

## YLAI Mentorship Role and Responsibilities



The Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLAI) Professional Fellows Program is an exchange program that promotes mutual understanding, enhances business development and leadership skills, and builds a lasting and sustainable network of mid-career entrepreneurs, business and social leaders across **Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada**. Each year, 280 YLAI Fellows are placed in small cohorts of 10-14 people in approximately 20 cities across the United States for professional fellowships. Fellows will arrive at their host cities on June 11, 2020 and will work with host businesses from June 15 – July 10, 2020.

In addition to their work with host businesses, YLAI Fellows will interact each week with a mentor. YLAI Mentors guide fellows as they work to address their top business challenges and create practical, innovative solutions that can be applied to their businesses back home. For two to three total hours each week, **in-person and virtual mentors** will interact with a small group of fellows to discuss their business challenges, networking goals, and professional development. These discussions will culminate at YLAI's Closing Forum in Washington, DC from July 14 – 16, 2020, where fellows will participate in a **pitch competition** to present proposed solutions to their business challenges.

### Who Are YLAI Mentors?

YLAI Mentors are **experienced entrepreneurs and business leaders** who are enthusiastic about equipping young entrepreneurs with technical and professional guidance. They include but are not limited to practicing entrepreneurs, startup veterans, ecosystem leaders, investors, and other professionals with practical business experience. Mentors ideally have experience working in developing countries and are interested in supporting impact and creating ties with fellows' home countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada. Mentors also have expertise in one or more YLAI Business Challenges: finance, operations, law & policy, talent, strategy, social impact, scaling and expansion, or marketing and sales.

### Mentor Responsibilities

IREX expects mentors to commit **two to three hours each week from June 15 – July 10, 2020** to meet with a group of **3-5 mentees** (either together or separately) for mentorship sessions. Meetings can be in-person or virtual. Mentors should have the capacity to volunteer their time and contact their mentees at least once per week during the one-month fellowship period. After the fellowship is complete, mentors share feedback on the experience with IREX through a brief survey.

### Continuing Opportunities

Mentors may, but are not required to, continue their professional relationship with YLAI Fellows after the end of the fellowship. All YLAI Mentors are also eligible to apply to the **Outbound Exchange**, which provides an opportunity to visit and collaborate with one YLAI Fellow in their country. At least 70 American awardees will be competitively selected from participating host organizations and mentors to travel following the fellowship.

## YLAI Mentorship FAQ's

### What are the responsibilities of a YLAI Mentor?

YLAI Mentors will commit **two to three hours each week from June 15 – July 10, 2020** to meet with a group of **3-5 mentees** for mentorship sessions. Mentors should have the capacity to volunteer their time and contact their mentees at least once per week during the one-month fellowship period. They may arrange in-person or virtual meeting times with individual fellows or small groups of fellows according to their schedule and preferences. Mentors should focus their time on coaching fellows through specific business challenges to help identify solutions that fellows can apply to their businesses in their home country. After the fellowship is complete, Mentors will share feedback on the experience with IREX through a brief survey. Mentors may choose to, but are not required to, continue their professional relationship with their mentees after the fellowship.

### How does IREX support YLAI Mentors?

IREX will identify and recruit Mentors who fulfill the criteria outlined above. All **YLAI Mentors will receive a handbook** which will contain important guidelines, tips, and reference materials for creating a successful mentor-mentee relationship. YLAI Fellows will also receive guidance for their mentee role through a virtual orientation prior to their arrival in the United States. IREX staff will be available throughout the fellowship period to mediate any issues or answer questions that arise between mentors and mentees.

### Can Mentors choose their Mentees?

In most cases, **IREX will assign Mentors a group of 3-5 fellows** in their city, or the nearest host city. IREX will match Mentors to a small group of fellows based on the expertise of the Mentor and the business challenges facing the fellows in your city. Once IREX facilitates an introduction, mentors and mentees have the flexibility to structure and design the relationship in a way that is mutually beneficial.

### Are YLAI Mentors compensated?

YLAI Mentorship is on a **volunteer** basis. However, Mentors who successfully complete the program requirements are eligible to compete for an Outbound Exchange to travel to one of their mentees' countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, or Canada and collaborate on an entrepreneurial initiative.

### Do virtual mentors have to be based in a YLAI host city?

Virtual YLAI Mentors can be located anywhere in the world. However, only mentors who are U.S. citizens are eligible to participate in the Outbound Exchange Program.

### When will YLAI Mentors know more about their fellows?

IREX will complete the fellow placement process in late April 2020 and will distribute fellow bios to mentors for planning purposes in **May 2020**. Fellows and mentors will also be introduced virtually, and IREX will lead a virtual webinar to set expectations, learn and discuss best practices, and provide resources to best support fellows during their fellowships.

