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JOE MINICOZZI is the principal of Urban3, a consulting firm created by Asheville real estate developer, Public Interest Projects. Urban3's work in pioneering geo-spatial representation of economic productivity has prompted a paradigm shift in understanding the economic potency of urbanism and the value of well designed cities. Their studies for municipalities across the United States and Canada have affected the reevaluation of public policy and a broader understanding of market dynamics created by tax policy.

Joe is a sought after lecturer on city planning issues and his work has been featured in numerous journals and at international conferences. He is a founding member of the Western North Carolina-based, non-profit Asheville Design Center. He holds a Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Miami and Master of Architecture and Urban Design from Harvard University.



VALERIA PIAGGIO was appointed a year ago as the Head of Polycultural Insights at The Futures Company. In this role, she is the conceptual leader and chief consultant for the Total Market subscription offer—the first and only unified multicultural and general market consumer insights service. Valeria is the knowledge lead for multicultural marketplace trends in support of The Futures Company's strategic insight, planning and innovation consultancy. Before joining The Futures Company, Valeria spent 10 years at Iconoculture, where she was responsible for the launch of their U.S. Latino service. During her tenure, the Iconoculture Latino service grew to become its Multicultural practice. She also was instrumental in the development of the global product, created and managed the Cultural Fluent network, and became the Lead Global Consumer Strategist in charge of team operations. Previously, Valeria was a strategic planner at Group One Communications. She started her career in Argentina, her home country, where she held various positions in the areas of education and communications.