

# YOUTH. JUSTICE. EQUITY.

Youth**Action**Net®

AN INITIATIVE OF THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FOUNDATION



“

Our campaigns promote gender equality while condemning violence and discrimination. We deliver hope to those who have never had it. We can't give up.”

Ayaz Shalal Hassan

*2015 Laureate Global Fellow*

IRAQ

# CREATING A MORE JUST, EQUITABLE, SUSTAINABLE FUTURE BEGINS WITH PUTTING YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE FOREFRONT.

1,507

YOUNG SOCIAL  
ENTREPRENEURS

92

COUNTRIES

23

YOUTH LEADERSHIP  
INSTITUTES

1.7M

LIVES IMPACTED  
IN 2016

YouthActionNet®, a signature program of the International Youth Foundation (IYF), equips the world's greatest asset—youth—to solve our greatest challenges. We support young social entrepreneurs, ages 18 to 30, who have pioneered innovative solutions to urgent problems in their local and global communities.

Our 1,507 fellows in 92 countries tackle diverse issues in their work yet are united by core values. They believe that inclusive societies are fundamentally better societies. They recognize that all people, regardless of their gender, race,

ethnicity, or economic standing, have inalienable rights that must be upheld. And they understand that living in balance with nature is essential to the sustainability of our planet.

Each passionately pursues social change solutions that uphold these values. In the pages that follow, we tell the stories of young change-makers who are strengthening democratic participation in India, promoting greater social integration of children with disabilities in Kenya, and advocating for prison reform in Costa Rica. They do so through employing technology, art, human-centered design, storytelling,

business principles, and other innovative strategies.

At a time of sweeping change and global challenges, our role is to support, train, mentor, connect, and advocate for these exceptional young leaders. With 193 nations having united behind the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, the question is not *what* we need to do to safeguard our collective future, but *how*? Supporting youth-led efforts to advance justice and equity must be part of any lasting solution.



## THE ADVOCATE

Deepa Gupta // India // 2015 Fellow

For Deepa Gupta, changing the world starts with taking action in one's own community. Deepa launched Jhatkaa to foster a stronger democracy in India through mobilizing citizens to speak out on issues they care about. In Hindi, *jhatkaa* means to shake up or jolt. Over three years, Jhatkaa.org has created a membership base of more than 300,000 committed individuals who have taken action—online and on the

ground—to protect women's rights, combat racism, promote net neutrality, preserve the environment, and more. Their collective voices have resulted in policy reforms and greater corporate accountability. "People are learning that even small actions can make a big difference," says Deepa, adding that half of Jhatkaa's campaigns have been won with a petition and a few hundred signatures.

"In India there's a lot of cynicism about change being possible. Being specific and pursuing short-term solutions helps people see how change actually happens."


## THE ROLE MODEL

Sheldon Smith // United States // 2011 Fellow

"I grew up without a male role model," says Sheldon Smith, who was seven when his father was first incarcerated and left home. When Sheldon became a dad at 21, he vowed to become a hands-on parent. But his determination didn't stop there. In 2009, he

founded The Dovetail Project to teach African-American fathers, ages 18 to 24, about their roles, rights, and responsibilities. To date, more than 280 young men have graduated from Dovetail's 12-week training course, gaining parenting and life skills, along with a better understanding of felony street law. In 2016, Sheldon was honored as a CNN Hero and is now launching two new program sites in Chicago. Through his personal and professional experience, he seeks to contribute to a new narrative surrounding young African-American fathers. "I want to drive a conversation about fatherhood," says Sheldon, now 28. "People don't understand that support for fathers has a big impact on children."



A photograph of Sheldon Smith, a Black man with a shaved head and a goatee, wearing a light blue patterned dress shirt and a dark blue patterned tie. He is holding a white binder in his left hand and looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. He is standing in a classroom with several young men sitting at long tables in the background, some looking at papers and others talking. The room has wooden walls and windows on the right side.

"Fatherhood doesn't  
come with a map  
or a manual. It's  
our goal to get  
young men to think  
differently and  
access the love  
they need to move  
forward."

Sheldon Smith  
*Founder, The Dovetail Project*





**"When we prevent young offenders from returning to jail, we solve a problem, not just for them, but for society as a whole."**

*Lauren Díaz, Founder, Nueva Oportunidad*

# THE REFORMER

Lauren Díaz // Costa Rica // 2012 Fellow

In Costa Rica, the majority of people sentenced to prison have committed petty crimes, most related to poverty and lack of economic opportunity. The prison environment offers little in the way of rehabilitation, with roughly one in five prisoners released eventually returning to jail. Lauren Díaz founded Nueva Oportunidad (New Opportunity) to change this reality and influence how society views ex-convicts. “Our main focus is on youth who are born into poverty and end up jailed for minor offenses,” says Lauren. She and her team work to improve conditions within prisons, while advocating for policy changes at the national

level. Nueva Oportunidad also supports soon-to-be-released inmates in developing micro-enterprises to help them earn an income upon their release.



# THE BOUNDARY BREAKER

Melanie Tran // Australia // 2017 Fellow

It is estimated that just one in 10 people living with a disability globally has access to the assistive technology devices necessary for social inclusion and independence. To fill this gap, Melanie Tran co-founded AbilityMate. Blending technology with human-centered design, Melanie and her team develop custom, 3-D printable, assistive technology solutions that help people with a range of disabilities increase

their mobility and ability to carry out everyday activities. “Empathy is one of my core values,” says Melanie, a student at Torrens University Australia, a member of the Laureate International Universities network. To date, AbilityMate has engaged over 100 individuals with disabilities and their families through co-design workshops and mobilized 500-plus supporters through a crowdfunding campaign

to jumpstart clinical trials and secure regulatory authorization. Each product designed by AbilityMate becomes open-source with the goal of increasing global access to low-cost, custom solutions.

“Technology is one of the most powerful tools we have to break down barriers for people with a disability.”





## THE BRIDGE BUILDER

Maria Omare // Kenya // 2013 Fellow

“People become nervous around those with disabilities and tend to avoid being around them,” says Maria Omare, who founded The Action Foundation (TAF) to rehabilitate and integrate

children with disabilities into social spaces so they can lead healthy, dignified lives. A youth-led, grassroots organization, TAF operates in low-income communities in Nairobi to provide early intervention and care for children with conditions including autism, Down syndrome, and cerebral palsy. It also empowers parents to be active participants in their children’s development. Recognizing the importance of shifting public policies and hiring practices related to individuals with disabilities, advocacy also plays a major role in Maria’s work. Ultimately, she seeks to create a barrier-free society for these children.

## THE SOCIAL ARTIST

Leonardo Párraga // Colombia // 2015 Fellow

“Reducing inequalities is what drives me,” says Leonardo Párraga. In 2013, Leonardo launched the BogotArt Foundation in Colombia to empower youth and community members to identify local challenges and develop arts-based solutions. “We’ve seen how art can break down stereotypes and change people’s perceptions,” says Leonardo of BogotArt’s work to transform marginalized neighborhoods into cultural

hubs. In early 2017, following the passage of a peace agreement between the national government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), Leo cofounded Cartas por la Reconciliación (Letters for Reconciliation). With ex-combatants poised to reintegrate into Colombian society, the letter writing campaign helps foster communication—and empathy—among youth on

opposing sides of the conflict with the goal of supporting a sustainable peace.

“We help people realize that what they share in common is far greater than their differences.”





"Having a disability should not be a barrier to people achieving their dreams."

Maria Omare  
*Founder, The Action Foundation*

# BUILDING A GLOBAL MOVEMENT

Over 17 years, we at the International Youth Foundation have tailored YouthActionNet's response to best meet the needs of our fellows, while building a supportive ecosystem for youth leadership both nationally and globally. Here are five ways we're working to strengthen today's global youth movement—one leader, one community, at a time.

## Creating Change from the Ground Up

Lasting change starts small and grows. By focusing on early-stage youth-led ventures, we provide training and support where it is needed most. Over time, we've helped hundreds of young social entrepreneurs to strengthen and scale the impact of their work. Many report that the training, support, networks, and credibility provided through their YouthActionNet fellowship were critical to reaching long-term goals.

## Building a Global Network

Central to our mission is the establishment of national and regional YouthActionNet institutes that are locally rooted and globally connected. These institutes—housed within universities, foundations, and nongovernmental organizations—tailor their approaches to meet the needs of youth leading change within their countries/regions. This



social franchise model enables us to scale our impact, while ensuring local ownership and long-term sustainability.

## Amplifying Youth Voices

Through events, publications, and related media, we bring youth voices to the forefront of development. Globally, YouthActionNet Fellows have addressed audiences convened by The World Bank, International Finance Corporation, and the United Nations, among others. At the

national level, our institute partners are recognized focal points for youth social entrepreneurship, providing essential research and data related to the sector as a whole. Each offers fellows a valuable platform for sharing their innovations and expertise with decision-makers. In 2017, we launched a new video series, "Goal Getters," profiling fellows' achievements in advancing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.





### Engaging Universities as Partners

We partner with universities to support youth-led change. Our signature partnership with Laureate International Universities has resulted in the creation of 23 youth leadership institutes, with 15 housed on Laureate campuses. From Brazil to Spain, Peru to Turkey, these institutes serve as vital hubs for youth-led social innovation. Our work with institutions of higher learning, including Georgetown University,

connects the theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom with practical, real world examples, as students learn from and contribute to youth-led social ventures.

### Supporting Lifelong Learning

Leaders have different learning needs depending on where they are in their social change journeys. To meet these needs, we offer a range of continuing education opportunities, including mentoring, webinars, videos, and the

sharing of valuable resources. As guest speakers, our alumni contribute their first-hand experience on a range of issues. Recent webinar topics include advanced project management, communications planning, and how to pursue client-centric funding partnerships.

**"Our partnership with IYF is rooted in shared values and the belief that engaged and empowered young people can solve the world's toughest challenges."**

**Esther Benjamin**  
*Senior Vice President,  
Global Public Affairs  
& Chief Benefit Officer,  
Laureate International  
Universities*



# A Locally Rooted, Globally Connected Network

Over 17 years, YouthActionNet® has established or partnered with youth leadership institutes in the following countries and regions.

## Anglophone Africa Regional Program\*

Social Entrepreneurs Transforming Africa  
(SET Africa)  
Kampala, Uganda  
[www.facebook.com/SETAfrica](http://www.facebook.com/SETAfrica)

## Arab Regional Program

King Abdullah II Award for Youth Innovation and Achievement  
Amman, Jordan  
[www.kafd.jo](http://www.kafd.jo)

## Australia

Young Social Pioneers  
Melbourne, Australia  
[www.fya.org.au](http://www.fya.org.au)

## Brazil

Premio Laureate Brasil: Jovem Empreendedor Social—UAM  
São Paulo, Brazil

Premio Laureate Brasil: Jovem Empreendedor Social—UnP  
Natal, Brazil

Premio Laureate Brasil: Jovem Empreendedor Social—UniNorte  
Manaus, Brazil

Premio Laureate Brasil: Jovem Empreendedor Social—UNIFACS  
Salvador, Brazil

[www.premiolaureatebrasil.com.br](http://www.premiolaureatebrasil.com.br)

## Chile

YouthActionNet Chile  
Santiago, Chile  
[www.yanchile.cl](http://www.yanchile.cl)

## Costa Rica

Premio Yo Creo  
San José, Costa Rica  
[www.premioyocreo.com](http://www.premioyocreo.com)

## Francophone Africa Regional Program\*

Innove4Africa  
Dakar, Senegal  
[www.synapsecenter.org/innove4africa](http://www.synapsecenter.org/innove4africa)

## Honduras

Premio Yo Emprendo  
Tegucigalpa, Honduras  
[www.premioyoemprendo.com](http://www.premioyoemprendo.com)

## Jordan

BADIR  
Amman, Jordan  
[www.badir.jo](http://www.badir.jo)

## Kyrgyzstan

School of Social Entrepreneurship  
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan  
[www.ase.kg/en](http://www.ase.kg/en)

## Mexico

Premio UNITEC a la Innovación Tecnológica para el Desarrollo Social  
Mexico City, Mexico  
[www.unitec.mx/premio](http://www.unitec.mx/premio)

Premio UVM por el Desarrollo Social  
Mexico City, Mexico  
[www.premiouvvm.org.mx](http://www.premiouvvm.org.mx)

## Morocco\*

Entrepreneurs en Mouvement  
Casablanca, Morocco  
[www.entrepreneursenmouvement.com](http://www.entrepreneursenmouvement.com)

## Nigeria

Social Innovators Programme  
Lagos, Nigeria  
[www.leapnigeria.org](http://www.leapnigeria.org)

## Peru

Premio Protagonistas de Cambio UPC  
Lima, Peru  
[www.premioprotagonistasdelcambio.upc.edu.pe](http://www.premioprotagonistasdelcambio.upc.edu.pe)

## Senegal\*

Projet JETS (Jeunesse, Entreprise et Transformation Sociale au Sénégal)  
Dakar, Senegal  
[www.warccroa.org/jets](http://www.warccroa.org/jets)

## South Africa

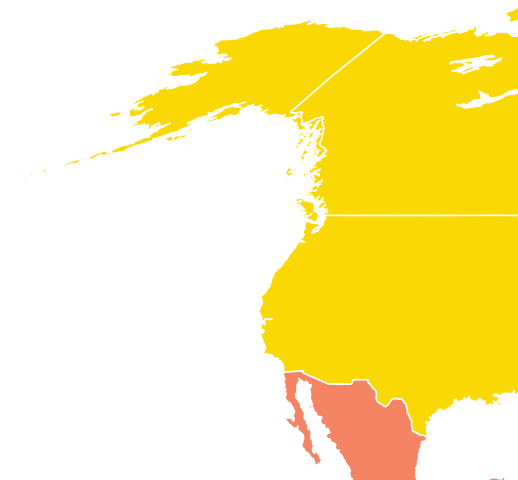
MSA LEAD  
Johannesburg, South Africa  
[www.msalead.msa.ac.za](http://www.msalead.msa.ac.za)

## Spain

Premios Jóvenes Emprendedores Sociales  
Madrid, Spain  
[www.emprendedoresociales.universidadeuropea.es/](http://www.emprendedoresociales.universidadeuropea.es/)

## Turkey

BİLGİ Genç Sosyal Girişimci Ödülleri  
Istanbul, Turkey  
[www.bilgiggo.org](http://www.bilgiggo.org)



## MEXICO

Partners: Universidad del Valle de México (UVM) and Universidad Tecnológica de México (UNITEC)

## HONDURAS

Partner: Universidad Tecnológica Centroamericana (UNITEC)

## COSTA RICA

Partner: Universidad Latina de Costa Rica

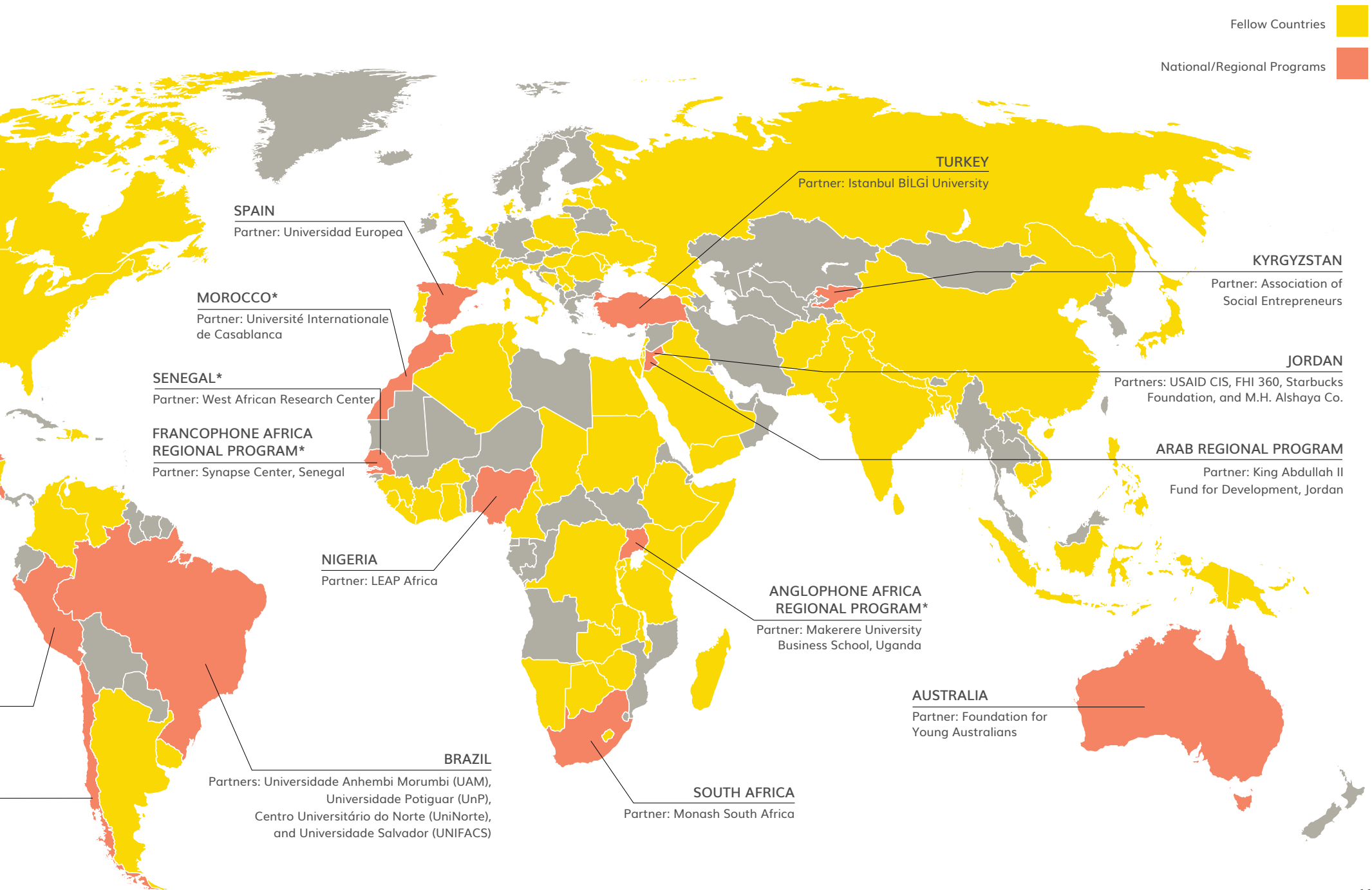
## PERU

Partner: Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas (UPC)

## CHILE

Partners: Universidad Andrés Bello (UNAB), Instituto Profesional AIEP

\*Indicates programs that are not actively recruiting fellows.



# Class of 2017 // Laureate Global Fellows

Each year, we proudly support the leadership journeys of 20 outstanding young social entrepreneurs through the Laureate Global Fellowship. Supported by Laureate International Universities, the yearlong program includes advanced leadership training, coaching, advocacy, and networking opportunities. Together these young change-makers—all founders and CEOs under 30 years of age—demonstrate Laureate's and IYF's commitment to developing an emerging generation of global leaders.



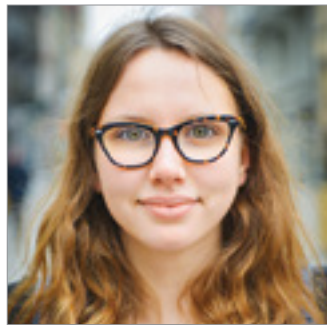
## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



**Innocentia Mthembu, 29**  
*Show Time Film Club*  
SOUTH AFRICA

Innocentia launched the Show Time Film Club to help disadvantaged children and youth discover their potential through gaining video production, storytelling, and citizenship skills. In 2016, 120 students developed skills they can use to pursue productive futures, while connecting to their communities.

[www.facebook.com/ShowTimeFilmClub](http://www.facebook.com/ShowTimeFilmClub)



**Sylwia Wodzinska, 27**  
*MamyGlos*  
POLAND

Sylwia co-founded MamyGlos to equip teenage girls in Poland to equip teenage girls in Poland to advocate for their rights and end gender discrimination in their schools and communities. Through workshops on activism and women's empowerment, as well as creative media campaigns, MamyGlos empowers Poland's next generation to take a stand for gender equality.

[www.mamyglos.weebly.com](http://www.mamyglos.weebly.com)



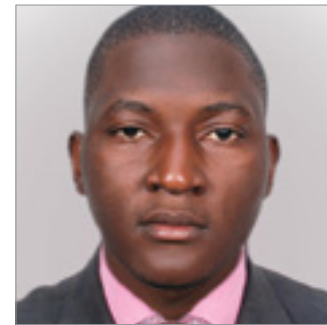
## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



**Rosario Ahumada, 29**  
*JUNO*  
ARGENTINA

With low-income mothers often unable to leave their homes and children to earn a living, Rosario founded JUNO. Through the social enterprise, 120 women now generate extra income by producing handcrafted items from home. JUNO also offers entrepreneurship workshops.

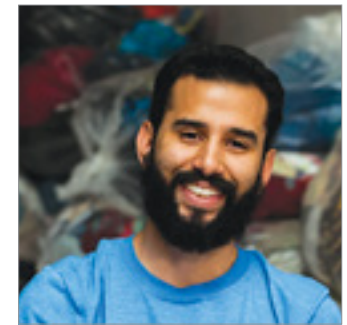
[www.junotrabajosremotos.com](http://www.junotrabajosremotos.com)



**Paul Matovu, 27**  
*Vertical Micro-gardening*  
UGANDA

Through Vertical Micro-gardening, Paul manufactures and sells vertical farms to low-income urban residents, particularly housewives and youth, enabling them to grow fresh, organic produce in a limited space while generating much-needed income.

[www.unitedpartnerships.org/project/vmg](http://www.unitedpartnerships.org/project/vmg)



**David Hernandez Sandoval, 29**  
*2da Mano-Ropa Solidaria*  
COSTA RICA

Through 2da Mano-Ropa Solidaria, David empowers female heads of households with the skills and materials needed to repurpose and sell second hand clothing. Since 2014, 43 women entrepreneurs in 18 communities have benefited from an average 80 percent increase of income.

[www.facebook.com/2damanocr](http://www.facebook.com/2damanocr)





## EDUCATION



**Mikayla Sullivan, 22**  
*KinoSol*  
UNITED STATES

To help reduce post-harvest food loss in developing countries while creating entrepreneurial opportunities for subsistence farmers, Mikayla co-founded KinoSol. With KinoSol's solar-powered dehydration technology, over 100 mostly women farmers in 39 countries are now able to preserve—and sell—fruits, vegetables, grains, and even insects.  
[www.getkinosol.com](http://www.getkinosol.com)



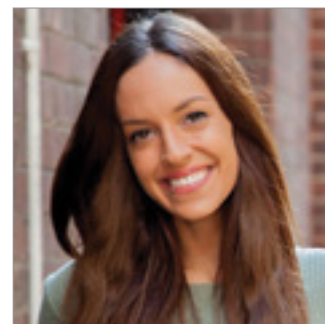
**Binayak Acharya, 29**  
*ThinkZone*  
INDIA

Binayak founded ThinkZone to enable women in low-income communities to deliver quality early childhood and primary education programs through a technology-enabled school-in-a-box solution. To date, over 1,500 children have received quality education, with 45 women benefiting from livelihood opportunities.  
[www.thinkzone.in](http://www.thinkzone.in)



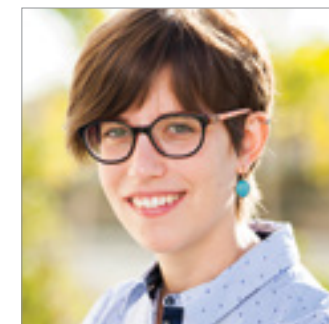
**Innocent Eliuseli, 26**  
*My Little Travelling Library*  
TANZANIA

Innocent co-founded My Little Travelling Library to inspire a passion for reading and independent learning among rural primary school students in Mwanza, Tanzania. In 2016, over 2,400 youth in 15 schools benefited from the organization's network of mobile handcart libraries delivering books and interactive reading lessons organized by university student volunteers.  
[www.mylittletravellinglibrary.com](http://www.mylittletravellinglibrary.com)



**Natalie Kyriacou, 29**  
*My Green World*  
AUSTRALIA

Through My Green World, Natalie empowers educational institutions, children, and families with fun, creative ways of learning about and acting on global environmental issues. To date, My Green World has directly impacted 12,000 young Australians and indirectly reached over 900,000 people through its website and social media platforms.  
[www.mygreenworld.org](http://www.mygreenworld.org)



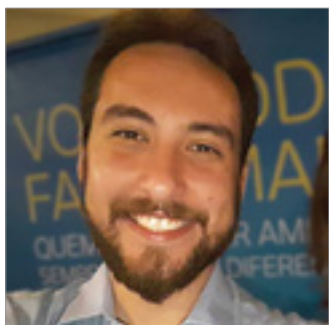
**Cristina Balbás  
Martinez, 29**  
*EscueLab*  
SPAIN

Recognizing that students' attitudes toward science are shaped by age 14, Cristina co-founded EscueLab, which equips children, ages 6 to 14, with STEM skills through educational materials, teacher training, science clubs, and camps. In 2016, EscueLab reached 1,900 students, with a special focus on vulnerable children.  
[www.escuelab.es](http://www.escuelab.es)

# Class of 2017 // Laureate Global Fellows



## ENVIRONMENT



**Luiz Hamilton Ribas, 28**  
*Ação Social para Igualdade das Diferenças*  
BRAZIL

Luiz co-founded Ação Social para Igualdade das Diferenças (Social Action for Equality of Differences) to bring together companies, volunteers, people with disabilities, and care-giving institutions to create a more inclusive Brazil. In 2016, the organization provided 35 care institutions with management consulting to increase revenues and improve services.  
[www.asidbrasil.org.br](http://www.asidbrasil.org.br)



**Ivonne Bocanegra, 27**  
*Grupo Ambiental Tierra Amazónica-Gatia*  
PERU

Through Grupo Ambiental Tierra Amazónica-Gatia (Amazonian Land Environmental Group), Ivonne trains youth and women as eco-entrepreneurs, and promotes environmentally-friendly behaviors through campaigns and events that have reached over 12,000 people. [www.facebook.com/Grupo-Ambiental-Tierra-Amazónica-Gatia](http://www.facebook.com/Grupo-Ambiental-Tierra-Amazónica-Gatia)-135862429819811



**Dysmus Kisilu, 28**  
*Solar Freeze*  
KENYA

Through Solar Freeze, a company that produces solar-powered walk-in cold rooms, Dysmus increases the incomes of smallholder farmers by preventing post-harvest food losses. To date, the initiative has benefited 1,000 youth and women.  
[www.solarfreeze.co.ke](http://www.solarfreeze.co.ke)



## SOCIAL INCLUSION



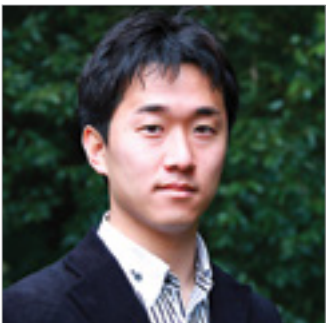
**Ankit Agarwal, 28**  
*HelpUsGreen®*  
INDIA

With floral waste from religious institutions imposing a heavy pesticide burden on the Ganges River, Ankit founded HelpUsGreen®. The initiative now employs 128 women who previously worked as scavengers to upcycle the floral waste into organic fertilizer and incense, while generating much-needed income for themselves and their families.  
[www.helpusgreen.com](http://www.helpusgreen.com)



**Dissa Ahdanisa, 27**  
*Fingertalk Enterprise*  
INDONESIA

Dissa founded Fingertalk Enterprise to end the stigma against the Deaf in Indonesia and reduce unemployment rates among Deaf youth. Fingertalk's social enterprise model employs 30 Deaf individuals at various small businesses, including a Deaf café where all people can connect regardless of hearing ability.  
[www.facebook.com/deafcafe.fingertalk](http://www.facebook.com/deafcafe.fingertalk)



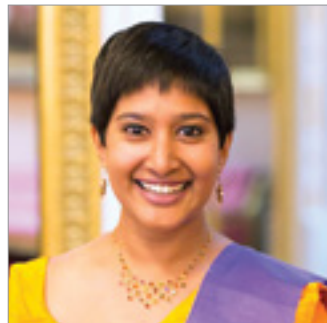
**Junto Ohki, 29**  
*ShuR Group*  
JAPAN

As co-founder of the ShuR Group, Junto uses technology to transform the lives of the Deaf. Among its achievements, ShuR launched an online sign language dictionary with the world's first sign language keyboard, making it easier for Deaf individuals to look up a word or sign.  
[www.shur.jp](http://www.shur.jp)



**Ignacio Rodriguez, 28**  
*Epix*  
VENEZUELA

With Venezuela experiencing the worst social, economic, and political crisis in its recent history, Ignacio founded Epix, a social venture dedicated to restoring empathy and connecting the nation's citizens through the sharing of stories. Through its online platform, events, and social media outreach, Epix reached an audience of 43,000 in 2016.  
[www.epix.com.ve](http://www.epix.com.ve)



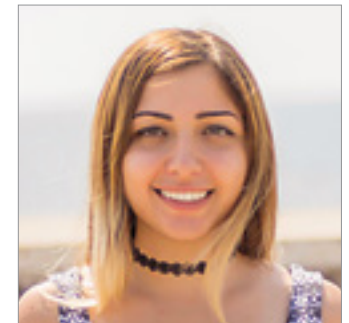
**Nushelle de Silva, 29**  
*Building Bridges*  
SRI LANKA

In the wake of the Sri Lankan civil war, Nushelle founded Building Bridges to provide ethnically diverse youth with the opportunity to express themselves and connect with others. In 2016, Building Bridges guided 200 students from rural communities across Sri Lanka in building empathy and collaborating through the creative arts.  
[www.buildingbridges.lk](http://www.buildingbridges.lk)



**Melanie Tran, 21**  
*AbilityMate*  
AUSTRALIA

Melanie co-founded AbilityMate to increase global access to assistive technology devices that help individuals with disabilities achieve greater independence. Combining 3-D printing and open source technology with human-centered design, AbilityMate develops low cost, customized devices that support users' mobility and ability to carry out everyday activities.  
[www.abilitymate.com](http://www.abilitymate.com)



**Katia Zahwi, 24**  
*Architects for Change*  
LEBANON

Believing that architects are capable of not only designing buildings but strengthening communities, Katia co-founded Architects for Change. Comprised of 83 design students and recent university graduates, the collaborative implements participatory design solutions for cultural and public spaces.  
[www.facebook.com/archforchange](http://www.facebook.com/archforchange)



# FROM THE CEO & THE CHAIRMAN

**William S. Reese**

*CEO*

International Youth  
Foundation

**Douglas L. Becker**

*Chairman*

International Youth  
Foundation

*Founder, Chairman & CEO*

Laureate Education, Inc.

## Healing our deeply divided

world depends on nurturing the values of justice and equity among today's youth. Featured throughout these pages are the stories of young leaders who not only uphold these values, but inspire their peers to do the same.

For Leonardo Párraga in Colombia, the art of letter writing offers a powerful tool for reconciling youth who have grown up on opposing sides of the nation's decades-long armed conflict. For Melanie Tran in Australia, low-cost 3-D printing technology, combined with human-centered design, holds a key to creating a more inclusive world for those with disabilities. And for Sheldon Smith in the United States, equipping young African-American fathers to be engaged parents is helping to transform larger societal narratives around race and the role of fathers.

These young change-makers are among 1,507 YouthActionNet Fellows in 92 countries whose social innovations

are bridging economic, racial, political, and other potent divides.

The journey of social change begins with empathy and agency. The vast majority of our fellows took action as a result of being exposed to social injustice in their communities. According to our research, 60 percent of youth first feel inspired to lead change at the age of 16 or older. How do we move more young people from interest to action? How do we equip them with the knowledge and tools to be effective? We believe that offering real-life examples and hands-on experience are crucial to developing young people's civic engagement and leadership skills. This year, we expanded our efforts to engage our fellows with university students to foster peer-to-peer learning and social action.

Our work to build a supportive ecosystem for youth-led social entrepreneurship was especially visible in Costa Rica and Chile. In both countries, youth leadership institutes housed at

institutions in the Laureate International Universities network equipped fellows to facilitate training workshops for their peers seeking to launch social ventures.

At the same time, we realize that young change-makers face significant obstacles in realizing their potential. Only 19 percent of YouthActionNet fellows feel key institutions in their community strongly support their work. By advocating for youth needs—and amplifying youth voices—we seek to create a groundswell of support for today's global youth movement.

The world's 1.2 billion young people represent a powerful force for positive change. In a recent IYF youth perceptions survey, more than 80 percent of youth respondents reported believing they have an obligation to help those who are less fortunate. Engaging this generation to create a just and equitable world has never been more urgent. They are ready, and we as a society need to step up in pursuing shared goals.

## INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FOUNDATION

For more than 25 years, the International Youth Foundation (IYF®) has focused solely on helping young people succeed.

A global nonprofit organization, IYF believes success in life is secured by learning skills that will endure, earning a livelihood, and growing as an engaged citizen. While most youth choose a career path and land that first job, many others decide to start their own small businesses or social ventures. Regardless of the road chosen, IYF has been by the side of more than 19.7 million youth in 105 countries, empowering them to lead productive, fulfilling lives.

[www.iyfnet.org](http://www.iyfnet.org)

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