“Characterizing and measuring the impact of B Corps on the inclusion of youth and women in Latin America”

Academia B, with the support of Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC), is inviting academics and professionals to submit proposals for research on the characterization and measurement of B Corps’ impact on the inclusion of youth and women in Latin America.

Up to 7 proposals will be selected, each of which will receive a maximum amount corresponding to US$10,000.

This call is part of the project “Understanding the Systemic Impacts of B Corps on Social and Economic Opportunities for Women and Youth in Latin America” (available at www.academiab.org), funded by IDRC and developed by Academia B/Sistema B. The project between IDRC and Sistema B seeks to understand the individual impacts of B Corps on the inclusion of women and youth, the collective potential of these market innovators to motivate traditional companies to act for inclusion, and to explore ways to generate partnerships to accelerate the adoption and progress of these market innovations that seek to solve social problems. The generated knowledge will be brought to action through Sistema B and will be widely publicized through the media, high-reach tools and events that promote new business strategies.

Academia B is a Sistema B initiative to monitor the progress of Sistema B and the movement for a new economy through research, training and meetings. It is an invitation to teachers, students, researchers, public policy agents, business owners, citizens, social entrepreneurs, and all those striving to create a new economy (www.academiab.org).

Sistema B is an accelerator of open innovation ecosystems. It offers opportunities for radical collaboration, connecting entrepreneurs, investors, opinion leaders, citizens, academics, and public policy agents in collective activities and tools to build a new economy with a new type of business: B Corps. A Latin American organization created in 2012, present in 11 countries of the region (www.sistemab.org), and whose vision is to build an economy where success is measured by the well-being of people, societies, and nature.

Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC): As part of Canada’s foreign affairs and development efforts, IDRC invests in knowledge, innovation and solutions to improve the lives and livelihoods in the developing world. Bringing together the right partners around opportunities for impact, IDRC builds leaders for today and tomorrow and helps drive change for those who need it the most.

1 Goal

B Corps are part of the new type of entity known as “hybrid companies” or “companies with a purpose”, which result from the convergence of different businesses that use market instruments to build assets of public interest. It’s a corporate model that increases the fiduciary duty of shareholders and managers by including non-financial interests, undertakes to create a positive impact on society and the environment, and operates under high standards of management and transparency while seeking the best financial performance and enables the distribution of profits among shareholders.

B Corps around the world face the challenge of demonstrating that they are fulfilling their promise of change. The academic world is best positioned actor to build an analytical base with empirical evidence to make the transition from a story to a strictly proven reality. This enables us to better understand and measure the impact of these “new actors of the economy”.

Through this call Academia B is inviting researchers to collaborate in our understanding of these companies in Latin America, their role in the economy and particularly their impact on the inclusion of women and youth, their social and financial performance, and the logic behind their creation. The knowledge acquired from their actions will help create new public policies and new business models that contribute to inclusion.

This call aims at promoting qualitative and quantitative research that allows to characterize the B Corps and their impact on the inclusion of youth and women. The idea is to support research in order to understand how these companies generate bigger and better social and economic opportunities for these groups in Latin America. The characterization is intended to highlight the particularities of those entrepreneurs (and their companies) who have decided to redefine the purpose of their business to generate positive social and environmental impacts (with a focus on the inclusion of women and youth), understand their motivations and how they are structured, among other variables considered to be relevant. The proposals must use impact measurement methodologies that allow to show the individual contribution of B Corps to the inclusion of youth and women. Priority will be given to the studies that use the data from the B Impact Assessment2 (see appendix 1).

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1 http://sistemab.org/como-me-sumo/
2 Evaluación de Impacto B que completan las Empresas B Certificadas, https://beta.bimpactassessment.net (para ser consultado debe registrarse como investigador, con el fin de no alterar los datos agregados). Preguntas consultables en http://b-analytics.net/content/standards-navigator
A study characterizing the contribution of B Corps to the construction of better social and economic opportunities for women and youth in Latin America and identifying cases of good practices;

A replicable methodology that allows to measure the impact of B Corps on the inclusion of youth and women, including, where relevant, reference to experiences of application of the methodology developed for measuring the impact of inclusive businesses;

Suggestions to improve the B Impact Assessment in terms of inclusion of youth and women;

Notes that enables the material to be used as a pedagogical tool at universities.

In Latin America more than 30 million people, mostly youth and women, are at risk of slipping back into poverty. The economic downturn and the limits of fiscal expansion partly explain this risk, but there is a major impact of the significant number of precarious and informal work, in which mainly women and youth are, such as the low productivity or informal activities in the service sector. More than half of the 300 million workers in Latin America and the Caribbean are in informal jobs. 70% of SMEs are informal and more than half of the people are employed in micro-enterprises.

Furthermore, the inclusive economic growth, that is, the growth that includes marginalized groups such as women and youth, has increasingly acknowledged as crucial to sustainable development. Governments, international agencies and civil society have supported public policies based on gender and age so that women and young people can participate in productive activities, generate income and reduce poverty. The private sector has an essential role to play in this.

Hybrid organizations like B Corps are redefining business success. They are for-profit companies that use the power of markets to solve social, environmental, and economic issues (such as the inclusion and the creation of decent jobs) as the core of their business.

B Corps are promoted by Sistema B as part of the movement for a new inclusive and regenerative economy in Latin America. Inclusive growth requires effective action by the private sector.

B Corps can contribute to inclusion not only within their own companies and their suppliers and customers in the value chain, but also with the purpose of their business activities. Many B Corps operate in the region having inclusion as their central business model: Mujeres del Pacifico, which promotes women entrepreneurs in five countries of Latin America; Terrium, which offers single mothers a first job close to home; Gulliver, which develops business ecosystems in rural areas to support women and young entrepreneurs; Crepes & Waffles, one of the largest chains of restaurants in Colombia, which offers decent job for thousands of single mothers; Natura Cosmetics, which offers business opportunities for low-income women to work at home; and Balloon y Emprediem, which supports young entrepreneurs in rural areas; SiembraViva, which supports the return of young entrepreneurs from urban to rural activities.

According to UNDP Human Development report 2016, between 2003 and 2013 some 72 million people were taken out of poverty in Latin America. Between 2015 and 2016, however, there was an increase in the number of poor people, and some 25 to 30 million people, many of them youth and women, are at risk of returning to poverty in the region, given that women and youth work mostly in precarious employment, in low productivity and informal activities in the service sector.


CALL FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

5 Procedure

Research proposals along with the applicant(s)’s résumé must be submitted to Verónica Díaz (veronica@sistemab.org). The proposal must have a maximum length of 10 pages (in Word, font 12, single line spacing, letter size).

The proposal must contain:

- An abstract of the study;
- Title and description of the main motivation of the project;
- Research questions that are expected to be answered;
- Topic relevance: why it is important to answer the project’s questions;
- Potential impact of the knowledge generated;
- Literary review and expected contributions: an updated review of pertaining literature and a clear identification of the project’s contribution(s);
- Methodology: point out the methods that will be used and the steps that will be followed to answer the proposed questions. A description of how the data will be obtained is expected;
- Expected results and outcomes;
- A work plan;
- Applicants must also send their résumé and academic and professional background.

“We suggest that researchers check the following research resources available on http://academiab.org/investigacion/:

- Scope of information on B Corps,
- Recording of webinar “B Impact Assessment as a research tool”
- Webinar presentation
- B-Analytics standards navigator

The author of the selected proposal will participate in a meeting with Academia B team to review the B Impact Assessment and the available data. This meeting will determine whether it is necessary to adjust the methodology to include this information.

6 Funds Available

The selected research project will be granted US$10,000. The author of the project will be able to use the amount granted freely, without prejudice to the fact that Academia B reserves the right to request the refund of the amount granted should the author not present the research results according to the terms described in the following paragraphs:

FIRST PHASE: The selected proposals shall receive a first payment, corresponding to 40% of the total amount, after the applicant is informed on the corresponding resolution. Upon submittal of the research proposal, the selected author shall present his or her work in a special session of Academia B at a location and date still to be defined.

The applicant shall present a draft of the products specified in this call under item 3 no later than February 28, 2018 for a preliminary review. Academia B’s Evaluation Committee will determine whether the progress meets the academic requirements or needs modifications and/or more content in order to be acceptable.

SECOND PHASE: No later than May 21, the researcher shall submit the final version of the products with whatever adjustments suggested by the Committee, if so should be the case. Then the researcher will receive the second payment, corresponding to 60% of the total amount, upon submittal of a letter by the corresponding journal certifying receipt of the paper for its potential publication. Acceptable journals should be indexed, preferably open access.

Chances for publication will be discussed with the Academia B.

7 Intellectual property

It is expressly declared that all products resulting from this research’s intellectual creation will be released with the Creative Commons license for IDRC and Sistema B.

8 Participation

This call for research includes the author’s participation in academic events and academic paper writing workshops. Travel expenses will be paid by Sistema B.
The Committee that will evaluate the proposals includes:

- The Director of Academia B;
- At least one representative of the Academia B’s Advisory Council: with a doctorate degree, academic experience and production of literature related to B Corps;
- A representative of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

Sistema B reserves the right to include another member in this Committee should it deem appropriate.

It is expressly declared that application implies acceptance of this regulation and of any other decision by Academia B pertaining to it. The results of this call are public and will be released by Sistema B’s networks.

It is expressly declared that Academia B will make the payments of phases 1 and 2 as soon as the administrative procedures are carried out by the unit responsible for granting the funds.

This call for research includes the possibility of a publication in a special issue of ACADEMIA de CLADEA-BALAS magazine.

Verónica Díaz
veronica@sistemab.org

# Evaluation Committee

# Disclaimer

# Dates and deadlines

**SEPTEMBER 29:**
deadline for queries

**OCTOBER 10:**
deadline to submit proposals

**OCTOBER 24:**
deadline to inform applicants on the selected proposal

**NOVEMBER 28-29:**
Possible presentation of the study at Encontro Acadêmico 2017, São Paulo, Brazil

**FEBRUARY 28, 2018:**
deadline to submit progress report

**MARCH 14, 2018:**
deadline to send comments to applicant

**MAY 21, 2018:**
deadline for final submittal of the study outcomes as stipulated in section 3

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Academia Revista Latinoamericana de Administración (ARLA), the official journal of the Latin American Council of Schools of Management (http://www.cladea.org/), publishes rigorous peer-reviewed research in the field of management and related disciplines with clear reference to Ibero and Latin-American management and businesses. The journal welcomes strong research analysing the practice of management, including solid theoretical and empirical articles, practical regional teaching cases, and literature reviews.