



Ricardo Hausmann

AUTHOR · ECONOMIST · FUTURIST

Boards keep being surprised by which economies grow and which stall. Standard indicators fail to capture the mechanism, because growth depends on productive capabilities that GDP figures and governance scores cannot see. The harder question is what an economy can actually make, and which adjacent industries that capability opens up.

Ricardo Hausmann built Economic Complexity and Growth Diagnostics, the frameworks now used worldwide to diagnose why countries grow or stall, and helps senior leaders apply them to capital allocation and country strategy.

Ricardo Hausmann's 2026 Biography

Why organisations work with Ricardo Hausmann

He built the frameworks. Economic Complexity and Growth Diagnostics, now used by the IMF, the World Bank, and governments from South Africa to Sri Lanka, are his work. Audiences hear them from the person who originated them.

Fifty country engagements deep. The Harvard Growth Lab has run more than 50 research initiatives across nearly 30 countries since 2006, under his direction. He brings what those projects revealed about why standard reform packages fail and where productive capability actually compounds.

He has held the brief. Former Minister of Planning of Venezuela and the first Chief Economist of the Inter-American Development Bank, where he founded the Research Department. He speaks to ministers, central bank governors, and global CFOs as someone who has been on their side of the table.

Powershoring is his framing. The argument that energy-intensive production will migrate to countries with abundant green electricity, and that this rewires comparative advantage, originated in his Growth Lab work. Boards working out where to put the next decarbonised plant get the underlying logic from him.

The vocabulary traces back to him. Original Sin, Dark Matter, Self-Discovery, and Powershoring are his coinages, now standard in IMF and central bank discourse on sovereign risk and the energy transition.

AVAILABLE FOR

- After Dinner Engagement
- Panel Participation
- Speaking

RICARDO'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Climate Action and Sustainability
- Economic Trends & Global Markets
- Energy Transition
- Geopolitics
- Supply Chain Resilience

LANGUAGES: English, Italian, Spanish

Biography highlights

- Founder and Director of Harvard's Growth Lab; Rafik Hariri Professor of the Practice of International Political Economy at Harvard Kennedy School.
- Originator with César Hidalgo of the Economic Complexity methodology, published as *The Atlas of Economic Complexity: Mapping Paths to Prosperity* (MIT Press, 2014).
- Originator with Dani Rodrik and Andrés Velasco of the Growth Diagnostics framework, adopted by the World Bank as a long-running executive education course.
- First Chief Economist of the Inter-American Development Bank (1994-2000), where he founded the Research Department.
- Former Minister of Planning of Venezuela; former Chair of the IMF-World Bank Development Committee.
- Monthly columnist for Project Syndicate; research cited more than 60,000 times and covered by The New York Times, the Financial Times, The Economist, the Wall Street Journal, and the Washington Post.

Biography

Most standard development indicators fail to predict which economies will actually grow. They measure outputs and surface conditions, not the underlying productive capabilities that generate them. That gap is what Economic Complexity, the framework Ricardo Hausmann built with César Hidalgo at Harvard's Growth Lab, set out to close.

Hausmann founded the Growth Lab at Harvard Kennedy School in 2006. It has since run more than 50 country engagements across nearly 30 countries, identifying the binding constraints on growth and the industries that existing capabilities make possible. The Growth Diagnostics methodology, developed with Dani Rodrik and Andrés Velasco, is now taught at the World Bank and used by governments worldwide.

Before Harvard he was on the other side of the brief. He served as Minister of Planning of Venezuela in the early 1990s, then became the first Chief Economist of the Inter-American Development Bank, where he founded the Research Department. He has seen which policy frameworks survive contact with fiscal and political reality, and which collapse on first contact.

His more recent work has moved into the geography of decarbonisation. Powershoring, a concept developed in the Growth Lab, argues that energy-intensive production will migrate to countries with abundant green electricity, rewiring global supply chains in the process. He writes a monthly column for Project Syndicate; the Growth Lab's recent client roster runs from Bolivia and the UAE to Wyoming and Western Australia.

Key speaking topics

- Economic complexity and country diversification
- Growth diagnostics
- Powershoring and the energy transition
- Sovereign risk, original sin, and dark matter
- Industrial policy in a decarbonising economy
- Latin American political economy
- Global supply chain reconfiguration

Ideal for

- Boards and CEOs setting country exposure and supply chain strategy.
- CFOs and treasurers managing sovereign and currency risk in emerging markets.
- Heads of corporate strategy planning industrial investment under the energy transition.
- Multilateral institutions, finance ministries, and central bank leadership.

Audience outcomes

- A working diagnostic for why some economies grow and others stall, built on the Economic Complexity framework.
- A sharper read on where productive capability is compounding and where it is decaying, with implications for supply chain placement and country exposure.
- The case for powershoring and the structural logic that will move energy-intensive production toward countries with abundant green electricity.
- What 50+ Growth Lab country engagements have revealed about why standard reform packages fail.
- The vocabulary that finance ministries and central banks now use to discuss sovereign risk: original sin, dark matter, self-discovery.

Ricardo Hausmann's Videos

