

THE



Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness in Latin America

PROGRAM

2025–26



Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness in Latin America

The ECLA Program at Columbia Business School is exclusively for entrepreneurs from mid-sized Latin American companies seeking to expand and better compete in today's global environment.

The rigorous curriculum features:

- Classes on campus and online with Columbia's professors
- International study tour
- Two projects—Process Improvement and Business Growth—guided by faculty advisors and industry mentors

The ECLA Program equips entrepreneurs with the skills, tools, and network to professionalize and grow their businesses.

A key component of the program is that each firm participates with 2–3 leaders. This ensures a shared mindset and experience that enables decision makers to implement the methodologies and changes in their companies.



SCHEDULE & CURRICULUM

2025

JAN 8-17

MODULE I

Columbia Business School, NYC

8-day mini MBA introductory session on operations management

FEB-JUL

MODULE II

Live-streamed classes

Bi-weekly online sessions focused on process improvement methodologies

MAY 5-9

MODULE III

International Study Tour to The Netherlands

Week-long study tour to visit companies and meet entrepreneurs

AUG 18-22

MODULE IV

Columbia Business School, NYC

Week-long session focused on business growth strategies

SEP-DEC

MODULE V

Live-streamed classes

Bi-weekly online sessions with a focus on business growth strategies

2026

JAN 5-9

MODULE VI

Columbia Business School, NYC

Week-long session on how to professionalize and implement change

PROCESS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Six-month project under the guidance of a faculty advisor, focused on the improvement of one particular process in your company

Problem Definition >> Analysis and Solution Design >> Implementation >> **Presentation**

BUSINESS GROWTH PLAN

Four-month project with the support of a faculty advisor, focused on your company's growth strategy

Industry Analysis >> Opportunity Definition >> Execution Plan >> **Presentation**

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Each participating company enrolls a team of two or three decision makers – CEOs, founders, managing directors, CFOs, and other leaders.

COMPANY PROFILE

- \$2M+ annual revenue
- 20+ employees
- 5+ years in business
- Scalable business model

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

- Proficient in English
- Bachelor's degree
- Global mindset
- Intellectual curiosity

IMMEDIATE RESULTS, LONG-LASTING BENEFITS

Acquire tools and skills to grow your business beyond borders and lead change within your organization.

Collaborate with a faculty advisor to work on a process improvement project with measurable results.

Build a strong network of entrepreneurs, industry coaches, and business leaders from around the world.

Gain international exposure to a region with a unique business and entrepreneurial culture.

Experience the ideal environment to share challenges with peer entrepreneurs and benefit from professors' expertise and insight.

Take the opportunity to step back as a team and analyze your company from a distance.

Join the Columbia Business School alumni network of more than 42,000 executives across industries in over 120 countries.

Audit Columbia Business School classes at any time – a lifelong alumni privilege.

123SEGURO

ECLA Graduate 2017

123Seguro is an **online insurance** broker based in **Argentina**. The company was very successful in generating sales leads, but was struggling to optimize its client conversion. Under the guidance of Professor Omar Besbes, they were able to redesign the sales process and reallocate resources into specialized teams led by top sales performers and incentivized with new, more appropriate metrics. Within two months of implementation, 123Seguro was enjoying a 22% increase in monthly sales.



TOUR VACATION GROUP

ECLA Graduate 2013

Tour Vacation Group (TVG) is a vertically-integrated **tourism** company in **Colombia** focused on low- and middle-income markets. Upon entering ECLA in 2012, they did not have an online presence due to the complexity of their payment and booking processes. Working with Professor Kamel Jedidi and industry mentors, TVG launched a website and call center, accelerating international expansion that resulted in 30% more sales outlets, 20% more charter flights, and a 70% increase in revenue. Since graduation, they have expanded to two additional countries and in 2019 they expanded into the luxury market.



TIENDAPET

ECLA Graduate 2019

TiendaPet is the leading **eCommerce and Retail** supplier of pet food, toys and accessories in **Chile**. They worked with Professor Alonso Martinez to improve their pricing strategy, optimize logistics and rationalize their service. Within a few months, they reduced the delivery cost by 60% and reduced fixed logistics costs by 12%. By switching to a more optimized pricing strategy based on geography and competition, monthly sales increased by an average of 5% across stores. Using data analytics, they were able to identify the optimal minimum order size which resulted in a significantly increased average order size and made the overall operations simpler and more cost effective.



BELEZA NATURAL

ECLA Graduate 2011

Beleza Natural is a chain of **beauty** institutes in **Brazil**. Due to issues in their process, they were unable to keep up with customer demand, resulting in lengthy wait times and customer dissatisfaction. With Professor Medini Singh, they were able to identify and fix the bottlenecks to increase their capacity, reduce their costs by two-thirds, and increase profitability from 15% to 40% during the time they participated in ECLA. Annual growth since 2011 has been 146% and they have gone from 12 salons with 1,500 employees to 31 salons, 17 kiosks and 4,000 employees in 2016. In 2018, they opened their first store in New York City.

ALUMNI SURVEY



73%

entered into business collaborations with fellow ECLA participants.



85%

stated that the program paid for itself within one year of graduation; 50% indicated this happened during program.



88%

continue to use the process improvement methodologies in their companies.

ADMISSIONS

Program Details and Information Sessions

business.columbia.edu/ecp/ecla
ecla@gsb.columbia.edu

Application

business.columbia.edu/ecp/latin-america/apply

Program Fees

Early-bird discount: \$35,000 for two participants

Regular pricing: \$45,000 for two participants

Admissions will be determined on a rolling basis, and early applications are encouraged! The early bird discount will be offered to up to 8 accepted companies as long as the application is submitted by June 20.

Fees cover tuition, class materials, and hotel accommodations while in NYC and The Netherlands.



Nelson Fraiman '71

Founding Faculty Director, ECLA Program, Columbia Business School

“Back in 2007, when we first began thinking about a program for Latin American entrepreneurs at Columbia Business School, I didn’t realize I was embarking on the most exciting trip of my career.”



Manuel Wiechers

Co-founder and CEO, Iluméxico; ECLA '17 Graduate

“The ECLA program has transformed me as a leader and the whole company as well. I’m much more process-oriented and my role is now more on problem-solving and developing others.”



The ECLA program is sponsored by the Jerome A. Chazen Institute for Global Business and Santander University.