Rights CoLab to Tackle Human Rights Challenges

New Multi-National Collaborative Will Catalyze Strategies that Connect Civil Society, Technology, Business, and Finance

NEW YORK (PRWEB) January 23, 2019 -- Co-founders Paul Rissman, Joanne Bauer, and Edwin Rekosh have joined forces to create Rights CoLab, a unique multinational collaborative to develop bold strategies to advance human rights.

According to Rekosh, “the field of human rights is facing a crisis in this time of rising populism, geopolitical change, and erosion of support for international institutions.” “We created Rights CoLab,” adds Bauer, “to take risks and pursue under-explored connections across disciplines.”

Rights CoLab is a multidisciplinary team of ten experts spanning four continents, with plans to grow. Team members develop common projects implemented by themselves and partner organizations to address four key challenges:

Reimagining Civil Society

Civil society organizations are under intense pressure. Technological innovation, social entrepreneurship, local philanthropy, impact investment, and other creative solutions offer human rights initiatives more resilient, sustainable futures.

Mobilizing Technology for the Public Interest

Technology can offer greater accountability, transparency, and justice but it can also negatively impact human rights. Civil society, the private sector, and government must ensure that public interest is always at the core of technology use.

Realigning Business and Society

Growing inequality, the rise of populism, and corporate scandal have brought the corporate form that maximizes shareholder value under scrutiny. Alternate corporate structures to combat inequality and promote human rights need development now.

Leveraging the Financial Sector

Providers of capital determine where it is allocated and whether it is used responsibly. Investing for positive social impact and, once invested, holding businesses accountable for their social risks require innovative approaches to advance human rights.

Rights CoLab’s newly launched website, https://rightscolab.org, already offers a rich collection of research and analysis. The organization will create resources— mapping organizational models, dialogues, training, toolkits, experimental advocacy methods, and more — to link human rights innovators globally.

“We want to bring to bear some unconventional thinking from outside the traditional human rights field,” says
Rissman.

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Joanne Bauer has been a human rights researcher, author, teacher, and advocate for over 25 years. She is adjunct professor of international affairs at Columbia University, where she directs a business and human rights clinic.

Edwin Rekosh has co-created human rights initiatives in over 30 countries and teaches on the adjunct faculty of Columbia Law School. He is the founder of PILnet: The Global Network for Public Interest Law and served that organization as executive director and president for 18 years.

Paul Rissman was an executive vice president of AllianceBernstein L.P. and chief investment officer of Alliance Growth Equities. He is an Open Society Fellow.
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