



BRAZIL

FA.VELA — Advancing digital entrepreneurial skills of underserved youth



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In Brazil, inequalities disproportionately affect marginalised youth in peripheral regions. In Belo Horizonte, 480,000 people live in unplanned settlements, deprived of access to social and economic opportunities.

The project Escola Digital, supported by the Julius Baer Foundation and implemented by FA.VELA empowers young entrepreneurs lacking sufficient expertise in business development. FA.VELA links them with successful entrepreneurs. Through

classes, mentorships, group talks and other services, the young entrepreneurs learn to (re)structure their businesses for further growth. And besides this professional aspect, Escola Digital addresses the social layer by bringing people from opposite realities together to build bridges and overcome prejudices.

Through FA.VELA's inclusive education over 1,000 individuals from diverse underserved backgrounds have developed an entrepreneurial attitude and digital skills, capable of transforming their businesses and their lives positively and lastingly.

Quick facts

- Brazil, Belo Horizonte
- Project support: 2021–2026
- Grant amount: CHF 150,000 per year
- Connecting marginalised Brazilians aged 18–35, who run informal businesses, with established professionals, who are recognised experts in their fields.
- Goal: Empowering the marginalised youth in business management and technological literacy, bolstering their self-esteem and fostering business growth.

From excluded and untrained ...

Around 70% of the project's applicants already perform as entrepreneurs, but less than 20% have regular access to computer and internet services, specialised education, support networks or financial investments.



... to equipped and connected.

Vulnerable youth suffering from social stigma and lacking financial resources gain access to innovative digital education and collaborations with established professionals.





“Before being a professional, I am a citizen. A person with rights as well as obligations. This project has transformed the way I and my team think about design. In order to create projects for the world, I need to first understand that world. To see the contrasts and try, to my best abilities, to make them smaller. This project shows the true meaning of the word ‘community’.”

Gustavo Greco, CEO and founder of Greco Design

OUTPUT



Over **1,200 hours of mentoring, classes and psychological support** have already been delivered through FA.VELA Escola Digital.

OUTCOME



Many participants led a company before engaging in the programme. After participating, **100% of them felt more qualified and equipped to lead their businesses.**

HIGHLIGHT



Escola Digital **boosts participants’ digital skillset.** 100% of the entrepreneurs state that they apply improved communication and marketing strategies compared to before the programme.

Creating access to professionalism

- Despite all its wealth, Brazil is a country full of social and economic inequalities.
- Those who do not fit certain social standards regarding skin colour, education, wealth and other criteria are deprived of various social and economic rights.
- 74.2% of companies set up between April and August 2024 in Brazil were nano and small businesses founded mostly by people belonging to historically marginalised groups.
- FA.VELA set out to empower underserved leaders and entrepreneurs to change not only their lives but also their surroundings.
- FA.VELA designed Escola Digital to lower the barriers and create access to indispensable business education and professional networks.
- Whether they are video makers, natural cosmetics producers, accountants, cooks, booksellers, or other craftspeople, Escola Digital’s educational opportunities are now reaching youth throughout Brazil.
- A new breed of young entrepreneurs is growing and thriving in the favelas, forming a cohesive network across the wealth divide.
- Additionally, financial aid, access to technology and psychological support significantly impacted their ventures.

About FA.VELA

As a civil society organisation, FA.VELA operates as an education and learning hub with its mission to promote diversity and socioeconomic development through innovative, digital and inclusive education. 64% of FA.VELA’s programme participants are women, 80% are people of colour, 25% identify as LGBTQI+. Moreover, 97% earn less than two minimum wages in Brazil, while 64% reside in vulnerable areas.



More information about FA.VELA and their project in Brazil: favela.org.br



Watch the FA.VELA video

Do you feel inspired by the FA.VELA project and would like to support it?

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with us! foundation@juliusbaer.com



Learn more about our mission and our projects on the Wealth Inequality Initiative platform.

Julius Baer Foundation

Established in 1965 by Walter J. Bär (1895–1970), the Julius Baer Foundation has a long history of supporting diverse philanthropic initiatives. Today, our focus is on reducing wealth inequality by convening leading thinkers and actors on the topic and supporting projects worldwide that foster collaboration between individuals, groups and organisations across the wealth spectrum to create a world of equal opportunities.

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