



NEWS

Strategy of the Latin American Thoracic Association (ALAT). Ten Strategic Goals for Development in 2016–2020[☆]

Estrategia de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Tórax (ALAT). Los diez objetivos estratégicos para su desarrollo en el quinquenio 2016–2020

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Introduction

Respiratory Health in Latin America faces great challenges. Prevalence and impact of respiratory diseases have been increasing in morbidity. Mortality rates have been rising in the region¹ and respiratory medicine practice has been developing in a very fast and disorganized way. Our health system and institutions are inefficient and fragmented. The Human Resources are insufficient and not well trained.^{2,3} Ensuring a successful and sustainable development of the respiratory medical specialty in this context is a priority for the Latin American Thoracic Association (Asociación Latinoamericana de Tórax – ALAT).⁴

Twenty years after its foundation, ALAT proposes an institutional strategy for 2016–2020. This project was led by the President and the General Secretary at a first meeting in Panama City on the 4th and 5th of December 2014 and additional sessions during 2015. It brought together the members of the Executive Committee, directors of the committees in charge of Science and Research, Education, International Relations, Congress, members of the Scientific

Departments, Past Presidents, Members of ALAT's staff and external consultants (Fig. 1). Participants were instructed to visualize the future challenges of ALAT and to propose initiatives, goals and plans that were to be presented to the group with a view on how to implement them successfully. Using methodologies and tools generally accepted in strategic business development,⁵ and taking into consideration successful case stories from related societies,^{6,7} the work done enabled the group to redefine the mission and the vision of ALAT. It also enabled the group to propose an integrated strategic plan composed of ten strategic goals.

Mission

To promote respiratory health in Latin America, supported by golden standards in quality of care for prevention, detection and treatment of respiratory diseases, research and applied science, education to health care practitioners and population, and advocacy to generate health policies.

Vision

In 2030 ALAT will be recognized as the Leading association in respiratory health in Latin America by:

1. Building innovative value proposals for our members that assure the constant growth of the association to gain more representation.

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Fig. 1. Meeting strategic plan.

2. Generation of knowledge applicable in the region through science and research.
3. Recognition of ALAT educational projects as the most adequate to develop skills and competencies of health care respiratory practitioners in the region.
4. ALAT's advocacy at political and decision making instances to improve respiratory health indexes in Latin America.

Strategic Goals ALAT (Table 1)

1. Reorganize the managing and administrative structure of ALAT:

- a. Redefine functions and responsibilities of Executive and Advisory committees.
- b. Create the Strategic Council for planning, development and continuous evaluation of successful implementation of the strategy. The council will consist of the Past President, the Secretary General, three ALAT past members of the executive committee and the Executive Director or his delegate, with voice but no vote.
- c. Redesign the structure of the staff, creating the positions of Executive Director, Director of Operations and Director of Administration.
- d. Incorporate differentiated operational and administrative headquarters of ALAT in strategically positioned cities in Latin America.

2. Innovate in benefits for our members and stakeholders:

- a. Build differentiated value proposals for our members and stakeholders (scientific societies, private and public health institutions, universities, research centres, training centres, and pharmaceutical and technological industries).
- b. Develop a database model with dynamic and relational properties that allow ALAT to exchange information with our members and with the National Societies.
- c. Create the Fellow of ALAT academic award to recognize those members that have contributed significantly with the growth and development of ALAT.

- d. Define an ethical framework for ALAT that considers transparency, conflicts of interest with the healthcare industry, ethics in research and professionalization.

3. Strengthen ALAT's relationships with national, international and regional societies:

- a. Establish strategic alliances with national, regional (Latin America), and international societies.
- b. Promote the formation and strengthening of the Latin American Forum of Respiratory Societies (Foro Latinoamericano de Sociedades de Medicina Respiratoria – FOLASOR), as a collaboration space to produce projects in advocacy.⁸
- c. Maintain presence as a member of the Forum of International Respiratory Societies – FIRS.

4. Promote ALAT certification of excellence:

- a. Encourage and strengthen scientific departments as an engine of growth of the ALAT.
- b. Develop volunteer models of certification of excellence, addressed to health centres, to technicians and professionals in specific scientific skills like spirometry, sleep medicine, interventionism, etc. This certification so that it can be additionally endorsed by national and/or international societies offering similar models, thus adding value to ALAT's certification.

5. Participate in the development of respiratory medical specialties in Latin America:

- a. Promote the organization of an ibero-american event, bringing together all the stakeholders to define tendencies and contexts of the practice of pneumology, paediatric pneumology, thoracic surgery, and the specialties of respiratory care, as well as the super specialties in techniques and special pathologies in our region. The scope of this analysis will be for the next 15 years to be published as a consensus.⁹
- b. Propose a model of the syllabus for the specialist training in Respiratory Medicine in Latin America.

6. Develop an institutional structure for the organization of the ALAT Congress:

- a. Institute the annual periodicity of the ALAT congress starting in 2018, with a differentiated structure within ALAT's organization.

Table 1

Strategy of alat		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Strategic goal 1	Reorganize the managing and administrative structure of ALAT					
Strategic goal 2	Innovate in benefits for our members and stakeholders					
Strategic goal 3	Strengthen ALAT's relationships with national, international and regional societies					
Strategic goal 4	Promote ALAT certification of excellence					
Strategic goal 5	Participate in the development of respiratory medical specialties in Latin America					
Strategic goal 6	Develop an institutional structure for the organization of the ALAT congress					
Strategic goal 7	Create the ALAT academy					
Strategic goal 8	Develop a publications plan					
Strategic goal 9	Support the formation of researchers and finance research projects					
Strategic goal 10	Create the INSPIRA foundation					

b. Develop an academic project in the scientific ALAT departments to feed the congress with scientific material.

c. Build an annual business plan to achieve the funds to organize the congress and to generate income with the support of interested stakeholders through commercial transactions and/or unconditioned grants as applicable.

7. Create the ALAT Academy:

a. Constitute the ALAT Academy as a structure that develops, regulates and coordinates educational activities of the scientific departments of the association, with strategic partners for the implementation.

b. Analyse the online tools of ALAT with the help of a consulting company (website, e-learning resources and social networks). These tools should be a key component of the ALAT Academy.

c. Strengthen long and short stay scholarship portfolio of ALAT in collaboration with other societies.

8. Develop a publication plan:

a. Complete a bibliometric impact analysis regarding the published material on respiratory health in Latin America in the past 5 years, as a tool to organize an event that will help ALAT plan a future project involving respiratory health publications in Latin America.¹⁰

b. For ALAT publications, we have a strategic alliance with the Spanish Society of Pneumology and Thorax Surgery (SEPAR), as well as its journal "Archivos de Bronconeumología". We will analyse the interest of ALAT to create its own journal in Spanish and Portuguese.

9. Support the formation of researchers and finance research projects:

a. Promote and finance research projects in collaboration with research centres of the Latin American region, and with related entities and stakeholders.

b. Institutionalize and organize from 2017 onwards, a biennial event focused on young Latin American researchers, counting with the mentoring from experts and supported by international associations to create a cross-fertilization space of ideas and experiences.

c. Enlarge coverage of the MECOR courses (Methods in Epidemiologic, Clinical and Operations Research) in Latin America, opening basic and intermediate levels in Spanish and Portuguese with educational models that include both face-to-face and e-learning methodologies.

10. Create the INSPIRA Foundation:

a. Create the INSPIRA Foundation (Fundación Latinoamericana de Salud Respiratoria-Fundación INSPIRA) to develop projects in advocacy and projects directed to the community and patients, also serving as a source of diversification of the funding of ALAT.

Conclusions

The growth of ALAT in the last years INSPIRES us to work as a team in the implementation of the strategic goals proposed for 2016–2020, and to achieve the vision that we propose for 2030.

Authorship

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