

THE IMPACT OF THE YOUNG LEADERS OF THE AMERICAS INITIATIVE (YLAI)



Since its launch in 2015, the U.S. Department of State’s Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLAI) Fellowship Program supports emerging for-profit business entrepreneurs from the Western Hemisphere to enable the full economic potential of the region’s citizens. YLAI promotes U.S. business models, increases trade, encourages job creation, and builds lasting and sustainable networks of young entrepreneurs and business leaders across Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States.



CELEBRATING MORE THAN

2,100

YLAI ALUMNI

AND MORE THAN

1,500

U.S. BUSINESS PARTNERS
ACROSS 86 CITIES AND 34
STATES IN THE UNITED STATES

FROM

37

COUNTRIES IN LATIN
AMERICA AND THE
CARIBBEAN



THE YLAI FELLOWSHIP HAS AWARDED



outbound
exchange
grants



impact and
innovation
grants



professional
development
grants

TO FOSTER COLLABORATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING
BETWEEN U.S. PARTNER AND ALUMNI NETWORKS AND
ALUMNI LOCAL ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES

AFTER COMPLETING THE
PROGRAM, YLAI ALUMNI
REPORTED THAT YLAI HAS
SUPPORTED THE
FOLLOWING:

Established strong professional networks across borders 85%

Contributed to growth of their enterprise or company 86%

Improved ability to identify business opportunities 92%



ylaifellowship@irex.org



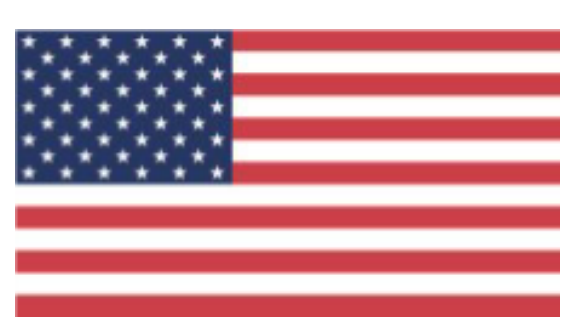
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The YLAI Program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State with funding provided by the U.S. Government and supported in its implementation by IREX.

THE PILLARS OF YLAI



The YLAI Fellowship Program is an annual exchange program for 250 emerging young entrepreneurs from 37 countries across Latin America and the Caribbean, who are matched with businesses across the United States aligned with their sectors. In addition to entrepreneurial leadership training, participants build new skills, share best practices, and forge commercial ties. YLAI Alumni also have access to Outbound Exchange, small grants, resources and events, as well as to exclusive opportunities offered by the U.S. Department of State on alumni.state.gov.



U.S. Embassies and Consulates organize activities with YLAI Participants, participants from other U.S. government-sponsored exchange programs, and young leaders to support entrepreneurial networks. YLAI participants and network members are key partners for engaging with and inspiring other young leaders across the hemisphere.

“It was so exhilarating to support [Fellows] along their journeys towards local, national and global impact.” - 2023 Partner, San Diego

“[This experience] was fantastic! it helped me better understand the challenges and opportunities in other countries.” - 2018 Partner, Dallas

“Through YLAI, I honed crucial skills, expanded my professional network, and gained a global perspective on leadership and innovation. [It] instilled in me a newfound confidence and sense of purpose, driving me to make a positive impact in the Americas and beyond.” - 2024 Participant, Ecuador

“This incredible 6 week experience has given me invaluable knowledge, immense personal growth, and support systems to last me a lifetime.” - 2023 Participant, Jamaica

“[YLAI] has provided opportunities, experiences, and connections that will continue to shape my work and impact long after the program.” - 2026 Participant, Suriname

“YLAI brought me friends, business partners, clients, and a family. It changed my life.” - 2016 Participant, Brazil



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