomy. This joint effort has helped lay the foundation for a stronger professional community—one capable of driving structural and cultural change around fundraising, strategic communications, and engagement with alumni and donors.

We extend our deepest gratitude to **Sue Cunningham**, for her vision, leadership, and unwavering commitment to strengthening higher education worldwide. Her contribution has been instrumental in building an international network of universities that share standards, learning, and common goals in philanthropy and institutional advancement.

The findings of this survey will help build a meaningful narrative to better understand the **commitment and resilience of the higher education sector,** reflecting the effort of universities that, day after day, strive to expand opportunities for students, strengthen research, and actively contribute to the well-being of their communities.

At **Santander Universidades**, we firmly believe that **philanthropy is a tangible expression of trust in the value of education.** Promoting its development is, therefore, a fundamental part of our mission—to accompany universities in their pursuit of sustainability, relevance, and impact.

To all participating institutions, we express our sincerest appreciation. Your contributions not only enrich our shared understanding but also fuel a regional and international conversation about how universities, through vision and commitment, can build a more just and prosperous future for all.



Arturo Cherbowski
Executive Director, Santander Universidades
General Director, Universia México

Introduction

This report presents the findings from CASE's two-year pilot initiative establishing philanthropic benchmarks in Latin America. It reflects the collective efforts of advancement professionals, institutional leaders, and partners like Santander Universidades, who have championed the need for data-informed insights to guide strategy and growth.

The pilot and accompanying report address compelling needs around higher education advancement in Latin America, from rising demand to the opportunity presented by a growing middle class. Each of these is reviewed briefly below.

“This project is the result of the commitment of 19 pioneering institutions in Mexico and Colombia who came together to share their data, experiences, and aspirations. Their participation has laid the foundation for a new era of transparency and collaboration in Latin American educational advancement. Benchmarking empowers us to move beyond anecdotes and assumptions, providing actionable insights that help every institution—regardless of size or resources—identify opportunities, measure progress, and advocate for investment in their missions. As we expand this initiative to all CASE members in the region, the goal is that all universities can access these tools, participate in a trusted network, and contribute to a stronger, more inclusive culture of philanthropy. By working together, we can unlock the full potential of Latin America's educational community and create lasting impact for students, families, and society.”

Angélica Careaga,
Executive Director, CASE Latin America

Rising Demand for Higher Education in Latin America

Latin America has experienced a surge in demand for university education, with enrollment expanding dramatically over the past two decades. Between 2000 and 2018, the region's gross higher education enrollment rate more than doubled from 21 percent to 52 percent, making Latin America one of the world's fastest-growing higher education markets¹. This translates to roughly 28 million tertiary students across nearly 10,000 institutions in the region today². Crucially, many of these new entrants are first-generation and underserved students, reflecting efforts to broaden access. Yet inequalities persist—the bottom 50 percent of the income distribution accounts for only 25 percent of university students, highlighting that demand is especially strong among marginalized groups still striving for access³. In short, more Latin American families than ever (including those from historically excluded communities) are seeking higher education, creating urgency for universities to find new resources, such as philanthropy, to support larger and more diverse student bodies.

Budget Constraints in Public Universities

Despite growing enrollment, public funding for higher education in Latin America is under severe strain. Government budgets have often failed to keep pace, leading to financial crises at many public universities. In Colombia, student protests have highlighted chronic underfunding, with institutions reporting deficits that threaten academic programs and infrastructure. In Mexico, public spending on education has remained stagnant as a percentage of GDP, hovering around 4.3% in recent years, despite rising enrollment and inflation^{4,5}. And in Argentina, public universities faced a budget freeze and inflation over 200 percent, effectively reducing their funding by 70 percent⁶. Across the region,

academic leaders warn of a “worrying trend” of recurring budget cuts that jeopardize educational quality and access for vulnerable students⁷. In short, many Latin American universities face financial pressure and austerity, making it difficult to maintain programs and expand access. These constraints make a compelling case for developing philanthropic funding streams to supplement volatile public budgets.

Emerging Culture of Higher Education Philanthropy

Historically, most Latin American universities have not relied extensively on alumni giving or fundraising, but this is beginning to change, as illustrated in Figures 6–8. Fundraising as a professional field is relatively new in the region, and institutions are now recognizing its importance. A 2022 higher educational study bluntly noted that Latin American universities “cannot afford to keep neglecting fundraising” and are “already paying a high price for this strategic void,” calling for nothing less than a philanthropic revolution in the coming years⁸. In practice, this emerging culture is evidenced by initiatives like CASE’s new Latin America benchmarking project, launched in 2023 to meet a “growing need for philanthropy benchmarks across the region”⁹. Many universities are only now establishing dedicated advancement offices. The CASE pilot invited institutions with as little as five years of fundraising experience, underscoring the recency of these efforts¹⁰.

“For over 63 years, CETYS has thrived through philanthropy. This benchmarking effort is a catalyst for collaboration across public and private institutions to promote a stronger culture of giving in Latin America.”

Mónica Manzanilla,
Vice President of Institutional Advancement
CETYS University

Demographic Opportunity – Youth and a Growing Middle Class

Latin America’s demographics create a fertile long-term opportunity for alumni philanthropy, which is already showing great promise given the nascency of fundraising in the region, as shown in Figure 10. The region’s population is still relatively young—the median age is only about 31 as of 2024¹¹, far lower than Western Europe—and a large cohort of young people are now completing university. Latin America is in the midst of a demographic “window” where the working-age population proportion is at a historic high (roughly 68 percent in 2024) and will remain favorable into the 2030s¹², meaning today’s graduates will swell the ranks of middle-aged professionals in the coming decade. Indeed, the middle class has expanded rapidly in recent history: the number of Latin Americans in the middle class jumped by 50 percent in the 2000s (from 103 million in 2003 to 152 million in 2009), growing to about 30 percent of the population^{13,14}. This expanding, educated middle class, many of whom are first-generation university alumni, represents a new pool of potential donors as they achieve financial stability. Over time, as these graduates advance in their careers, their loyalty and gratitude to alma maters could translate into significant philanthropic support. In summary, Latin America’s youthful demographics and rising middle class point to a burgeoning base of future alumni donors, making it timely to lay the groundwork (through benchmarking and engagement efforts) to cultivate this next generation of philanthropists.

BENCHMARKING AS A TOOL FOR REGIONAL CHALLENGES IN ADVANCEMENT

Along with opportunities, Latin American institutions share common challenges in building successful advancement programs. One major hurdle has been the lack of data and infrastructure for fundraising; many universities historically operated in isolation without industry benchmarks

or robust alumni and donor databases. Participants in the new CASE survey note the difficulty of standardizing information across diverse institutions, as each school has approached alumni relations and gift recording differently¹⁵. This fragmentation has led to data silos, making it hard to assess performance. Likewise, until now there were no region-wide comparative metrics for educational philanthropy, limiting strategic planning. The current benchmarking initiative is helping to fill that gap. There is broad agreement that creating common indicators and shared definitions will enable better diagnostics at both the institutional and regional level. In fact, this benchmarking project has “ratified the importance of building common quantitative indicators, based on precise data, to support institutional and collective (regional) assessments” of advancement progress¹⁶.

Pilot program participants noted that their institutions would benefit from modern donor databases and policies and procedures to support growth. They mentioned as among their challenges the lack of common definitions plus constraints on time, and weak commitment to data collection.

Pilot Initiative Methodology

CASE invited 24 member institutions from Colombia and Mexico to take part in the two-year pilot, with the goal of launching an annual core benchmarking survey for CASE Latin America. Pilot participants represented both public and private universities with established advancement programs.

As part of the pilot, an “Introduction to CASE Global Reporting Standards Online Course,” was launched for CASE members in Spanish and in English. The second year of the pilot shifted to data collection for core fundraising metrics for calendar year 2024. Nineteen institutions completed the pilot survey. They are:

- Universidad Autónoma de Bucaramanga
- Sistema CETYS Universidad
- Universidad Anáhuac Mayab
- Universidad Anáhuac México
- Universidad Anáhuac Puebla
- Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán
- Universidad de Monterrey
- Universidad del Rosario
- Universidad del Valle de Puebla S.C.
- Universidad EAFIT
- Universidad La Salle A.C.
- Universidad Madero
- Universidad Panamericana
- Universidad de las Américas Puebla
- Universidad Autónoma de Baja California
- Universidad de Guanajuato
- Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México
- Universidad de Guadalajara
- Universidad de los Andes

CASE is grateful to each participating institution for its openness, leadership, and commitment to advancing educational philanthropy in Latin America; their contributions have made this groundbreaking benchmarking initiative possible.

This report includes advancement data from **January through December 2024**. CASE

InsightsSM staff screened the data for outliers, inconsistencies, and potential errors and queried participants to confirm or correct their responses. Not every table or figure represents data for all participants. In some cases, universities did not submit data for individual questions. The number of responding universities for each metric is shown.

COUNTING METHODOLOGY

This report includes philanthropic giving based on funds received only. New funds committed will be included in future iterations of the survey. As noted in the Next Steps section, this represents an area where additional clarification, longer collection time, and training was needed.

To ensure consistency and comparability across countries, the survey collected financial data in each institution’s local currency. CASE then converted all figures to U.S. Dollars using the average exchange rate during the reporting period, offering a balanced representation of currency values over time. This approach enables meaningful comparisons across institutions in different countries, especially as the survey expands to include the full Latin American region. Furthermore, by using the average rate rather than a single-day snapshot, the conversion accounts for fluctuations in local currencies, providing a more stable and representative financial picture.

All calculations in this report are based on “hard credit” giving counted through the lens of funds received. “Hard credit” designation is assigned to the individual or entity that received legal credit for the donation. Gifts attributed to foundations, donor-advised funds, and other organizations may reflect the philanthropy of alumni, parents, and other individuals who make charitable contributions through these vehicles.

Complete definitions for all terms are available on <https://www.case.org/research/surveys/case-insights-en-filantropia-america-latina>.

Key Observations from the Pilot Survey

This section highlights key metrics from the pilot survey. As the inaugural year of data collection, CASE is sharing key observations; in future iterations, as the survey becomes a core philanthropic benchmarking tool for the region, the report will shift to deliver more robust and representative key findings.

FUNDS RECEIVED: OVERALL

This report includes summary statistics for both public and private institutions. As you review,

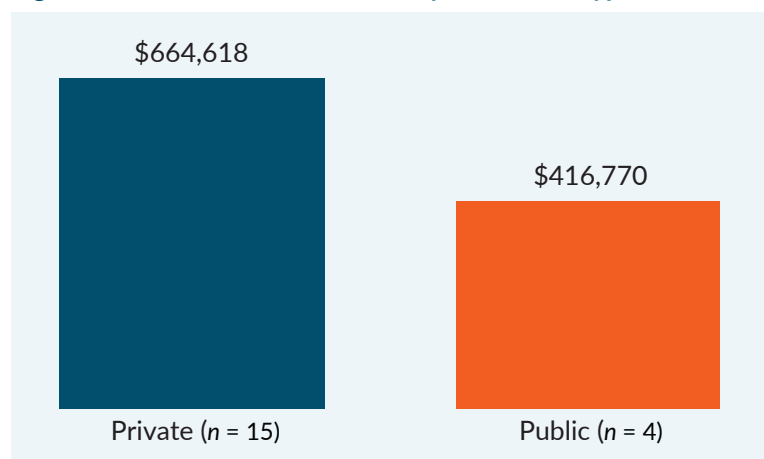
keep in mind that most participants in the study were from private institutions, which typically have more established fundraising practices, often skewing total funds received. This report primarily includes the median, or middle figure, for actionable benchmarking. For example, consider whether your institution is above or below the median, to better understand where to celebrate and how to determine areas for focus or opportunity.

Figure 1: Funds Received, by Institution Type, 2024

Category	Private n = 15	Public n = 4	All n = 19
Total	\$40,189,959	\$2,447,303	\$42,637,262
Min	\$3,592	\$16,350	\$3,592
Max	\$13,051,948	\$1,597,414	\$13,051,948
Median	\$664,618	\$416,770	\$664,618
Average	\$2,679,331	\$611,826	\$2,244,066

Note. See note in "Counting Methodology" above about how U.S. dollar amounts were calculated.

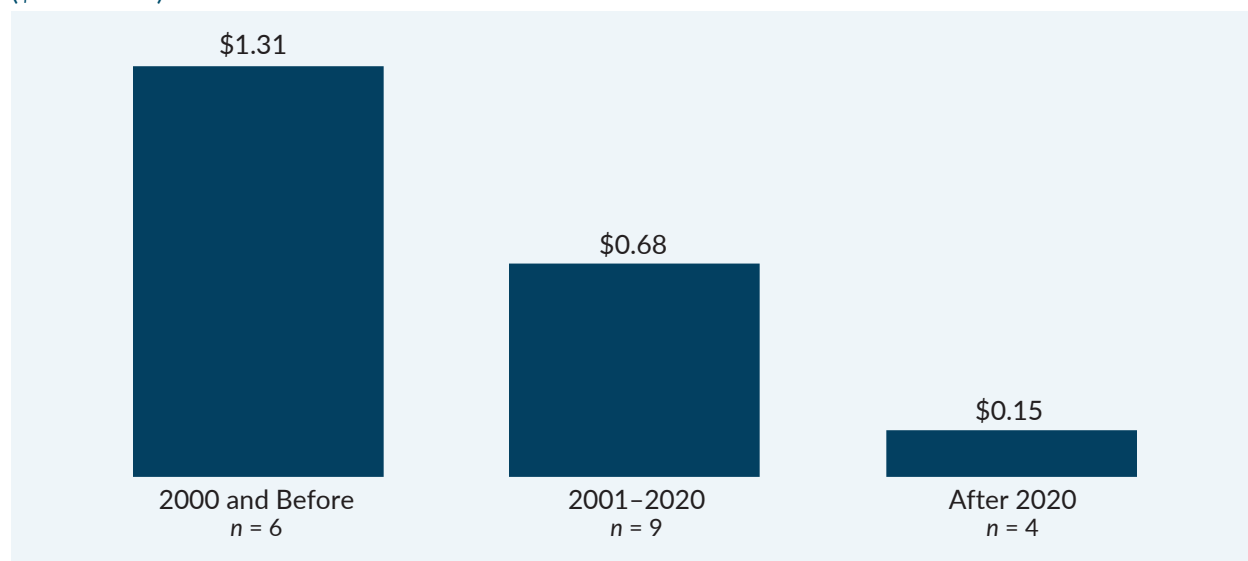
Figure 2: Median Funds Received, by Institution Type, 2024



A key measure from the study is an unsurprising, but deeply important quantifiable concept: fundraising is a relationship, not a transactional business, and results indicate funds received was correlated with the age of the fundraising program. Six universities that began fundraising in 2000 or

earlier report a median of \$1.31 million raised; nine universities that started between 2001 and 2020 report a median of \$680,000; and four universities that launched fundraising efforts in 2020 or later report a median of \$150,000.

Figure 3: Median Funds Received, by Inception of Fundraising Program
(\$ in millions)



FUNDS RECEIVED: DONOR COUNTS

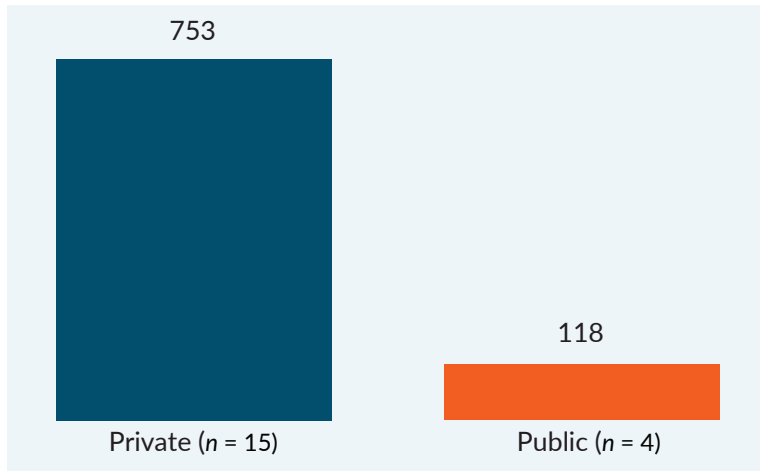
While Funds Received provide a snapshot of philanthropic success, donor counts provide insight into the maturity and sustainability of fundraising programs. A larger and more diverse donor base often signals broader engagement and reduces the risk associated with relying on one or two large

donations. This measure also reveals notable differences between institution types: private institutions report a median of 753 donors, while public institutions report a median of just 118, highlighting disparities in donor cultivation and program development across the sector.

Figure 4: Total Donor Counts, by Institution Type, 2024

Category	Private n = 15	Public n = 4	All n = 19
Total	17,710	892	18,602
Min	15	1	1
Max	3,884	656	3,884
Median	753	118	596
Average	1,181	223	979

Figure 5: Median Donor Counts, by Institution Type, 2024



FUNDS RECEIVED BY DONOR TYPE

Donor type reflects the individual or entity that was responsible for the donation. Understanding the distribution of donations across these categories helps institutions identify which donor groups are most engaged and where there may be opportunities for growth.

Figures 6 and 7 calculate the percentage of funds received from each source by institution, then depict the average. To illustrate the variance among pilot participants, Figure 8 shows a distribution of donor type per institution, in order from smallest to largest fundraising programs.

Figure 6: Average Distribution of Funds Received by Donor Type, 2024

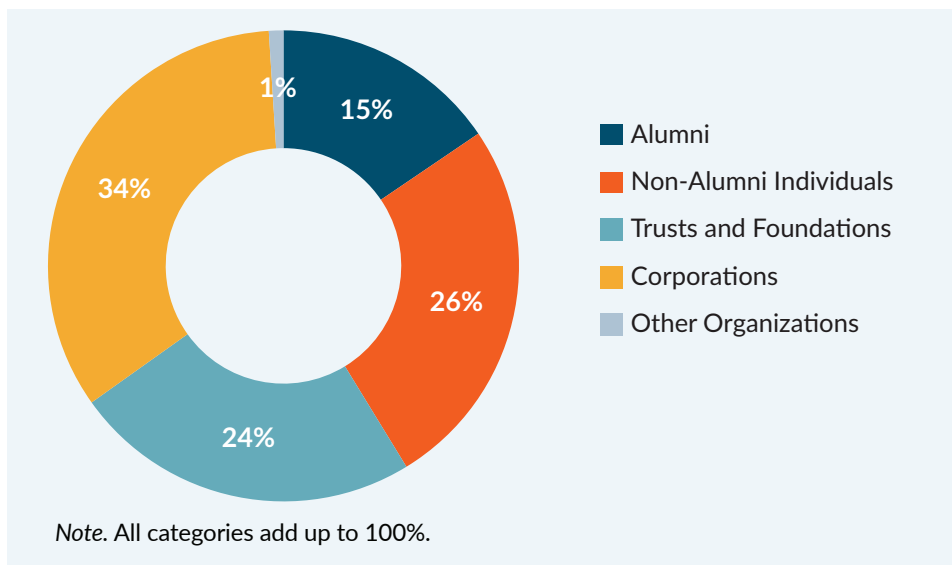


Figure 7: Average Distribution of Donor Counts, by Donor Type, 2024

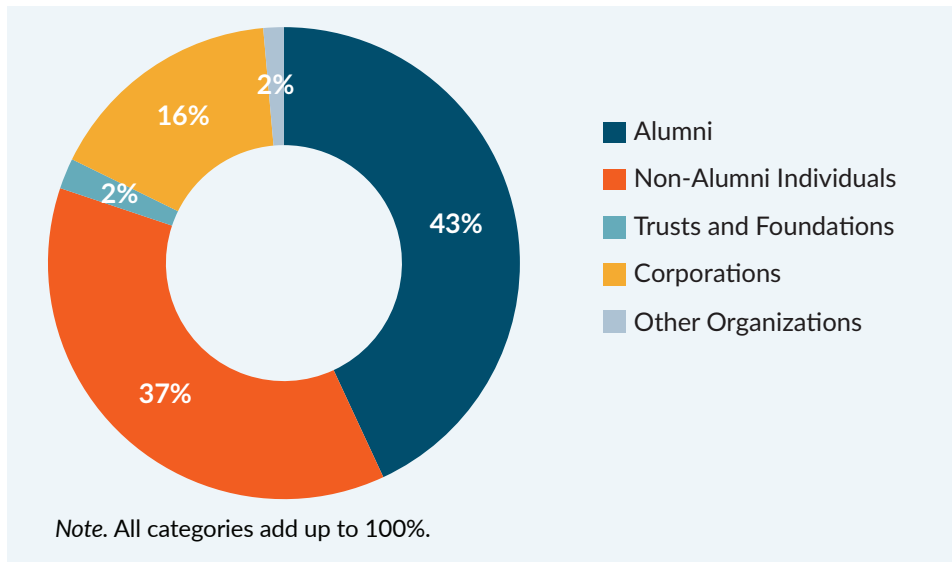
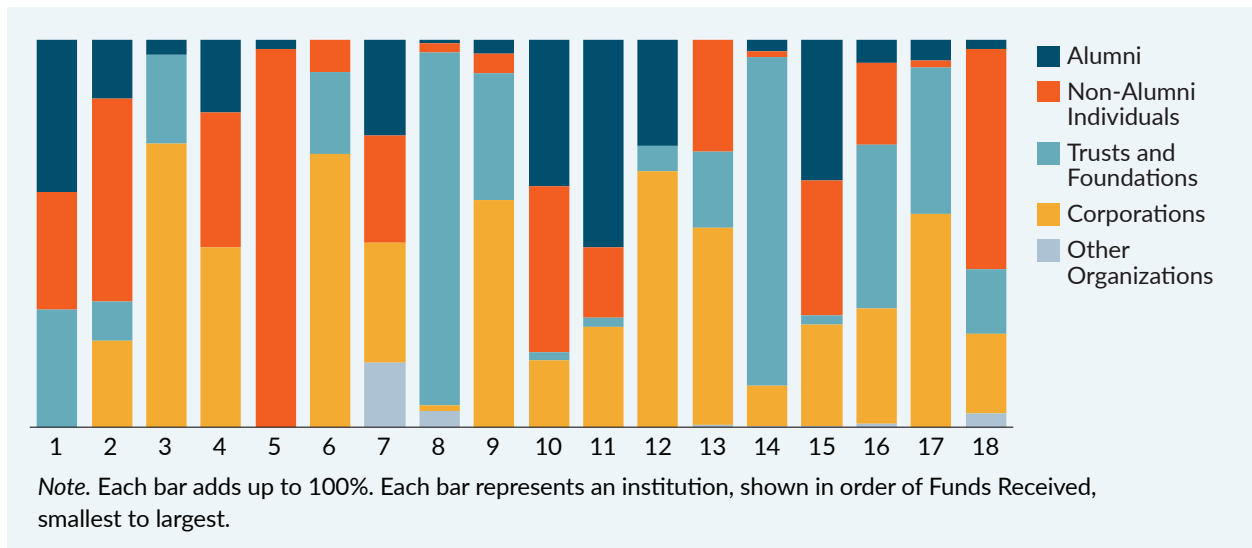


Figure 8: Distribution of Funds Received by Donor Type (amount)



UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF DONATIONS FROM INDIVIDUALS, ALUMNI AND NON-ALUMNI

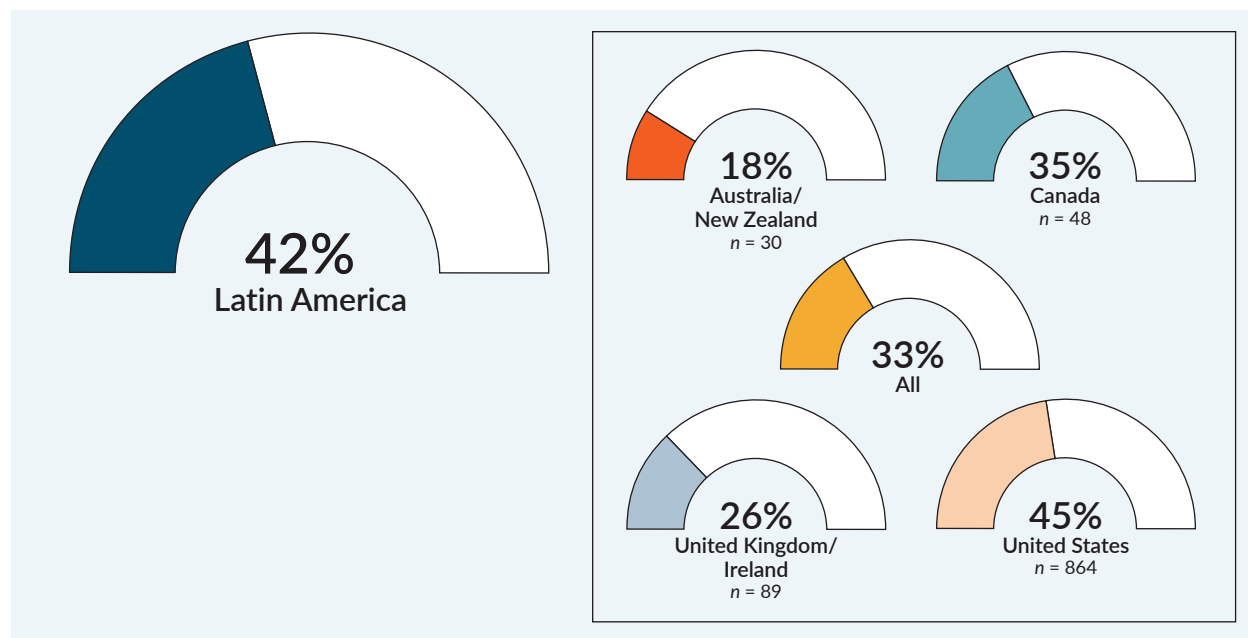
Perhaps the most surprising takeaway from the pilot project is the significant proportion of philanthropic revenue coming from individuals. Data show that 42 percent of all funds received and 80 percent of donors are individuals—more closely resembling patterns seen in the United States than in other global regions, as shown in see Figure 9. In the United States, where university fundraising programs are long-established and philanthropy plays a key role in bridging funding gaps, strong individual donor support is often considered a marker of program maturity and success.

This success among individual donors in Latin America may be rooted in decades of strategic alumni engagement. Many universities in the region have prioritized alumni relationships through career services, experiential offerings,

and networking opportunities. The care and investment in alumni communities now appear to be manifesting in philanthropic outcomes.

At the same time, institutional support from foundations remains limited. For example, one analysis found that over a decade, the Gates Foundation directed just \$24 million to Latin American universities, compared to over \$2 billion to European institutions¹⁷. While this highlights a gap in foundation funding, it also underscores the opportunity: awareness of philanthropy in higher education is growing, and the field, though still nascent, is gaining momentum across the region. This makes it an ideal moment to establish benchmarks, share best practices, and support the development of fundraising programs as the culture of giving continues to take root.

Figure 9: Comparison with Other Regions: Percentage of Support from Individuals



REVENUE PER ALUMNI DONOR

Revenue per alumni donor, calculated by dividing total funds received from alumni by the number of alumni donors, helps institutions understand the average size of donation from this key constituency. This can be a useful benchmark as it is more easily comparable across institutions of different sizes and fundraising models, offering a standardized way

to assess performance and donor engagement. Furthermore, higher average gifts are correlated with higher levels of retention, which helps institutions build upon success of loyal donors, as opposed to the churn of acquisition and reactivation.

Figure 10: Alumni Revenue per Donor, by Institution Type, 2024

Category	Private <i>n</i> = 14	Public <i>n</i> = 2	All <i>n</i> = 16
Min	\$35	\$138	\$35
Max	\$6,243	\$1,014	\$6,243
Median	\$214	\$576	\$214
Average	\$1,020	\$576	\$965

The median funds received per alumni donor in Latin America (\$214) are lower than other regions, as illustrated in Figure 11. This is influenced not only by the relative youth of fundraising programs, but also by the younger median age of the population and broader economic factors. Despite these differences,

Latin American universities are engaging a high proportion of individual donors, a pattern more typical of mature fundraising markets. As fundraising programs and alumni cohorts continue to mature, and as economic capacity grows, there is significant potential for increases in average donation size and overall philanthropic revenue.

Figure 11: Alumni Revenue per Donor, Regional Comparisons

Region	Median Funds Received per Alumni Donor	<i>n</i>
Latin America	\$214	16
Australia/New Zealand	\$1,015	30
Canada	\$1,079	35
UK/Ireland	\$1,212	79
United States	\$1,417	747

FUNDS RECEIVED BY PURPOSE

“Purpose” reflects the donor’s intent regarding the use of funds. CASE regional philanthropy surveys often reveal similar overarching purposes for donations—such as supporting students, research, or capital—but the specific categories used to describe these purposes vary across regions. Early in the pilot, CASE observed that Latin American institutions raise funds for social programs beyond their university walls. Given that social impact is deeply tied to the mission of many universities in the region, it was important to capture this as a distinct category in the survey. This emphasis on social programs not only highlights the unique priorities of Latin American institutions but also demonstrates how philanthropic support is closely aligned with institutional missions and community needs. Purpose categories are defined as:

- Unrestricted: Funds received without any restrictions on their use by the donor.
- Student Financial Aid and Experience: Funds that the donor restricts for student financial aid and/or experience. This includes both need-based and merit-based scholarships, student awards and prizes, and contributions made in support of student work-study arrangements.
- Faculty/Staff Support: Funds that the donor restricts for use in a specific academic division of the university, but on which no other restrictions have been imposed, or that the donor has restricted for faculty and staff salaries and benefits, or that the donor restricts for academic support services, such as academic advising or skills tutoring. This includes funds received to finance sabbaticals and other professional leave for university employees.
- Capital: Funds that the donor restricts for the purchase, construction, or renovation of buildings and other facilities, land, and equipment.
- Research: Funds that the donor restricts for research. This category includes philanthropic grants for individual and/or project research, as well as grants for research institutes and centers, including payments processed through such centers. It may include private money received from both private and public universities and nonprofit organizations.
- Social Impact: Funds that the donor restricts for social programs or social benefits. This includes donations aimed at supporting initiatives such as poverty alleviation, improving education, providing healthcare, and other social protection programs.
- Other: Any funds received that are not accounted for in any of the above categories.

Figures 12–13 show the average after CASE calculated the percentage of funds received from each source by institution. Due to the variance among pilot participants, Figure 13 shows the distribution of purpose per institution, in order of smallest to largest in funds received. Seventeen out of 18 institutions that responded to this question reported funds received directed to student support, with several indicating 100 percent of philanthropic funding dedicated to this purpose. As fundraising programs mature and evolve, we anticipate that the distribution of donation purposes will become more balanced across the institution, with philanthropic support extending beyond a single category and reflecting a broader range of institutional priorities.

Figure 12: Average Distribution of Funds Received by Purpose, 2024

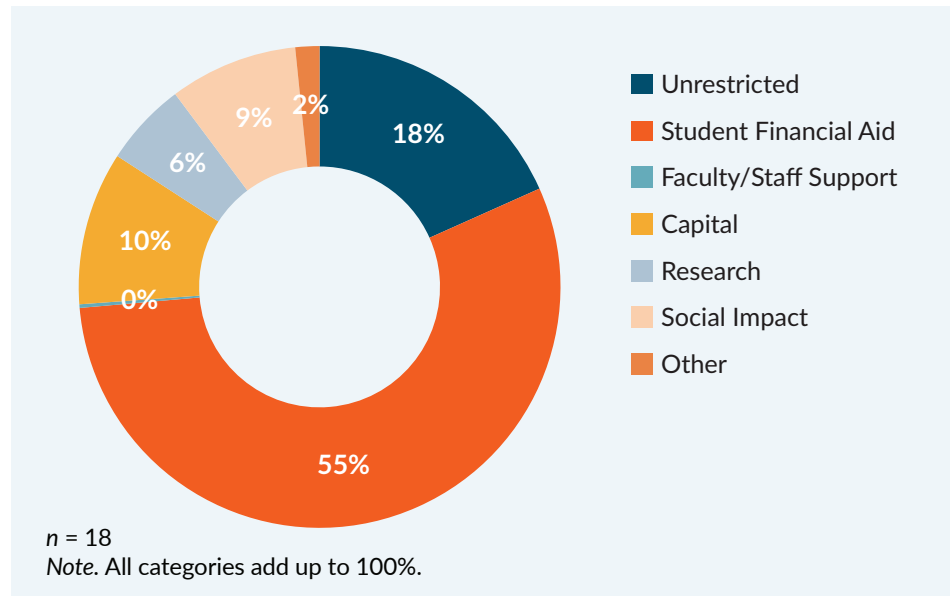
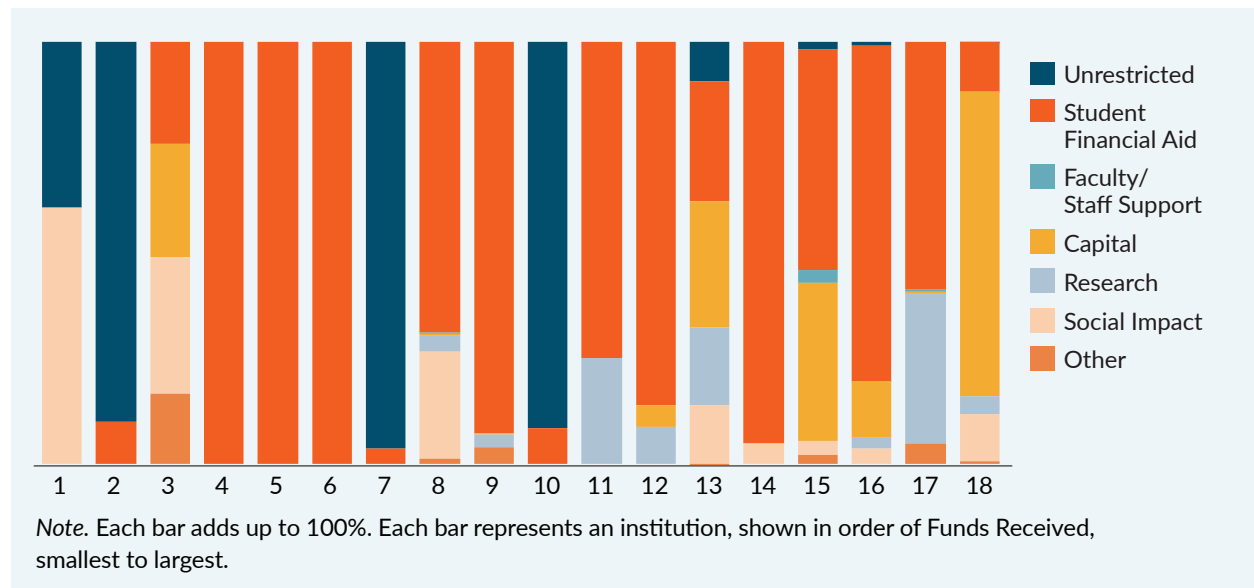


Figure 13: Distribution of Funds Received by Purpose, by Institution, 2024



ADVANCEMENT INVESTMENT

To assess advancement investment, institutions were asked to report the number of paid staff working in advancement, with guidance to include only salaried employees and to exclude executives outside the advancement area, student workers, and volunteers. Staff time could be distributed across multiple functional areas and reported using decimals to reflect part-time roles. For this analysis, observations focus on fundraising staff FTE, as further clarification is needed to accurately capture staff counts

across advancement functions. The data show that the age of the fundraising program is more strongly correlated with higher fundraising staff counts than institution type. As noted earlier, older fundraising programs also tend to raise more philanthropic dollars. These findings provide quantitative confirmation that as fundraising programs expand and mature, both staff investment and philanthropic revenue increase.

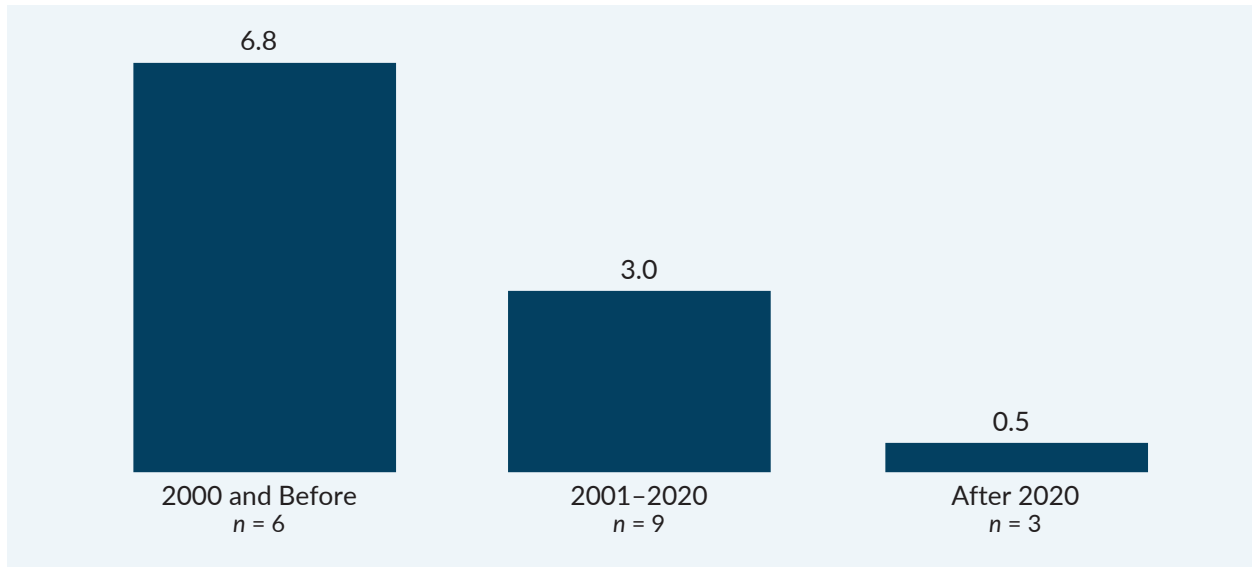
Figure 14: Fundraising FTE by Institution Type, 2024

Category	Private n = 15	Public n = 3	All n = 18
Total	78.5	8.5	87.0
Minimum	0.3	1.0	0.3
Maximum	16.0	4.5	16.0
Median	3.0	3.0	3.0
Average	5.2	2.8	4.8

Figure 15: Fundraising FTE by Inception of Fundraising Program

Category	2000 and before n = 6	2001–2020 n = 9	after 2020 n = 3	All n = 18
Total	43.2	41.0	2.8	87.0
Minimum	2.0	1.0	0.3	0.3
Maximum	15.0	16.0	2.0	16
Median	6.8	3.0	0.5	3.0
Average	7.2	4.6	0.9	4.8

Figure 16: Median Fundraising FTE by Inception of Fundraising Program



Latin America’s median fundraising staff FTE (3) is lower than in other regions, as shown in Figure 17. Since higher staff counts are closely linked to older fundraising programs and greater philanthropic revenue, these results reinforce the

case for investing in fundraising staff. Institutions can use this global comparison to advocate for growth and demonstrate how staff investment supports long-term fundraising success.

Figure 17: Median Fundraising Staff FTE, Regional Comparisons

Region	Median Fundraising Staff FTE	n
Latin America	3	18
United States	9	181
Canada	13.5	35
UK/Ireland	7.9	81
Australia/New Zealand	12	35

Next Steps for Building Benchmarks

This section provides guidelines and next steps for the transition from a pilot project to a core regional philanthropy survey, based on responses from the participating institutions in the pilot. This includes recommendations for universities and for CASE.

“Benchmarking gave us a clear view of our positioning and areas for growth. Comparing ourselves with the best fundraising programs highlights practices and trends that guide our path forward.”

Mtro. Donaciano Alvarado
Vice President of Institutional Development
Universidad Madero

TRANSITIONING FROM PILOT TO GLOBAL PRACTICE

Given the successful pilot, CASE is now transitioning this effort to a core regional philanthropy survey for Latin America. This means the survey will be available to any CASE higher education member in the region. (Note: a separate global schools philanthropy survey is available for independent schools in Latin America.) This transition marks an important opportunity for institutions in the region to embrace benchmarking as a global practice, supporting continuous improvement and alignment with *CASE Global Reporting Standards*, with an aim of global consistency and regional relevancy. Shared learnings from the pilot impacted three key spheres of influence:

- **Institutional:** Participating universities gained strategic clarity and operational capacity. Benchmarking data empowered teams to communicate with leadership using comparative insights, while training in the *CASE Global Reporting Standards* enhanced their ability to collect, interpret, and apply fundraising metrics. Many institutions reported a cultural shift toward data-informed decision-making,

expressing enthusiasm for continuing the initiative annually.

- **Regional:** The pilot established Latin America’s first shared, standardized benchmarking effort across multiple Latin American countries, offering a baseline for understanding fundraising performance in higher education. Results in this white paper reflect an important balance: aligning Latin American institutions with *CASE Global Reporting Standards*, while recognizing the need for country-specific context and flexibility. This dual approach helps ensure that institutions contribute meaningfully to global benchmarks while also honoring local operational, cultural, and regulatory realities. This will foster transparency, peer accountability, and trust across public and private institutions alike. It also reinforced advancement as a strategic discipline and lays the groundwork for long-term investment in institutional philanthropy.
- **Global:** The pilot expanded CASE’s benchmarking network and enriched its Insights portfolio with perspectives from a dynamic and growing region. It modeled how CASE can co-create tools with institutions to ensure relevance and adoption, and it sparked cross-regional dialogue about values, strategies, and impact. Ultimately, this initiative supports CASE’s mission to grow data-informed philanthropy worldwide and strengthens the foundation for future collaboration, investment, and advocacy.

Following this model allowed participants to use a common framework, fostering a culture of mutual learning and peer-based accountability. It also allowed both public and private institutions alike to build trust and contribute to shared benchmarks.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES TO BENCHMARKING

As part of the pilot survey process, participants were asked to share challenges and reflections. Several recurring themes emerged, categorized below to guide future improvements.

1. Limited Access to Timely or Complete Data

- Not receiving information promptly from institutional partners
- No access to all required information
- Data not integrated or available in the requested format
- Lack of access to certain financial or administrative data

2. Institutional Silos and Lack of Trust

- Discomfort or hesitation in sharing information across areas
- Distrust from leadership or institutional culture around transparency
- Data is not shared even within the same institution or department
- Limited cooperation between internal areas

3. Lack of Clarity in Questions or Instructions

- Unclear guidance on how to categorize or report data
- Desire for examples and more detailed instructions
- Requests for additional context (e.g., fiscal years, exchange rates, donor types)

4. Time and Resource Constraints

- Difficulty dedicating time to gather or verify information
- Misalignment between survey requests and available staff capacity
- Pressure due to competing priorities

5. Technical and System Issues

- Validation errors in the platform
- Uncertainty about whether a data point should be included
- Frustration over missing or unrecorded data

6. Internal Confusion Over Roles

- Lack of clarity around who is responsible for reporting or entering data
- Misalignment between fundraising efforts and institutional reporting (e.g., academic units fundraising outside advancement)

7. Suggestions from Participants

- Share data summaries or benchmark goals in a simple, accessible format
- Provide videos explaining the purpose and structure of the survey
- Allow time to pause and reflect before responding
- Use consistent terminology across all communications

“This initiative confirmed the importance of building shared, quantitative indicators. It created a space of trust and collaboration that will strengthen our collective efforts to advance higher education in the region.”

José de Jesús Jaime Galván
Advisor to the General Rector
Universidad de Guanajuato

From these challenges, key recommendations emerged, both for universities within the region as well as for CASE, to continue to support participation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNIVERSITIES

- **Build Internal Data Sharing Protocols:** Encourage formal, cross-departmental collaboration and designate data liaisons.
- **Clarify Internal Responsibilities:** Clearly define roles for data reporting and fundraising attribution.
- **Create Internal FAQs or Guidance Sheets:** Use common issues raised (e.g., fiscal year definitions, exchange rates) to guide internal documentation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CASE

- **Enhance Survey Instructions:**
 - Include concrete examples and visual aids.
 - Clarify terminology and expectations (e.g., “committed funds,” donor categories).
- **Provide Orientation Materials:**
 - Short video walkthroughs of the survey logic.
 - Clear definitions and a glossary of terms.
- **Adapt Survey Design:**
 - Simplify language where possible.
 - Allow for partial or tiered responses if data is incomplete.
- **Support Institutions in Change Management:**
 - Offer guidance on internal communication and stakeholder alignment.
 - Acknowledge the resource constraints and suggest phased reporting.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Looking ahead, several areas for improvement and expansion emerged as a result of the pilot. The metrics reported focus on trusted and validated responses. There were additional metrics that were collected but not included in this report due to incomplete or invalid responses, likely related to clarity or limited access to information, as noted in the “challenges”. With additional training and a longer, established timeframe for institutions to complete the survey, we are confident that future findings will incorporate new funds committed—a metric that captures overall fundraising activity, including multi-year pledges rather than just funds received. Additionally, improved guidance on how to count staff across advancement will also enable participants to calculate ROI measures and better demonstrate the impact of investment.

Also, at the start of the pilot, we learned that gifts-in-kind and lotteries were important revenue sources for some institutions. While gifts-in-kind are included in educational philanthropy and were collected in the survey, reported figures were not as significant as initially expected. We will continue to collect this data to further assess its role over time. Lotteries, on the other hand, do not fit within the definition of educational philanthropy, but recognizing their importance for some institutions, data was collected on ticket sales in a separate “Other funds” section. This allows us to compare revenue from lottery tickets to philanthropic funds raised. Going forward, we will continue to collect information on ticket sales and their purpose for reference, but these figures will not be included in fundraising total.

References

Sources: The arguments above are supported by data and commentary from multilateral organizations, policy research institutions, and higher education leaders. Enrollment statistics and equity data are drawn from World Bank analyses, including its 2021 report on tertiary education and COVID-19. Budgetary challenges are evidenced by reporting on funding cuts in Argentina and Colombia, as covered by *El Tiempo* and ACLED, along with a regional statement from Arquisur opposing defunding of public universities. Enrollment as it relates to funding in Mexico as of 2025 is explored by Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Observations on the emerging importance of fundraising come from sector studies and initiatives, including a 2022 article in *Revista de Educación Superior en América Latina* calling for a “revolution” in university philanthropy, and a benchmarking project announced by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). Demographic and middle-class growth figures are provided by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Inter-American Development Bank, and the World Bank. Finally, quotes from Latin American university advancement professionals highlight common obstacles—such as limited data, infrastructure gaps and the absence of benchmarks—and emphasize the value of collaborative efforts. These sources underscore why establishing philanthropy benchmarks now is both timely and critical for the region.

^{1,2,3}World Bank. “LAC Tertiary Education and COVID-19.” Published Oct. 11, 2021. Available at thedocs.worldbank.org

⁴Chacón Orduz, M. (2024, April 11). “¿Qué tan grande es realmente la crisis financiera de las universidades públicas en Colombia y cómo solucionarla?” *El Tiempo*.

⁵OECD (2025, September 9) “Education at a Glance 2025: Mexico - Country Note”

⁶ACLED. “Latin America and the Caribbean Overview: April 2024.”

⁷FAUD UNSJ. “Arquisur Expresses Rejection of Veto on Public University Funding in Argentina.”

⁸Revista de Educación Superior en América Latina. “La necesidad de revolucionar el desarrollo institucional de las universidades latinoamericanas.”

^{9,10}Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). “Building Benchmarks for Latin America.” Published in the November-December 2024 issue.

^{11,17}Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). “Population Growth in Latin America and the Caribbean Falls Below Expectations.” Press release, 2024.

¹²Inter-American Development Bank. “Latin America and the Caribbean 2030: Future Scenarios.”

^{13,14}World Bank. “New Report Finds 50 Percent Increase in Middle Class in Latin America and the Caribbean.” Press release, Nov. 13, 2012.

^{15,16}Quotes from Latin American university advancement professionals, compiled in “LA Survey Participants” internal document.

What Is CASE InsightsSM?

Specialized CASE Insights data, standards, and research ensure advancement professionals are able to make data-informed decisions, demonstrate strategic impact, highlight success stories, and define ethical practices of the advancement profession at their institutions.

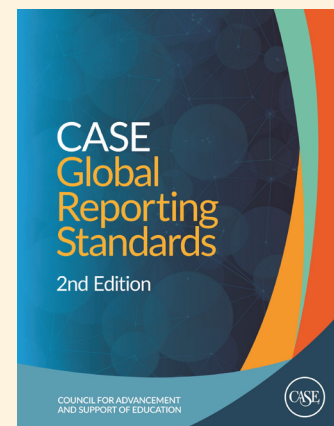
Global Standards and CASE InsightsSM



Philanthropy is one of five areas where CASE provides data, research, and frameworks for measuring Advancement activities. Our data collection is based around the CASE Global Reporting Standards. Creating and adhering to a set of methods, standards, and guidelines for reporting fundraising activities allows schools, colleges, and universities to represent the work of all institutions in transparent ways.

Why We Use Standards

- Provide** common foundation
- Guide** ethical decisions
- Reflect** global perspective
- Ensure** transparency and consistency
- Enable** benchmarking



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Cara Giacomini

Vice President, Data, Research and Technology

Solutions

Key Findings Reports and Data Portal

All members gain understanding of the larger landscape of philanthropy trends and access full, detailed results through the data portal.

Summary Benchmarking Reports

All survey participants can take a closer look at their own institutional benchmarks compared to CASE peers through Summary Benchmarking Reports (member benefit).

Strategic Benchmarking Reports (\$)

Survey participants can partner with the Solutions team to use results by purchasing a Strategic Benchmarking Report. Select your peers, review full findings, and participate in calls to focus on next steps.

CASE—the Council for Advancement and Support of Education—is a global, not-for-profit membership association with a vision to advance education to transform lives and society.

CASE is the home for advancement professionals, inspiring, challenging, and equipping them to act effectively and with integrity to champion the success of their institutions. CASE defines the competencies and standards for the profession of advancement, leading and championing their dissemination and application for more than 91,000 advancement professionals at 3,000 member institutions in 80 countries.

Broad and growing communities of professionals gather under the global CASE umbrella. Currently, these professionals include individuals working in alumni relations, development and advancement services, communications, fundraising, government relations, and marketing. These professionals are at all stages of their careers and may be working at schools, colleges, universities, cultural institutions, or other not-for-profit organizations. CASE uses the intellectual capital and professional talents of a community of international volunteers to advance its work, and its membership includes many educational partners who work closely with the educational sector.

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., CASE works across all continents from its regional offices in London, Singapore, and Mexico City to achieve a seamless experience for all its stakeholders, particularly its members, volunteers, and staff.

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