

Project Name: Empowering young women from underserved backgrounds by giving them education and work in technology

Organization(s): Laboratoria

Dates of Implementation: 2014 ongoing

Countries: Peru, Mexico, Chile and Brazil

Partner(s): Google, Omidyar Network, Metlife Foundation, Microsoft, Peery Foundation, DRK, Blackrock and Citi Foundation

Founder(s): Mariana Costa, Rodulfo Prieto and Herman Marin

Website: www.laboratoria.la/en

Project description: Laboratoria is a social enterprise that empowers young women from underserved backgrounds in Latin America by giving them access to education and quality jobs in the STEM sector. Participants are screened through a large call for applicants' campaign and those who are identified as high-potential will be accepted. The six-months bootcamp provides trainings in technical skills and soft skills such as communication and teamwork.

In this system, students only pay back the fees gradually in monthly installments across 24 months once they start working. Placement fees are covered by companies.

Target Population: Women who are traditionally excluded from tech sectors in Latin America.

Results to-Date and/or Target Results:

This program has reached to 1,038 young women in Latin America, 80% of them have been hired in leading companies in Latin America nearly tripling their income. Laboratoria intends to reach 2000 in three years. Major indicators are:

- Number of students trained in web development and UX design: we expect to train 120 students by year per site
- Number of students placed in tech-related jobs: we expect to place 80% of our graduates in tech related jobs in the six months after completing the bootcamp program
- Increase in income post-program: we expect our students to increase their income at least 2.5x, compared to their pre-program salaries
- % of graduates who continue working in tech 12, 18 and 24 months after graduation

Interesting Features & Innovations:

-Students don't have to pay until they are employed.

-Selective application ensures high retention.

-A "live" selection process: Laboratoria always looks for talent, and with every cohort that goes through the program, it adapts the selection algorithm to become better at identifying candidates that are the best fit.

-Laboratoria also offers in-company trainings supporting some of the leading companies in the markets.

-It employs merged technical skills and soft skills through the learning methodology called the "Agile Classroom" where the students work in teams to develop real digital products in short periods of time.